

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Roger Ascham Primary School**

LEA area:  
Waltham Forest

Unique reference number: 103056

Headteacher: Karen Mason

Reporting inspector: David Tytler

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 191255

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Name of Headteacher:	Karen Mason
School address:	1 Wigton Road Walthamstow London
Postcode:	E17 5HU
Telephone number:	020 8527 3157
Fax number:	020 8531 7227
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Bob Carey
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Tytler	<i>Registered inspector</i>		What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
David Holroyd	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? The community's contribution to the curriculum; Staffing, accommodation and resources. Best value.
Brian Milton	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs; Music; Geography; History; Physical education.	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to children?
Bimla Thakur	<i>Team inspector</i>	Equal opportunities; English as an additional language; Mathematics; Art.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
Gerry Slamon	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Religious education.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Carol Worthington	<i>Team inspector</i>	Under-fives; Science, Information technology; Design and technology.	Assessment.

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants  
Old Garden House  
The Lanterns  
Bridge Lane  
London  
SW11 3AD*

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33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Roger Ascham is a large two-form entry primary school near the centre of Walthamstow. It has 411 pupils aged five to 11, with an equal number of boys and girls, taught in 15 classes. The nursery caters for 18 boys and 23 girls, who attend either the morning or afternoon sessions. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the percentage speaking English as an additional language. The proportion identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average, as is the percentage having statements. Children join the school with a wide range of abilities, but overall attainment on entry is below that expected of children of their age nationally, particularly in their language skills.

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

Roger Ascham is a steadily improving school, with the headteacher, staff and governors committed to raising standards. There has been a gradual improvement in the results in the national tests for 11-year-olds, but they remain well below national averages in English and mathematics. In science, they were above the national average last year. Results in English and mathematics were in line with those in similar schools and well above them in science. The high quality of teaching observed in each year group during the inspection leads to pupils making good progress in their lessons. The high turnover of teachers, however, hampers progress over time.

The school is well led by the headteacher, who is given valuable support by the senior management team and staff in identifying priorities for improvement and ensuring that they are carried out. When account is taken of the progress pupils make, particularly in their personal development, and of the quality of teaching, the school provides sound value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- There is high quality teaching in all year groups, which enables pupils to make good progress in lessons.
- The school is well led and managed, with the clear aim of raising standards for all pupils.
- There are very good arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do, and this information is well used to plan for individual needs.
- There are very good arrangements for the induction of new staff, a significant strength given the school's current reliance on temporary staff.
- The moral development of pupils is very good.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, and they make good progress in their learning.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English and mathematics.
- The recruitment of permanent staff.
- Formal procedures for child protection measures and training for staff.

*The strengths outweigh the weaknesses, but they will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the governing body.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then all the key issues have been effectively addressed. There are now very good procedures for gathering information on what pupils know and can do, and the information is used well to plan for groups of pupils and for individual needs. Members of the senior management team have clear roles, which include the effective monitoring of teaching and learning. There is an outline three year development plan, and governors are beginning to develop systems for monitoring the quality of education the school provides. Standards have improved in reading, but concerns remain about writing. There has been a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>	
	all schools			Similar schools		
	1997	1998	1999	1999		
English	E	E	E	C	<i>well above average</i> A	
Mathematics	E	E	E	C	<i>above average</i> B	
Science	E	E	B	A	<i>average</i> C	
					<i>below average</i> D	
					<i>Well below average</i> E	

In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English was well below the national average. The proportion reaching Level 5 or above was below the national average. In mathematics, the percentage reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average, as was the proportion reaching Level 5 or above. In science, the percentage reaching Level 4 or above was close to the national average; the percentage reaching Level 5 or above exceeded it.

When compared with those of similar schools, results in English and mathematics matched the average, whilst they were well above in science. Evidence gathered during the inspection found that there had been an improvement in English, but that attainment in mathematics matched last year's results. In science, attainment in the current Year 6 matches national expectations. Attainment in information technology meets national expectations. Standards in religious education match the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	In most cases, pupils have good attitudes to their work. A few pupils, however, find it difficult to co-operate with their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The majority of pupils respond well in classes to the good behaviour management by staff. A minority of pupils need extra support to maintain acceptable behaviour. Behaviour on visits outside the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Relationships are good, even where children are experiencing difficulties.
Attendance	Although improving, attendance is still below the national averages. Unauthorised absence is very high and a significant number of pupils arrive late to school.

The attitudes and behaviour of the great majority pupils observed during the inspection was nearly always satisfactory, frequently good, and sometimes very good. The good attitudes and behaviour were directly linked to the quality of teaching. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils were satisfactory in 29 per cent of lessons seen, good in 56 per cent and very good in 14 per cent. Whilst there were instances of a minority of pupils not conforming to the school's expectations of good behaviour, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils overall were judged to be unsatisfactory in only one lesson.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen: 93	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.*

Good teaching was seen in all year groups and in all subjects. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory in 34 per cent of lessons, good in 46 per cent, and very good in 19 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. There was little difference between the key stages. The teaching observed in the nursery was consistently good. The good and very good teaching met the needs of all pupils and enabled them to make good progress in lessons. The quality of teaching of the temporary staff, many of whom have been in school for only a few weeks, is good, and often very good. However, the high turnover of staff is a disruptive element for the pupils and hinders their progress over time. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good across the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, with extra time allowed, but the school nevertheless provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant to the needs of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which enables them to make good gains in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision is in the early stage of development but is currently satisfactory, with improvements planned. The pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The personal development of pupils is good, and prepares them to take their place in a modern multicultural society. Moral development is very good, spiritual and cultural development good, and social development satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good pastoral care, although formal procedures for child protection are unsatisfactory.

The school works very hard to maintain an effective working partnership with parents. A significant minority of parents, however, do not always respond to the school's efforts. Whilst the school provides a good curriculum, the use of information technology in all subjects is limited. There are very good arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do, and the information is used well to meet the specific needs of pupils, who come from a wide range of backgrounds.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, with the active support of the senior management team and staff, provides effective leadership aimed at raising standards across the school. She has introduced many imaginative strategies, although not all have yet taken effect.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met and is beginning to monitor the quality of education the school provides.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A regular and effective system of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is undertaken by the senior management team and co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of all the resources available to it.

The school faces considerable difficulty in recruiting and retaining permanent staff. At the time of the inspection, seven of the 16 classroom teachers were on temporary contracts, many of them having joined the school only recently. There are sufficient support staff, who work closely with teachers. The accommodation is adequate to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Resources are adequate in all subjects. The school is beginning to apply the principle of best value.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The information on how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The partnership with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agreed with the positive views of the majority of parents. Evidence gathered during the inspection found that the school was well led and managed, and that it worked very hard to develop an effective partnership with parents but did not always receive a positive response. Behaviour was generally good, and the few instances of disruptive behaviour seen during the inspection were handled effectively, sensitively and swiftly. The recent introduction of a homework policy and the amount set was judged to be appropriate and to support the children's work in the classroom. The inspection team accepted that the range of extra-curricular activities was limited, but there were sufficient activities for the provision to be considered satisfactory. Reports on pupils' progress were judged to be satisfactory, although they do not include targets for improvement.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the nursery with below average literacy skills, but they soon learn to communicate in some form of writing. They will, however, start statutory schooling with levels of attainment below those expected for children of their age. Early mathematical skills develop well, and children will enter the Reception classes with attainment close to national expectations. They also make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development, and many will achieve what is expected nationally. Their social skills are good and their personal and social development will meet national expectations.
2. In the 1999 national English tests for 11 yearolds, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English was well below the national average, but matched the average for similar schools. The proportion attaining Level 5 was below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that while standards have risen, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average in listening but below average in reading, writing and speaking.
3. In the tests for seven year olds, the number reaching Level 2 or higher in reading and writing was well below the national average. The number reaching Level 3 was below the national average in writing and well below in reading. Compared with those of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds, results were average in reading and writing. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 is below average in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
4. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to listen attentively to their teacher and follow instructions, though the attention of some pupils wanders if they are not actively involved in whole class sessions. By Year 6, the higher attaining pupils show a well developed ability to share experiences in a structured way. Too few opportunities exist in other areas of the curriculum to extend pupils' achievement in this aspect of English. Pupils in both key stages show hesitancy and lack of practice when asked to speak aloud in formal situations.
5. Reading development is secured by progressively graded reading materials and by careful monitoring of pupils' progress. By the age of seven, more than half of the pupils are independent in reading texts suitably graded to match their level of attainment. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read longer texts silently with good concentration. The higher attaining pupils read aloud fluently and accurately, with good understanding. Some read expressively for dramatic effect.
6. Writing skills are being developed well, although consistent development is impeded by the high turnover of teaching staff. This results in standards being below average at the end of both key stages. Handwriting skills have not been appropriately developed over time. Standards in Key Stage 2 are inconsistent because not all pupils transfer the good standards they achieve in handwriting exercises to their everyday writing. By the end of the key stage, most pupils write in sentences, and use appropriate punctuation and correct spelling.

7. In the 1999 mathematics national tests for 11 year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average, as was the number reaching Level 5 or above. When compared with those of similar schools the results matched the average. Standards have improved since the last inspection and have been rising in line with the national trend, although they are still below national averages. Evidence gathered during the inspection matched the test results.

8. In the tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was close to the national average, although the percentage reaching the higher levels and Level 3 or above was well below it. When results are compared with those of similar schools, attainment is also below average. Taking the last four years into account, performance in mathematics was close to the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 match last year's test results. There is, however, some improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3.

9. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the four rules, adding, subtraction, multiplication and division, and are able to apply this in their day-to-day contexts, through simple problem-solving activities. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have a sound understanding of numbers to 100 and the place value of each digit in two-digit numbers. Some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have developed a sound understanding of place value to three digit numbers and have a good understanding of the 10 times table.

10. In the 1999 science national tests for 11 year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was in line with the national average, whilst the number reaching Level 5 was above it. This represents a dramatic rise in standards from 1998, when standards were well below average, as they had been for the previous three years, although gradually rising. When the 1999 results were compared with those of schools with similar intake, the performance in science was well above average.

11. During the inspection, standards in science at both key stages were seen to be average, confirming the rising trend at Key Stage 2. The school's predictions for the end of key stage tests also indicate average numbers of Levels 4 and 5 this year. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of animal habitats and can work out food chains. They see how to control electric switches to make a traffic light sequence, and they know several methods of separating materials, such as chromatography.

12. Pupils aged seven know that living things need food and exercise, and they identify healthy and unhealthy foods. They are beginning to understand the useful and harmful effects of drugs and medicines, and relate their simple knowledge of electricity to the appliances that are used in the home. They know that certain materials can be used to make specific objects, for example a wooden table.

13. Standards in information technology are similar to those expected for children of this age at the end of both key stages, and are similar to those found at the last inspection. Standards in religious education match the level expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages.

14. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They have good individual educational programmes (IEPs) in which the targets, set by the teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), are realistic and regularly reviewed. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. The school is reviewing provision to improve the progress these pupils make in their learning.

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

15. Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their learning. Nine out of ten parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire said that their children enjoyed coming to school. During the inspection the behaviour and attitudes of pupils were judged to be satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons. The good attitudes and behaviour were directly linked to the quality of teaching. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils were satisfactory in 29 per cent of lessons seen, good in 56 per cent and very good in 14 per cent. Whilst there were instances of a minority of pupils not conforming to the school's expectations of good behaviour, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils overall were judged to be unsatisfactory in only one lesson.

16. Pupils are happy to be in school and to play a full part in their lessons in all year groups and all subjects. They often show great enthusiasm, as was seen in the singing assemblies. In many classes, pupils tackle tasks enthusiastically, and this often influences the work of others. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, pupils responded quickly to the teacher's high expectations for them to work hard and do well, working quietly and independently. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils maintained interest and concentration throughout.

17. The development of personal and social skills underpins all the work in the nursery. Children listen to others and take turns. They learn to treat living things with care and concern and to show a range of feelings. Children respond particularly well to the activities which they find exciting. As a consequence, behaviour is consistently good and children show high levels of concentration. Pupils generally concentrate on what they are doing and try hard to do well.

18. Pupils respond well to the school's 'good behaviour' code and to the class rules drawn up after discussions between the teacher and the pupils. The school's expectations of good behaviour and attitudes to work are prominently displayed and are an important part of school life. Behaviour is good around the school and in lessons, with pupils responding well to the good teaching. There were many examples of pupils listening attentively and quickly settling to their tasks, particularly in practical activities. In a Year 1 literacy lesson pupils settled down to work very quickly, with a high degree of confidence and independence.

19. In some lessons, where behaviour overall was judged to be satisfactory, pupils would occasionally drift off task, talk in groups or be inattentive. There were also a few occasions when the behaviour of individual pupils required intensive support from staff in order to maintain the high levels of behaviour expected by the school. In the one lesson where behaviour and attitudes were judged to be unsatisfactory the behaviour of four boys had a negative impact on the teaching and learning of the class.

20. The effective operation of the school's behaviour policy ensured that there was very little behaviour of an oppressive nature or of any other unpleasant form. Relationships are good throughout the school and are used by teachers to establish and maintain a partnership

of learning. This builds the confidence of pupils and enables them, for example, to ask for help as soon as they need it. Relationships remain good even when teachers are dealing with pupils whose behaviour has caused concern. Strong relationships between pupils were seen around the school and in the playgrounds. In class, they support each other and work well together in groups in English and mathematics across both key stages. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils used their good relationships and mutual trust to help support one another and encourage others to play a full part.

21. Pupils are keen to carry out tasks, behave sensibly, and take their responsibilities seriously. For example, pupils act as table leaders in Year 4 and run mental maths tests in a Year 5 class. There are, however, too few opportunities across the school for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative. Pupils know the effect their actions have. Most of them readily concede when confronted with the results of any inappropriate behaviour, and in most cases they respect the feelings of others. In a religious education lesson in Reception, for example, pupils showed their emotions as they acted out the *Ugly Duckling*. They understood the feelings expressed in the story and related them to their own experiences.

22. Whilst there has been some improvement in attendance since the last inspection, it remains below the national average. Unauthorised absence is still well above the national average and, despite the school's best efforts, significant numbers of pupils arrive late to school in the mornings. During the inspection, more than 5 per cent of pupils arrived after registers had closed: the equivalent of an entire class not being ready to start work at the beginning of the school day.

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

23. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and in all subjects. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory in 34 per cent of lessons, good in 46 per cent, and very good in 19 per cent. Teaching in the nursery was consistently good. In Key Stage 1, it was satisfactory in 32 per cent of lessons, good in 41 per cent and very good in 26 per cent. In Key Stage 2, it was satisfactory in 38 per cent of lessons, good in 45 per cent and very good in 17 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The good and very good teaching met the needs of all pupils and enabled them to make good progress in lessons.

24. The quality of teaching of the temporary staff, many of whom have been in school for only a few weeks, is good, and often very good. However, the high turnover of teachers is a disruptive element for the pupils and hinders their progress over time. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good across the school.

25. Teachers throughout the school have a good knowledge and understanding of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. In a Year 5 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher's very good subject knowledge could be seen in clear explanations and relevant objectives, enabling the pupils to make good gains in their understanding of persuasive writing.

26. Lessons are planned effectively, particularly in the literacy and numeracy hours, to ensure that not only do they meet the national requirements but provide activities to engage the interest of pupils. The school's very good arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do, coupled with the very good induction procedures, enable teachers to have a firm understanding of the capabilities of their pupils.
27. Teachers throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 1, had high expectations of what their pupils could achieve. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher made high expectations clear and used questions to encourage pupils to think for themselves. In lessons which were otherwise judged to be satisfactory the teachers' expectations were not high enough and led to insufficiently challenging work, particularly for the more able.
28. A good range of teaching methods ensured that pupils were interested and engaged in their work. Pupils particularly enjoy practical activities. In a good Year 3 science lesson, they understood the need for a fair test and could think of several ways of testing the properties of three different materials.
29. The management of pupils is good throughout the school, but particularly successful in Key Stage 1. Pupils' interest is maintained by a brisk pace and no-nonsense approach, with any potential difficulties dealt with swiftly according to the school's behaviour policy and classroom codes. In a few lessons the behaviour of a minority of pupils adversely affected the learning of others. In nearly all cases, teachers responded appropriately and kept disruption to a minimum.
30. Teachers make good use of time and resources and generally good use of the support staff, who work closely with them. There were occasions, however, usually in the literacy hour, when assistants had little to do during the opening whole class sessions.
31. Teachers make very good use of ongoing assessment in both key stages. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher made good use of questions to ensure that pupils of all abilities had a good understanding of the relationship between 'plus' and 'minus'. The final review sessions, particularly in literacy and numeracy, were in most cases well used to review and reinforce learning.
32. Teachers apply the new homework policy, and it is being used to support learning across the curriculum, with good examples seen in literacy, numeracy and geography. Pupils in Year 5, for example, carried out a survey of water use in their own homes, which they used to support their learning in class.
33. Pupils with special educational needs learn well. In all lessons the work is appropriate to their needs. They are well supported in their learning by teachers, special needs assistants and classroom support assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. The school is reviewing the teaching of these pupils to improve their learning.

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

34. The school provides its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. The emphasis is placed on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The school has, however, carefully considered the needs of its pupils by providing a relevant curriculum which gives opportunities for creative and physical development as well as being intellectually challenging.

35. Children in the nursery have access to a curriculum that is suitable to their needs and follow a programme leading to the desirable outcomes for children's learning on entering compulsory education. The curriculum provided at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. The school has carefully considered the time it allocates to different sections of the curriculum.

36. The school uses the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance in most subjects. In religious education this has been adapted to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The time allocation allows an aspect of the curriculum to be studied in depth over a period of time, based on careful medium-term planning, which is overseen by curriculum co-ordinators.

37. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall, an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection, where some pupils did not have access to support. Pupils' special needs are recognised at an early stage, and those identified as having mild learning difficulties are catered for within the classroom. Some pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, together with those with statements of special educational needs, receive additional support from outside agencies as well as from within the school. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory and is currently being reviewed.

38. The school has developed satisfactory strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Setting takes place in Years 5 and 6 for numeracy, although the number of temporary teachers makes it difficult for the school to assess its effectiveness. All teachers implement the daily literacy and numeracy hours, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use the skills learnt in other areas of the curriculum.

39. Whilst limited, the extra-curricular activities of the school are satisfactory. The absence of a full complement of full-time teachers makes developments in this area difficult. All pupils have full access to the curriculum. Most support takes place within the classroom. All withdrawals for specialist support are carefully managed to coincide with the work of the class. Special needs assistants, for example, work with statemented pupils to develop skills during the literacy and numeracy hours. The school has a good health education programme which includes units on drugs misuse and sex education. There is no programme for personal and social development, but this is currently being reviewed.

40. The provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. Good provision is made for their spiritual and cultural development. Provision for social development is satisfactory.

41. The calm working atmosphere that has been created in the school supports pupils' spiritual development. This is further developed in assemblies, in acts of collective worship, and in opportunities for reflection within areas of the curriculum such as English, science, music, history and art. The quality of singing in assemblies adds a further valuable dimension to pupils' spiritual development.

42. The good relationships that exist, and the good example set by teachers and other adults who work in the school, support pupils' moral development, which is underpinned by the school's aims. All adults who work in the school receive training in pupil management to help ensure a consistent approach to the behaviour policy. Pupils' sense of citizenship is developed through opportunities to discuss and reflect upon environmental issues.

43. The school actively encourages the development of good social skills. Assemblies are well used to promote a feeling of community. Older pupils are given some duties around the school, but they have too few opportunities to take responsibility and to use their initiative. Some members of staff act as mentors to pupils, and this helps their social development. The school plans to extend this good practice. Most members of the midday staff are caring and friendly in their approach to pupils, and this helps to make lunch breaks social occasions when pupils can interact with different age groups. This good practice has yet to be adopted by all midday staff members in accordance with the school's aims and practices. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate and to contribute to the community in which they live.

44. Pupils are also offered opportunities to contribute to the wider community through donating to charities such as Help the Aged and the NSPCC. Year 6 pupils have an annual residential trip or an activities week, which further enhances their social development and sense of achievement. These activities, together with 'Star of the Week' and 'Achievement' assemblies, are good examples of the school's provision.

45. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and to develop their knowledge of British culture and traditions, for example through visitors to school such as Shakespearean actors and storytellers. There are also well planned opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures and faiths through their religious education programme, visiting speakers, and musicians and writers from other cultures. Within the curriculum there are many opportunities to study art, music, dance and literature from other cultures as well as their own. Pupils' own languages, cultures and festivals are celebrated within the school community.

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

46. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. First aid procedures are good and they are carried out effectively. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, and these allow pupils to approach staff with personal concerns. The headteacher and designated staff regularly carry out a detailed risk assessment of the school site, and concerns are addressed. The governing body undertakes regular reviews of security and buildings. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good and have secured improvements. A member of the support staff is responsible for following up all unauthorised absences. This has meant a small reduction in the level of unauthorised absence.

47. The school has established effective systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Class teachers, even those on short-term appointments, get to know their pupils well and give them good pastoral support. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. Teachers and other adults give these pupils positive encouragement to promote their self-esteem so that they play a full part in all aspects of school life.

48. There are, however, few formal procedures for child protection arrangements. The school has accepted the local guidelines and has designated the headteacher as responsible for child protection. There has been no recent training in child protection for school staff. They know that they have to report matters of concern to the headteacher, but the lack of training means that they are unsure of the signs to look out for. The school is planning a training session for all staff.

49. Assessment of pupils' academic progress was a key issue in the last report. Procedures for assessing academic and personal development are now very good. They are especially good in English and mathematics, and the use of assessment is good in most subjects. This is a particularly important strength of the school given the large number of temporary staff currently employed.

50. Subject tests are used in addition to the statutory tests and optional standard assessment tests. In science, for example, Year 4 are tested on their parachute investigation, and unaided writing tests are given in Years 5 and 6 for the purpose of setting targets. In particular, the school portfolio for writing has helped staff to judge more accurately the National Curriculum levels achieved by pupils.

51. An assessment grid ties in well with planning, which is very effectively guided by assessment of pupils of all abilities. Teachers fill in assessment grids for foundation subjects, showing the progression pupils make in the learning of skills. Revised assessment sheets are to be introduced in September.

52. Pupils have responsibility for some assessment, and with their teachers they help choose a good piece of work from English, mathematics and science every term. They may also select two other pieces of work from other curriculum areas, one of which is a completely free choice. Teachers also keep personal profiles of tests taken by each child in each class, and these are readily available to parents. Year 6 pupils take pride in selecting and presenting portfolios for their secondary schools, with profile samples of current work for each year.

53. The assessment information is used well to plan work suitable for all abilities in most subjects. Analysis of Standard Assessment Test papers is used to find weaknesses in provision and in pupils' understanding, and these weaknesses are then rectified. Comprehensive records have been kept for each child this year for the first time, and the information will be used to track pupils' academic progress. Because this information had not previously been available, the school has not been able to track pupils through from baseline to the end of Key Stage 2. Neither has it been able to quantify underachievement or higher achievers, or achievement by different ethnic groups. Furthermore, the baseline assessment has been unreliable as there have been no agreed standards.

54. The monitoring of pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has one day a week to monitor their progress. Individual education plans are reviewed every term and new targets set. Parents or carers are invited to the termly review and are expected to play their part in supporting the pupils in achieving the targets. Specialist agencies keep good records of visits and record the progress of individual pupils. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive the provision set out on their statement.

55. Some assessment has taken place for pupils with English as an additional language who are at an early stage of language development, but it is not sufficiently regular. Assessment has not yet taken place for the other pupils with English as an additional language, who continue to need support in their learning. A co-ordinator is about to be appointed to take responsibility for pupils with English as an additional language, ensuring that assessments take place regularly, that the information is used to meet the pupils' specific needs, and to ensure that appropriate training is provided for the relevant staff.

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

56. Parents have a generally positive view of the school and its work. They are keen to know about their children's progress and a significant number are well informed about the government's and the school's educational priorities. Parents feel that their children are happy in school. Most believe that the school wishes to encourage parents and that it is easy to approach.

57. A minority who replied to the inspection questionnaire and attended the parents' meeting had concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities, the information provided on how their children are getting on, the leadership and management of the school, the partnership with parents, the amount of homework, and behaviour.

58. Inspectors agreed with the positive views of the majority of parents. Evidence gathered during the inspection found that the school was well led and managed, and that it worked very hard to develop an effective partnership with parents but did not always receive a positive response. Behaviour was generally good, and the few instances of disruptive behaviour seen during the inspection were handled effectively, sensitively and swiftly. The recent introduction of a homework policy, and the amount set, was judged to be appropriate and to support the children's work in the classroom. Whilst the inspection team accepted that the range of extra-curricular activities was limited, there were sufficient to be regarded as satisfactory. Reports on pupils' progress were judged to be satisfactory.

59. Parents consider the school gives good support and encouragement to children's academic and personal development, although there were some concerns over the turnover of teaching staff. This is a problem, but the school ensures that the temporary staff are of high quality and given good support in teaching the National Curriculum.

60. The link between the school and parents is good and has a positive impact upon learning. There is a group of parents who give the school sustained and high quality support. Occasionally parents are able to support teachers by helping in classes and other areas of the school, while others assist by accompanying staff on educational trips. There were good examples of parents supporting their children's reading by hearing them read at home. The newly formed Friends of Roger Ascham Primary provides financial support and is also offering a range of social opportunities and events for parents. The weekly 'Toy Library' and Drop-In enhances this work and is strongly supported by F.R.A.P.S.

61. The information that the school provides to parents is satisfactory. The reports on pupils' progress cover every subject of the curriculum, and reflect what children have learned. They are less precise about the progress made, and only in a few cases are targets for future personal or curricular development set out.

62. There is good information about school activities, its governors, and other information, which is displayed in the reception area and on notice boards around the site. Information concerning the curriculum is provided on request, at curriculum meetings for parents and during consultation evenings. The consultation evenings and meetings produce targets for future action, which are agreed and documented.

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

63. The headteacher, with the active support of the senior management team and staff, provides effective leadership aimed at raising standards across the school. She has embarked on a wide-ranging review of the school's work and methods. In the relatively short time she has been in post, she has introduced a range of imaginative strategies, although not all of these have yet had time to take effect.

64. Whilst the quality of teaching is good, the school faces considerable difficulty in recruiting and retaining permanent staff. At the time of the inspection, seven of the 16 classroom teachers were on temporary contracts, many of them having joined the school only recently. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that this hinders the progress of pupils over time.

65. The school has explicit aims and values which can be seen in its work. They do not, however, sufficiently focus on raising standards, although there is a firm commitment amongst staff to do so. A set of aims has been agreed with the children and these are used effectively to remind them of their responsibilities as learners as well as their rights.

66. There is a clear commitment to giving all pupils equal access to the curriculum, and this is largely being met. Delegated funding for pupils from ethnic minority groups has only recently become the responsibility of the school. The provision needs further development to ensure accurate and regular assessment of their progress, so that their specific needs can be addressed swiftly.

67. The role of the senior management team has been developed considerably since the last inspection and now has clearly identified responsibilities. Many members of the senior management team and other staff have increased responsibilities because of the large number of temporary staff. There is now a regular and effective system of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, undertaken by the senior management team and co-ordinators in nearly all subjects.

68. All areas for improvement are included in the school improvement plan, but priorities are not always clear and the success criteria are not sufficiently precise for governors to use in monitoring the quality of education provided. The success criteria do not focus on the impact which developments are having on standards. The headteacher is given strong support by the senior management team, staff, and governors in her drive to raise attainment for all pupils. This commitment to improvement extends to the temporary teaching staff, who serve the school well.

69. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met and is beginning to take steps to monitor the quality of education. This remains in need of further development so that they can gain a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Many governors make a major contribution to discussing and deciding policies to shape the direction of the school, particularly in the appointment of the headteacher, but some meetings of the governing body have been poorly attended.

70. The school aims to provide equal opportunities for all its pupils, to help them achieve their full potential. There is a high profile policy on multicultural education and a strong equal opportunities statement, both designed to guide practice. The school makes good use of the Traveller support staff from the authority, to promote pupils' attainment, ensure good attendance, and develop good home-school relationships. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported adequately by teachers, and through additional help from support staff. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum, although there are recorded differences in achievement between the two, especially in English and science. The school is aware of these differences and is taking steps to address them.

71. The number of teachers and support staff is satisfactory. The teaching staff are suitably qualified with a good range of experience. The overall position, however, is unsatisfactory due to the very high numbers of teachers on temporary contracts. As a result many staff are having to take on a wide range of responsibilities. Induction procedures for new teachers, however, are very good. This means that although teaching staff change frequently the school manages to ensure that the key values, ideals and important routines are sustained to minimise disruption to the education provided.

72. The school's appraisal and performance procedures for non-teaching staff are good. The school is well served by the administrative and clerical support staff and the site manager, who all take an active part in the life of the school beyond their contractual responsibilities. The school makes sound use of new technology, and there are some good features. In particular the school has established its own pupil record system and pupil database. This will shortly be integrated with other information to aid assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress.

73. The school has good financial control measures. The last audit report has been fully addressed by the school. Sound use is made of funds for pupils with special educational needs and the school is reviewing its expenditure for those with English as an additional language to ensure that it fully meets their needs. Sound financial planning ensures that the agreed educational priorities are met. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value.

74. The large building provides pupils with an interesting and stimulating learning environment, and the school has remodelled several areas to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The school makes effective use of the space available and has organised separate specialist rooms for the teaching of music and information technology. The library is adequately stocked, and good use is made of small rooms and communal areas to support pupils when working in small groups. There are useful conference, rest and medical rooms. Learning resources are satisfactory and used effectively to support the teaching of all subjects. Good quality displays reflect the range of activities experienced by pupils.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to improve further the quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Raise standards in English and mathematics, by:
  - \* introducing formal opportunities for speaking and writing across the curriculum;
  - \* widening the reading experiences available to pupils;
  - \* involving support staff more fully in pupils' learning;
  - \* improving long-term planning in mathematics to provide more challenging work for all pupils.
  
- Ensure the recruitment and retention of high quality permanent staff by:
  - \* liaising with teacher training institutions within reasonable distance;
  - \* raising the profile of the school in the wider community so that it is aware of the school's achievements;
  - \* celebrating the school's many successes on a wider scale, so that teachers know that it is an attractive place in which to work.
  
- Introduce formal procedures for child protection and ensure that all staff are trained appropriately by:
  - \* developing a whole school policy in conjunction with the relevant agencies;
  - \* arranging training for all staff on the nature, identification and procedures to be employed in dealing with all forms of child abuse;
  - \* ensuring that child protection procedures are kept under regular review.
  
- All these key issues have been identified by the school as areas for improvement.
  - \* The governors should also consider how to improve the provision for ethnic minority groups, including: regular assessments of their needs; raising levels of attendance and punctuality; ensuring that information technology is used across the curriculum; establishing clear liaison between the nursery and the main school to ensure a smooth transition into statutory schooling; finding ways to give pupils more responsibility and to show initiative; producing a school improvement plan that has clear priorities, with specific success criteria which will enable governors to monitor the quality of education more effectively; and reviewing the annual reports to parents on the progress being made by their children.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	19	46	34	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**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	411
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	154

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	82

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	70

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	43

#### **Attendance**

##### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

##### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	3.1

*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	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	1999	25	26	51

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	22	20	24
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	41	40	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80	78	88
	National	82 (79)	83 (81)	87 (84)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	20	25	25
	Girls	19	22	20
	Total	39	47	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	76	92	88
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (85)

*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	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	1999	31	23	54

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	27
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	32	34	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	59	63	83
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	27
	Girls	15	17	17
	Total	31	35	44
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	60	65	83
	National	68 (65)	69 (59)	75 (71)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	26
Black – African heritage	24
Black – other	7
Indian	8
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	0
White	224
Any other minority ethnic group	55

***Teachers and classes***

**Qualified teachers and classes:  
Y R – Y 6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21 :1
Average class size	21

**Education support staff:  
Y R – Y 6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

***Exclusions in the last school year***

	<b>Fixed period</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

***Financial information***

Financial year	<b>1999/2000</b>
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	<b>£</b>
Total income	896169.00
Total expenditure	877147.00
Expenditure per pupil	2099.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	12106.00
Balance carried forward to next year	31128.00

***Results of the survey of parents and carer***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	411
Number of questionnaires returned	41

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	44	46	10	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	5	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	15	54	10	12	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	11	55	21	3	11
The teaching is good.	35	50	5	2	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	39	22	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	34	51	12	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	44	2	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	27	44	17	7	5
The school is well led and managed.	22	41	22	7	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	59	8	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	25	22	22	22

## **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**

76. Children come into the nursery from the age of three and most remain until the term in which they become five, when they transfer to the reception classes. Other children from outside school enter these classes at the beginning of each term. The current nursery teacher had only been in post for three weeks at the time of the inspection but had already made a considerable impact on provision. She has put in place a sound curriculum for this age group, and is assessing children's progress continuously to guide planning for each child's need. She and the nursery nurse work very well together to provide a happy and friendly atmosphere in the classroom, so that small children enjoy coming to school and are well motivated to learn. A particular strength is the regular routine to which the children are now accustomed and in which they feel secure. All the teaching in the nursery seen during the inspection was good. The needs of young children are well known to the staff, who provide varied activities during each session. These include a structured 'brain gym' learning exercise at the beginning of each day, which involves them in assessing their progress with great enjoyment.

#### **Language and literacy**

77. Language and literacy develop well. Children enter the nursery with below average literacy skills, but they soon learn to communicate in some form of writing. Most children were able to make a recognisable effort in writing their name, and this skill is developed by the teachers' attention to the correct way of holding a pencil. Colouring in is accurately done, exemplified by the farmyard pictures children were making, and teachers praise accuracy. The children learn to appreciate books and love looking at pictures and being read to. Most children could name 'cow', 'sheep', 'dog' and 'pig', following a visit by a city farm. Although children listen carefully, their speaking is not well developed; they do not have a wide vocabulary, but teachers do encourage them to talk to each other during their social times. They are starting to recite the alphabet, and most know it begins with A. Despite the progress they make, their standard of attainment will be below that expected for children of their age when they start statutory schooling.

#### **Mathematics**

78. Early mathematical skills develop well, owing to the importance given to counting games and rhymes. For example, the class was seen to count up to 15 as children were counted with a 'magic wand' when entering the nursery at the start of the session. The teacher further fosters number skills by taking one or two children at a time for short sessions in which they match coloured counters to numbers. Some children write numerals up to ten, and they are encouraged to record the results of a class survey of favourite farm animals by drawing a pictogram, which is proudly displayed on the wall. Many children will match national expectations when they reach statutory school age.

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

79. Teachers promote well the children's knowledge and understanding of the world in the areas specified by the curriculum, for example by giving free access to the computer during each session. Some children show enough independence and initiative to print their own finished *Millie's Monsters* without help from the teacher. They also study different materials, deciding which of their toys are hard or soft, for instance, and putting them into sets. Children are beginning to gain satisfactory knowledge of the passage of time by learning the days of the week and the school timetable. They know where they are in relation to the main school, and know that is where they will go when they are older. Most children will achieve the standards expected nationally when they are five.

## **Creative development**

80. Children express their creativity in painting: for example, one girl has painted the farmer in the tractor which is part of the farm display. They also make colourful string paintings which are prominently displayed in the foyer. Children paint every day and are particularly fond of animals since their visit to the farm. They sing nursery rhymes and counting songs with enjoyment, and enjoy playing musical instruments most days. By the time they reach statutory schooling, children will be achieving at the national expectations.

## **Physical development**

81. Twice-weekly physical education develops children's physical skills. They show good independence for their age as they change their shoes, which most can do unaided. Teachers maintain very good discipline during the time in the physical education hall, and this enables children to make good gains in free movement skill and in balancing on simple apparatus, such as benches. Children are also given daily opportunities to develop their social and movement skills in the attractive play area attached to the nursery, where there are large wheeled toys and a climbing frame. Precise movement skills such as using scissors and glue, for example, are not well developed, but teachers encourage and patiently help the children till they are successful. Children will be attaining at the levels expected nationally when they move into the Reception classes.

## **Personal and social development**

82. Social skills are noticeably good for such young children, and develop well during directed play activities with sand and water, for example, and in the home corner. Children in reception do not have a separate play area, and do not continue with the under-five curriculum long enough. The transition between nursery and reception is too abrupt. There is no common planning and assessment structure to make the transfer between stages easy, and children who are just starting school, approaching their fifth birthday, are expected to adapt immediately to the more structured nature of the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, children start their statutory schooling having achieved standards matching the national expectations.

## ENGLISH

83. In the 1999 tests for 11 year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English was well below the national average, but broadly in line with the average for similar schools. The proportion attaining the higher level was below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. Results in English were lower than those in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that while standards have risen, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average in listening but below average in reading, writing and speaking.

84. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, the number reaching Level 2 or higher in reading and writing was well below the national average. The number reaching the higher level was below the national average in writing and well below in reading. Compared with those of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds, results were average in reading and writing. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 is below average in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

85. At the time of the last inspection, standards in English at the end of both key stages were well below average. The school now closely analyses its test results to identify weaknesses and has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. These initiatives, including a greater emphasis on writing, have resulted in rising standards. However, interruptions caused to pupils' learning by frequent changes in teaching staff, and a significant amount of pupil transience, has meant that standards are not rising as rapidly as the school would like.

86. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to listen attentively to their teacher and follow instructions, though the attention of some pupils wanders if they are not actively involved in whole class sessions. Most readily join in discussions of the shared text, and teachers give encouragement by listening carefully to pupils' answers. By Year 6, the higher attaining pupils show a well developed ability to share experiences in a structured way. Too few formal opportunities exist in other areas of the curriculum to extend pupils' achievement in this aspect of English. Pupils in both key stages show hesitancy and lack of practice when required to speak formally.

87. Pupils in both key stages have positive attitudes to reading. Reading development is secured by progressively graded reading materials and by careful monitoring of pupils' progress. Many, but not all, parents give good support by hearing their child read at home. In the initial stages, pupils are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds, so that they make steady progress. By the age of seven, more than half of the pupils are independent in reading texts suitably graded to match their level of attainment. Most are able to sound out unfamiliar words to find their meaning. Levels of accuracy are satisfactory, and pupils generally have a satisfactory level of understanding. Pupils read expressively in shared reading led by the teacher.

88. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read longer texts silently with good concentration. The higher attaining pupils read aloud fluently and accurately, with good understanding. All have favourite authors and they explain their preferences with enthusiasm. However, even the higher attaining pupils choose to remain within the security of children's fiction, and their range needs to be extended. A significant number of parents extend their children's experience by taking them to local libraries. More opportunities, however, are needed for all pupils to develop research skills by using information books for independent study in other subjects.

89. In lessons seen during the week of inspection, writing skills were being developed well, so that by the end of Key Stage 1, many confidently and accurately write stories and use other forms. They plan their stories well using pictures to predict what is going to happen at the beginning, in the middle and how the story is going to end. The consistent development skills, however, is impeded by the high turnover of teaching staff. This results in standards in writing being below average at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven, there is a wide range of attainment in the year group. Most pupils match and combine letters to make words, and many make simple sentences, using capital letters and full-stops correctly. Higher attaining pupils employ other punctuation, such as exclamation marks and question marks in their writing.

90. Handwriting skills have not been appropriately developed over time and, although most pupils form their letters correctly and space out their words, a fluent style of writing has not been consistently taught. A joined style of writing is not established until Year 3. Spelling of simple words is generally correct and many pupils write more unusual words phonetically so that they can be understood. The work of pupils with lower attainment needs interpretation and these pupils do not yet have a clear understanding of how to write sentences. Pupils' knowledge of basic grammar is improving with the increased emphasis given to it since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.

91. Standards in handwriting are inconsistent through Key Stage 2, because not all pupils transfer to their everyday writing the good standards they achieve in handwriting exercises. By the end of the key stage, most pupils write in sentences and use appropriate punctuation. Standards of accuracy in spelling and punctuation are sound, and homework supports achievement in spelling.

92. There are good examples of lively writing in all years, such as in work written in response to Shakespeare's *'A Midsummer's Night Dream'* in Year 4. The school has correctly identified writing as an area for development and has increased opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the technicalities of writing and of the ways language can be arranged. Pupils are introduced to a good variety of writing: narrative, poetry, letters and drama scripts. As a result, their writing is becoming more structured.

93. Teachers encourage pupils to use evocative vocabulary and expression within creative and descriptive writing. The best poetry shows depth of insight and imagination in creating pictures in words. A good example of this was seen where a Year 6 pupil writing about the seasons described spring as 'standing up slowly'. However, because the range of pupils'

reading experiences is too limited, many pupils lack an exciting and lively repertoire of words to engage the reader. This is the main reason for below average attainment in writing. Information technology is not sufficiently used to improve the accuracy and quality of pupils' writing. Another area for development is the effective use of displays to celebrate pupils' work and to give them access to the good work produced by other pupils.

94. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall in both key stages. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In Key Stage 1, 43 per cent of lessons were very good, 43 per cent good, and the remainder were satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, 28 per cent of lessons were very good, 36 per cent were good, and the rest satisfactory. This represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall and 25 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.

95. Many pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment in literacy, and standards of attainment are still below average when they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, for the reasons already mentioned. The good, consistent teaching they are presently receiving, together with the good attitudes and behaviour of most pupils, supports good progress in their learning.

96. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and make good progress. The progress of these pupils towards their personal targets is regularly monitored so that appropriate adjustments are made quickly. Teachers are aware of the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and they make progress equal to that of other pupils of similar abilities. Pupils of higher attainment are identified and provided with appropriately challenging work.

97. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Lessons are well planned with appropriate aims and interesting activities which help to challenge and inspire pupils, most of whom apply themselves well to their tasks. The good relationships between teachers and pupils increase pupils' confidence in answering questions and their enjoyment of the subject. Teachers set good models of language by reading aloud expressively. They regularly mark pupils' work, giving encouragement and setting targets for improvement. Most teachers use questions skillfully, but in a minority of lessons some pupils are allowed to play a passive role during whole class sessions. Pupil management is very good. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and to behave well, and most pupils respond well to these expectations. A minority of pupils in Key Stage 2, however, lack self-control and motivation and disrupt the learning of others in the class.

98. The organisation of groups during the literacy hour, the management of time and resources are carefully planned. The headteacher and the subject co-ordinator monitor teachers' plans and classroom practice. Very good support is given to teachers new to the school to ensure consistency in the teaching of literacy. Although support staff are generally well used when pupils are working on individual and group tasks, the school is aware of the need to involve them more fully in pupils' learning during whole class sessions. Learning resources are used well, for example, the use of dictionaries to support pupils' spelling in a Year 5 writing session.

99. The subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership and has very successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy. She has a clear vision for the future development of the subject. Although history and science contribute effectively to developing pupils' writing skills, the contribution other subjects can make to pupils' literacy skills has yet to be fully realised. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

100. Twelve per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. About a third of these need additional support to understand the full range of work provided in English and mathematics. About two-thirds are at the higher stages of English acquisition, and in most cases progress in English is similar to that of other pupils, although English as an additional language pupils are generally less confident in taking part in class discussions.

101. There is no written policy for providing guidance to teachers on how to identify and meet the specific language and learning needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are developing as bilinguals. Individual teachers try to develop partnership with parents to support their children's learning.

102. Some pupils were assessed initially by class teachers when the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant funding was available in the previous year. Appropriate individual targets were set for these pupils. Progress towards these targets, however, is not tracked on a regular basis. Assessment has not been extended to include either new pupils or pupils who are still at the earlier stages of learning English. From April 2000, the school had access to the new allocation of EMTAG. A small proportion of time has been bought for providing in-class support through a support assistant, who has received some training from the Borough to enable her to work under the guidance of a class teacher.

103. The sole responsibility for providing for pupils from ethnic minority groups has only recently fallen on the school, and it is still developing a strategy that clearly focuses on raising attainment. A co-ordinator is about to be appointed to take responsibility for this area of the school's work to ensure that assessments of pupils' needs take place regularly, that the information is used to meet their specific needs, and that training is provided for the relevant staff.

104. The school has used relevant courses to meet the linguistic needs of individuals. At present, however, there is no strategic plan to develop the provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Provision is satisfactory, although in the early stages of development, with improvements planned. Pupils make satisfactory progress, are well integrated into the school community, and are motivated to learn. There are adequate resources to support pupils' language development.

## MATHEMATICS

105. In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average, as was the number reaching Level 5 or above. When compared with those of similar schools the results matched the average. Standards have improved since the last inspection and have been rising in line with the national trend, although they are still below national averages. Evidence gathered during the inspection matched the test results.

106. In the tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was close to the national average, although the percentage reaching the higher levels and Level 3 or above was well below. When results are compared with those of similar schools, attainment is also below average. Taking the last four years into account, performance in mathematics was close to the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 match last year's test results. There is some improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3, although the proportion of pupils working at Level 2C and below is still very high.

107. The numeracy strategy has been effectively introduced and is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, as is the setting of pupils for mathematics in Years 5 and 6. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics, and in the achievement of different ethnic minorities in school.

108. By the age of 11, pupils learn to round up numbers with two decimal places to the nearest tenth or the nearest whole number. They learn the conventional methods of doing long division and long multiplication, involving numbers with two decimal places, and are developing a sound understanding of how to check the accuracy of their answers by using the inverse operation. Overall, pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing sound knowledge and understanding of the four rules, and are able to apply this in their day-to-day contexts, through simple problem-solving activities.

109. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils develop a sound understanding of numbers to 100 and the place value of each digit in two-digit numbers. They are able to use their number squares and number lines to work out number bonds to 20, or beyond. They can use money in practical situations and can solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction. They are beginning to understand the concept of doubling numbers and can count in twos and tens. Some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have developed a sound understanding of place value to three digit numbers and have a good understanding of the 10 times table.

110. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, those who come from a Traveller background, and those who have English as an additional language. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They behave well and are keen to learn. They are well motivated during lessons, particularly during the introductory mental and oral activities, which give them good opportunities to solve simple mathematical problems, in a range of situations. The good use of resources during teachers' demonstrations further adds to the pupils' interest in mathematics. They work well with others during group work and help each other as necessary.

111. Teaching is good. During the inspection, 24 per cent of the lessons were judged to be satisfactory, 59 per cent good and 18 per cent very good. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and this underpins their clear explanations and demonstrations. They explain the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and the interpretation of symbols.

112. The introductory activities give due regard to developing pupils' mental calculation strategies and an instant recall of number facts. Pupils are well involved through good questioning techniques and are encouraged to check the accuracy of their answers. They are encouraged to establish good understanding of links between operations, such as addition and subtraction or multiplication and division. In some lessons that were judged to be otherwise satisfactory, teachers had low expectations of pupils' capability, which resulted in insufficiently challenging work.

113. Teachers use ongoing assessment well to provide differentiated tasks, although more care is necessary to ensure that individual targets are set to meet specific needs. The use of the key learning objectives in the numeracy framework is not fully developed to support the long-term planning. Teachers record useful comments about the quality and presentation of work in the pupils' books, but there is not enough guidance on how they might improve.

114. Numeracy supports the development of skills in literacy, although there is some scope for improving pupils' speaking skills, for example through the plenary sessions, by giving pupils more opportunities to discuss the strategies they have used in reaching their answers. There were examples of mathematics being integrated well with other subjects, such as art, science, history and geography. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to extend this to include other subjects, such as information and communication technology.

115. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership in the development of the subject and has a clear view of its strengths and the areas that need developing. The co-ordinator has attended relevant courses and is providing guidance and training for staff and parents. There is an appropriate action plan to ensure that the numeracy strategy is put into practice effectively throughout the school. Senior managers are making good use of the data analysis to set whole school targets for pupils and to raise achievement in line with national expectations. Teachers' planning is being monitored on a regular basis; this has a good impact on achieving consistency of practice across the school. The monitoring of planning, however, is less effective in ensuring that all the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered well at the higher levels, particularly in Key Stage 2.

116. Resources for supporting work in mathematics are satisfactory and are used well by pupils and teachers alike. However, not enough use is made of the computer to support mathematics.

## SCIENCE

117. In the 1999 national tests for 11-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was in line with the national average, whilst the number reaching Level 5 was above it. This represents a dramatic rise in standards from 1998, when standards were well below average, as they had been for the previous three years, although gradually rising. There has been no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. When the 1999 results were compared with those of schools with similar intake, the performance in science was well above average. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language generally achieved results commensurate with their ability. Results of the standardised teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 in 1999 show pupils achieving average standards at Level 2, and below average at Level 3 in comparison with those nationally. When compared with those of similar schools, however, they are average overall.

118. During the inspection, standards at both key stages were seen to be average, confirming the rising trend at Key Stage 2. The school's predictions for the end of key stage tests also indicate average numbers at Levels 4 and 5 this year. Solid Level 4 work was seen in books and lessons. Average pupils in Year 6, for example, have a sound knowledge of animal habitats and can work out food chains.

119. They see how to control electric switches to make a traffic light sequence and they know several methods of separating materials, such as chromatography. Higher achievers in one class demonstrated greater ability in explaining the function of parts of a plant and the process of photosynthesis. Pupils' books showed that physical science is not as consistently well addressed as biological and material science.

120. Pupils aged seven know that living things need food and exercise, and identify healthy and unhealthy foods. They are beginning to understand the useful and harmful effects of drugs and medicines, and relate their simple knowledge of electricity to the appliances that are used in the home. They know that certain materials can be used to make specific objects, for example a wooden table.

121. The quality of teaching at both key stages is at least satisfactory overall. Of the nine lessons observed, two were good and two were very good. The remainder were satisfactory. Teachers generally have at least satisfactory and sometimes good subject knowledge, which is well supported by the scheme of work and by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, who monitors the subject well by plans and in class. A strong feature is the attention paid to investigation throughout the school, and children know from an early age how to predict, hypothesise and make a fair test. They do not, however, carry out their own practical work as often as they should.

122. Subject knowledge is less secure in physical science: superficial work on forces was seen in some books. Although pupils are taught numeracy skills well and often display their work as graphs, they are not always made aware of the patterns in the results of investigations, for example when examining the relationship between the amount of force and the distance a car travels down a ramp.

123. Teachers' expectations of children's understanding and skills are generally high, but they do not pay sufficient attention to presentation or quality of written work, which is below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers manage their pupils well, despite having some who exhibit challenging behaviour, and all lessons have a purposeful atmosphere, yielding productive work. Pupils in Year 6 are given a satisfactory amount of revision homework in science, and this has helped raise standards at the end of the key stage. Investigative skills at this stage are overshadowed by the importance placed on revision work. There is little evidence of teachers using information technology, for example CD-ROM, in extensive research projects, or for monitoring changes, such as temperature, during investigations.

124. Teachers' planning is good overall and is based on assessment of pupils' work. For example, when starting electricity in Key Stage 1, teachers effectively brainstorm the topic with the class. Pupils then write down what they already know, what they want to know, and what they have learned, so that they are aware of how well they are progressing. Teachers produce work suitable for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, who progress satisfactorily. Teachers often pair children with different reading ages, which benefits them well.

125. Sufficient time is allocated to science in all classes, and it is used well. Sometimes short sessions, for example one seen on light and shadows, do not allow all children to finish work. The curriculum followed is satisfactorily based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme, with a good planning map showing the progression of the topics in each class. The teachers in the same year plan well to meet the same objectives, whilst providing work to suit their particular pupils. Procedures for assessment are good, with samples of work and investigations being collected at regular intervals in each year, and teachers use these well to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding. Subsequent lessons are planned accordingly.

126. Although there is a good variety of resources, they are not yet collected in topic boxes, and this prevents children from always doing their own practical work, particularly with temporary teachers. The co-ordinator is now beginning to do this and to adapt the QCA scheme more closely to the resources in the school. Since the last inspection, standards have improved.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

127. Standards in information technology are similar to those expected for children of this age at the end of both key stages, and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils aged 11 use computers to make well-presented small booklets on healthy living, incorporating text and graphics. They use the school network to search for information on the Victorians from the Internet, but are not yet able to download relevant pieces of information for their project. Standards in graphics work are above average in pictures drawn of the London bridges and buildings on the Thames. Pupils aged seven log on and off the school network correctly, finding their own user area. They change fonts, sizes and style of text to form speech bubbles for animal pictures. There is no evidence of the use of computers to control vehicles or lighting systems, for example, or for monitoring experiments in science

128. The teaching seen at both key stages was at least satisfactory; of the seven lessons observed, two were good and one was very good, with the remainder satisfactory. Teachers have good expertise in the use of computers, and all coped capably with the recent changes to the network system, even when the system failed to give access to the Internet or email during the week. They generally have high expectations of the outcome of all pupils' work, and some plan very well to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of ability. In a Key Stage 2 class, for example, the teacher extended graphics work in planning a new classroom layout; pupils of different abilities and skills had different objectives regarding the shape and number of pieces of furniture.

129. Methods used are satisfactory on the whole, but the variation in pupils' skills seen during the inspection indicates that specific skills, such as the use of the keyboard, are not taught formally. Many older pupils, who had not had regular computer lessons lower down the school, were unsure of the position of keyboard symbols. Assessment of information technology skills is in its infancy, with a good system recently devised and due to be implemented from September. Progression of skills has not yet been charted, so pupils do not know how well they are doing in gaining them.

130. Hardware resources for the subject are good. There is fifteen-station network with sophisticated facilities for demonstrations to the whole class and to oversee individual pupils' work, which some teachers use to good effect. This is a good motivating factor for the pupils to do their best and not waste time. Software is limited at present, so the whole curriculum cannot be taught in full. However, this is in hand, and the control and monitoring strand will be met from September.

131. Pupils with special needs and Traveller children have some information technology facilities designed especially for them, and make good progress, although the use of these facilities is limited to those who are withdrawn from the class. The lack of available computer facilities in or near classrooms inhibits regular use, and this slows progress with work presentation during daily lessons. Considerable improvement has been made in computer facilities since the last inspection, and the setting up of an information technology team of teachers has given a good pool of expertise available to help other teachers, many of whom have good skills. The network facilities have greatly improved pupils' experiences; each class now has a regular hour a week devoted to information technology, but it is still not used well enough in all curriculum areas.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

132. Standards in religious education match the level expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Teaching is guided by a very good scheme of work which is linked to the syllabus and gives good advice to teachers. Throughout the school, pupils are increasing their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils display basic knowledge of some features of Christianity and other faiths, such as Hinduism. They understand, for example, the importance of light in many faiths. Pupils know that a major element in many faiths is that of caring for one another and for the environment. They have a good understanding of human relationships and this is reflected in their behaviour towards each other.

133. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can relate some of the concepts of different faiths to their own experiences and go beyond this to discover more about religious beliefs, ideas and structures. They know facts about the main faiths in Britain, such as Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism, and that each has key leaders such as Jesus, Moses and Guru Nanak. Pupils also know that each faith has a Holy Text, for example the Bible and the Torah, and that each gives rules and examples for living. They know that the Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments, and they apply lessons learned from parables, such as that of the Good Samaritan, to their own lives. Pupils develop a sound understanding that religions share some common features, for example the role of such festivals as Christmas, Harvest and Diwali, and the importance of giving as well as receiving is well understood. Pupils throughout the key stage consider basic religious concepts and ways in which they have been expressed in sacred books, daily living, and rituals.

134. The quality of learning is supported by good teaching and by the positive attitudes shown by most pupils. The quality of teaching seen was good in 71 per cent of lessons, and satisfactory in 29 per cent. There was no significant variation between the teaching in each key stage. Through their own personal research and the support they receive, teachers are confident in teaching the subject. They motivate the pupils through interesting discussion and role-play activities. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils achieved a good understanding of how we must care for each other through a dramatic performance of the story of the *Good Samaritan*.

135. The good quality support for pupils with special educational needs gives them full and equal access in lessons and allows them to achieve appropriately. Pupils who speak English as an additional language play a full part in lessons and make progress in their learning which is comparable to that of other pupils of similar ability. Teachers make effective use of all pupils' own experiences to promote their knowledge and understanding of different beliefs. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were encouraged to talk about religious rituals and ceremonies. Pupils' learning and understanding is well supported by the sensitivity with which teachers approach Christianity, other faiths, and issues raised in lessons.

136. Teaching is used well to reinforce moral values and to provide recognition of pupils' own value as individuals. Learning is also well supported by the good behaviour and attitudes to learning which most pupils display. Most pupils in both key stages listen attentively to teachers and to each other. They work well together, and most are keen to answer questions and to take part in discussions and role-play activities. However, a small number of Key Stage 2 pupils do not listen respectfully, and they try to distract others.

137. The subject is well managed, and the school ensures that it contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In lessons, there is appropriate emphasis on the importance of equality of opportunity and the need to respect and understand other faiths and cultures. The teaching of religious education is supported by assemblies, speakers from different faiths, and visits to the local church. The school is planning visits to other places of worship. There is a good range of stimulating artefacts, which are well used to support teaching and learning. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills when they are given opportunities to write about their experiences.

## ART

138. Standards reached by the oldest pupils are satisfactory for their age. By Year 6, pupils can represent their chosen themes and ideas with increasing accuracy and attention to detail. For example, portraits of their friends have been achieved after a good deal of observation and taking note of line, colour, shade, shadow and proportions. Pupils learn to draw objects which are near and which are further away, and study the effect of their drawings. The curriculum is broad, and pupils make sound progress in both key stages, developing a range of skills in two- and three-dimensional activities.

139. Pupils are developing their confidence in different painting and printing techniques, and in their observational drawings. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were being encouraged to evaluate their work, and to respond to the work of other pupils and artists. This was achieved successfully, and pupils were gaining good knowledge of art from different cultures and traditions. There were stimulating displays in the classroom. Appreciation and enjoyment of art is improving, and art makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

140. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the five lessons seen, one was very good, two were good and two were satisfactory. There are differences in the quality of planning between the two key stages; and there is a relative lack of opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to integrate investigating and making, and knowledge and understanding. Good observational drawings have been achieved and displayed, by pupils in Year 5 for example, on the Millennium Dome, Tower Bridge and the River Thames. There is good integration of art with other subjects, such as history, geography, and design and technology.

141. The use of the sketchbook was observed in Year 4 when pupils used it to refine ideas in their observational drawings. From the school displays, it was clear that Year 1 pupils have been looking at 'Red Poppies' by Emil Nolde, and have tried to copy the effects of his style, for example, by first wetting the paper and then using water dye to make the poppies 'run' over the page. They have also looked at the work of William Morris, in order to design wallpaper. Pupils were making good use of the computer to draw their designs. There were lively discussions with friends and the teacher on African and Aboriginal art, while creating their African style masks. Pupils had a clear idea of which style of work they found more stimulating, and could give their reasons. Teachers provide good demonstrations, and encourage pupils to develop their own ideas and techniques through using a range of materials, tools and techniques.

142. There is sound improvement in the development of art. The new co-ordinator is keen to provide an effective lead in managing the subject. She is currently up-dating the schemes of work, and building on resources to support the agreed whole school topics for the year. There is an increased range of books, pictures and artefacts in school, for pupils to learn about the styles of art associated with famous artists and cultures. The schemes of work are comprehensive and offer good opportunities to develop skills in using the visual elements, and in reflecting on art from different cultures, traditions and times.

143. Implementation, however, is less effective, mainly due to staff turnover which affects the progress pupils make in their learning over time. To address this issue, which was also identified in the previous inspection report, the co-ordinator is at present looking at nationally recognised schemes of work. An assessment checklist has been devised recently to monitor

pupils' progress in their development of skills. The monitoring of teaching through observing specific activities in classroom, such as painting and collage work, has recently begun. This is proving useful in building teachers' confidence and promoting a dialogue among staff about how the work could be improved. Pupils' work is valued and displayed attractively throughout the school. Art contributes effectively to raising pupils' esteem and confidence, and enhances the visual environment of the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

144. It was possible to see only one design and technology lesson in Key Stage 1 during the inspection, since the subject is taught in blocks of time and was not currently being taught in Key Stage 2. The lesson was satisfactory, and the work seen was of a similar standard to that found in many schools. Photographic evidence of this year's projects and displays of projects confirmed this.

145. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make attractive houses out of card, and amusingly illustrate nursery rhymes such as *Little Miss Muffet* with wind up toys which contain some realistic spiders climbing up and down drainpipes. By the end of the key stage, seven year olds are satisfactorily beginning to evaluate their products, saying what they like about them and how they could have been improved. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 use recycled materials to make models of monsters in which parts of their bodies move by pneumatic control. Working torches are made during an electricity project, but little thought had been given to the design of these, other than to illustrate scientific circuits.

146. Pupils in Year 6 satisfactorily make colourful textile wall hangings with cartoon and animal designs for nursery and reception classes. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work is in place, and each class does the suggested two or three projects a year. Assessment and progression in skills are satisfactorily integrated into the course, and teachers keep careful records of progress.

147. Reception and nursery children still work from the older scheme devised by the able co-ordinator; this had some exciting and original projects, and reception children have made realistic models of bears, dogs, cats and crocodiles from recycled materials. A picture profile shows pupils working in groups, using construction kits and making ingenious but soundly constructed suspension and girder bridges. The pictures are not yet annotated with the skills being developed, nor the levels achieved.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

148. The school continues to make satisfactory provision for geography. The work is blocked, allowing coverage in depth, and the curriculum follows the QCA exemplars. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. Evidence from other sources, including lessons observed in Key Stage 2, scrutiny of work, and discussions with pupils, showed attainment to be in line with that expected at the end of both key stages.

149. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use simple plans. They map the position of plants found around the school grounds, use their own maps to show their journey to school and can indicate where they live on a map of Britain. Their work on the 'Holiday'

project shows increasing understanding of other countries in Europe and they are developing a geographical vocabulary relating climate to places in the world; deserts, rainforests, mountains. Pupils are also able to contrast their environment with the seaside.

150. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use maps with confidence, are familiar with the local area and can find their own houses on suitable scale maps. They recognise the difference between human and physical features and can express their likes and dislikes about their own environment. Pupils use simple survey techniques to examine traffic flow, use of water and the effects of pollution. They study life in India and Pakistan and use a range of resources to improve their knowledge and understanding of geography.

151. Pupils have a good attitude towards their work, enjoy their lessons, particularly those relating to practical activities and show enthusiasm for their work. Year 4 pupils, for example worked well in groups when surveying litter in the school grounds. Pupils in Year 5 worked successfully well in groups when discussing ways of saving water.

152. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Of the five lessons seen, teaching was very good in one, good in two and satisfactory in two. Lessons are well planned and practical work is integrated into the project. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning. Lessons are well paced. In a Year 4 lesson pupils were set time limits within which they had to work before moving on to the next activity. Methods of working are good. There are opportunities for first-hand activities followed by analysis and discussion. Good use was made of mathematics in lessons on water in Year 5, where the collected data was totalled and then averaged. Teachers make use of homework opportunities. Pupils had surveyed the use of water in their own homes during the half term holiday.

## **HISTORY**

153. The school continues to provide a satisfactory curriculum for history. The recent introduction of the QCA guidelines has enabled the school to ensure greater continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Topics are blocked over a half term. This gives opportunities for study in depth and also strong links with other subjects.

154. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to distinguish between past and present. They are able to use timelines relating to their own lifetime and have an increasing awareness of longer passages of time. By looking at their own environment they are able to distinguish between old and new houses and understand how everyday items have changed over the past hundred years. They have the opportunity to handle historical artefacts lent to the school by the local museum. They also use a range of books to support their learning. They know about some people from the past and can distinguish between these and fictional characters such as Cinderella.

155. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 understand the main events in a period of history they have studied. They also know about some of the main characters. They can talk about voyages of the Vikings and are able to discuss reasons why people leave their homelands. Through their written work they show that they understand what it was like to live in their area during Victorian times. Good resource material supports their ability to understand change. For example, the use of Ordnance Survey maps of the area help them understand how their own area has changed since 1800.

156. Pupils are keen to contribute to lessons, and show enthusiasm about the things they are doing. During a Year 1 lesson they showed interest in learning about historical artefacts and made sensible guesses about the use of an item from their existing knowledge. Year 3 pupils showed good levels of concentration when completing work on Viking voyages. The work was challenging but most completed it in the time available.

157. The one lesson seen at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory. It was well prepared, with a range of resources available. The majority of pupils were involved throughout the lesson, though they were expected to sit on the mat for too long. Work seen in pupils' books indicates that teachers throughout the key stage are preparing suitable activities. Pupils are being encouraged to think about history, and teachers are guiding them in recording their findings. These are often based on first-hand experience in the local area or on handling artefacts.

158. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Of the two lessons seen, one was good and one was satisfactory. Teachers make good use of resources and links with other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 had studied *Oliver Twist* as part of their Victorian project. A Year 3 literacy lesson used texts on the Vikings to support pupils in learning how to use information books. In a Year 3 history lesson the teachers used very good questioning techniques to support learning about why the Vikings left their homeland. The scrutiny of work of Year 5 pupils showed thorough coverage of the Tudors, including learning about famous people of the period.

## MUSIC

159. The school continues to provide satisfactory coverage of the music curriculum, and pupils attain satisfactory standards. All teachers follow a taped scheme that enables continuity and progression in learning to take place. Good use of a music specialist on the staff supports the curriculum well, especially the development of singing at both key stages.

160. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to sing songs from memory with good control of pitch. They listen carefully to music and appreciate that music can be used to create mood. Singing and listening to songs from a wide range of cultures, pupils learn songs in other languages. They make use of percussion instruments, creating sounds to illustrate their understanding of dynamics.

161. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to sing with growing confidence. They sing rounds with an awareness of the needs of the other group and have a wide repertoire of songs from a range of cultures. Listening to music is part of all their music lessons. Music is also listened to at the beginning and end of assemblies. They recognise the sounds made by different instruments.

162. The majority of pupils have a good attitude towards music. They enjoy singing and are pleased to be able to perform songs they know. They try hard to concentrate when they are listening to a taped lesson or music played to them. The behaviour of the majority is very good. They are able to co-operate well, for example when pupils in a Year 4 lesson were asked to construct a machine which used body sounds to make it go faster or more slowly. In groups of four, pupils discussed the work and produced good results.

163. One music lesson and the weekly singing assembly were seen at Key Stage 1. The lesson was satisfactory and the teaching of singing is good. Good knowledge and understanding of the subject supports pupils' learning well, particularly in singing. Pupils are encouraged to sing with enthusiasm, well supported by all the adults in the room. They are accompanied by flute and guitar, which allows them to hear themselves singing. The singing session is managed well, and good use is made of the specialist skills of two teachers. In the music lesson, good use was made of unpitched percussion to illustrate the sounds in *Old Macdonald's Farm*. Use of a familiar song by the teacher encouraged the pupils to concentrate on such aspects as 'long' and 'short', and 'loud' and 'soft' sounds.

164. Of the three lessons seen at Key Stage 2, one was very good, one was good and one was satisfactory. The teaching during the Key Stage 2 singing session was very good. The high quality specialist teaching enabled pupils to achieve a very high standard of singing, which showed a good sense of pitch, rhythm and tonality. Good use is made of the taped music lessons. Teachers use the tapes constructively, stopping and restarting to reinforce learning points. This does affect the pace of lessons, but teachers worked hard to keep pupils on task, encouraging and supporting their listening skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

165. The school continues to provide a satisfactory curriculum in all areas of physical education. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of dance, gymnastics and games skills. The standards achieved in swimming are satisfactory. Many pupils achieve the National Curriculum target of swimming at least 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.

166. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to perform and perfect basic movements involving travelling, turning and jumping. They are able to travel with and send and receive a ball. During the inspection, lessons were observed in dance and games. Good movements were observed in a dance lesson where pupils were able to interpret a poem, using small and large movements. Pupils show good proficiency in the ability to move around in a very confined space. They show good control of space when undertaking fast movements around the hall, for example in warming-up sessions.

167. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to dance with a degree of control, including the interpretation of dances from other cultures. These skills are practised right across the key stage, and pupils were seen to be growing confidence during the inspection. Pupils undertake a swimming programme during Years 5 and 6. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are able to swim, and they have confidence in water.

168. Pupils respond well to their physical education lessons. The majority behave well, but a small minority of pupils are reluctant to take part in lessons. This can affect the performance of other pupils. Pupils clearly understand the methods used by the teacher to regain control of the session, and respond immediately. They co-operate well and, in lessons when they work with partners, show a good awareness of the needs of others. In a gymnastics lessons in Year 3 they showed good levels of concentration when working with partners on changing body shapes. Pupils also concentrate well during dance sessions when they have to listen carefully to instructions from a tape-recorded lesson. When pupils go swimming their behaviour on the bus and at the baths is very good.

169. Of the three lessons seen in Key Stage 1, one was good and two were satisfactory. Teachers control pupils well and have developed effective strategies for bringing them together in dance and gymnastics lessons. This means that there is minimal time wasted and all lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers deal well with reluctant pupils, although the time spent on this small minority can affect the pace of some lessons.

170. Of the five lessons seen at Key Stage 2, three were good and two were satisfactory. Teachers show a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the subject. Each lesson observed started with a warm-up session and ended with a recovery period. Activities during the lesson were relevant and there was development of skills in small steps. In a Year 6 dance lesson, pupils practised movement to music from India. The teacher used the tape in a constructive way which allowed the pupils to achieve a good degree of success in perfecting an activity that involved simultaneous movement of feet and hands.

171. The lack of a full complement of full-time teachers has meant that there is currently no co-ordinator for physical education. The responsibility is being covered by the headteacher. In the light of the curriculum developments required for September 2000 this is an unsatisfactory situation.