

INSPECTION REPORT

THE AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sutton

LEA area: London Borough of Sutton

Unique reference number: 102960

Headteacher: Dorothy Middlemass

Reporting inspector: Grace Marriott
3676

Dates of inspection: 4th to 8th June 2001

Inspection number: 191357

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior with a Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Avenue Road
Belmont
Sutton

Postcode: SM2 6JE

Telephone number: 020 8642 5138

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Jessop

Date of previous inspection: January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3674	Grace Marriott	Registered inspector	Science, information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further
9053	Vivienne Phillips	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23487	Patricia Kitley	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language, physical education	
20875	James Howard	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector	Design and technology foundation stage, special educational needs,	
11746	Robin Coulthard	Team inspector	History, geography, music, religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Avenue is a large primary school in Belmont, in the London Borough of Sutton, very close to the county boundary with Surrey. The school has 491 pupils on roll, including 49 children who attend the nursery part time. This is almost a hundred more pupils than when last inspected. They come from a variety of backgrounds but mostly from advantaged homes, with a small number of pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Thirteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is about average. The number of children with special educational needs is also about average. Their special needs are mostly dyslexia, with a few who have speech and language needs. About twenty per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities, with very few at an early stage of learning English. Children start the nursery with broadly average knowledge, skills and understanding.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Avenue School is now providing its pupils with a good education. It has come through a period of some uncertainty in the leadership and management which affected standards, but the situation is stable and the school has made considerable progress in the last eighteen months. Overall, the standards of current pupils are better than the national average at all stages. The teaching is good. The recently appointed headteacher, supported by the governors, senior managers and staff, is providing strong and purposeful leadership which is moving the school forward rapidly. The school is providing good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- All the teaching was satisfactory or better, almost half of it was good and a fifth was very good
- Pupils' attitudes towards school are very positive: they enjoy school, are keen to learn and work hard
- The nursery provides children with a good start to their education
- Pupils behave well, they are polite and responsible
- In mathematics the standards and the teaching are particularly good
- The headteacher and staff work very well as a team and have a strong commitment to providing a good education

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Pupils' skills in spelling and using phonics to help their reading are not secure enough
- In a minority of lessons the teaching, though satisfactory, could have challenged pupils more
- The new schemes of work being developed for each subject need to be more closely matched to the particular needs of the school and the pupils
- School policies on assessing and marking pupils' work are not used as consistently as they could be to raise achievement

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Overall the improvement is satisfactory and the school has developed rapidly in the last eighteen months, particularly in leadership and management, which compensates for the limited improvement in previous years. The headteacher, appointed in 2000, has put into place a very strong programme of development and change, she has created a good team who are committed to raising standards. This was necessary because the school's results in Year 6 had previously been better than both the national results and similar schools, but in 2000 were better than similar schools only in English. This means that The Avenue had not improved as much as other schools. The evidence from the inspection is that standards are rising rapidly, particularly in Key Stage 2. The issues from the last inspection have been tackled. Subject co-ordinators have much stronger and more clearly defined leadership and management roles that include a significant responsibility for monitoring teaching and standards. The long-term plans for each subject are based on the nationally recommended schemes of work. These provide a satisfactory basis for planning but need to be further developed to ensure that they fully match the specific needs of the pupils in this school and provide a significant challenge. Assessment and recording procedures have been improved and standardised. They are now more useful in helping teachers to plan teaching and

monitor progress but the marking and assessing of work is not always focused consistently enough on giving pupils specific guidance on how to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	B	C	B
mathematics	A	C	C	C
science	A	D	D	E

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

The foundation stage gives children a good start so that by the time they reach compulsory school age, most are reaching above average standards in all aspects of the curriculum. They are happy in school, are keen to learn and are well prepared for the more formal work in Year 1. Almost all can read simple books and write intelligible sentences. They can count and use numbers to ten or beyond, with the higher attainers doing simple addition.

In Key Stage 1 the results of tests taken at the end of Year 2 in 2000 were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. When compared with similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils' with free school meals) results were much better in mathematics, better than others in writing and broadly the same in reading. At Key Stage 2 the table shows that the results of the tests taken at the end of Year 6 were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The school was doing significantly better but other schools have caught up. Compared with similar schools results were better in English, broadly the same in mathematics and well below in science. Girls were doing slightly better than boys in both key stages but this was not evident in the work seen during the inspection. However the 2001 results are much improved, particularly in mathematics. Well over ninety per cent of pupils have achieved Level 4 or better in all three subjects.

Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and are achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, although pupils withdrawn from literacy in order to receive additional structured support are beginning to make better progress.

In English current pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving well. Pupils are very articulate and speak confidently in discussions and their writing shows good use of grammar punctuation and interesting vocabulary. In Key Stage 2 achievement is satisfactory. oral work is still good but written work does not reflect the quality of the pupils' ideas. In both key stages, Though most pupils are fluent readers, some have difficulty in reading and understanding more difficult, unfamiliar words. Weaknesses in spelling often spoil otherwise good written work. In mathematics the current Year 2 pupils are well above the average, they have good number skills and they are achieving well. At Key Stage 2 standards are improving and Year 6 pupils are also achieving above average standards. The introduction of the numeracy strategy has been particularly important in raising standards. In science the work seen during the inspection was above average which indicates that standards are rising and that pupils in both key stages are now achieving well.

In other subjects, standards in Information and communication technology are rising rapidly they are at least satisfactory overall and in many aspects of the work they are above average. Pupils are achieving well, History and (religious education) RE are above average in Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. Geography, design and technology, art and physical education (PE) are average in both key stages and music is below in both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They are enthusiastic and work

	hard in almost all lessons. They are willing to try, even when an answer might be wrong
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Occasionally individuals forget what is expected of them, but are usually quick to respond to a gentle or discreet reminder from the teacher, and settle down to work without further fuss.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils are self-disciplined and learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. It is similar to the national average, with unauthorised absence below that of other schools.

The atmosphere in school is warm, positive and rewarding, which encourages pupils to follow codes of conduct. Pupils have the confidence to try to express their views and feelings and to respect the different ideas of others. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive on time but some have holidays in term time which disrupts their work and makes it harder for them to do as well as they could.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	good

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

The standard of teaching is good overall. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching and half was good, a fifth was very good (17%) or excellent (4%) and just over a quarter was satisfactory (29%). This is much better than the last inspection where one lesson in ten was unsatisfactory.

The teaching is good throughout the foundation stage, especially among established staff who have a very good understanding of the needs of young children coupled with very high expectations. New staff are supported well to ensure a consistent approach to work.

There was slightly more good teaching overall in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, but there were excellent lessons in both. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. The pupils achieve well because they are fully involved throughout and lessons are carefully structured to allow them to practise what they have been taught. They work hard and complete a substantial amount of work. Lively introductions, good questioning and discussion help them to understand the work clearly and make good links so that they can use information from one subject to support work in another. Classroom assistants effectively support groups of pupils and individuals in lessons, and there is valuable additional literacy support. Children who have English as an additional language are effectively supported and this enables them to make good progress in all areas of learning. English and mathematics are both well taught. The improvement in teaching and the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies are helping to raise standards.

In a few lessons, where expectations were not as high, the challenge for pupils with potentially higher attainment was limited. On a few other occasions the teaching was satisfactory rather than good because the teachers were less secure in their knowledge of subjects such as music and history. In some lessons the depth of questioning was not as great. Teachers mark work regularly, but not enough of the marking makes it clear to pupils how their work could be improved and information is not used consistently enough in planning work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which meets all statutory requirements
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory and being improved. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets on their individual education plans

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support enables pupils to make good progress
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good for spiritual, moral and social development and good for cultural development
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very careful steps to ensure that pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn, with very good supervision.

Links with parents are increasingly effective and the partnership overall is satisfactory. The school is successfully creating a climate where concerns are shared openly through initiatives such as weekly coffee mornings and the changes to the format of consultation meetings. Setting has been introduced for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and to help lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs the lower set in each year is smaller and has a well- trained learning support assistant permanently attached to the class.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the work of the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the governing body is suitably focused on the important issues of maintaining high standards, pupils' progress and ensuring value for money.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's performance is analysed thoroughly and the information is used to set targets for the future.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well targeted to supporting the school's educational priorities

The school has made rapid progress in recent months as a result of purposeful management and a clear analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The effect of the changes is being seen in higher standards of work. The accommodation is satisfactory, the building is clean and well kept and the classrooms are light and airy. The recent changes have considerably improved the accommodation but older pupils do not have access to a library for independent research and the outdoor play provision for the reception class is not adequate. Resources are satisfactory overall. The ICT room is a great improvement though additional software is needed and more practical resources to support pupils with special educational needs.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard and do their best • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for parents about how well their children are doing • How well the school works with parents • Homework • Extra-curricular activities

The inspection team supported the parents' positive views of the school. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is good and the arrangements made to involve parents in their children's education and the life of the school are at least satisfactory. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and good in terms of sport. Homework is broadly satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The nursery and reception classes give children in the foundation stage a good start. By the time they reach compulsory school age, most children are achieving well and reaching above average standards in language, literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, physical and personal and social development. They are happy in school, are keen to learn and are well prepared for the more formal work which begins in Year 1. They talk confidently about what they are doing and make good progress in the early stages of reading and writing so that by the end of the reception class almost all can read simple books and write intelligible sentences. In mathematics they can count, sort objects and order numbers to ten, and many use numbers to twenty and beyond with the highest attainers doing simple addition. They can explain whether objects are larger/smaller or lighter/heavier than others using the correct mathematical vocabulary.
2. In 2000 the results of tests taken at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. When compared with similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils' with free school meals) results were much better in mathematics, better than others in writing and broadly the same in reading. In the tests taken at the end of Year 6 the results were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. When these results are compared with similar schools they were better in English, broadly the same in mathematics and well below in science. Girls are doing slightly better than boys in both key stages, but there was no significant difference in the work seen during the inspection.
3. The school's actual results in the core subjects were much the same as at the last inspection, though at that time the school was better than average but other schools have caught up. However the results for 2001 show significant improvement, particularly in mathematics. Results in English and science show a ten per cent improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or better and a twenty per cent improvement in mathematics. In all three subjects, well over ninety per cent of pupils are reaching the expected standards for their age group. This supports the inspection findings that standards are rising, though it is not yet possible to compare the school's performance with national results or similar schools.
4. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and are achieving at a similar level to other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, and those withdrawn from literacy in order to receive additional structured support are beginning to make better progress. They are growing in confidence and are improving their basic literacy skills which in turn is beginning to have a positive impact on their work within class.
5. In English achievement is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. It is good in both key stages in speaking and listening. Orally, pupils of all ages are articulate and discuss their ideas well. In writing pupils are achieving well in Key Stage 1 and use grammar, punctuation and interesting vocabulary well. In Key Stage 2 achievement in writing is satisfactory and most pupils can express themselves clearly though the quality of written work does not always reflect the high quality of discussion. Across the school the relatively limited use of a structured phonics programme affects their ability to read unfamiliar words and their understanding of what they have read. Weaknesses in spelling also spoil otherwise good written work.
6. In mathematics the current performance of seven year-olds is well above the average for this age and they are achieving well. At Key Stage 2 standards are improving and current Year 6 pupils are working at an above average level, which represents good achievement compared with their previous work. The introduction of the numeracy strategy has been particularly important in raising standards. By the end of Key Stage 1 almost all pupils have a good basic understanding of

number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts and are developing mental strategies. By Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding of place value and know their multiplication tables. They use mental arithmetic confidently.

7. In science the work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are above average and are rising rapidly. Pupils in both key stages are achieving well and more in line with their potential. They develop good scientific knowledge and skills through practical activities. In Key Stage 1 pupils understood why it was important to record findings accurately and were making sensible predictions. In Year 6 most pupils could test and then describe accurately the properties of different materials, The higher attainers had a good understanding of the difference between chemical and physical changes.
8. Standards in ICT are rising rapidly and pupils are achieving well. They are at least satisfactory overall and in many aspects of the work are above average. The way in which pupils are able to relate work in other subjects to ICT is particularly useful in developing their understanding of its practical applications. Pupils of all ages use a range of software packages confidently and older pupils are developing good skills in multi-media work as well as in word processing, data handling and graphics.
9. Standards in History and RE are above average in Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents good achievement in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory achievement in Key Stage 2. Geography, design and technology, art and PE are average in both key stages and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Music is below average in both key stages and pupils are not achieving as well as they could be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The improvement since the last inspection in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development has been good, particularly in response to the school's recent, positive focus on fostering a sense of achievement.
11. As parents indicated, their children like school and are happy here. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They are enthusiastic about what they are asked to do particularly when activities are well paced, interesting and matched carefully to their needs. In a religious education lesson in Year 1, they were fascinated by the story of how Moses was hidden in the bulrushes and were inspired to answer and ask thoughtful questions about this. In almost all lessons, there is a very strong work ethic and a clear willingness to have a go, even when an answer might be wrong. This is very evident when relationships are very good and tasks challenge pupils to think and make real intellectual effort, as seen in a higher set Year 3 mathematics lesson involving problem-solving. Pupils thoroughly enjoy and participate readily in well managed, carefully prepared personal and social education lessons, including circle time, offering mature responses to issues such as who or what is special to them.
12. Behaviour is very good. In most lessons, pupils listen to what is said, follow instructions with care and ensure that everyone is able to do what is asked because there is little or no unnecessary interruption. On rare occasions, individuals forget what is expected of them, but are usually quick to respond to a gentle or discreet reminder from the teacher and settle down to work without further fuss. One or two pupils have more difficulty than others in concentrating on learning and not disrupting other people's work. When activities are interesting and challenging enough they behave just as well as everyone else, as seen in a Year 4 circle time lesson about memories. There have been no exclusions.
13. Personal development is very good. Pupils are self-disciplined and learn to take responsibility for their own actions, following the example set by adults and through what is taught, particularly in personal, social and religious education. Pupils take pleasure in each other's successes as seen in

assemblies to celebrate achievement. The harmony and high degree of trust evident in the school community ensure that pupils are willing to try to express their views and feelings and to respect different ideas aired by other people. Pupils enjoy the chance to use their initiative in their work and in helping around the school as monitors or as members of the school council.

14. Relationships are very good. Pupils get on very well together in and out of lessons. They mix happily at play. No conflict or bullying was seen. When required, pupils work constructively in pairs or groups, as in a Year 6 history lesson where they had to share views and describe the crucial differences between life in Athens and Sparta.
15. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school have good relationships with the learning support assistants and teachers. They behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to work. They are eager to learn, especially when given interesting and relevant tasks that are matched to their needs. For example in a Year 6 History lesson a series of short tasks undertaken in mixed ability groups especially motivated pupils. Other pupils are very caring of pupils with more complex learning needs.
16. Attendance is satisfactory. It is similar to the national average, with unauthorised absence below that of other schools. Most pupils attend regularly, have no unnecessary absence and arrive on time. A few individuals have too many absences without good reason, or have more holidays in term time than is usually acceptable. Such absences disrupt work in literacy and numeracy, making it more difficult for these individuals to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The standard of teaching is good overall. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching and half of it was good, about a fifth was very good or excellent. Just over a quarter was satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement over the last inspection when one in ten lessons was unsatisfactory. The good teaching results in good learning and is a very important reason why standards are rising.
18. The teaching is good throughout the foundation stage, especially among established staff who have a very good understanding of the needs of young children coupled with very high expectations. New staff are supported well to ensure a consistent approach to the work. The staff plan a good range of interesting experiences which help the children to become independent and to acquire a good range of skills which will enable them to learn well in future. All staff take every opportunity to extend the children's language skills in each aspects of the foundation stage curriculum. For example they work hard to develop children's understanding of mathematical language and ideas as well as their reading and writing skills. The nursery staff take full advantage of good outdoor facilities to encourage children to learn through active play and in reception the staff do as much as possible with more limited access.
19. In the school as a whole the literacy and numeracy strategies are both being used systematically. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall. It is particularly effective in developing speaking and listening skills. Reading is taught satisfactorily, but a more structured approach to teaching phonics would help to improve reading skills further. In written work some classes are taught to go through the full process of planning, drafting, revising and proof reading before final presentation, however this good practice is not consistent throughout the school.
20. The teaching of numeracy is good and is increasing pupils' understanding and confidence. All lessons contain some good direct teaching, and teachers strike an appropriate balance between mental and written mathematics. Teachers encourage pupils to learn number facts by heart so that they can recall them quickly and older pupils of higher ability are able to work accurately in their heads and to use a range of appropriate strategies to solve problems.

21. There was slightly more good teaching overall in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, but there were excellent lessons in both. In good lessons teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. The lessons are well planned and pupils are very well managed and fully involved throughout. A history lesson in Year 2 provided an excellent example of this when the combination of good visual aids, very good questioning and an absorbing task kept pupils working hard and achieving at a high level for over an hour. In this and other good and very good lessons the teacher explained the learning objectives well which helped pupils to understand what was expected of them. A good pace ensured that pupils worked hard and completed a substantial amount. In most lessons teachers were secure in their subject knowledge and made good links between the various subjects and used the work to support pupils' development in literacy and numeracy. They consistently explained and used the key words for the lesson. In a good ICT lesson in Year 5 the teacher was using pupils' mathematical skills well when teaching them how to use a particular graphics package.
22. Although teaching overall is good, with plans including activities for the less able pupils, in some lessons teachers do not have enough strategies or approaches to support the different learning needs of all pupils. In a few lessons the level of challenge was not demanding quite enough of the higher-attainers, for example in English when the same worksheet was used for all groups or when in science the tasks did not allow for highest levels of achievement. Occasionally pupils with special educational needs who were working together, could have benefited by being in mixed ability pairs or groups. When this happened, in a Year 6 ICT lesson, the pupils' knowledge and confidence improved as they supported each other to develop their skills. On a few occasions the teaching was satisfactory rather than good because the teachers were less secure in their subject knowledge of subjects such as music and history. In some lessons the depth of questioning was not as great.
23. Teachers assess and mark work with reference to the learning objectives, and the best marking suggests to pupils how they might improve their work but this is not done enough in all classes. In general the information obtained from assessment and marking is not being evaluated consistently enough to plan the next stage of work and set targets.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants who are committed and increasingly skilled. Teachers ensure that the assistants are fully aware of lesson objectives so that they are better able to support group tasks. However tasks are not always matched carefully enough to pupils' abilities or interests often because of the lack of a suitable variety of resources, and computer software, that could make learning more interactive and interesting. This is identified as an area of development by the school.
25. Visiting staff in the autumn term provide very high quality support for pupils who come to the school knowing very little English. The team helps prepare a programme of support that is shared with class teachers to ensure that the learning needs of these pupils are met effectively in lessons. The school plans to use additional funding to increase training of teachers to support these pupils in class.

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

26. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, to which all pupils have satisfactory access. The curriculum has undergone significant improvements since the previous inspection. A curriculum policy was adopted, as suggested in the report, but this is shortly to be superseded by a new policy for teaching and learning. To ensure pupils have a satisfactory balance of experiences co-ordinators now monitor long-and medium-term planning carefully, and teachers with parallel classes in each year plan together on a week-to-week basis. Topic-based teaching is no longer a feature, but teachers plan well to incorporate cross-curricular themes, such as the use of ICT and numeracy.

27. The school has successfully introduced the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Setting has been introduced for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and to help lower attaining pupils and those with special educational the lower set in each year is smaller and always has the help of a learning support assistant. At present, the literacy strategy is having a satisfactory effect on pupils' attainment, while the numeracy strategy is having a good impact.
28. The provision for children with special educational needs is satisfactory overall whereas it was deemed good at the time of the previous inspection. However the situation is now improving. The recently appointed co-ordinator has worked hard in a short time to ensure that the school's approach to special educational needs is coherent and more consistently applied. She is fully committed to improving provision. The recently revised policy is good and has clear aims and objectives. The training of the classroom assistants in particular has been beneficial to improving the quality of support pupils receive and is beginning to impact positively on the progress pupils make. Pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
29. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines for each subject. Staff are engaged in adapting these for their classes but since many of the staff responsible are relatively new to the school this is not yet finished. Apart from English and mathematics, the new schemes of work, have not been sufficiently tailored to meet the needs of all pupils for example worksheets are not always well adapted to meet needs across the full range of ability. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education receive a satisfactory allocation of time. A new locally agreed syllabus for religious education has just been published which will entail some adaptation of current schemes of work.
30. Provision for personal, social and health education (PHSE) has undergone considerable development in the last two years, and is now good. The school values PHSE as an important part of the foundation for pupils' learning. Staff have received training in leading circle time. Through this, pupils are able to develop their self-esteem and understand that their opinions are valued. As part of PHSE, the school is already providing suitable instruction in sex education and drugs awareness. The school nurse has contributed to these topics in Year 6 and is involved in raising pupils' awareness to the hazards of smoking. The police and fire brigade contribute to pupils' education in safety matters.
31. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Local Christian workers and a Muslim have contributed to assemblies and religious education. Theatre groups and storytellers have participated in PHSE, history and the Multicultural Book Week. Pupils make regular visits locally and to places, such as Penshurst Place, Dulwich Picture Gallery, the Imperial War Museum and Brighton. Year 6 pupils visit an outdoor activity centre for a week each July. There are appropriate links with other schools locally, including a recent visit by Year 6 to watch a performance of Macbeth at a local secondary school.
32. Provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and in some respects good, although some parents would like more to be provided. There is good provision for sport, including athletics, football, rugby and cricket. Opportunities for extending pupils' skills in the new technology are met by a newspaper club and an e-mail club. There are opportunities to develop sewing, cycling proficiency and recorder playing. Despite the lack of a specialist teacher, each class contributed to a concert last Christmas.
33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection. The school promotes spiritual development very well. Assemblies are of a consistently high quality and sometimes outstanding. The way in which achievements of pupils from reception to Year 2 were celebrated and valued was moving and exhilarating, above all for the sheer joy with which one child received his award. A stimulating assembly for the whole school, led by a visitor,

explored the idea of laying firm foundations for personal achievement by analogy with the story of houses built on sand and in rock, using pyramids of plastic cups. The pupils were captivated by the sight and sound of the collapsing pyramid which fell from a flimsy table as the speaker's feet drummed to the sound of their tapping fingers of rain and roars of storm force wind. Assemblies meet the requirements for collective worship. They are planned with care around relevant themes that are explored further in lessons. For example, the focus on talents and achievements in assemblies during the week of the inspection was reflected in work in the classroom, as in an exemplary Year 2 lesson on what made Florence Nightingale special.

34. Support for moral development is very good. Adults set a strong, positive example of how to relate to others and to value what people do. Teachers praise pupils for their efforts to co-operate and to make the right choice about how to behave, for example, when someone ignores silly comments made by another child. The very good groundwork from the nursery onwards encourage pupils to listen, sit still and take turns to speak thoughtfully during whole class discussions. This is relevant to their understanding of the right thing to do in lessons, the importance of reflecting on a range of ideas and learning to respect what others say. The atmosphere in school is warm, positive and rewarding, which encourages pupils to follow codes of conduct.
35. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are expected to take responsibility and show independence from the start, as when nursery children handed out drinks and biscuits they had made earlier with help from a parent. The recent introduction of a school council and class councils in Years 5 and 6 is enabling pupils to develop a real sense of their roles and responsibilities within the school community. There are many high quality opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons, such as comparing ways of reaching solutions in mathematics and building on what others have said in circle time. Pupils start their own games and invite others to join in at break and lunchtime. They enjoy doing things together, as reflected in the development of a school newspaper AveNews produced by the computer club.
36. Support for cultural development is good. The school has worked on points made in the last report about the need to help pupils to recognise the rich diversity of faith and culture within the school community. A multicultural book week introduced pupils to a stimulating range of poems, texts and tales, supported by storytellers and parents familiar with different myths and legends. The use of ideas and traditions from other cultures is more firmly rooted in the school's everyday work now. This was evident in a religious education lesson where pupils began to talk about their own different backgrounds spontaneously and without embarrassment. There is good work to help pupils to appreciate the richness of the cultural heritage in and beyond the local area, Opportunities to enrich such experience through art, music and drama are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Since the last inspection and particularly in the last year, the school has given careful attention to comments in the report about the use of policies and procedures that relate to pupils' well being. As a result, there have been rapid improvements recently in the way that the school cares for its pupils.
38. The school takes very careful steps to ensure that pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn, with very good supervision at work and at play. Procedures for child protection are very good. Teachers know individual pupils very well and even temporary or very new staff are well aware of particular personal needs. The school's life reflects a very strong commitment to building pupils' confidence and self-belief, whatever their home circumstances.
39. The school has good, ways of detecting any patterns in pupils' attendance that might give cause for concern, by tracking absences and lateness carefully and taking prompt action. It contacts families of pupils whose attendance is below average and who are slow to give reasons, on the first day of

absence. It does not do automatic first day checks otherwise because most parents are quick to contact the school first.

40. The school promotes high standards of behaviour very well by using carefully thought out policies and procedures in a very positive and consistent way. Any incidents of name-calling or other unacceptable, oppressive behaviour are dealt with promptly and fairly in line with very clear school policies. Teachers keep daily records of what pupils do well and of instances of disappointing behaviour so children can be rewarded or helped to do even better. Assemblies that celebrate achievement and classroom displays that feature the stars of the week, contribute very strongly to a positive culture of reward for effort and excellence. As a result of the priority given to ensuring that pupils feel good about themselves and are therefore ready and able to learn, procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The very high quality of care provided is successfully underpinning the school's efforts to raise standards.
41. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully addressed the key issue regarding assessment. Consistent procedures are used to assess all pupils' attainment and systems to monitor their academic progress are good. The assessment policy contains clear guidance for teachers. The school uses standardised reading and spelling tests twice a year and optional national tests in the English, mathematics and science to assess pupils not involved in end of key stage tests. Other assessments in these subjects take place each half term and are linked to specific objectives identified in teachers' planning. The information is recorded on Parents' Evening Report Sheets and is being used to identify targets for individual pupils. The school plans to involve pupils and parents in setting and monitoring progress with target books for writing. Pupils' achievements in other subjects are less well monitored and teachers do not record what skills pupils know, can do and understand.
42. Teachers' assessment files vary in the amount of detail included. In examples of the best practice, detailed records can be used to identify skills that pupils have not mastered. For example, structured assessments in mathematics track individual skills so that differences in progress can be monitored. However, in literacy there is an over-reliance on matching pupils' performance to test criteria, and some teachers' assessments of reading and writing do not record what pupils need to do to improve. There are inconsistencies in the use made of marking and other day-to-day recording of pupils' achievements and the assessment co-ordinator is starting to provide monitoring and guidance to ensure greater consistency in these areas.
43. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational need meets the requirements of the statements and it is reviewed regularly. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are assessed carefully by visiting staff. These pupils are well-supported within the caring atmosphere of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the school have shown modest, but satisfactory improvement in a period of change. At the time of the last inspection, about a quarter of parents felt that they did not have a clear understanding of what is taught. The school has worked hard to change this by giving parents regular information about the focus of what children will learn. As at the last inspection, parents do not all feel well informed about their children's progress. There are still conflicting views about whether children have the right amount of homework. Parents had reservations about the school's handling of complaints before; now there are reservations about whether the school works closely with them. On both occasions, about 9 out of 10 parents said that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.
45. Parents' views of the school are mixed, but positive comments outweigh concerns and most are supportive of the school and think that it is doing a reasonable job. They see current expectations as high and believe that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. A few

parents are less satisfied with what is offered partly because of past experience of children's under-achievement. Not all parents have a clear understanding of the school's aims, ethos and policies, which leads to expectations that cannot be met, particularly over entry tests for particular schools. In spite of commendable efforts to work with all parents, the school has not convinced a critical minority that new policies and procedures are a positive and necessary step to raise standards rapidly and provide the best education for all pupils.

46. The school is determined to build a constructive working relationship with parents and is working hard to find ways to improve communication to support this. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is good overall though the school could make even more explicit than it does, its achievements and priorities. The best reports are of high quality with clear personalised statements of what the pupil knows, understands and can do and explicit targets for improvement. A few less effective reports rely too heavily on phrases used for describing National Curriculum levels reached and give descriptions of character, rather than what the pupil should do to achieve a higher standard of work. Changes to arrangements for parent consultation, such as a day to review progress with parents and pupils individually, show a commitment to making the exchange of information better.
47. Recently the school has made strenuous efforts to seek parental views through use of surveys and in discussion. Regular, lively newsletters and planned improvements to the prospectus and governing body's report to parents are resulting in better communication. In most cases, contact with parents is constructive and very well focused on children's all round development and high achievement. In a few cases, differences of opinion about what is reasonable to expect of staff and how parents can help with individual children result in more difficult relationships. The school has been successful in creating a climate where any concerns can be shared openly through initiatives such as weekly coffee mornings. Links with parents are increasingly effective and partnership overall is satisfactory. The increase in the range of extra-curricular activities is a direct response to the information gained from a survey carried out earlier this academic year.
48. Parents are fully informed and involved with the individual reviews of their children who have special educational needs. Parents who have concerns are able to meet and discuss issues with the co-ordinator who ensures that advice and guidance is provided from outside agencies if required.
49. Parents contribute well to the life of the school. For instance, a parent comes in to play the piano for choir and others help regularly with swimming lessons and by noting choices of books and mathematics games. Fifteen parents help regularly in class and others offer invaluable support at events such as multicultural book week. The school decided, with good reason, that it is inappropriate for parents to work in their own child's class. This led to a sudden drop in the number of helpers, which is now rising steadily as parents realise why. Parents are very keen to see their children achieve. They contribute well to children's learning by working with them at home. There is active participation in activities organised by TAPTA (The Avenue Parents' and Teachers' Association). The impact of parents' involvement with the work of the school is good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the school are good. This represents a very significant improvement since the time of the last inspection, when they were judged in need of some improvement. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the work of the school. In this, she is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. They work together most effectively, and set the tone for the school's positive learning atmosphere and sense of community. With the support of governors and a strong staff team, they have successfully developed the quality of education that the school provides. Effective leadership and management are evident in the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, the

monitoring of teaching and pupils' attainment to ensure high quality, and in the thorough analysis of the school's performance in order to set targets for the future.

51. Co-ordinators make a very effective contribution to the development of their subjects. This marks a further significant improvement since the time of the last inspection. They review policy and resources, provide guidance to other staff, monitor teachers' planning and assess the quality of work produced by the pupils. All co-ordinators have produced action plans for their subjects, outlining the planned development of the subject. This commitment to continued improvement is a major factor in the higher standards most pupils are achieving. The staff work very well together, sharing ideas and supporting each other. This readiness to learn and to improve is having an increasingly positive impact on standards throughout the school.
52. The school's special needs provision is well managed. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's procedures and practices. She gives a good lead to the school and her recent initiatives such as training for classroom assistants, improved administration and establishing specific programmes to help pupils to improve basic skills are having a positive impact. Much has been achieved in a short time, while there are still areas that require development, these have already been identified, and are included in the school development plan.
53. The governing body has developed a very effective structure of committees with clearly defined terms of reference. The chair of governors has a clear knowledge of the role and responsibilities of the governing body and works very well in close partnership with the headteacher. He is well supported by the rest of the governing body. The school fully complies with all statutory requirements. Regular meetings keep governors fully informed on all matters relating to the school. The governing body is suitably focused on the important issues of maintaining high standards, pupils' progress and ensuring value for money.
54. The school has clear aims and values, which are consistently reflected in the school's policies and practice. There is an excellent ethos, pursuing high standards across a broad and interesting curriculum and encouraging enjoyment in learning. This ethos is also reflected in the very good relationships and the commitment to providing equal opportunity for all pupils to make progress. The enthusiasm and hard work of the teaching and support staff create an interesting and stimulating environment for pupils.
55. The school plans very well for its future development. The action plans prepared by the subject co-ordinators are combined to produce a school development plan. This clearly identifies appropriate priorities, includes a realistic timescale and sets out criteria by which the success of the individual initiatives will be judged. Staff are prepared to try new initiatives to raise standards. Setting whereby classes are taught in groups based on their prior attainment, has been introduced for some lessons in Key Stage 2. This is having a positive impact by focusing teaching more directly on the needs of individual pupils.
56. The school maintains a very high standard of financial administration, which was confirmed by the recent auditors' report. The office staff and the financial officer use computers effectively to support school administration. Monthly spreadsheets enable the head and governors to monitor closely all aspects of finance. Specific grants are scrupulously spent for their intended purpose. The school applies rigorously the principle of best value in all expenditure, preferring quality and durability to cheapness, researching all purchases carefully and tendering where appropriate. The caretaker, who has advanced skills in carpentry, has given valuable service by skilfully converting storage space.
57. The premises have been successfully adapted to link the two areas of the school and plans are currently being formulated to allow further expansion of the size of the school. The recent creation of a new joint staff room and one school office has not only helped to unite the staff but has allowed the creation of rooms which will provide useful additional working areas, such as a special

needs resource room. There is a good specialist ICT suite but currently older pupils do not have access to a library where they can research topics independently though the school plans to remedy this. The swimming pool enables pupils from the nursery onwards to learn to swim.

58. The nursery building has a large outdoor play area. However, the recently opened reception class area, although spacious, was not designed with access to a secure, easily supervised outdoor play area. Noise from the other open plan class bays can distract children when they are working. Staff have worked hard to create a small outside area, but this is not large enough for a full range of outdoor activities. Nor is it easily supervised. The school is looking at ways of improving the provision.
59. Resources for learning are adequate with recent purchases used appropriately to support curriculum developments. The ICT room is a great improvement though additional software is needed. Co-ordinators have appropriately monitored provision and have identified future resource needs. In addition more practical resources are needed to support pupils with special educational needs.
60. The school is well staffed. The provision for inducting and supporting newly qualified staff is good. All teachers are regularly observed and given helpful and constructive feedback and the opportunity to discuss their work. Part-time staff who share jobs, plan together and these arrangements work well. However due to current LEA admission policy, the school has some difficulties in recruitment, training and supporting temporary staff who are employed each year to work in the reception class for the summer term only. Whilst they make every effort to ensure that pupils needs are met, it is harder to ensure that there is consistency in approach. Staff, including classroom assistants, have had access to relevant and varied training. Those who attend courses are appropriately given time to pass on their learning and update staff expertise.
61. During this period there have been numerous staff changes and the school has been through a difficult period. Since the appointment of the present headteacher in January 2000 improvement has been systematic and rapid. The staff have worked hard to raise standards and has developed good systems to ensure full implementation of the National Curriculum and to develop the strategic roles of the subject co-ordinators and governors. Strategies have been devised to build on the school's existing strengths and to assist teachers' professional development. The school's implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, systems for analysing attainment and setting targets, very good procedures for monitoring teaching and planning, and commitment to continued development indicate that it is very well placed to secure further improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Building on the success of the last two years the governors, headteacher and staff should ensure that:

- 1) they put into place a systematic programme to develop phonic and spelling skills to help to improve further the pupils' standards in reading and writing

Paragraphs 5 67 75

- 2) where teaching is satisfactory, they further raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the level of challenge for all pupils

Paragraphs 22 78 94 113

- 3) the new schemes of work being developed for each subject are more closely matched to the particular needs of the pupils and the school

Paragraphs 29 94 105 109 114 119 125

- 4) school policies on assessing and marking pupils' work are used consistently by all staff to focus clearly on what individual pupils as well as groups of pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work.

Paragraphs 41 42 64 79 94 109 113 131

Minor issues

In addition the governors and headteacher may wish to include the following issues in their action plan

- 1) Implementing as quickly as possible the plans to improve the library provision in Key Stage 2 and the facilities for outdoor play for the Reception Classes

Paragraphs 57 58 70 76 79

- 2) Further upgrading of ICT resources, particularly the software for control and measuring and for pupils with special educational needs

Paragraphs 59 94 118

- 3) Sharing more explicitly with parents the school's priorities and achievements

Paragraphs 45

- 4) Raising standards in music

Paragraphs 9 120

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	17	50	29	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24.5	486
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	77

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	60

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	80
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence in 1999-2000.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	28	33	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	26
	Girls	29	30	31
	Total	51	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87(91))	89 (97))	93 (94)
	National	83(82)	84(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	24
	Girls	28	31	30
	Total	62	57	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (95)	93 (95)	90 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	86 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to 1999.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	28	29	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	20
	Girls	27	24	26
	Total	47	52	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (75)	74 (74)	71 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	21
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	47	45	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (79)	79 (79)	84 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to 1999

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	11
Black – other	3
Indian	23
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	3
White	307
Any other minority ethnic group	41

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: YR– Y6

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

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	865709
Total expenditure	898556
Expenditure per pupil	2047
Balance brought forward from previous year	99556
Balance carried forward to next year	66709

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

491

Number of questionnaires returned

129

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	43	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	52	8	1	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	59	6	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	49	19	5	4
The teaching is good.	37	47	4	1	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	44	24	9	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39	48	8	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	48	6	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	20	45	21	9	5
The school is well led and managed.	25	44	10	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	61	2	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	30	30	16	10

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

62. The good provision for children in the foundation stage has been maintained since the last inspection. The attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average but the children clearly have the potential to do well. A varied and interesting range of learning experiences, together with the positive relationships between staff and children, and effective teaching, provides a stimulating learning environment. As a result children have a good start to their school career, and make good and sometimes very good progress. Staff work well together to ensure that the good start made in the nursery is consolidated and built upon in the reception classes. By the time children reach compulsory school age, the majority attain above average standards in all areas of learning and achieve well in relation to their knowledge skills and understanding on entry.
63. Children have different amounts of time in the foundation stage with some having a full three terms in the reception class and others having only one term. This is the result of LEA policy but has staffing and resourcing implications with the school having to appoint staff for the summer term each year and ensure that they are fully conversant not only with the needs of young children but with school policy and practices. Every effort is made to ensure that these younger children settle quickly into school routines and also benefit from the limited time in the reception class.
64. Staff work hard and develop effective links with parents. The good system of home visits prior to admission has been maintained since the last inspection. This enables staff to know the needs of the children well. The record keeping system is clear and manageable. It gives staff a well-informed basis from which to plan work. On entry to the nursery, simple but effective assessment procedures provide clear indications of children's attainment. This is then monitored to track progress. In the reception class baseline assessments are used to inform planning of group work matched to ability, but this information is not yet used to set targets. More able children's ability in literacy and numeracy are assessed in more detail and this is used to track progress. However, more detailed assessments are not undertaken to identify less able children's strengths and weaknesses, so as to establish a supportive programme early in their school career.
65. The quality of teaching is good throughout the foundation stage, especially among established staff who have a very good understanding of the needs of young children coupled with very high expectations. New staff are supported well to ensure a consistent approach to work is undertaken. They work hard to settle younger children into full time education. Effective support is given to children who have English as an additional language. This enables them to make good progress in all areas of learning. All members of staff ensure that children including those with special educational needs have full access to the areas of learning.

Personal and social education.

66. Children start in the nursery with a wide range of personal and social skills, but because of the positive and supporting environment, children make good progress, become confident and increasingly independent, for example changing with minimal help into swimming costumes. Staff provide good role models as they treat the children politely, courteously and with respect. Children enjoy coming to school; they follow the routines and join in activities with enthusiasm. They play well together, take responsibility for taking their nametags to indicate they have arrived and help tidy up, taking pride in their efforts. This is achieved because of the very good relationships between staff and children, who encourage them to share and take turns. Young children, who have recently started in the nursery, are also beginning to develop more mature attitudes, because of appropriate management and encouragement, by staff. They too are beginning to take responsibility and share their activities with their new friends. As a result of this good teaching by

the time they reach compulsory school age, the majority of children have exceeded the early learning goals in this area

Communication, language and literacy.

67. In both the nursery and reception classes children listen attentively to stories, enjoy looking at books, and telling imaginary stories. Staff use every opportunity to develop language skills, by joining in and talking about their activities, as a result, children make good progress, with older reception children now confident enough to talk about their work in assembly. In the reception classes, the majority of children can read simple texts and because they have developed good skills in the nursery, write words and sentences correctly, using a joined style. In both the nursery and reception for example children looked at seaside books and produced simple 'zig-zag' books about different types of sea creatures, of a good standard. In the older reception class children are already experiencing a literacy hour, they can talk about the story, predict the missing words and recognise rhyming patterns. However, more able children often get frustrated, for example, when trying to write rhyming words for a poem, or when meeting unfamiliar words in books, as they lack a structured way in which to approach these tasks. Despite this however, most children are already exceeding the early learning goals in this area.

Mathematical development.

68. This area is effectively supported in the nursery and children make good progress so that generally by the time they start in the reception classes the majority of children are already exceeding the early learning goals. Many varied teaching activities are used to develop mathematical language skills, with staff effectively planning to meet the needs of the children. In the nursery children confidently count objects to 10, recording their answers accurately. They enjoy looking at patterns on fish and shells creating their own simple patterns. This good quality work is continued in the reception classes where good teaching and well-planned activities, using interesting resources, enable children to consolidate their skills and make good progress. The older children have made very good progress, and double numbers and estimate accurately objects in a bag. The more able of these children can double numbers to 10, sometimes beyond, and estimate and record accurately to 20, using these skills to complete addition sums to at least 10. Younger children use positional language correctly, recording the position cars finished in a race for example and measuring and comparing by size and weight.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

69. Activities that encourage children to use all their senses provide a range of meaningful experiences, which they enjoy immensely and from which they learn well. For instance through, the topic on water children are learning to care for fish and tadpoles and learning through observation the stages of growth. They learn about the local environment and older reception children have produced carefully labelled pictures of the school pond. They are taught to use magnifying glasses to look at shells and talk about the different properties of materials, while nursery children, enjoy making 'star fish' biscuits, talking about the texture of the ingredients. Simple Bible stories are used to develop caring attitudes. The teaching is well planned and all staff are involved in working with the children which ensures that they are interested, motivated and challenged. Children confidently use the computer, controlling the mouse to manipulate pictures on the screen. Because of this good standard of varied experiences children are exceeding the early learning goals in this area.

Physical development.

70. In the large outdoor play area in the nursery, the staff ensure that the wide variety of equipment and climbing areas effectively supports children's physical development. They help children to move confidently and safely up, down and along the climbing frame. The children show a good awareness of space and can control bikes and wheeled toys effectively. Construction kits, and varied activities such as cutting and sticking, help develop children's hand co-ordination. In the reception classes the staff make the best use of the limited outdoor area to develop physical skills and visit the nursery garden regularly. Children have good skills and can accurately aim, throw and roll small balls onto targets. Children make rapid progress, for example although initially hesitant

to enter the water, after a short time, less able children confidently and safely entered the water from a sitting position on the pool side. All can swim across the pool with buoyancy aids, some without, and all children now respond well to instruction. Already most children are exceeding the early learning goals in this area.

Creative development.

71. Children's creative development is promoted very well through art, music and role play activities. Staff provide sensitive encouragement which increases the children's confidence to explore a range of different activities. Music also effectively stimulates children's imagination, younger children in reception, painting bold pictures in response to hearing 'The Elephant Song', from the 'Carnival of the Animals'. Older children exploring sound patterns, copying and repeating rhythms and creating their own musical patterns using instruments. Teaching was challenging and children progressed rapidly at the end of the session creating simple picture notations to represent the 'sea sounds' they had made. Children in the reception classes are already clearly exceeding the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

72. In the 2000 national assessments at age seven, results in writing were above both the national average and the average compared with similar schools. Results in reading were also above the national average, but they were the same as standards achieved in similar schools. Test results for pupils at age eleven in 2000 were in line with the national average and good compared to similar schools. Girls were doing slightly better than boys, but no significant difference in their performance was seen during the inspection. Results remained fairly steady between 1997 and 2000 and the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was well above the national average, the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 did not improve at the same rate as results nationally. However the results for 2001 show an improvement with well over ninety per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 or better and about seventy per cent achieving Level 5.
73. Achievement at the end of Key 1 Stage is good and at the end of Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. Recent initiatives put in place by the school are already having a positive impact on raising standards in year groups within both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment, and pupils who come to the school knowing little English make good progress.
74. Pupils listen attentively in lessons because teachers have high expectations and are skilled at asking questions that enable all pupils to make a valued contribution to class discussions. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoy hearing a poem in the style of a rap, recognising the sound of the 'noisy' words and joining in with the rhythm of the chorus as it is read. By listening to the intonation of each other's voices, pupils in Year 3 were able to suggest the correct punctuation to create the same effect in writing. Pupils in Year 5 work in pairs and groups to rehearse and modify their performance of the poem 'Conversation Piece' by Gareth Owen, they also write similar performance poems. Pupils make tape recordings of their stories and these are added to class listening corners. Lessons in subjects such as Religious Education and history provide opportunities for pupils to discuss issues. Many classroom assistants are skilled at discreetly helping pupils with special educational need so teachers can reinforce their sense of achievement by calling on them to answer. As a result all pupils are willing to contribute and speak confidently and clearly. They are achieving well in this aspect of English, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now good.
75. Standards in reading in both key stages are broadly average and pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level. Pupils enjoy group reading times in the literacy hour and all take part in discussions about authors' style and use of language. Most can explain reasons for their choice of favourite book or author. By the end of both key stages, higher attaining pupils are fluent, expressive and confident readers. All pupils make good progress with sight reading from work on

shared texts. However, because the school does not have a well enough structured phonics programme some pupils find it difficult to read unfamiliar words which affects their understanding of what they have read. Parents and children share stories from many cultures in Book Week events and they hear reading in school and at home. Comments in reading diaries and some teacher's records support pupils' efforts but are often too general to help diagnose individual problems and plan future work. Books are well presented in rooms and non-fiction books are stored in resource boxes for use in classrooms. The lack of a library means that opportunities for pupils to use higher reading skills are more limited for those who do not visit local libraries.

76. The quality of handwriting through the school is good. Teachers model a high standard of handwriting, by the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are using joined handwriting and by Year 6 many have developed a fluent style and present their work well. Pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and interesting vocabulary develops well as they follow the national literacy strategy but spelling is not as good. The standard of writing in Key Stage 1 is above average and most pupils, including those who have learnt English as an additional language, make good progress and are achieving well. Pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Their needs are well supported and they attain realistic targets. All pupils have written stories, poems, letters, science books about broad beans and recipes for a best friend, with higher attaining pupils using a wide range of imaginative language to good effect.
77. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach national standards in writing and their achievement is satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has improved considerably the opportunities for extended creative writing. Pupils are successfully using various kinds of writing, including stories, play scripts, poems, letters, diary entries, instructions and reports. For example, Year 3 write fables which have a clear moral and Year 4 use ICT to write letters asking various conservation agencies for information. Year 5 have used different resources, including interviews, to write reports about life in Britain since 1930, while Year 6 have discussed the issues arising from the current foot and mouth outbreak to write balanced reports. Although such information is clearly expressed, few higher attaining pupils at the end of the key stage use the formal language, complex sentence patterns and paragraph structures expected for higher level factual writing. The content of written work seen during the inspection did not always match the higher quality of pupils' discussions at the beginning of the lesson. In some groups, pupils go through the full process of planning, drafting, revising and proof reading before final presentation, however this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Weaknesses in spelling affect the overall standard of writing, especially for pupils with average and below average attainment. Commonly used words such as 'safety', 'believe', 'cruel' and 'friends' are often spelt incorrectly by older pupils. The school plans to introduce spelling journals in September.
78. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is helping to raise standards. It is also an improvement since the last inspection. In good lessons teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work, lessons are well planned and pupils are fully involved throughout. In a Year 1 lesson pupils applied their learning about 'sequencing' and wrote sentences that accurately re-told the story of 'Dogger'. All pupils achieved well because the lesson was carefully structured for them to practise what they had been taught. Very good pace in a Year 4 lesson ensures that pupils worked in a business-like way. Through good questioning and discussion, the oldest pupils were able to make links between language and the image in poems by Ted Hughes. In the satisfactory lessons where pupils are not required to write quickly or at length, and when the same worksheet is used for all groups, challenge for pupils with potentially higher attainment is limited. Classroom assistants effectively support groups of pupils and individuals in lessons, and there is valuable additional literacy support.
79. Pupils' standards are regularly assessed in all aspects of English and teachers mark written work carefully, with reference to the learning objectives, and the best give points for improvement. However, across the school the information obtained from assessment and marking is not being evaluated consistently enough to plan work and set targets. Many classes display pupils' writing

and create a literary environment with attractive book corners though high quality work in displays in the upper school could be better used to raise expectations of standards of drafting and proof-reading. There is no Key Stage 2 library and although library skills are taught, the school should replace this important resource at the earliest opportunity. English is well led and managed. The very effective monitoring of teaching and planning that have been introduced since the last inspection have led to significant improvements and enabled the co-ordinator to identify areas for development.

MATHEMATICS

80. The results of the 2000 tests for seven year-olds showed that standards were well above average compared to all schools nationally, and to similar schools. The results for eleven year-olds in the same year were average. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be above average at both key stages. Since that time standards have risen at Key Stage 1, and the current performance of seven year-olds indicates that it continues to be well above that expected for this age group. The picture at Key Stage 2 is more complex. Here, standards had fallen relative to the national average. This is largely because the school has not kept pace with improvements in the national standard during this period. This represented under achievement, as pupils were capable of doing better. However, results rose in 2000, and standards are continuing to improve. The results for 2001 show that this improvement has been sustained with over ninety percent of pupils achieving Level 4 or better; an increase of about twenty per cent.
81. Several factors have contributed to this improvement. The successful introduction of the national numeracy strategy has given a clearer focus to lessons. Setting has been introduced, whereby pupils are taught in classes based on their previous standard of work. The quality of teaching has been thoroughly evaluated, focusing on teachers' planning and classroom performance. This has raised the quality of teaching overall, with the result that pupils are now making better progress and achieving higher standards than previously.
82. At both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are now achieving in line with their abilities. Pupils receive a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that provides coverage of all the required strands of the National Curriculum. An appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of numeracy, and opportunities are planned to consolidate knowledge through work in other subjects; for example, measuring skills and data handling work in science and ICT.
83. At Key Stage 1 pupils recognise repeating patterns and are beginning to understand place value. By the end of the key stage almost all pupils have a good basic understanding of number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts. They are developing strategies to be able to reach answers without necessarily writing their calculations down. Pupils can name common two and three-dimensional shapes, and most can describe their properties using correct mathematical terminology.
84. By the time they leave the school, pupils are confident with number. They also have a good mathematical vocabulary, which they use well to describe what they are doing. They have a good understanding of place value and most older pupils know their multiplication tables. Pupils learn to make sensible estimates and to check the reasonableness of their answer. They understand area and perimeter, and most can calculate them accurately. Pupils can create and interpret data in a variety of graphs
85. The good rate of progress at both key stages is attributable to the quality of the teaching and to the planning of the curriculum, which ensures that knowledge is developed systematically. The numeracy strategy is increasing pupils' understanding and confidence. The three-part structure of the lesson is firmly established and teachers are clear what they want pupils to learn in each session. They share this with pupils at the start of each lesson and re-visit it at the end. This

enables pupils to see for themselves how they are improving and this serves to further motivate many. Standards in numeracy are improving because pupils are encouraged to think mathematically. Teachers encourage pupils to know number facts 'by heart', and older pupils of higher ability are able to work accurately in their heads and to employ a range of appropriate strategies to solve problems. The standard of presentation is good and most pupils take pride in the appearance of their work. These positive attitudes are a further factor in the good progress achieved.

86. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good overall with some very good teaching in both key stages. Over half the teaching seen was good or very good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. It is a feature of the most successful teachers' planning that they cater well for all pupils, including not only those with special educational needs, but also the more able. All lessons contained some good direct teaching, and teachers strike an appropriate balance between mental and written mathematics. They deploy classroom assistants well to support lower attaining pupils. All teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. They explain clearly, question pupils effectively and encourage efficient thinking. They are skilful in introducing and reinforcing mathematical vocabulary so that pupils are able to use it with accuracy and understanding. Where teaching is particularly effective teachers emphasise the importance of using existing knowledge and thinking clearly. Teachers mark work carefully, but not all use marking to make it clear to pupils how their work could be improved. Teachers make efficient use of resources, such as measuring equipment and number lines, and teach pupils to use them correctly and appropriately.
87. The most effective teaching was characterised by a lively, brisk pace and high expectations of what pupils were capable of achieving. This was illustrated in a Year 2 lesson on multiplication. Here the teacher made excellent use of time. She struck a balance between allowing pupils sufficient time to think for themselves and intervening to move their learning forward. In the best lessons teachers modify their planning according to the needs of the pupils. In a Year 6 lesson on symmetry, following a clear introduction and a practical activity, the teacher introduced more complex work to challenge higher attaining pupils to undertake work that extended their knowledge and understanding.
88. The mathematics co-ordinator is playing an important role in the continuing development of the subject. Priorities for development are identified and used to formulate an action plan. The effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy has been evaluated through a thorough analysis of performance, including lesson observations. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvements since the time of the last inspection and is very well placed to develop further.

SCIENCE

89. There has been considerable improvement in science in the last year. The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are rising rapidly and that pupils in both key stages are achieving well. Their standards are above average which is more consistent with their potential and better than previous work. The results for 2001 support this and show a ten per cent improvement over the previous year. In 2000 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments were broadly average when compared with the national assessments and compared with similar schools. Key Stage 2 results were below average and well below other schools. At the time of the last report standards were also above average.
90. The scrutiny of pupils written work showed that at both key stages they have made considerable progress in knowledge and understanding during this year. Their recorded work is more detailed and shows a better grasp of basic scientific information and methods. Their scientific knowledge, understanding and skills have been built up through a good range of practical activities.

91. In Key Stage 1 pupils understood why it was important to record findings accurately and were making sensible predictions. Their work on plants showed a secure understanding of why different plants might grow in different places and good observational skills. In Year 2 they were fully engaged in an investigation to find out whether there was a consistent relationship between hand size and height. Pupils were well aware of the need to conduct a fair test and were systematic in testing their hypothesis. They used good mathematical skills to record their findings on a bar chart. They were surprised to find that their initial prediction that the tallest members of the class would have the largest hands, had not been accurate.
92. The emphasis on practical work continues in Key Stage 2. In Year 6 most pupils were testing a variety of materials and observing the reaction when a given amount of a substance was added to water. They worked carefully to ensure that the tests were consistent and described, with a fair degree of accuracy, the results. Most pupils had a sound understanding of the difference between chemical and physical changes and the higher attainers were asking more detailed questions. In general pupils' observational skills were better than their recording skills. Some pupils chose methods of recording which were too detailed and almost predetermined their results.
93. The teaching seen was good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory, though with strong elements, in Key Stage 2. However the quality of work in books suggests that the teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. There is good coverage of all attainment targets and teachers plan lessons well. In both key stages they share the learning objectives with pupils to help them understand what they are expected to learn. The whole class sessions at the start of lessons are used to remind pupils of what they have already done and introduce the new work. This was effectively done in a good lesson in Year 1 where the photographs taken on walk round the school grounds were used to stimulate pupils thinking about plants. In a Year 3 lesson there was good emphasis on using scientific vocabulary and in a Year 6 lesson good questioning was prompting pupils to think scientifically, though here the pupils needed rather more support with recording than they received. Where the teaching was satisfactory rather than good, the tasks were not always open-ended enough to allow the higher attaining pupils to work at a higher level. A lesson on pulse rates in Year 5 was carefully planned and the questioning in the introduction built well on what pupils knew, but the practical work did not enable them to reach a high level. Similarly the work in pupils' books in Key Stage 1 did not always show a high enough level of challenge for all pupils.
94. Standards in science have improved significantly in the last year because of the hard work and determination of staff, ably led by the recently appointed co-ordinator, to improve standards. Observation of lessons, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work and analysis of test results have all been used to identify weaknesses and set targets for improvement. Training and support have been used to good effect to increase staff knowledge and confidence. The curriculum is being revised to take account of the new national guidelines and the co-ordinator is aware that the activities planned need to be challenging enough to stretch the higher attaining pupils. The use of ICT is satisfactory at present and the co-ordinator has identified increasing its use as a priority for the future. She is particularly keen to develop work using sensors, but recognises that this will need more computers in classrooms. She is also aware that although the quality of assessment has improved, there is still more to do. Pupils' work is regularly marked but there is variation in the quality of the comments though the best marking gives clear guidance on how to improve the work. The school is now much better resourced for the teaching of science and the new environmental area is an asset.

ART AND DESIGN

95. The last time the school was inspected attainment in art was below national expectations at both key stages. Since then standards have improved and are now average at both key stages. From their early days in the school pupils are given opportunities to paint and draw, both what they see and imagine, using a range of materials and media. They experiment with colour and pupils use their knowledge to produce attractive illustrations, often to support their work in other subjects. Year 2

pupils, for example, produced a large, attractive seaside scene which illustrated how clothes and values have changed, as part of their history work.

96. The quality of observational drawing is a strength. Pupils are taught to practise and refine specific techniques using their sketchbooks and most produce work of high quality. Another strength is pupils' bold and imaginative use of colour. From a young age pupils are encouraged to experiment with their use of colour and to seek the exact shade to create the desired effect. The school places high value on art and pupils' paintings and drawings are displayed carefully. The quality of these displays does much to create a warm and colourful environment.
97. Appropriate emphasis is given to the enjoyment to be derived from art, and many pupils unhesitatingly name it as their favourite lesson. Three-dimensional work is also of good quality. Year 6 pupils have produced a model of Tian Shan in connection with their study of mountains in geography.
98. In addition to their practical work, pupils also learn about famous artists and use examples of their work for inspiration. Year 4 pupils produced made clay teapots after studying the work of Clarice Cliff. A particular artist is the subject of a display in the hall each half-term, and examples of a variety of artists' works adorn the corridors. The range of artists studied makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development.
99. Teaching is satisfactory, and as a result, pupils of all abilities are achieving at a satisfactory level. Teaching is most effective when teachers have sufficient confidence and expertise to be able to teach specific techniques. Where progress is more limited it is invariably because the teacher lacks sufficient skills to be able to guide pupils as to how to improve their work. Nonetheless, teachers plan lessons thoroughly and identify what they intend pupils to learn. Insistence that pupils observe closely develops skills that are valuable in other subjects, such as science.
100. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and further contribute to the standards achieved. The school makes good use of local facilities to broaden pupils' experience. A recent visit to Dulwich Picture Gallery provided pupils with the opportunity to study original paintings at first-hand, and an artist from the gallery is shortly coming to school to work with the pupils.
101. The co-ordinator is making a positive impact on standards in the subject. She has produced a very useful booklet setting out how to make the best use of sketchbooks and has led the introduction of a new scheme of work well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. From the limited evidence available, two lesson observations, talking to pupils and scrutiny of teachers plans, standards in design and technology, as at the last inspection, are in line with expectations, with pupils broadly achieving satisfactory standards. However, the limited opportunity to complete all the projects is preventing pupils achieving at a higher level.
103. In Year 1 lesson on food, pupils were observed preparing to make a fruit salad and vegetable soup. This work motivated pupils who eagerly discussed the wide variety of produce available. This was used very effectively by teachers, to develop pupils' spoken and written language skills and skills in close observational drawing. Pupils worked diligently all afternoon, totally engrossed in their work, which was of a good standard. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language with support also making good progress in the lesson. Puppets and houses designed in Year 2 show how effectively design and technology can support other curriculum areas. Pupils, measured accurately, used and experimented with a variety of materials and compared methods of joining such as glue, hole punches and sewing. They were making simple evaluations of the success of their work in discussions.

104. Although sufficient work has been planned that covers all the required elements, within Key Stage 2, many topics have not been completed. This has limited the amount of practical making, experimentation and subsequent evaluation of their designs by pupils. This was also indicated as a weakness in the last inspection. For example, pupils in Year 6, were clearly disappointed that they had not been able to make or evaluate the shelters they had designed, but proudly showed their work on investigating how to make joints strong enough for a structure to be stable. Work that has been completed such as sandwich design and money containers was of an appropriate standard and supported pupils' mathematical skills, when they produced graphs and charts from a data analysis.
105. No judgements can be made about teaching but the recently appointed co-ordinator has improved her expertise and is beginning to develop staff confidence. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines but staff have not yet felt confident enough to adapt this to better match the needs and interests of the pupils. Resources have been improved and there are now sufficient varieties of materials for pupils to use. However, pupils have had limited experience of incorporating electrical circuits or control mechanisms using information and communication technology in the products they make. The school recognises the need to raise the profile of this subject and to fully develop its potential to support other subject areas.

GEOGRAPHY

106. It was possible to observe only one geography lesson during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' written work indicates that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in both key stages. Pupils' achievement in relation to their previous work is satisfactory. They learn appropriate geographical skills and vocabulary from an early stage when studying their local environment. In Year 2, they compare their own locality with the seaside and tabulate their findings in an orderly way. They develop the skills of fieldwork when they make a plan of the school. Pupils survey local traffic, comparing quiet and busy time, and express their findings as a graph. They know the key features of a Mexican village.
107. By Year 6, pupils have increased their geographical knowledge of their local environment and the world considerably. They have investigated the school's drainage system and researched the water cycle. They have compared major rivers of the world, such as the Chiang Jiang in China and the Congo in Africa and have noted important climatic, industrial and social conditions in each country studied. Pupils achieve a good standard in using a good range of source materials from which to select and record information, and they illustrate their work with great care. Presentation is good, but standards of spelling are unsatisfactory. The volume of work of middle- and lower-attaining pupils is often small because tasks are insufficiently adapted for these pupils.
108. In the one lesson observed, the teaching was very good. Year 5 pupils worked out a route from Sutton to Brighton. They developed their map reading skills very well, and used technical language well in class discussion. The teacher had planned the lesson very well to enable the pupils to increase their skills and knowledge in a variety of ways. For example, they noted counties and places of interest on the journey, and were familiar with using a CD-ROM as a source of information. Pupils responded well to the very good working atmosphere that the teacher had established. They learned at a very good rate, sustaining their concentration and interest well. The teacher provided very good individual support so that pupils over the whole range of ability were achieving very well. Pupils used maps with differing scales competently and understood the symbols used.
109. Geography has been a recent focus for development and is better managed than at the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinator organises the subject well. She regularly monitors colleagues' planning and will shortly have an opportunity to assist them in the classroom. Teachers in each year plan well together and the scheme of work reflects revised statutory requirements, but has yet to be adapted fully to meet the needs of pupils over the whole range of ability. The co-ordinator has begun to match work to the assessment levels in the National Curriculum, but this requires further

development. The allocation of time is satisfactory overall, although geography is mostly taught in alternating half-term blocks with history. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their social and cultural understanding of the countries they study. The subject provides satisfactory opportunities for the development of literacy and numeracy. There has been a satisfactory improvement in provision for geography since the last inspection. Resources have improved, although there is still a need for more textbooks. A good standard of display adds to the status and attractiveness of the subject. Pupils make regular visits in connection with geography; some pupils, for example, will visit Brighton later this term.

HISTORY

110. Pupils' attainment in history at the end of Year 2 is above the standards expected nationally. Pupils' achievement in relation to their previous work is good. They understand 'then' and 'now', and 'old' and 'new'. They learn the differences between modern toys and those of a previous generation. They understand that old photographs and a classroom exhibition of old toys are useful evidence when comparing historical periods. Pupils know that historical enquiry involves asking questions about such evidence. For example, they compared a picture of Florence Nightingale in uniform with a modern nurse's uniform to deduce differences in ideas and working practices in hospitals between the Nineteenth Century and today. History makes a good contribution to developing the quality of pupils' oral and written description and their abilities to ask and answer questions. Pupils present written work neatly and illustrate it carefully, although the quantity of work produced varies considerably between higher and lower attaining pupils.
111. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with standards expected nationally. By Year 6, pupils can easily locate the period of the Ancient Greeks on a time line. They have a satisfactory understanding of BC and AD. They understand 'city state' and use information sources competently to contrast the geography and social development of Athens and Sparta. Pupils' achievement in relation to their abilities is satisfactory.
112. The teaching observed in Key Stage 1 was very good. Teachers are very well informed and very skilled at asking questions and presenting evidence in ways that attract and sustain pupils' interest. As a result, pupils work very hard. They answered questions thoughtfully and concentrated well when working independently. In an outstanding lesson in Year 2, the teacher used the resources on Florence Nightingale excellently to challenge pupils' thinking and powers of observation. The 75-minute lesson was divided into sections, each with a clear learning objective. Excellent questioning prompted the pupils' powers of observation. They were able to learn a great deal from a video because the teacher had prepared them very well for it. Then they eagerly worked independently for 30 minutes recording their ideas and illustrating them. The teacher supported all pupils, particularly the lower-attaining, and maintained the excellent pace of work by imposing a tight deadline. The pupils made excellent gains in the skills of independent learning.
113. The teaching observed in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory overall. Good questioning prompted one Year 6 class to develop their historical skills by making useful comparisons between Ancient Greek city-states. The teacher's knowledge of the topic was less certain in the other Year 6 class. The focus was on explaining information, and the challenge of the lesson was not matched to the varied abilities represented in the class. At other times also teachers were less assured in their use of questioning, for example when the pupils investigated the text from the Rosetta Stone in Year 3. Marking is regular throughout the subject, but tends to be brief, containing little information on how the pupils can improve their work.
114. The joint co-ordinators work in close collaboration and manage the subject efficiently. They monitor colleagues' planning and will assist in developing their teaching in the classroom when

history becomes a focus for development later this year. They have identified appropriate cross-curricular links, for example with geography, drama and music. There are good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within history, but these are not yet made explicit in the planning. A high standard of display enhances the image of history, often produced with the help of ICT. In particular, the very attractive display of projects on World War II, in the Key Stage 2 foyer, contains good examples of historical research and presentation. Particularly vivid is the account of his evacuation, together with photographic evidence, related by the grandfather of a Year 5 pupil. Work in history is more challenging and better designed to develop in pupils an appropriate range of skills than previously. There has been a satisfactory improvement in provision since that time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. The creation of the ICT room and the resultant considerable increase in the access to ICT are producing rapid improvement in pupils' progress in acquiring knowledge and skills and in understanding of how ICT can be used in a variety of situations. This is an improvement on the position at the last inspection.
116. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are average. For example in a lesson using a programmable robot pupils worked well in small groups to program a route accurately using various commands. At the same time this was re-inforcing their mathematical understanding of right angles. Examples of other work show that they can load and use various programs for drawing and word processing. In Key Stage 2 Year 6 pupils were working confidently and skilfully on presentations involving the use of a range of ICT applications. They were creating a series of good slides importing pictures, sound and text from different sources. In this task they were working at an above average level, but their attainment overall is average because they have more limited experience of using computers in control work and the use of sensors in measurement. At both key stages, standards are rising and the pupils are achieving well.
117. The teaching of ICT is good. The teachers are enthusiastic and have upgraded their own ICT skills to enable them to teach the subject better. The lessons are well-planned to build on pupils' previous experience of using ICT and their knowledge and skills. The planning makes good links with other subjects, for example during the inspection ICT was used to support work in mathematics, geography and English. Teachers explain very clearly what they expect pupils to achieve which helps everyone, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to monitor their own work and see how well they are achieving.
118. Teachers make particularly good use of whole class demonstrations. They used the digital projector and large screen particularly effectively to revise work and demonstrate new skills and techniques at the start of the lesson. Pupils were then able to work successfully and independently. In the best lessons the projector was also used to review what had been learnt and it allowed pupils to demonstrate what they had done to the whole class. In Year 5, pupils working with a graphics package used their mathematical knowledge to help them to create to scale a plan of their classroom on screen. The task also allowed more experienced pupils to develop their skills further as they had to work out the scale for themselves.
119. Pupils use the equipment sensibly and are keen to explore the various programs to see what they can achieve. They usually try to work things out for themselves before asking for help. They worked well in pairs in the ICT room and the small groups program the robots were co-operating well. The ICT co-ordinator has managed the recent good developments very effectively to provide a secure basis from which pupils can achieve high standards. The headteacher and staff have a clear understanding of the place of ICT in the curriculum and are committed to developing it further.

The ICT room has been well planned. It provides a good range of equipment and the software is adequate and being expanded. The curriculum meets statutory requirements though there are aspects of control technology and the use of sensors which need to be further developed and this is planned.

MUSIC

120. The school acknowledges that music is an area for development. At present, pupils do not build methodically on the required skills. Even though work in some lessons and some classes is satisfactory, by the end of each key stage, pupils are not attaining the standards envisaged in the National Curriculum. Pupils' individual levels of achievement throughout the school are unsatisfactory at present.
121. Of the two lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made good progress in one and satisfactory progress in the other. Year 2 pupils made good progress when they quickly learned the song, 'The Skeleton Stomp'. They sang well in tune and the improvement in singing over 20 minutes indicated good achievement in a short time. The pupils understood 'high' and 'low', and developed their understanding of the importance of reflecting the character of words when singing. They were particularly keen to reflect 'shimmy and shake' in their performance. In an interesting lesson on playground singing games, Year 4 pupils achieved competent performances, with the required actions, for example, in 'In and out the dusky bluebells'. Since few of them could skip, a skipping game, which was more ambitious, had to be abandoned. However, the lesson enabled pupils to consolidate their understanding of the need for rhythmic co-ordination in performance. It also provided some insight into an interesting aspect of social history. In an assembly, Year 5 pupils performed raps they had composed in class. These compositions revealed a good understanding of metre and rhyme and were well co-ordinated in performance.
122. Teachers are responsible for their own class's music. In the lessons observed, teachers prepared their lessons carefully and chose topics that the pupils would enjoy. Both teachers used question-and-answer well to develop pupils' understanding of technical points. In the Year 2 lesson, the teacher used her own voice well to demonstrate to the pupils, and skilfully manipulated the recorded accompaniment on cassette so that the pace of learning remained brisk. In both lessons, the pupils' very good attitudes and their efficient collaboration, with the teacher and each other, significantly helped their learning. The pupils concentrated well and worked keenly to try to achieve good standards. A small amount of music was observed in two other lessons. These were brief sessions and could not be assessed as formal lessons. However, in those lessons, it was clear that the teachers need assistance in matching musical activities to pupils' abilities and attainment.
123. The school lacks the advantage of a specialist musician. However the policy for teaching music is good the co-ordinator is preparing a scheme of work, based on the revised statutory requirements that will help non-specialist teachers to teach to the required standard. Co-ordination of music is satisfactory and the subject is well organised on a day-to-day basis. Resources are just adequate and will require supplementing to enable an appropriate range of composing and performing activities to be undertaken. Standards in music are not as high as reported in the previous inspection, but appropriate measures are being taken to enable standards to rise soon.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. By the end of both key stages pupils reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages and they are achieving at a satisfactory level. Attainment is similar to the last inspection. Pupils experience a wide range of activities including gymnastics, dance, field games, swimming and outdoor activities. Key Stage 1 pupils concentrate hard to develop bouncing skills with a bat and ball. At Key Stage 2, pupils acquire skills to be used in field games. They practise one and two-

handed throwing and catching with bean bags, small and large balls and rings, and learn how to improve standing jumps and running techniques.

125. Pupils enjoy lessons and most work sensibly. Teachers plan carefully to ensure pupils' safety. Appropriate adult support enables pupils with special educational needs to be involved as fully as possible in lessons. In the most successful lessons seen during the inspection, teaching focused on building skills and allowing pupils time to practise and modify their performance. As a result pupils were challenged and worked hard within their existing capabilities. Pupils are not consistently taught the importance of planning and evaluating for themselves and, in some lessons, those who mastered skills quickly were unsure what they should do next to get better. There is no system for assessing and recording pupils' progress within year groups and between key stages. This needs to be incorporated into schemes of work so that teachers and pupils can evaluate and measure achievement. Too few lessons were seen to grade teaching overall.
126. Pupils in both key stages learn to swim in the school's pool and standards are above average. The youngest pupils are sometimes accompanied by a parent in the pool and this helps them to be confident in the water from an early age. Effective instruction enables pupils to be safe in the water and all pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres by the time they leave school.
127. Until the new co-ordinator takes up post in September the subject is led by an enthusiastic team of newly qualified staff. They have overseen the implementation of many improvements identified since the previous report. Improved equipment is clearly labelled and stored in areas or containers that enable pupils to handle it safely. A range of extra-curricular activities is open to boys and girls and activities are supported by parents and visiting experts. Pupils take part in competitive sporting fixtures within the area and trophies in the entrance hall celebrate their successes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and they achieve well. They have a growing knowledge of Christianity and are familiar with aspects of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. They know about places of worship in these religions and have written good descriptive accounts when they retell what they have learned, for example, about a Christian wedding, the plan of a mosque and the Hindu festival of Holi. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of each religion to its followers. They reflect on the moral that a story may have beyond its literal meaning. Through this, they effectively develop their speaking, and apply messages from religious stories to their own lives and attitudes. The Story of the Ant, from Islam, led pupils to understand that compassion towards animals is a worthwhile quality in humans. The written work makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy.
129. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with local requirements and their achievement in relation to their abilities is satisfactory. Pupils understand the sequence of major events in Christianity. They know the story of Easter and its significance. They have extended their knowledge of other religions. They make informative and concise notes about, for example, Hindu worship, gods, temples and festivals. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Year 6, but a scrutiny of written work indicated that there are fewer opportunities for personal writing by this stage. Pupils had written some imaginative responses when describing, 'my special place', and when devising a wedding contract for bride and groom.
130. The teaching observed was good and sometimes very good. Teachers have a good level of knowledge. They plan well and are clear about what the pupils are to derive from the lessons, in terms of knowledge, understanding and values. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response, set a good pace for lessons and expect the pupils to work hard. Pupils learn effectively. They behave well, are enthusiastic and work with sustained concentration. They respond well to the teachers' clear instructions and set about tasks with a strong sense of purpose, especially in Key Stage 1. They give oral responses thoughtfully, and listen well to the teacher and

to the answers and views of others. Teachers allocate time carefully to tasks and set deadlines to ensure that pupils sustain a good pace of learning when they work independently.

131. The co-ordinator, who is new this school year, works enthusiastically and is organising the subject satisfactorily. She has continued the system of monitoring the planning of her colleagues and she supports them with ideas. As yet she has not been able to monitor their work in the classroom. The policy for religious education helpfully outlines for teachers the particular skills to be taught through religious education. The present scheme of work reflects well the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good plan for developing religious education further includes adopting the new local syllabus, and devising and implementing suitable assessment procedures, which at present are lacking. Marking tends to acknowledge that the learning objective has been achieved, but it does not suggest how pupils may improve their work. Too little attention is given to ensuring that key words are correctly spelt.
132. The quality of teaching is similar to that found in the previous inspection. It has shown good improvement in Key Stage 1. Planning has improved and so has the quality of resources. Visiting speakers provide pupils with valuable insights into different religions. Christian and Muslim visitors have recently made stimulating contributions to lessons in Key Stage 2.