

INSPECTION REPORT

PARKSIDE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Borehamwood

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117562

Acting Headteacher: Mrs C. Beeden

Reporting inspector: Mr M.North
17078

Dates of inspection: 19 June 00- 23 June 00

Inspection number: 190873

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: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 3 to 9

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Aycliffe Road
Borehamwood
Hertfordshire

Postcode: WD6 4EP

Telephone number: 0208 953 2369

Fax number: 0208 386 7890

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs B. Williams

Date of previous inspection: 5 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
M. North	Registered inspector	Under fives, Maths,	Standards
		ICT, D&T, EAL	Teaching
H. Akthar	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
			Care for pupils
			Partnership with parents aspect
M. Rees	Team inspector	English, Art, History	Curriculum
		Geography, RE, PE	
I. Wilson	Team inspector	Science, SEN, EO	Leadership & management

The inspection contractor was:

Essex County Council
Learning Services
Advisory and Inspection Service
PO Box 47
Chelmsford
CM2 6WN

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a smaller than average foundation primary school for boys and girls 3-9 years old. It has 153 full time pupils and 40 part time pupils in its nursery class. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below the national average. 75 pupils have special needs; a figure which is well above the national average. Nearly a quarter of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, approximately half from white European and half from black Caribbean or black African and 13 pupils have English as an additional language. 57 pupils have free school meals. The school is subject to re-organisation and will have Year 5 pupils from September 2000 as it develops to become a school for 3-11 year olds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with standards rising in English and mathematics. Standards are weaker in other subjects, even though they have risen to close to national standards for most except science, information communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE). The school is led effectively and makes suitable use of the resources available. The quality of teaching is good overall, which helps its pupils to make good progress often and rarely less than satisfactory progress. The value for money provided by the school is satisfactory.

What the school does well

- Provision for pupils' personal development
- Manages behaviour very well
- Teaching is frequently good
- The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Standards in reading are well above those of similar schools.

What could be improved

- Standards in science, information and communication technology and religious education.
- Leadership in subject areas including monitoring of standards and provision
- Managing and planning the curriculum
- Pupils' attendance

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then it has addressed the issues raised by the inspection. There has been good improvement in reading and standards are now above those for similar schools. Standards of handwriting are improved and good by the end of Year 4. The school has developed suitable policies for drug education and applies these in its work. The approaches to marking are consistent and support pupils making progress. There has been improvement in the quality of work for higher achievers but not yet fully in all areas of the curriculum. Overall improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	E	D	A	well above average A
Writing	E	D	E	D	above average B
Mathematics	E	D	E	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Pupils enter school with standards below those expected for their age. They generally make good progress in literacy and numeracy. Since the last inspection standards have improved; although there was a dip in writing and mathematics in 1999, pupils achieved particularly well in reading which was well above average for similar school. The main strengths are in Reading. The National Curriculum test results for 2000 show a continued overall improvement in literacy and numeracy. The standards in science are below national expectations and need to be improved. Standards are also too low for religious education and information and communication technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes influenced by the good relationships in the school. They enjoy school and participate with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good, with many examples of very good behaviour in and out of classrooms. Where there is inappropriate behaviour it is well contained.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils make good progress in their personal development and show responsibility in their relationships. The Parkside Award underpins the good work done in this aspect of school life.
Attendance	This has slipped since the last inspection and is now unsatisfactory being well below the national average and unauthorised absence is too high. Punctuality is reasonable.

The main strengths in pupil's attitudes are the good work habits and good response to encouragement. No oppressive behaviour is seen and they move around the school in an orderly manner being courteous, helpful and respectful. In their personal development the

strengths are the respect they show each other, being aware of the feelings of others and how well they listen to each other. Attendance rates are made worse by the number of families that take holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	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.

The overall quality of teaching is good in approximately 60 percent of lessons throughout the school, with some that is very good. Only in 2 percent of lessons is the teaching unsatisfactory. The main strengths in the teaching are thorough planning for the national strategies of literacy and numeracy, both of which are taught well. Most lessons have good pace as there is effective discipline which means lessons are not interrupted by teachers having to deal with poor behaviour. There are usually expectations for pupils to work with independence. Teachers make good use of questions to help pupils discover new knowledge. The needs of all pupils are recognised by teachers and pupils with special needs are supported well. Teaching is unsatisfactory when the purposes of the task are not clear as in some topic work and too much time is spent questioning pupils rather than furnishing them with new knowledge. Overall pupils make at least satisfactory progress and often good progress in literacy and numeracy.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a broad range of opportunities that take account of the national initiatives of literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is satisfactory but some weaknesses exist in RE, ICT. There are some weaknesses in aspects of planning where there is confusion between national curriculum targets and those for the development of personal skill..
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils benefit from individual education plans and they are given good support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory. Pupils are supported adequately and make progress although the provision is not always specifically planned.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social	Overall this is good, being stronger for the moral and social aspects than the spiritual and cultural. The provision for personal education helps pupils to be confident members of the school

and cultural development	community and aware of their individual place in it. The adults in the school provide good role models.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school focuses well on pupils' welfare. There is a good understanding of pupils' pastoral needs but it is not so well developed on their academic ones.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. There is good interaction between staff and parents, and parents are generally satisfied with the leadership and the standards achieved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting head provides very good leadership. Day to day management is good. The present management structure does not allow for effective subject co-ordination or leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are committed to the school and have good working relationships. They perform their statutory duties and recognise the need to develop their monitoring role further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Overall this is satisfactory and the school monitors some aspects of its work well, however the monitoring is insufficient to ensure curriculum continuity and progress.
The strategic use of resources	The school has made good use of grants and linked expenditure into its improvement plan. Overall the use of resources is good.

Learning resources are used well, as is accommodation. The school is an attractive working environment. The number and qualifications of staff match the demands of the curriculum, but allocation of management responsibilities leads to unrealistic workloads in some cases. Governors and management seek best value for money in their expenditure and take careful account of the impact of their spending decisions on the work of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of teaching • Pupils' progress • Standards achieved • Discipline • Quality of leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Extra-curricular activities • Information about pupils' progress

Inspection findings generally support the parents' positive feelings. Inspectors found homework and provision for extra curricular activities to be satisfactory. The quality of

information for parents although satisfactory overall has some shortcomings as it says little on how pupils might improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter school with attainment that is below expectations for their age and make generally good progress in the nursery to attain standards that are close to the national expectations by the age of 5, although still below those overall. Progress is maintained in the next two key stages and by the ages of 7 and 9 most pupils are attaining close to national expectations for literacy and numeracy although standards in science are below national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs progress well. Those with English as an additional language make positive progress. Higher attaining pupils make good progress. There is generally better performance by girls than by boys, but not significantly so.
2. Since the last inspection, most standards have improved year on year and this has been very evident in the present academic year. Reading across the school is close to national standards and well above when compared with similar schools. Writing has improved over time but dipped in the last academic year, although it is clear from the SATs results for this year and from pupils' work that writing has improved further in this academic year. Handwriting and presentation are of a high standard by the end of Year 4. Throughout the school, pupils' skills of listening, reading and writing enable them to have good access to the rest of the curriculum at appropriate levels.
3. Pupils in both key stages mainly make sound progress in mathematics, meeting the key objectives for each year group. This progress is strongest in number work and in mental strategies. Although the comparison with similar schools for 1999 shows performance at much the same level as others, this year's National Curriculum tests' results show a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectations. It is not possible at this stage to make comparisons with similar schools for the current year.
4. Attainment in science is below national expectations at each key stage and pupils do not have sufficient knowledge, understanding or skills across all dimensions. Their skills of investigation are underdeveloped. Progress in science is therefore limited for the majority of pupils as there is limited coverage of science and duplication of learning experiences from year to year, as in the work about magnets.
5. Attainment is below expectations for information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE) for most pupils. In the rest of the foundation subjects except geography, attainment is mainly close to national expectations although not consistent across all dimensions of the subjects. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils enjoy school and participate well and with enthusiasm in all that the school provides. Their generally positive attitudes to the school, greatly influenced by good relationships in the school, contribute well to the quality of education. Pupils'

behaviour is good. The majority of parents feel that their children like coming to school. The overall picture remains as good as was reported by the previous inspection.

7. Children under five and Reception children are eager to explore new tasks and treat resources sensibly. They have a well-established sense of routine, for example, tidying up after activities. They talk about what they draw or make. They learn to share equipment and to work together, as was apparent in an early-year activity where pupils were making stained glass windows, following their recent visit to a church. They make good progress in personal development, confidently changing for physical education (PE) and attending to personal hygiene.
8. Pupils are developing good work habits and are generally enthusiastic about lessons. They listen to their teachers' instructions carefully, are eager to answer questions and work hard; good examples were seen in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils show good interest in school life by participating in the school council and extra-curricular activities; take-up of the activities is good, particularly in art and music. They take responsibility by taking registers to the office and showing visitors around. The school has an award scheme that recognises pupils taking social responsibility. Pupils with special educational needs work equally hard, respond very well to the support that they receive and take part in their own learning.
9. The standard of behaviour is generally good in lessons, with many examples of very good behaviour, for example in literacy lessons. There is some inappropriate behaviour but it is well contained. Pupils are generally well interested in what they are asked to do and enjoy their work. A vast majority of pupils behave well outside lessons. They are helpful, courteous and respectful. They move around the school in an orderly and quiet manner; for example, when moving to the hall for assembly or going for outside games. They enjoy good relationships with each other and with staff. All groups of pupils work and play together very well. No oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Pupils show respect for each other, including the feelings and opinions of others; for example, they listen courteously to others during circle time. Pupils treat the school's property with good care. Exclusions are not a feature of the school anymore. Pupils' personal development is good.
10. Whilst pupils like coming to the school, their attendance has slipped since the last inspection and is now unsatisfactory, being well below the national average and unauthorised absence well above the average. As a result, the pupils concerned do not fully benefit from the curriculum offered by the school. Absences are mainly due to illnesses or in a significant number of cases, due to family holidays taken during the term time. Unauthorised absence is mostly because the reasons for absence given by parents are either not entered in the electronic registers or they are not good enough to authorise the absence. Most pupils arrive on time in the morning; some pupils arrive late but this does not delay the start of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The overall quality of teaching is good or better in nearly three fifths of lessons throughout the school, with some that is very good. The rest of the teaching is almost all at least satisfactory with a few isolated incidents when it is unsatisfactory. This high frequency of good quality teaching contributes very significantly to the pupils' learning

and enables them to make good or better progress in over two fifths of lessons and at least satisfactory progress in almost all the rest.

12. All teachers plan thoroughly for the national strategies of literacy and numeracy and are clear about the intentions of their lessons and what all the pupils are to gain from them. The structures of the strategies are evident, with engaging expositions and work that is mainly matched to the pupils' different levels of understanding. Teachers show good knowledge of the requirements of the literacy and numeracy strategies and teach well phonics, understanding of language, mental and practical number work. Generally effective use is made of the end part of the sessions to check how well pupils have progressed. In the very good lessons, the tasks are very well chosen for the pupils and matched particularly well to their varying abilities. Teachers ensure resources are suitably chosen and prepared for the lessons and this enables pupils to gain understanding and keep up the pace of their learning. Most lessons progress at a good pace as the teachers make effective use of questioning to check pupils' levels of understanding and guide them onto new learning.
13. The relationships between the pupils' and teachers are good ensuring there is good behaviour that also contributes to the pace of the learning being maintained. In the few occasions when pupils with significant behaviour difficulties experience problems, the teachers' application of the school's very effective behaviour strategy ensures those pupils with difficult behaviour are managed well and do not interrupt the flow of lessons. In the good lessons teachers also place high expectation on pupils' overall performance and on pupils demonstrating independence in their work. This occurred in a good design and technology session. Pupils were expected to select materials from a limited range and devise their own strategies to solving a construction problem and went on to evaluate the quality of their products.
14. Pupils with special educational needs across the school are supported well through three main ways. Sometimes tasks are specifically chosen for them, frequently additional adult help is directed towards them as is seen in the under-fives area, with good use of the nursery nurse and with the effective use made of learning support assistants in the other key stages. Quite frequently the teachers have different expectations for the performance of pupils with special educational needs and tailor questions accordingly to those expectations. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress given suitable support by the teachers although the planning for these pupils is not developed as well as for other groups.
15. There is no great variation between year groups in the quality of teaching but there is variation between subjects. The quality of teaching in the core subjects of English and mathematics is usually better than for other subjects. When topic work is taught there is insufficient clarity about the purpose of the tasks set related to the expectation of the National Curriculum and this limits the effectiveness of the lesson, and on occasions, makes them unsatisfactory. Lessons are also unsatisfactory when too much time is spent on trying to guide pupils to solutions by questioning when it is clear they do not have adequate knowledge to draw on and the teacher should furnish the pupils with the required information. Overall teaching is a strength of the school.

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

16. The school provides pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 with a broad range of opportunities for learning, including all the primary foundation subjects. Teachers have taken account of national initiatives and are preparing for the school's imminent change of age-range. Since its last inspection, an improvement has been made in marking, and the school has met requirements for drugs education, as well as reviewing its provision for sex education. Links with other schools are satisfactory, in a context in which most pupils enter the school from the nursery class, and where the current Year 4 will stay on as the school's age-range is extended.
17. As at the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum is satisfactory but there are some weak aspects. These prevent pupils' progress from being as good as it might be, considering that teaching and learning are good in most lessons. They are:-
 - Provision for teaching religious education in Year 4 is not clearly planned for.
 - Subject planning is based on the school's curriculum calendar for personal and social education. It is not clear about how pupils work towards National Curriculum targets appropriate to their age. Whole school curriculum planning for information technology, religious education, and the foundation subjects fails to secure progression and continuity.
18. Because curriculum plans do not set out clear National Curriculum related targets, the school does not make the most of its very full assessment information in planning the next stage of learning for groups of pupils.
19. There are a number of good or at least satisfactory features of the school's provision of the curriculum and practice of assessment. These are:-
 - Pupils with special educational needs benefit from individual education plans and are given effective support to make good progress.
 - Teachers know all their pupils very well and make good use of their knowledge in setting pupils' daily tasks, asking them questions and marking their work.
 - In numeracy and literacy, the school is implementing the national strategies effectively.
20. The school has a highly developed personal and social education (PSE) policy, which is the keystone of its curricular provision, and which is in itself a strength. It has a clear impact on its good practice in providing for pupils' moral and social awareness and understanding. All staff convey clear messages about what is, and is not acceptable behaviour, based on consideration for other people. In some lessons, wider moral issues are discussed, such as the impact of pollution on the environment and what we can do to help.
21. Through the good PSE provision, pupils are helped to be confident members of the school community, and aware of their individual place in it. The school as a whole

gives them a good example of an effective, busy and happy society, in which problems can be solved by discussion and co-operation.

22. Pupils have some valuable opportunities to help with the day to day running of the school, and they are expected to be responsible in using the school's property and keeping their classrooms tidy. There is a valuable opportunity for pupils in Year 4 to go on a residential visit which is, for many, their first experience of being away from their families. Apart from this, there are not many occasions for pupils to take the initiative in their learning.
23. Spiritual and cultural development are both satisfactorily provided for in assemblies and lessons. Pupils' own creativity is valued, and there are moments when they are encouraged to delight in humour, beauty and wonder, although opportunities for this are sometimes missed. Music contributes to assemblies and to imaginative work in dance. Some books made by the pupils themselves celebrate the diversity of the world and its peoples, but most cultural education is based on examples of western art, music and literature.
24. Pupils have some opportunities to pursue personal interests such as art and football in after-school clubs. Their curricular experience is enriched and broadened by a number of interesting and exciting visits and visitors, and by opportunities to perform for their families and friends.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. As at the time of the previous inspection, the school focuses well on pupils' welfare. Staff know pupils, and pastoral needs of individual pupils are well supported by the good relationships that exist between them and staff. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
26. The school has policies and procedures in place to promote pupils' well being. Pupils new to the school are successfully helped to settle in quickly. The first aid arrangements are effective and trained first-aiders sensitively attend to pupils requiring treatment or medication. Provision of the breakfast club is yet another example of school's interest in the health of its pupils. Lunchtime procedures are good. Lunchtime supervisors are well committed to looking after the pupils. Wet-play is well organised. Pupils get appropriate guidance in sex education and drug awareness through the curriculum, particularly the circle time, and on matters related to their health and safety. Pupils' welfare is well supported by visiting specialists. Procedures for child protection, and for health and safety are good.
27. The school has good and effective procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Incentives like the Parkside Awards promote pupils' personal development and raise their self-esteem. The measures to ensure high standards of behaviour by pupils are good. Good behaviour and success are well rewarded. The headteacher firmly monitors and deals with any incidents of negative behaviour, which are now rare. No oppressive behaviour was seen and none was reported to inspectors during the inspection.

28. Whilst the school has good understanding of pupils' pastoral needs, focus on their academic needs is less good. Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is broadly satisfactory. The school has started work on tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement. Measures for pupils to do well are developing. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils are well supported. There is no specific provision for high attaining pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language or to address under-performance by boys.
29. Pupils' attendance is appropriately recorded at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions but the arrangements for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are ineffective. The school does not fully comply with the legal requirements for the electronic register, in that no printout of the attendance register or admission register is kept at present. The Optical Mark Reader (OMR) system is not productively used in monitoring absences. Measures to follow up absences are not rigorous enough to obtain satisfactory levels of attendance. Lateness to the school is monitored through a late-sheet system. Punctuality in class is satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. Parents are generally supportive of the school's work and their involvement in the life of the school is developing. The community initiatives such as support and guidance for parents available at the school are helpful in this respect. They are generally satisfied with the leadership, the standards achieved, teaching, pupils' progress, discipline in the school and what is expected of their children.
31. Inspection findings generally support their positive feelings. Some parents have expressed concern about the provision of homework and extra-curricular activities, and information about pupils' progress. Inspectors found that the homework and provision for extra activities are satisfactory. The quality of information although satisfactory overall, has shortcomings. For example, the governors' annual report does not include all statutory information at present. Pupils' reports tell what pupils can do but say little about how they might improve. Targets for improvements are too general and parents are not involved in the target setting.
32. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress and are appropriately involved in the reviews. The school prospectus and regular newsletters provide good information about the life of the school. The partnership with parents is satisfactory but not as strong as reported at the time of the previous inspection.
33. The school has a welcoming approach and there is good interaction between the staff and parents at the beginning and end of each day. This helps teachers and parents to inform and become informed about any concerns regarding pupils' development. Parents are generally interested in the education of their children and their involvement in the learning of their children at the school is satisfactory.
34. The parents' association is well supported and organises fund-raising events for improving school resources. Some parents work as voluntary helpers in the school and help with after-school activities. Their attendance at consultation meetings is good. Many parents support their children with their reading work at home. The school

successfully relies upon the co-operation of parents to maintain high expectations of behaviour.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The school succeeds in meeting its mission statement, which is concerned with ensuring the welfare, safety and valuing of pupils. This results from the shared commitment amongst all staff and governors to the school's aims and consistent efforts of staff and governors over a number of years.
36. The acting headteacher provides very good leadership. She has worked sensitively, recognising the interim nature of her position and has built on the organisation and systems in place and the existing strengths of the school. With the support of the teaching staff, she has ensured that key issues of implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, continuing the development of literacy teaching, improving information and communication technology, improving pupils' behaviour and raising standards have been addressed very well. The outcome is seen in the considerable improvement in pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy this year at Key Stage 1.
37. Day to day management of the school is very good. Many factors contribute to this including the effectiveness of the headteacher and senior staff, well understood school routines consistently followed by all teaching and non-teaching staff, relevant training for all staff and regular meetings of the headteacher with teaching and non-teaching staff. There are, however, some weaknesses in the management structure. The structure does not ensure effective curriculum co-ordination or subject leadership. Also, there are no clearly defined arrangements for a member of staff to formally take responsibility for the school in the absence of the headteacher. These weaknesses have an adverse effect on standards.
38. The Governing Body is very committed to the school and working relationships between governors, the acting and substantive headteacher and staff are good. The Chair of the Governing Body is a very frequent visitor to the school and both she and other governors know the school well. The Governors are involved in strategic decision-making and they ensure that financial administration is effective and statutory requirements are met. They are beginning to be involved in maintaining an overview of curriculum and standards but governors need to develop their monitoring role further.
39. Arrangements for the appraisal of staff are effective. The substantive headteacher has undertaken regular appraisal of teachers and the acting headteacher has continued the arrangements through the appraisal and monitoring of staff joining the school during the current academic year. Newly qualified teachers joining the school this year have been very well supported in the school and mentoring arrangements have met their needs very well. Considerable effort has been put into developing and enabling classroom based learning support staff.
40. Standardised tests, coupled with annual teacher assessments for the core subjects are used to monitor overall performance of pupils and to check progress. There is a need, however, to monitor specific aspects of progress of pupils, for example numerical skills, and to use this information to set pupil and school targets. There has been little monitoring of standards in the foundation subjects. Monitoring of the progress of

pupils on the special education needs register is good. Pupils' individual education plans contain appropriate targets that are reviewed at regular intervals and revised as needed. There is some monitoring of the curriculum through, for example, monitoring of teachers' medium and short term plans, but the monitoring is insufficient to ensure curriculum continuity and progression.

41. The school improvement plan is a useful and clearly set out document which addresses all aspects of the work of the school and which contains appropriate targets. Associated action plans address the targets well and indicate how progress will be monitored and success measured.
42. The school has made good use of the additional funding made available through its former direct grant, for example to improve the premises. Other additional funding through the Single Regeneration Budget has been used well to support early years developments and parental links. The Standards Fund grant is used appropriately.
43. The governors have established systems to ensure effective financial administration, including six monthly audits. The most recent audit highlighted the high quality of these arrangements. The arrangements include procedures for obtaining quotations or tenders for larger items of expenditure. The governors take careful account of the impact of expenditure decisions on the work of the school, for example the provision of breakfast facilities and good lunchtime meals are considered a priority for the physical well-being of the pupils. There is a need to amend the financial policy as it is quite dated and does not reflect existing practice. Governors should consider whether detail such as agreed virement limits should be added to the policy. A balanced budget has been difficult to achieve this year and was only effected through the late availability of additional external grant. The governors have recognised the need to draw up a three-year budget plan in order to be able to manage school resources and development in the future.
44. The number and qualifications of teachers and support staff matches the demands of the curriculum well. In general they are well deployed but the allocation of management responsibilities leads to unrealistic workloads in some cases. Accommodation is used well, is clean and well maintained. There have been difficulties with making space available for specialised ICT teaching but this is resolved through planned actions in the ICT development plan. Classrooms are tidy and very well organised; this combined with attractive displays results in the school as a whole providing a good working environment for pupils. There are good plans for the development of the school grounds. Learning resources are adequate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. The governors, headteacher and staff should address the following issues in order to raise standards further and build on the progress that has been made since the last inspection.

Raise standards in science, information technology and religious education by: -

- ensuring there is sufficient curriculum guidance that shows a clear path of progression from year to year and sets expectations for pupils' attainment. (4, 5, 74, 99, 114)

- monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the guidance and giving suitable feedback to teachers to enable them to make best use of the guidance. (72)
- improving the structures for subject leadership so there is an equitable workload for co-ordinators that ensures effective monitoring and curriculum development. (28, 37)
- developing the curriculum planning approaches so the curriculum plans set out clearly National Curriculum related targets appropriate to the age of pupils and subject planning. (17, 18)
- improving attendance rates by greater rigour in following up absences and ensure the arrangements for the use of electronic registers meet legal requirements. (10)

Other matters which are not key issues

Ensure the information to parents from governors in the annual report fully meets statutory requirements.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	10	46	37	2		

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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		138

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	75

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.41

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	21	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	13
	Girls	18	18	16
	Total	32	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74	70	67
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	30	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70	72	70
	National	82	86	87

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	8
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN– Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	209

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	574586
Total expenditure	577443
Expenditure per pupil	2711
Balance brought forward from previous year	18303
Balance carried forward to next year	15446

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	168
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	52	5	2	
My child is making good progress in school.	40	45	12		2
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	63	10		2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	10	46	28	5	10
The teaching is good.	33	55	5		7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	45	21		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	33	7		7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	31	45	12	2	10
The school works closely with parents.	26	50	14	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	19	57	5		19
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	59	7		10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	49	20	2	12

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

46. Since the last Ofsted inspection the nursery has continued to work successfully. It caters for the children on a part-time basis. Both the nursery and reception classes provide a busy, caring and stimulating environment in which to promote purposeful play in all areas of learning. However the few reception children in the two classes where there are mainly Year 1 pupils do not share the same range of expected experiences. All children are provided with a firm foundation for later achievement.
47. The standards on entry to the nursery class are mainly below average. Children make good progress in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. , standards are close to those expected of children by the time they are five years old. In creative and physical development, standards are satisfactory and are likely to be in line with the national expectations. Overall standards are just below those expected nationally. The main contributory factor to the children's improved standards of attainment is the quality of teaching and the impact that this has on the children's learning. Teaching is good in most lessons. Good teamwork between the teachers and the other adult support workers, such as learning support assistants and nursery nurse, is another significant factor contributing to the overall good progress of the children's work and play.
48. Provision for children's personal and social development is particularly good. The planned programme for children's personal and social development is given strong emphasis by all staff, both in the activities and in the daily routines. They ensure that children are happy and have very good relationships with adults and one another. Staff make good use of praise, encouragement and explanations to promote children's self-confidence and independence. They have secure knowledge of how young children learn and children's behaviour is handled in a caring and sensitive manner. Staff are consistent in the way they help children to recognise the difference between right and wrong. In response, children are helpful to each other when sharing equipment and the resources as, for instance, the play with model animals. Through ongoing activities and special celebrations, children are learning about other cultures and traditions.
49. Children's overall attainment in language and literacy is below average but they make good progress, especially in the development of their listening, speaking and early reading skills. Children listen attentively to adults and other children when taking part in activities such as story times and sitting together at snack-times relating experiences to each other. Staff have good expectations of children's abilities to communicate their ideas and express them to others. They provide regular times for children to work with them on reading and writing activities. They ensure that children take some responsibility for their own choice of activity during each session. Children's own language is valued and staff take opportunity in planned and spontaneous activities to extend children's vocabulary. Effective provision is made for reading and writing. Children enjoy sharing stories and re-telling them from pictures and from memory, using many of the correctly remembered phrases. They successfully write their names and copy words and letters well, often without adult help.

50. In mathematics, children attain standards close to those expected for their age and are likely to match those expected of similar aged children by the time they are five years old. Staff exploit opportunities to reinforce main teaching points and consolidate and extend mathematical learning thoroughly. A good example of this occurred in a mathematics lesson following a visit by the fire service, when children took turns to match numbers from a dice to numbers on model houses to “rescue” toy figures from the “burning houses”. They learnt to count, add on and subtract using numbers to twenty with increasing confidence and skill. Some of them wrote the correct number symbols. Children are taught an appropriate mathematical vocabulary through rhymes, games, stories and songs. They match objects one to one, arrange items in sequences, make patterns and comparisons, and solve simple problems in practical situations. Staff provide many chances for children to learn about amounts and ordered sequencing when they cook, use sand, puzzles and games.
51. Overall, children’s attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. A strength of the teaching is that staff provide many opportunities for children to talk about their homes and families and past and present events so that they develop an understanding of the differences and similarities between past and present times. A good example of this is the adult led discussion about the way the fire service operates. Children know about the different building properties of wet and dry sand and how these substances and playdough behave when poured or moulded. Through cooking activities, children learn to recognise different smells and tastes. They develop their understanding of the school grounds, local area and the wider world beyond, often by making visits to local places of interest such as the church. The staff ensure that children have opportunities to build and join by using construction kits and making models. Another significant feature of teaching and learning is evident in the way that children are able to use the computer and ‘mouse’ with confidence, matching and counting objects.
52. In the creative area of learning, children’s attainment is sound. Effective questioning helps children to think about what they are doing, respond with observations and express their own ideas, feelings and opinions. They express these with growing confidence and skill through planned activities of drawing, painting, imaginative play and music. They apply paint in various ways and successfully mix their own colours to produce patterns and prints, which they are pleased to share with others. Little role play was seen during the inspection but role play areas exist to help capture pupils’ imagination and add to their all round development. Children sing songs and nursery rhymes with enthusiasm. They are able to follow a tune, sing well and join in with appropriate actions as seen in assembly.
53. Children’s attainments in physical development are sound. Staff design activities to help promote the well-being of the children and support their physical development. Indoors children move around the classrooms confidently. Activities enable children to work at different heights, on the floor, at tables and while standing. Children handle jigsaws, construction kits, writing and drawing pencils and tools, and manipulate materials such as dough with increasing precision and fine hand and finger control. They use scissors with confidence and skill. A good range of outside activities is provided to help children develop their skills, control of their bodies and awareness of space and direction. Staff encourage children to gain confidence by using all the space and equipment without pressurising the less confident to attempt more than they are ready to do. Safety

procedures are good. Children take part in and enjoy physical play at their own rate and pace although more creativity could be encouraged in the indoor sessions.

54. Teachers' planning shows that they have a good knowledge of the desirable learning goals which promotes children's attainment. A full range of activities and resources is used effectively to promote learning suitable for boys and girls and those with special educational needs. In their planning, staff ensure that all aspects of the desirable learning goals are covered during a week. The planned activities help to capture children's interest and often challenge them to think for themselves. Assessments are unobtrusive, yet made on a daily basis. These are regularly shared with other staff and successfully help to plan the next day's activities. Both classes are well resourced and staff ensure that children have easy access to them.
55. The partnership with parents is supportive. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and also receive a written report on their child's progress. Comprehensive records are also kept and shared with parents.

56. ENGLISH

57. Pupils' standards in English have improved since the last inspection, most notably in reading, but also in writing, particularly where girls are concerned. A trend of improvement in the results of SATs at the end of Key Stage 1, faster than the national trend, was established in 1997 and 1998. However, in 1999 the school's Key Stage 1 SATs results for writing were lower than in the previous year, falling well below the national average, and below the average for similar schools. Reading results in 1999 were much better than those of similar schools, although still well below the national average. Nonetheless, over the four year period there has been clear improvement.
58. Most pupils in Year 2 currently are working at, or close to, the levels expected for their age in reading and writing. Most pupils in Year 4 have made at least the expected progress since they were in Year 2, and some of them write well for their age. In the work scrutinised and the lessons observed during the inspection, there was not a marked difference in the work of boys and girls. Most pupils' reading and writing skills are sufficient to give them access to the whole curriculum. Those who need additional help are well supported so that they achieve creditable standards which are sometimes similar to the others of their age.
59. From early in Key Stage 1 pupils listen attentively, and usually effectively. Their answers to questions are to the point, and they carry out instructions accurately. They listen to stories and to the teachers' expositions, and usually remember what they have been told. Some pupils make extensive comments and responses in discussion, but most are brief. In some classrooms, the high quality of the teacher's own speech, and skilful questioning, evoke a better level of oracy. Pupils sometimes use their oral skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum, for instance in talking about racial abuse in a Year 4 personal and social education lesson, or in discussing their work in science.
60. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 read appropriate texts steadily. They make use of the phonetic knowledge they have gained in reception when they meet words which are new to them. They remember parts of the story and talk about their favourite books. Some of the most able are confident in explaining how to use non-fiction library books,

and they know their alphabet and how to use dictionaries. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 know about authors they particularly enjoy, and realise that fiction can be classified by genre. They show increased maturity in responding to questions by picking out significant points from what they have read. They scan written material for key information. An individual reading session for Year 3 showed that most pupils choose junior novels suitable for their age, and some choose well-illustrated non-fiction with text that is challenging for them.

61. Pupils are taught to write in cursive script and this is having a beneficial impact on their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in the reception and Year 1 classes write independently during the literacy hour. Other times are also used to improve pupils' handwriting, and this is evident in the good quality of many Year 4 pupils' handwriting. In this class, the majority of pupils write in a well-formed, fluent hand, and spelling is usually quite accurate. Many pupils use full stops and capital letters consistently, while others are beginning to use question, exclamation and speech marks correctly. Some grammatical errors are fairly frequent, reflecting pupils' speech, such as the common misuse of "was" for "were".
62. Pupils in Year 1 write about family outings and other experiences, and begin to tell imagined stories in writing, sometimes basing their ideas on what they have read or heard in class. Pupils in Year 4 write for a wide range of purposes and their books include examples of poetry, extended prose in the form of diaries or stories, often linked to their reading, and letters.
63. In lessons, pupils nearly always behave well. They show good understanding of the literacy hour routine, and one of the youngest classes observed was very self-disciplined and productive when writing independently. They are eager to answer questions, and most of them understand that they must not call out. They are attentive to the teacher in whole class sessions, even when required to sit on the carpet for rather a long time. When they work at the tables, they generally concentrate well. Their good behaviour and attitudes are very helpful to their learning.
64. Teaching is good. Time is never wasted, and there are sessions of purposeful talk, handwriting practice and reading, in addition to usually intensive work in the literacy hours. The arrangements made to encourage pupils to read at home are well implemented, with book bags, notebooks and plenty of opportunities to read the next passage, chapter or book. Feedback in the form of oral comments and marked work is usually both encouraging and helpful to pupils' further progress. Questions are well targeted, so that all pupils have a chance to respond at an appropriate level, and the teachers are aware that some need a little time to get their thoughts organised. Learning support assistants are well-briefed, and work quietly and effectively with pupils who have difficulties.
65. Of the lessons seen, all were at least satisfactory and half were good or very good. Pupils are always well managed in classrooms where everything needed for the lesson is ready for their use. The school's implementation of the literacy hour helps to ensure consistently sound practice, and in most cases teachers use their skills to enliven the well-established routine. For instance, in shared reading, they point out the humour in illustrations, as well as focusing closely on teaching points arising from the text. They use their own expressive skills to give pupils a good example of lively, imaginative

speech. On a few occasions, exposition is over-long, and the pace of the lesson drops, but usually the hour or more seems to pass quickly and productively, and pupils are able to present or discuss a good quantity of work during the plenary sessions when their learning is reviewed.

MATHEMATICS

66. Pupils achieve standards in mathematics that match national expectations at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In lessons, a majority of pupils in each year are achieving the key objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school's statutory end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments for this year show a very substantial increase over those from previous years with 96 percent of pupils attaining level 2 or above in the mathematics test compared with 68 percent in 1999.
67. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good mental arithmetic skills, for example, they can add and subtract using different strategies such as doubling and counting on. They know number facts by heart for some multiplication tables and can explain the strategies they have used to do mental calculations. They can read, write and order numbers up to 100, can carry out simple estimation and measuring, and know the names of two dimensional shapes.
68. By the end of Year 4, many pupils can add and subtract two and three digit numbers and are able to work with decimals and fractions. They have a good knowledge of number facts, for example 2,3,4,5 and 10 multiplication tables. They can identify lines of symmetry in different shapes.
69. Teaching in mathematics is good throughout the school leading to pupils of all ages and abilities, including children in the nursery and pupils with special educational needs, making good progress in the subject. Teachers plan well, following national guidelines for the teaching of mathematics. Objectives for lessons are generally clear and are explained to pupils. Lessons are well structured, well organised and have good pace. A strength of teaching is the way teachers plan work to match the wide range of attainment of pupils in the various classes. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the teaching of mathematics. Their work is carefully planned with teachers and they are well deployed thereby enabling different groups of pupils to be well supported.
70. Day to day assessment by teachers of pupils' learning is good. Good questioning is used to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and pupils' work during lessons is checked well. Teachers give good feedback to pupils and use the information to plan future work.
71. Pupils respond well to the teaching. They listen well, are keen to answer questions and they contribute well to discussions. They move quickly from class work to independent work and then work well independently.
72. Teachers' plans are monitored by the head teacher and other senior staff and there is monitoring of standards through the use of standardised tests and an annual teacher assessment. These monitoring arrangements do not, however, provide sufficient information for the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge

and understanding, monitor progress or set targets for learning. Arrangements to monitor progress against the key numeracy objectives need to be introduced and there needs to be more effective monitoring of the curriculum to avoid unnecessary repetition seen sometimes from one year to another.

73. The school has completed an audit of mathematics teaching, as recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy and a good action plan for the implementation of the strategy has been drawn up by the acting head teacher and teacher responsible for co-ordinating the subject throughout the school. This action plan should help ensure that most required developments take place during the current year. However, the overall arrangements for mathematics subject leadership in the school are unclear. They need to be reviewed in order to ensure effective subject leadership as well as co-ordination.

SCIENCE

74. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have gained knowledge and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum. They can classify living things and materials, for example different kinds of animals or different foods. They can identify magnetic and non-magnetic materials, they have some knowledge of the properties of sound and they know about the life cycles of some animals. They can carry out simple investigations with help and record their observations in tables or drawings. They know about the need for fair tests. Overall, though, the attainment of the majority of pupils in science is below that expected for pupils of this age.
75. Year 4 pupils have a better understanding of how to carry out investigations. They know what a prediction is and can explain how to carry out a fair test. Their scientific knowledge and vocabulary has developed, for example, they can describe in reasonable detail parts of the human body and explain terms such as 'flammability'. By the end of Year 4 in Key Stage 2, pupils are reaching national expectations in some aspects of science but not consistently in all their work.
76. Teaching in science is satisfactory. Teachers' classroom organisation is good and they manage pupils well. The structure of lessons is sound with a balance of whole class teaching and individual or group work. Time is used well. Day to day assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is good; there is good questioning of pupils during lessons and work is marked well and often indicates whether the pupil was able to complete the work unaided. A weakness of the teaching is that lessons are sometimes planned on the basis of activities rather than clear learning objectives. This sometimes results in a lack of focus that limits pupils' progress. There is some use of information technology, for example, pupils used a database to produce bar charts to analyse hair colour, but no other work with computers was seen during the inspection.
77. Pupils enjoy doing science. They are enthusiastic when carrying out investigations and in all lessons get on well with the tasks set for them. Their behaviour is good.
78. There is an outline scheme of work for science in the school but it is insufficient to give clear guidance to teachers about what to teach and how to teach it. There is some limited monitoring of standards in science but it is insufficient to be able to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Whole school co-ordination and development of science has not been a priority because of the emphasis given to implementing the

literacy and numeracy strategies. As a consequence, there is an overall lack of continuity and progression in science. There is a need to clarify subject leadership and then to support teachers in developing teaching of science.

ART

79. During the inspection it was possible to see only one art lesson taking place, in Year 2. However, teachers' planning and pupils' work was scrutinised and the subject was discussed with pupils in Year 4. Displays around the school also included examples of pupils' art. These sources of evidence show that attainment is typical of pupils' age, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and when they are in Year 4.
80. Pupils use a variety of media competently to produce both 2 and 3 dimensional images. There are examples of pupils exploring texture in paper and fabric, and creating textures and patterns in clay, as well as painting and modelling. In Year 4, pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to record what they see, or to try out ideas. They use a computer programme to make pictures. Pupils in Key Stage 1 experiment with colours, and gain control of pencils, crayons and brushes. In Key Stage 2, pupils try out effects with translucent or shiny materials, such as cellophane, tissue paper and metallic paper and paint. Pupils in Year 4 have produced some sensitive observational drawings, for instance, of fruit and vegetables.
81. By the time they are at the end of Year 4, pupils have seen and learnt about the work of famous 20th century artists, including Kandinsky, Klee and Georgia O'Keeffe, as well as the 19th century impressionists such as Monet. In each case, pupils have made a number of paintings in response to the works they have seen. These are sometimes expressions of their own ideas and feelings, as well as a reflection of the pictures they have seen. This is seen, for instance, in their pictures in response to Kandinsky, where they use line and colour to express emotions.
82. Work on display or in pupils' files shows that they have been able to handle the various media confidently, and have usually succeeded in the task they were set. In the lesson observed, Year 2 pupils created collage pictures, using various colours of torn tissue paper to create sky effects. In the time available, some completed the task, while others worked more slowly. All based their work closely on the example provided by the teacher.
83. Lesson planning and teaching are sound. The school provides pupils with a range of opportunities to create art and to learn about the work of well-known artists. Teaching effectively imparts technical skills and information and sets an imaginative context for pupils' work. However, in both the work and lesson seen, there was less evidence of pupils' being asked to plan their work individually, or to make personal choices of media or colour. In discussion with pupils, it was clear that they enjoy their art lessons and look forward to them; one pupil said she would like more, and she is glad to join in the art club activity after school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

84. From scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils, standards are close to national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. Pupils plan a product using a range of different materials. They have knowledge of different cutting and joining techniques as in the work on shadoofs and animated pictures. Little use has been made of ICT to support work in this aspect of the curriculum.
85. It was only possible to see two design and technology lessons in both of which the quality of teaching was good. The objectives for the lessons are clear, not only in terms of the activities and the products to be manufactured but also in the range of skills to be developed. Expectations for pupils' performance are good and there is good expectation for the extent of independence pupils display when working so they make informed choices over which materials and tools to use. Classes are set out sensibly so pupils have good and safe access to materials and suitable tools. Teachers give encouragement to pupils as they monitor the work being done. They help the lessons progress at a good pace through clear and explicit instruction and the questions they ask pupils about their work. Pupils of different abilities are mainly given effective support targeted to their need by extra adult help and guidance.
86. The pupils worked confidently in small groups, as individuals and as pairs to solve problems. They discuss the merits of their designs and evaluate the products against specified criteria often between groups or to the whole class when talking about the different shadoofs. Pupils then use the information gained to revise and improve their design and product.
87. There are reasonable resources to support the pupils making progress.

GEOGRAPHY

88. During the inspection, no geography lessons were seen and it is not possible to form a view of the standards pupils attain in the subject as a whole. However, the school's planning and pupils' work were seen and discussed with teachers and pupils.
89. Pupils' work shows that in both key stages they make and use maps at various levels of complexity. In Key Stage 1 pupils make simple plans as part of their local study. These show such things as the playground, from a bird's eye view, and the path that children follow on their way to school. By the end of Year 4, pupils are familiar with maps of Europe and the world; they know where to find Great Britain, and the main points of the compass. They examine detailed area maps, and note where there are changes in their own locality. They also use sections of maps in their study of rivers.
90. Discussion with pupils in Year 4 showed that they know about and understand the water cycle. They understand that a map is a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional world, and are confident in using the world map to show what they have learnt about voyages of exploration in history.

91. The school provides opportunity for geographical learning for pupils in Year 4, on their three-day residential course. During the time they spend at a study centre, they experience the use of a compass. They can see examples of the effects of water on the landscape, and carry out a river study from first hand observation.
92. However, in general the school's planning for the subject is not clear enough to support teachers in developing pupils' geographical skills. Appropriate places and themes are planned for study in each year, but there is insufficient detail about what pupils should know, understand and do as a result of what they are taught.

HISTORY

93. Only two history lessons were seen during the inspection, both in Year 3. Work and displays were scrutinised and the subject was discussed with pupils in Year 4. Pupils' attainment is closely linked to their literacy, and is broadly typical for their age group.
94. Pupils in Year 4 show a good recall of some of the factual information they have learnt, for instance about the explorers Vasco da Gama and Magellan. With a little prompting, they remember how long ago these explorations happened, and are aware that they were well before the memory of anyone alive today. Their sense of chronology is also evident in the fact that they realise that the ancient Egyptians were BC, and the other periods they have studied, for instance the Victorian, were AD.
95. The work in pupils' files show that they are aware that things change over time, and that they make comparisons, for instance of the means of transport, or of means of communication.
96. Pupils show an interest in talking about history, and the work they do is often well set out and neatly written.
97. In one of the lessons seen, teaching and learning were good because there was a clear focus on an appropriate historical objective. In studying the ancient Egyptians, pupils were developing an understanding of the beliefs that motivated them, and how these were expressed in artefacts. The other lesson, although soundly taught, was not wholly focused on history. Because planning was based upon the school's personal and social education calendar, there was no clear historical objective. Although the teacher had high expectations and pupils worked well, the task was insufficiently focused for pupils to make gains in historical understanding.
98. Whole school planning for history is not sufficiently clear to support teachers in preparing lessons that effectively promote pupils' progress in the key elements of the history curriculum, although appropriate areas of study are evident.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Throughout the school standards are below national expectations, although there are signs of improvement. A very comprehensive action plan for the development of ICT has been established recently and started to be implemented. As yet it has had insufficient time to have an impact on raising standards. The leadership for the subject is secure. The whole-school planning, based on documentation and advice from the

local education authority, provides a very good framework for the pupils to be able make progress and attain standards in line with national expectations.

100. In the short sessions of ICT teaching, pupils were given clear expositions on the use of, searching for and retrieving information. Later in the week they were able to have access to equipment to practice what they had been taught previously. They clearly had learnt from the original input but not having immediate access to suitable equipment limits the overall effectiveness of the earlier good quality exposition from the teachers.
101. The school has recently been able to improve its provision of equipment and much faulty and redundant equipment has been discarded and a thorough audit of the school's equipment and requirements has taken place which is now included in the ICT development plan.
102. Most teachers are confident in their knowledge to ensure their teaching of ICT is effective. Limited access to equipment has slowed progress in this aspect of the curriculum.
103. When pupils use the computers they are confident, can select appropriate programs and use both keyboard and mouse to operate them. They have some knowledge of using recorders, and digital cameras. Most of the work seen is using programs to support learning of language or maths skills such as the initial sound programs or word processing. Some limited information retrieval occurs, limited data handling and use of graphical representation and use of drawing programs. The school has Internet access and many pupils have school-generated e-mail addresses, but as yet little use is made of this facility.

MUSIC

104. Music is an every-day part of the life of the school; pupils hear it in assemblies, and as an accompaniment to their work in physical education. It is also possible for pupils to have individual piano lessons, and at the time of the inspection there were two who did so. During the inspection, only one example of composition was observed, and there were no examples of their listening to and appraising music other than their own compositions. There were no examples of pupils using information technology to compose music.
105. Pupils perform music at a level which is broadly typical for their age. They sing the songs they know, in unison, mostly tunefully. They respond to instructions about tone and volume appropriately. One of the pianists showed good understanding of the teacher's explanation of the dynamics of the piece she was playing, and was able to improve her performance. In Key Stage 2, pupils clap to complex rhythms and count silently to "enter" at the right moment.
106. Pupils in Year 4 work with percussion instruments to compose short pieces to convey feelings of fear or anxiety, for instance. Each of the three groups who presented their work at the end of the lesson seen showed that they had planned effectively to carry out the task. For instance they built from a solo instrument to an ensemble effect, when all the instruments were heard, and then back to the solo again. Pupils' comments on each other's work were generally appropriate, focused on what was successful.

107. Most pupils are willing to sing and clap, and appear to enjoy composition. In handling musical instruments, however, some pupils in Year 4 show a lack of self-discipline. However, working in groups they are able to share ideas to achieve the result they intend, and they listen carefully to the work other groups perform.
108. There is a lack of specific expertise in music that limits the teaching of the subject. Tasks are rarely challenging, and pupils' performances in class work are not clearly improved by the teacher's interventions. Pupil management is less secure than is usual for the school. In order to address this, the school has recently acquired a published scheme, which includes taped material. Teachers' judicious use of this is beginning to ensure that pupils make progress through an appropriate range of musical activities and experiences over their time in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. Standards in physical education seen during the course of the inspection match national expectations at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils can throw or hit balls with rackets and practice their skills using small apparatus or games equipment. They can work together safely using space allowed. In dance they can move well in time to music and simulate different feelings or actions, for example Year 1 pupils very effectively mimed characters from Jack and the Beanstalk and simulated the life cycle of a butterfly. Pupils can evaluate what they are doing and improve with practice. They follow instructions well.
110. At Key Stage 2, pupils can use gymnastic equipment safely and follow a brief, for example linking different movements to create a sequence. They work well in pairs, sometimes producing synchronised movements. In an outdoor games lesson pupils were able to improve catching and fielding skills satisfactorily, with practice, and play as part of a small team.
111. Teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall, with some that is good and very good teaching. Teachers manage pupils well and provide clear instructions. Activities are well organised and varied and a good pace is maintained in lessons; pupils' interest is maintained and they show obvious enjoyment of their lessons. Good features of teaching seen during the inspection included the teaching of specific skills, the effective use of music, positive feedback to pupils and the linkage of the PE work with other areas of the curriculum; these all led to good learning by pupils.
112. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. All pupils undertake gymnastics, dance and games and older pupils have swimming lessons. There is an outline scheme of work for the subject but there is insufficient detail to ensure continuity and progression in the subject. The scheme needs to be developed so that it provides clearer guidance about what to teach, when and how to teach it and time allocations for the different areas of the physical education curriculum.
113. Resources for the subject are good. The school has good grounds for outdoor work and these are well maintained.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Little teaching of religious education was seen during the course of the inspection and a scrutiny of work in the different classes indicated that the subject is under-represented in the curriculum. Standards in the subject are below those expected for pupils in each key stage.
115. In the few lessons that were observed pupils gained some knowledge of different religious beliefs and were able to relate these to their own experiences and beliefs.
116. There is an outline scheme of work for the subject but it is very dated and new guidance for teachers is only just being introduced. The school needs to draw up a curriculum map for the subject setting out time allocations, content and links with other areas of the curriculum. A scheme of work then needs to be developed with clear guidance to teachers about what to teach, when and how to teach the specific aspects of the syllabus. The recently produced non-statutory guidance on religious education should be used to support this planning by helping teachers to match work to the range of abilities in each class and to help them judge standards. Resources for the subject are adequate and readily accessible.