

INSPECTION REPORT

ROBIN HOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Sutton

LEA area: Sutton

Unique reference number: 102984

Headteacher: Mrs Janet Wilson

Reporting inspector: Mr Martin Beale
19385

Dates of inspection: 19 - 23 June 2000

Inspection number: 191502

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Thorncroft Road Sutton SURREY
Postcode:	SM1 1RL
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Terry Gorley
Date of previous inspection:	7 - 10 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Martin Beale	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Physical education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements.
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Candy Kalms	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Christina Kadir	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	
		Music	
		Special educational needs	
James Howard	Team inspector	English	N/A
		Geography	
		History	
Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Design and technology	N/A
		Information technology	
		Religious education	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Robin Hood Junior School is a larger than average mixed school for pupils aged from 7 to 11. There are 326 pupils in the school, of whom almost a fifth are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Sixteen per cent have English as an additional language although few are at the early stages of understanding English. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average and seven have statements. The proportion of the pupils eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school as measured by Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results is above average; however, the comparatively high number of pupils who join the school after Year 3 have the effect of reducing overall attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Robin Hood Junior School is a very effective school. Standards have improved since the last inspection under the astute leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by staff and governors. The high quality of much of the teaching enables the pupils to make good progress and to achieve high standards. The school has a below average income and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Results in National Curriculum tests are above average in mathematics and science.
- There is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching throughout the school, which enables the pupils to learn quickly and to make good progress.
- The school benefits considerably from the very strong leadership provided by the headteacher and the effective support of staff and the Governing Body in managing the school, identifying and eliminating any weaknesses and planning developments.
- The good provision for the pupils' personal development is reflected in their willingness to learn, their good behaviour and the way in which they get on with each other and their teachers.
- The information gained from a thorough assessment system is used effectively to set targets and to aid teachers' planning.
- The wide range of learning opportunities is greatly enhanced by a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, strong community links and a very extensive range of well-attended extra-curricular activities.
- The good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress both towards their targets and in most subjects.

What could be improved

- Insufficient use is made of information technology (IT) to support learning in most classrooms.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in dealing with the key issues and other weaknesses from the previous inspection in 1996 and in raising attainment in the school. National Curriculum test results in mathematics and science have improved, but no comparison is possible in English as the 1996 examination scripts were lost in the post. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection; there is now almost no unsatisfactory teaching and much more that is very good or excellent. The pupils' IT skills have improved and are taught across the curriculum; however, greater consistency is needed in the use of computers to support learning in other subjects. Weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge have been eliminated through effective training. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities, with higher-attainers being suitably challenged and lower-attainers supported effectively. The implications for the school of increasing pupil numbers have been carefully analysed and the changes needed have been planned and effectively implemented. Pupils' skills in reading and writing are systematically developed and standards are rising.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	B	A
Science	B	D	B	B

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

Overall results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were in line with the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. There were some variations between results in the three core subjects, and boys did better than girls in English and mathematics compared with nationally. Results in both mathematics and science were above the national average. When compared with similar schools they were well above average in mathematics and above average in science. This was an improvement in both subjects over the results in 1998. English results in 1999 were not as good largely because fewer pupils reached the higher Level 5 than in mathematics and science. Results in English were in line with both the national average and results in similar schools; they have fallen from a high point in 1997.

The pupils are achieving well from observations in the lessons seen during the inspection and from a scrutiny of their work. Standards in the core subjects reflect those in the most recent National Curriculum tests. Standards of literacy are satisfactory, and are good for numeracy. Information technology skills develop well and standards are in line with expectations. The majority of the pupils are achieving the standards required by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education by the age of eleven. Good progress is also made in design and technology, where standards are particularly good, and in art, music and physical education. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress because of the good support that they receive both in class and in withdrawal sessions.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are eager to learn and are interested in their work. They enjoy school and respond well to the opportunities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes very good. The pupils behave well in the playground and around the school. This produces a pleasant atmosphere and has a beneficial effect on learning and life in the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils are friendly and the very good relationships between pupils and staff contribute considerably to the motivation of pupils.
Attendance	Attendance has improved this year and is close to the national average, while unauthorised absence has decreased.

The school is very effective in the work that it undertakes to fulfil its aims of promoting positive attitudes to work, good behaviour and the pupils' personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching is very good overall. It is satisfactory or better in over ninety-seven per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in twenty-four per cent. Teaching of both literacy and numeracy is good. This has a significant effect on the progress that the pupils make. Both of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented. Literacy is also promoted well in several subjects. High expectations of behaviour and good strategies for managing classes have enabled most teachers to develop a calm working atmosphere in their classrooms, where the pupils can concentrate, work hard and give of their best. Good planning, preparation and organisation with a clear sequence to activities and good reference to previous work enables the pupils to consolidate their skills well and learn new ideas quickly. Well-targeted questioning challenges the more able and enables the less able to be involved with confidence, and is also used effectively to generate good pace to lessons. Where there are any weaknesses it is because too much talking by teachers stifles pupils' discussions and their contributions to lessons and there is insufficient challenge for the most able. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is effective in enabling them to participate in all activities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school's curriculum provision is good overall. There are good links between the subjects and a wide range of extra-curricular activities is on offer to all of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Carefully targeted support is building pupils' confidence, improving their skills and enabling them to take a full part in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Staff successfully involve pupils in all classroom activities and the support for those who are at the early stage of language acquisition is effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Social education has been a focus and provision in this area is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good measures to monitor and promote good behaviour with a strong emphasis on rewarding good behaviour. The school successfully ensures the health and safety of its pupils.

All National Curriculum requirements are being met. Some teaching sessions are too short for gymnastics lessons in the hall. Extra time is allocated each week to develop the pupils' writing. Procedures for the assessment of the pupils' academic progress have improved considerably. Good links have been developed with people and organisations within the local community. Several successful initiatives have been introduced to strengthen the schools' links with parents. Suitable systems are in place to deal with child protection issues, although there has been no recent whole-school training for staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strong teamwork and the effective leadership of the headteacher and other senior managers have been instrumental in bringing about improvements and raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is very effective in its work. It has a good understanding of its role, which it fulfils for the benefit of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff reflect on and evaluate all that they do, taking vigorous and effective action to deal with any identified areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The funds and resources available are used very effectively to support school improvement.

Strong teamwork is a feature of the school. Year teams work well together, planning jointly and supporting each other very effectively. There is a clear and visible commitment from all associated with the school to continue the drive to raise standards. The building has been continually improved to provide specialist areas and to provide accommodation for the increased number of classes. Staffing levels are suitable and there is a good range of learning resources. Financial planning is thorough. The school is adept at securing extra funding to support site developments. The Governing Body takes care to ensure that the principles of best value are used when purchasing goods and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress that their children make. • The school's expectations of hard work and good behaviour. • The way the school helps their children to grow up well. • The school is well led and managed. • The approachability of staff. • Their children like coming to school. • They are well informed about their children's progress. • The close way in which the school tries to work with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities.

Parents are pleased with the school and the education that it provides. Inspection findings support this view, but do not support the opinion of some parents that insufficient extra-curricular activities are provided. The range of clubs and sporting activities and the extent of pupil participation are both judged by the inspection team to be excellent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The overall results of Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were close to the national average and close to those of pupils in similar schools. There were some differences between the three core subjects, with results in mathematics and science being better than in English. Results in mathematics and science were both above the national average. Results in mathematics were well above average, and in science were above average when compared with similar schools. Results in English were close to both the national average and the average of pupils in similar schools. One reason for the lower English results was that fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English than did in mathematics in particular. The proportion of the pupils who achieved at least Level 4 in mathematics (the standard expected for their age) was above the national average, as was the proportion achieving the higher Level 5. Two pupils achieved Level 6, which is above the standard expected from the average fourteen-year-old. The 2000 results are similar in all three subjects except that more pupils have achieved Level 5 in English and in science than in 1999.
2. There have also been some differences in performance by gender. Boys' results have shown an improvement over the last few years at a faster rate than girls' results. Girls achieved better results than boys in English for the last three years, although in both 1998 and 1999 the difference was not as great as seen nationally. Boys achieved better results than girls in mathematics in the last two years, with the difference greater than seen nationally. There has been no pattern to any gender variations in science. The school's targets for results in English and mathematics in both 1998 and 1999 were sufficiently challenging and were successfully achieved.
3. Pupil mobility has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils. Pupils who enter the school in Year 3 from the infant school do so with above average attainment overall in English, mathematics and science. Robin Hood Junior School has recently expanded from two to three forms of entry and has had some spare capacity. These places are filled during the course of the year, with some pupils not joining the school until Year 6. Several of the pupils who enter at this stage have had an unsuccessful experience elsewhere, and a high proportion has either special educational needs or English as an additional language. Some of these pupils have behavioural difficulties. This has the effect of lowering overall levels of attainment on entry of each year group of pupils to be close to those seen nationally.
4. The pupils make good progress in English during their time in the school. The concentration on the promotion of literacy in subjects other than English, and the extra time devoted to writing in particular are starting to have an impact on raising standards. Speaking and listening skills are weak in the lower part of the school; however, through the interesting range of learning opportunities provided and the good teaching, the skills of speaking and listening are fostered well and the pupils make good progress. The pupils' speaking skills also have an impact on their written work in the earlier years, as many pupils write as they speak. The school has identified that it is weaknesses in the pupils' written work that causes lower English SATs results. Considerable effort has been put into tackling this weakness in the last few years, and improvements can be seen in the standard of writing throughout the school. Good progress is being made in writing, particularly through the support that its development receives in other subjects. Reading develops well, with a love for books being fostered throughout the school. The pupils have good awareness of spoken sounds, which they can use to good effect when faced with unfamiliar words, but few are able to use the context of what they read to deduce meaning.
5. Standards of numeracy are good throughout the school. The successful implementation of the daily mathematics lesson this year, many features of which had already been adopted by the school, has enabled the pupils to develop great confidence when handling numbers. The pupils' mental recall of a wide range of number facts is very good, with higher-attaining pupils being able to solve comparatively complex calculations with little need for jottings. The pupils are able to use and apply their calculating skills effectively when solving problems, with the

need to check answers using another method being promoted throughout the school.

6. The pupils' information technology (IT) skills are in line with national expectations and are showing good development through the use by teachers of the material provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to support their planning. The school has made good progress in this subject since the last inspection, with a new suite of computers recently provided. Pupils learn new skills in the context of how they can be applied, with examples drawn from a wide range of subjects. Some teachers also plan to use computers within their classrooms: however, the one remaining weakness in this area is that opportunities are not provided consistently in classrooms for the pupils to use IT to support their learning.
7. The standard of the work seen in the core subjects reflects the results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests. Attainment in English is in line with national expectations while attainment is above expectations in both mathematics and science. The pupils are achieving well from evidence both in the lessons seen during the inspection and from a scrutiny of their work. Progress is good in design and technology, art, music and physical education. Some particularly good work was seen in design and technology, which is an area of strength in the school. Standards in physical education are considerably enhanced by the excellent range of extra-curricular activities provided. Progress is satisfactory in religious education and pupils are achieving in line with the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus. The time devoted to both geography and history has been reduced to allow more to be allocated to English and mathematics; however, the progress made by pupils is satisfactory in geography and good in history.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and are able to participate in all areas of the curriculum. They receive good support both in lessons and in small withdrawal groups. The same is true of the progress made by those pupils with English as an additional language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. This is a strength of the school, and together with the very good relationships that exist, makes a significant contribution to pupil learning.
10. The majority of pupils are positive in their attitude to the school. They are eager to learn and are interested in their work. The pupils enjoy school and respond well to the opportunities provided. This has a positive effect on their learning. Pupils settle quickly to their activities. They concentrate well, and are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussions, such as in a Year 6 geography lesson where the pupils provided good ideas about changes in the environment. Most pupils are motivated and attentive although some are easily distracted and can become restless.
11. Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes very good. The pupils behave well in the playground and around the school. This fosters a pleasant atmosphere and has a beneficial effect on learning and life in the school. Pupils understand the standards of behaviour expected and the system of rewards and sanctions. They respond well to the school rules and their own agreed classroom rules. Staff handle well any incidents where pupils become restless or misbehave. There has been an increase in the number of fixed term exclusions recently, where this has been used as the ultimate sanction for severe misbehaviour.
12. Pupils are courteous and friendly, and speak highly of their school. They report that bullying is rare. The school has put much effort into eradicating bullying, and pupils feel confident that any incidents are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.
13. The pupils' personal development and the relationships that they establish are very good. Relationships between pupils are friendly and sociable and the very good relationships between pupils and staff contributes considerably to the motivation of pupils. The pupils work well together on their own or in pairs and in groups. They share equipment and resources sensibly when working together, in particular pupils in one Year 4 class divided the tasks sensibly so that each had a turn using the computer. Pupils are willing to help each other; they co-operate well on joint activities as when pupils in a Year 6 class sensibly shared their ideas when researching about a famous person. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds are thoroughly integrated and get on well with each other. Pupils share thoughts in circle time and

listen with respect to the feelings and beliefs of others.

14. Year 6 pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school. They are willing and helpful as monitors around the school, assisting with wet play, working the overhead projector and delivering registers to classrooms. They show initiative in organising sales to raise funds for charities and to fund their annual summer production. Year 5 pupils enjoy their role as a support for new pupils to the school. Classroom monitors carry out their jobs conscientiously. Pupils are enthusiastic about their participation in the recently formed school council and value the role that they are beginning to play in decision making.
15. Attendance in the school is satisfactory. Levels of attendance have improved significantly in the current school year. A few pupils take holidays during term time which has an effect on the overall attendance figures. Unauthorised absence has also decreased because absences are more rigorously investigated. Punctuality is satisfactory although a minority of pupils arrive late in the morning, some frequently so.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in over ninety-seven per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in twenty-four per cent. This is a major factor in the good progress that the pupils make. The pupils consolidate learning well and learn new ideas and skills quickly. They respond well to the praise and encouragement that they are given by putting a considerable effort into all areas of their work. The calm working atmosphere that has been generated in most classrooms enables the pupils to concentrate on their work with little distraction, to work hard and achieve well. Teaching of both literacy and numeracy is good. Both the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson have been successfully implemented. Homework is used very effectively to support learning, to extend the pupils and to prepare them for secondary school.
17. The structure of the literacy hour is well established throughout the school and is having a considerable impact on standards. Extra sessions are devoted to extended writing and to reading, and literacy is promoted effectively in other subjects. Lesson planning is often very good with a good link back to previous work. Expectations are high. Tasks are carefully pitched at various levels, as in a Year 6 lesson where the pupils were building words from known spellings with the activities carefully chosen by the teacher to meet individual needs. The methods used by teachers and the way in which questioning is used enables all pupils to feel confident and yet challenged by the work. Enthusiasm and the good use of praise encourages the development of a good working atmosphere and generates pace to lessons as in Year 5 where the pupils were preparing to write poetry. The teacher encouraged the pupils to picture themselves on the beach before thinking about imaginative phrases that they might use to describe the scene.
18. Mathematics lessons follow closely the pattern recommended by the national strategy. They are well planned with the objectives shared with the pupils so that they understand what it is they are to learn. Mental arithmetic sessions are inventive and challenging, encouraging the pupils to develop confidence when handling numbers. Plenary sessions are used well to reinforce learning and to assess whether or not the pupils have achieved the objectives. Pupils are taught in ability group in Years 5 and 6. This enables higher-attaining pupils to be challenged and extended and less able pupils to be supported in smaller groups. Good questioning, with the pupils expected to reason and to explain their answers in a Year 6 lesson, helped to develop the pupils' written methods of multiplication. Clear explanations that referred carefully to previous work generated pace and enabled the pupils to focus on their work. High expectations and work that was carefully planned for each ability group in the class ensured

that the pupils in a Year 4 class worked hard to complete tasks converting fractions into decimals, while interesting activities on symmetrical patterns motivated Year 5 pupils and successfully encouraged collaborative work.

19. High expectations of behaviour and good strategies for managing classes have enabled most teachers to develop a calm working atmosphere in their classrooms. Excellent relationships

throughout the class and an effective working atmosphere in a Year 5 IT lesson preparing a page for a newspaper, allowed the teacher to use humour along with plenty of praise and encouragement. The teacher was skilled at giving the pupils just enough information to enable the pupils to move forward, without stifling their inventiveness. The pupils worked well in pairs, collaborating well over decisions to be taken about the layout of their page. Good lesson planning, preparation and organisation with a clear sequence to activities and good reference to previous work moves learning forward. Questioning challenges the more able and enables the less able to be involved with confidence. A lively pace was generated in a well-structured Year 3 science lesson where the pupils carried out simple experiments with shadows. Clear explanations systematically developed the pupils' knowledge and understanding while retaining their interest and motivation.

20. The teachers' good subject knowledge helps to deepen the pupils' understanding of new ideas. The teacher showed a very good knowledge and understanding of the material in a Year 6 music lesson. This was evident from the very good planning and the good questioning of the pupils, as they were involved in appraising each other's work. The pupils concentrated carefully on developing their musical knowledge and applying it to the creation of their own compositions. Skilled teaching enabled a Year 4 teacher to improvise well in a dance lesson when the taped music had broken down. The lesson was quickly adapted and the teacher's encouragement of the pupils enabled them to produce simple choreographed dances in pairs and small groups to tunes composed spontaneously by the teacher.
21. A particular feature of recent developments is that the objectives for each lesson are shared with the pupils at the start and reviewed at the end. This, coupled with helpful marking in some classes, where pupils are provided with written comments on the quality of their work and how it might be improved, gives the pupils a good understanding of how well they are doing. Individual targets are also set and regularly reviewed in English and mathematics. This also gives the pupils a good picture of the progress that they are making and encourages them to strive harder.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, especially in the core subjects. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' ability to achieve. Teachers use methods which enable all pupils to learn effectively. The time available is used well and support staff are deployed effectively; however, teachers need to be more aware of adapting work more carefully to the needs of these pupils in other subjects.
23. Pupils with English as an additional language learn well. They are supported by a visiting teacher who works on the early stages of language acquisition. This teacher liaises well with classroom teachers and tries to relate the work that they are doing to class topics. For example, pupils in Year 6 had work linked to health education and the issue of smoking. Class teachers are very supportive and involve pupils in all classroom activities. They have access to a range of relevant learning materials. Pupils' mother tongue is valued, and pupils are encouraged to use it in school such as when a Korean pupil was able to write a letter home to a friend.
24. In the small proportion of lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory too much talking by the teacher stifled the pupils' discussions and their contributions, and tasks did not provide sufficient challenge for the most able. There were some cases where the control exercised by the teacher did not have a sufficient effect on discipline in the lesson.

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

25. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The time allocated to subjects favours the teaching of basic skills, and additional time is provided for English and mathematics. The school has effectively adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This has had an impact on pupils' achievements in all curriculum areas but in particular in English and mathematics. The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Issues such as health education, sex education and drugs' awareness are sensitively and appropriately taught. By the time that they leave the school, the pupils have a good understanding of health issues and an awareness of their ability to make informed choices.
26. The school has very good links with many people and organisations from within the local community. This year the school has established business links with a local hotel, and Year 6 pupils are planning a project that will involve working with this hotel.
27. Every effort is being made to maintain the breadth of the curriculum. In spite of improvements to the provision for the teaching of IT skills, insufficient use is made of IT to support learning within the classroom. Some difficulties also arise in the provision for physical education, because afternoon sessions in the hall are too short for effective use to be made of large apparatus in gymnastics.
28. The school has undertaken considerable curriculum development and as a result good improvements have been made in areas identified as weaknesses by the last inspection report. Documentation and schemes of work to support teachers in their planning are very helpful. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities and in improving teachers' subject knowledge in the core subjects, including science and information technology and in setting of pupils for mathematics.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly in English and more specifically for literacy. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons for the majority of the time. Staff provide good support in whole-class, group or one-to-one situations and a small number of pupils benefit from special language development support. This is of a high quality, involving pupils and parents very well, and as a consequence pupils are much more confident about their ability to participate in all areas of the curriculum.
30. The school's policies and practice ensure equal access and opportunity for all pupils to all activities and the whole curriculum provided by the school. The organisation of pupils into ability groups for mathematics in Years 5 and 6 enables teachers to extend the higher-attaining pupils and to support the less able in smaller groups where they can receive more adult attention. Teachers plan carefully, particularly in the core subjects to ensure that work is closely matched to the pupils' prior learning and attainment is evaluated from a careful assessment of their work. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well in lessons and given further intensive help in small withdrawal groups. This ensures that they can successfully participate in all areas of the curriculum and acquire an understanding of the English language.
31. An excellent range of activities is provided to extend the pupils' learning both during and beyond the school day. This includes numerous clubs before and after school and at lunchtimes that also encourage the pupils' social development. These extra-curricular activities include a choir, gardening, dance, lace making and a range of sporting activities. The school runs teams that compete against neighbouring schools, successfully encouraging a sense of teamwork and fair play and raising the profile of the school in the local community.
32. A wide range of visits is arranged to support the pupils' studies and to deepen their cultural development. The pupils visit local churches, the synagogue and ecology centre. Pupils often take part in town events and promotions. The school promotes these links as part of its curriculum, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The curriculum is also enriched by visits e.g. to The Millennium Dome and the British Museum. Learning is also enhanced by contributions from visiting specialists such as sporting coaches, theatre companies and the annual event of an artist in residence. Musicians and poets are welcomed into the school to

work with pupils. There are regular opportunities for pupils to hear a range of music, and displays celebrate the work of artists. Pupils' cultural development is effectively encouraged. Teachers seek to increase pupils' understanding of their own culture through all subjects.

33. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils are given opportunities for reflection and to express what they feel. The quality of collective worship is good and encourages the pupils to consider values and their application to everyday life. The concept of spirituality is fostered, not only through religious education lessons, which explore a variety of other faiths, but also through pupils' writing. The recently introduced circle time allows pupils opportunities to reflect on both their own feelings and those of others. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and school and class rules are discussed and formulated with the pupils. Teachers apply these consistently in lessons. All adults who work in the school provide good role models, and the quality of relationships between all members of the school community is particularly good. The school encourages pupils to be aware of others beyond the confines of the school, and supports a number of local and national charities. Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to one another. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together co-operatively and to take responsibility. The school has worked hard to encourage social development and the current provision in this area is very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school has maintained the high levels of support and guidance identified in the previous inspection report. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and provide a caring, supportive atmosphere. There are good arrangements to ensure the health and safety of the pupils. Detailed checks of the site and premises are carried out each term. They are systematically documented and any action required is carried out quickly. All equipment is subject to annual checks. Day-to-day first-aid procedures for dealing with minor accidents and emergencies are good. There is a detailed child protection policy clearly explaining procedures and suitable systems in place to deal with any situations that occur. Staff know that they should refer any concerns to the headteacher; however, there has been no recent formal training for staff. The school receives support from a number of outside agencies to supplement the care it provides. The police liaison officer and road and rail safety officers talk to the pupils about the danger of strangers and road and rail safety. During the inspection pupils received a talk about the misuse of drugs.
35. Good procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' personal development and to keep track of any concerns. Staff are aware of the needs of the pupils in their classes. A PSHE programme is in place, which together with regular circle time supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils' achievements and good work are regularly recognised and rewarded in assemblies, and individual achievements are displayed on the honours' board.
36. Very good measures are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. A detailed policy clearly explains procedures for staff on how to manage discipline. The school has clear expectations on standards of behaviour. It emphasises an approach based on rewarding good behaviour. Pupils know the standards of behaviour expected and are fully aware of the consequences of any inappropriate behaviour. Staff consistently use praise to reward pupils and to encourage them to behave well. Sanctions are applied when necessary. Good systems are in place for staff to record and monitor incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Procedures based on a no blame approach are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying; pupils report that such incidents are rare.
37. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good and have helped to improve levels of attendance and to reduce unauthorised absences this year. Registers are monitored daily, unexplained absences are followed up and the parents of pupils with attendance problems

contacted whenever their child is absent. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service and together they recently organised a campaign to raise pupil and parental awareness of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

38. The systems for assessing attainment and progress are very good. The school has a clear policy on assessment which is being effectively implemented, and is closely linked to target-setting. End-of-year assessment procedures are fully established in English and mathematics in all year groups, and give the school a very clear indication of the measure of progress that the pupils have made towards projected targets. Regular assessment in all core subjects, with a range of tests linked to termly topics and learning objectives, builds up a clear picture of progress being made over the year. Further assessment practices and procedures are being developed in all subjects, with an evaluation being made on weekly planning sheets showing pupils who make more or less than expected progress.
39. Assessment information is used very effectively to guide curriculum planning. Teachers' lesson planning includes an evaluation of learning, whether objectives have been adequately met or exceeded, and how future planning may need to be adjusted accordingly. Test results are analysed very carefully to identify any particular strengths or weaknesses. For example, in numeracy, long division, long multiplication and problem-solving were shown as areas that needed particular attention.
40. Assessment is used particularly effectively to support academic progress by placing pupils in groups within the classroom or across the year group for different subjects and activities. Pupils with special educational needs have effective individual education plans that include sensible and achievable targets. Their work is regularly assessed and new steps in learning are well planned and effectively communicated to pupils and parents. Booster classes are provided for some Year 6 pupils, and the school finances similar support for pupils towards the end of Year 5. Pupils are set individual targets in literacy and numeracy, which are clearly defined and regularly reviewed. They are keen to achieve these targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school is very well regarded by parents. This message came through clearly from the questionnaires and pre-inspection meeting. They are very supportive of the school and satisfied with the standards achieved. The inspection team supports the view of parents who feel that the teaching is good, that the school is well led and managed, that the school expects children to do their best and that they find the school welcoming and approachable. In contrast to this a minority of parents raised concerns about levels of homework and felt that the school did not offer sufficient extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence does not support these views. The provision of homework is satisfactory, with all classes encouraged to take home their reading books in addition to other activities, while the number and range of extra-curricular activities is far better than those offered in most schools.
42. The school has established very good links with its parents. Parental support is encouraged in all areas of school life, and the school has successfully achieved a close partnership with parents. The involvement of parents and the contribution that they make to the life of the school and to their children's learning are very good. The headteacher welcomes parents into the school, and together with staff, is always available to discuss any concerns. The school seeks to involve parents in decisions and regularly consults them about school policies. For example, their views were sought on the home-school agreement and the behaviour policy. Parents are invited to class assemblies. Parents have played a significant role in securing the improvements to the school particularly the school ground development. They are also responsible for helping to organise some of the extra-curricular activities and some parents regularly hear pupils read in school. A Parents' and Friends' Association arranges a variety of social and fund raising events enabling the school to purchase additional resources, a recent purchase being new football kit. Homework diaries provide a good link to support pupils' learning at home and provide an effective means of communication between the teacher and parents, although they are not always used consistently.
43. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in the development and review of individual education plans from the start of the process. They report on their child's success or problems with homework tasks and meet regularly with the special needs co-ordinator, and class and support teachers to ensure that the pupils stay motivated and keep up with their work.

44. Frequent newsletters keep parents well-informed about school matters, forthcoming events and key dates. The prospectus provides useful information on school routines. The school makes a considerable effort to inform parents about its curriculum, holding workshops annually and inviting parents to preview sex education videos; however, the information provided for parents about work to be done in lessons is limited to brief topic headings in newsletters. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through two formal consultation meetings each year and parents can discuss annual reports should they wish to do so. Annual written reports give clear information on pupils' achievements and progress and identify clear targets for future learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. Strong teamwork and the effective leadership of the headteacher and other senior managers is focussed very effectively on continually seeking improvements to the quality of the education provided and the standards achieved by the pupils. This has had a considerable effect on the way in which the school has moved forward in recent years. The headteacher leads the school very well. She provides a clear sense of direction and is committed to raising standards. She has been rigorous in ensuring that the action plan following the previous inspection has been implemented, and has been instrumental in the improvements to the school.
46. Other senior managers, such as the deputy head and many subject co-ordinators, are also providing effective leadership. They provide very good support for the headteacher and for their colleagues. They have ensured that policies and all supporting documents are up to date and provide clear direction for the development of their subjects. There is a very strong sense of teamwork in the school. Year teams work as strong units, planning jointly and supporting each other very effectively. The administrative support in the school is very effective in providing a welcoming point for parents and in ensuring that the school runs smoothly. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. The school has effective systems and structures in place to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all opportunities. Staff are deployed effectively and equipment is used well. Individual education plans and pupils' work are monitored, and staff and pupils observed in lessons.
47. The Governing Body is very effective in its work. There is considerable expertise amongst governors and a considerable commitment to the success of the school. Governors have a good understanding of their role, which they fulfil well. There is an effective committee structure, which is involved in forward planning. Through regular visits and by a joint annual review of the school undertaken in conjunction with the local education authority, governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and a clear vision for the future.
48. Staff reflect on and evaluate all that they do, taking vigorous and effective action to deal with any areas that are identified for improvement. The processes and structures that are in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are very thorough. What is more important is that an analysis of any monitoring is used to identify areas for development and steps are taken to deal with them. This is a school that is very happy to reflect on all that it does and to take steps to improve the education that it provides.
49. The development plan is very useful and has been used very effectively to raise standards and to deal with weaknesses identified at the last inspection. It is carefully constructed in part from the outcome of monitoring and also from the vision for the future of the school, which it encapsulates well. It has clear priorities, which are deemed by the inspection team to be appropriate for the school in its current stage of development, and measurable targets that are based on raising standards. Actions required to meet the targets are clear and are vigorously implemented. Resource implications are carefully costed. Many of the areas for improvement identified by this inspection already appear as areas to be tackled in the school development plan. Financial planning is secure and is very well supported by the process of development planning. The funds and resources available are used very effectively to support school improvement. Considerable extra funding has been secured from unobtrusively placed advertisement hoardings along the perimeter of the school, which also serve to shield the

school from traffic noise. The Governing Body takes care to ensure that the principles of best value are used when purchasing goods and services.

50. The school is staffed with appropriately qualified teachers who have a wide range of experience ranging from newly qualified teachers to those with considerable service. The significant turnover in staff over the past two years has resulted in one class having frequent staff changes. A suitable number of support staff work with pupils with special educational needs. These staff work closely with class teachers, are included in planning and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Staff training needs are met through appraisal and development meetings with the headteacher. Induction procedures for new staff are effective. Newly qualified teachers are allocated a mentor and provided with regular non-contact time.
51. Accommodation is good. Three classes are housed in new mobile classrooms but these are modern and have their own toilet facilities. Several rooms in the main building are used for specialist activities and group work. Another building has recently been refurbished into a specialist music and drama facility. The recently installed computer suite allows whole classes to be taught together; however, as the room also contains the library it limits the space available and accessibility for both facilities. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors make for a stimulating environment and enable the pupils' achievements to be recognised. The outside area is adequate having a suitably sized playground and a grassed area. There are also two quadrangles currently being developed to provide outside areas for teaching and learning. Overall the quality and quantity of learning resources are good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. To build on the progress made since the last inspection, the school should ensure that opportunities are consistently provided for pupils to use information technology as a tool to support their learning across the subjects of the National Curriculum (paragraphs 6, 27, 64 and 91).
53. In addition to the above, the governors may wish to consider these other matters when drawing up their action plan:
 - providing regular staff training in child protection matters (paragraph 34).
 - improving the timetable arrangements for physical education lessons (paragraph 27).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6.8	17.6	39.2	33.8	2.7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	326
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	59

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	92

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	42	44	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	29	36	39
	Girls	36	32	41
	Total	65	68	80
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	76 (68)	79 (55)	93 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	32	36	35
	Girls	33	31	33
	Total	65	67	68
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	76 (68)	79 (53)	79 (57)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	3
Indian	16
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	29

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	6	1
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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	585781
Total expenditure	584970
Expenditure per pupil	1779
Balance brought forward from previous year	31776
Balance carried forward to next year	32587

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	327
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	35	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	57	7	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	55	9	7	1
The teaching is good.	45	51	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	46	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	1	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	35	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	49	4	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	40	2	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	51	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	47	19	6	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS

OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

54. The results of the 1999 end of key stage tests for eleven-year-olds showed that attainment in English was close to the national average and the average for similar schools. Results have dropped slightly over the last three years. Results in 1999 were below those in mathematics and science largely because fewer pupils achieved above average levels in English. The current performance of Year 6 pupils is broadly in line with national expectations. The range of ability in this year group is wide. Whilst about a fifth of pupils are achieving high standards, there is a large number of pupils with special educational needs who attain lower than nationally expected standards.
55. Standards of speaking are low among the younger pupils. Many have difficulty in clearly articulating their ideas and lack the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. This has an impact on the quality of their writing, as pupils tend to make the same errors in their written work that they do when speaking. The school is working well to improve standards in this area. Activities such as Circle Time provide opportunities for discussion and the considered use of language. Teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient time to think about what they want to say and help them when they are struggling. These strategies are working well and the pupils make significant progress in speaking as they move through the school.
56. Standards of listening are not well developed in younger pupils but good progress is made throughout the school. This is not only as a result of the pupils' positive attitudes to learning but also because activities are planned that encourage the development of listening skills. Often, when pupils are watching a video in connection with work in another subject, they are required to take notes. This focuses their attention well, with the result that they develop both greater knowledge of the subject matter and improved listening skills.
57. Pupils make good progress in reading. Older pupils are able to deduce information from what is written and discuss their views of the characters in the books that they read. The school is successfully promoting a love of literature among the pupils. Older pupils discuss their preferences among authors, referring to a number of titles that they have read. Pupils are specifically taught strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. They have a good knowledge of spoken sounds and common letter blends. Although some work is done in the use of context cues to deduce meaning, this is not so well developed.
58. The previous inspection report was critical of some shortcomings in the opportunities to develop the pupils' writing. The school has responded very well to these criticisms and now provides regular opportunities for pupils to write for a number of purposes in a range of styles. Standards of presentation are high throughout the school. Teachers set high expectations in this area and pupils take considerable pride in the appearance of their work. This is evident not only in English, but across all subjects. As pupils progress through the school they learn formal grammar and sufficient technical vocabulary to be able to discuss their writing; however, some pupils continue to make needless errors. Although when questioned they display good knowledge of the use of capital letters and punctuation, not all consistently apply this knowledge in their writing.
59. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are thoroughly prepared and teachers plan to ensure that adequate time is given to all aspects of the subject. The school is using the National Literacy Strategy well and its effective implementation is a key factor in the good progress now being made. Teachers make good use of regular assessments, and adapt their teaching to tackle identified areas of weakness. Group activities are well matched to the attainment of the pupils, and those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress.
60. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject is good. The school collects data on pupils' performance from a wide range of tests. The results of these are analysed and suitable targets for improvement are set. This commitment to continued development and the higher standards mean that the school is well placed to raise attainment in English further.

MATHEMATICS

61. The results of National Curriculum tests for mathematics in 1999 were above average overall and well above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 4 (the standard expected for their age) was above average as was the proportion at the higher Level 5. Two pupils achieved Level 6, above the standard expected of a 14-year-old. The 2000 results are slightly lower. Results in mathematics have fluctuated but show an overall upward trend since the last inspection. They were similar in 1999 to results in science but were better than those in English. Boys achieved better results than girls both 1998 and 1999, with the difference being greater than nationally. The school's targets for mathematics were exceeded in both 1998 and 1999.
62. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 largely reflect these recent test results and are above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Standards of numeracy are good, and the pupils make good progress in the development of number skills and the application of these skills as they move through the school. The good teaching, with some very good and excellent lessons, and the successful implementation of the daily mathematics lesson are the main factors that contribute to this good progress, although the pupils' keenness, enthusiasm and their hard work also play their part. All teachers provide interesting and challenging activities at the start of their lessons to develop the pupils' speed of mental recall and to increase their confidence when handling numbers. These sessions enable the pupils to consolidate previous learning well, while sharpening considerably their accuracy when calculating. By Year 6 most pupils can work accurately with whole numbers, decimals and fractions with many also able to use percentages when calculating.
63. Lessons are planned well, with the main teaching referring back to previous work to enable the pupils to focus on new ideas to be learnt in the lesson. The objectives for each lesson are shared with the class and reviewed at the end of the lesson. Teaching is brisk and challenging with questioning skilfully targeted to keep the pupils on their toes and of a style that requires them to think carefully and to respond in detail. The teacher in a Year 4 class carefully explained the lesson's objectives, and then through good questioning enabled the pupils to recognise the equivalence of the fraction and decimal forms of a half, a quarter and one-tenth. By the end of the lesson the higher-attaining pupils were able to write the decimal equivalent of four-tenths. The plenary session was used well in a Year 3 lesson to check that the lesson objective had been covered, and for groups to report on what they had done in the lesson and to explain how they had worked out their answers to some quite complex problems involving money.
64. The activities chosen for pupils to attempt are provided at different levels, matched carefully to the stage they have reached and provide sufficient challenge for all to move forward. The teaching of pupils in Years 5 and 6 in classes organised by ability has enabled a challenge to be provided for those who need extending and for support to be provided for those who need longer to consolidate and develop their skills. Some of the activities given by teachers include the use of IT, but this is not a consistent feature in all classes and is an area requiring attention.
65. Opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to investigations, practical work and the solution of problems. These help to deepen the pupils' understanding while further sharpening their skills. Year 6 pupils were applying their skills to the solution of real-life problems involving the use of money during the inspection. The higher-attaining pupils are able to solve quite complex problems by breaking them down into smaller, more manageable parts. Good progress is also made in the pupils' understanding of the properties of shapes, and in their ability to handle, present and interpret data in a variety of forms. Pupils in one Year 5 class were able to recognise when different shapes had been translated and could give instructions for translating a shape by specifying the distance and direction to be moved. In another class in the same year group the pupils were able to complete symmetrical patterns and use coordinates to plot points. Pupils in Year 4 were being taught about decimals during the inspection. Many had reached the point where they could use their understanding of the metric system to convert units of length such as centimetres into metres, and units of capacity such as millilitres into litres.

66. The good progress made since the last inspection has been supported in part by a careful analysis of test results to identify areas of weakness. The regular monitoring of teaching with constructive feedback has helped improvements to be made and the introduction of many of the features of the daily mathematics lesson one year early has had a significant impact on standards. A commitment to high standards has driven planning for the subject and has been supported by training and a review carried out jointly with the local education authority.

SCIENCE

67. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for science were above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. Results in science were close to those in mathematics and better than results in English. The proportion of the pupils achieving at least Level 4 was well above average. These results have been maintained in 2000 and more pupils have achieved the higher Level 5. Results in science are higher than at the last inspection. There has been no significant pattern in recent years to any difference in the results achieved by boys and girls.
68. Standards for the present group of Year 6 pupils are above average. These standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection. Questioning is used well, encouraging predictions based on prior knowledge, and this is often appropriately targeted at different attainment levels within the class. The pupils have a good understanding of how to establish a fair test. They record the results of experiments accurately in a variety of ways, for example, by drawing, writing and using tables. Pupils are used to making initial predictions, often in the form of questions, and using experiments to test their theories. They have a good understanding of the conditions necessary for plant growth and reproduction and know that the environment is an important factor in determining where various creatures live. Pupils have a good understanding of the harmful effects of smoking on the human body; they confidently discuss how different organs are affected in different ways and how smoking can affect a person's appearance. Pupils in Year 3 learn that light travels in straight lines and they are beginning to make simple generalisations about physical phenomena. The use of practical resources such as a life-sized skeleton is very effective in engaging pupils' interest. Year 4 pupils understand that the purpose of the skeleton is to protect internal organs and to give the body rigidity. Year 5 pupils know that plants produce flowers that have male and female organs, and that seeds are formed when pollen from the male organ fertilises the ovum.
69. Pupils handle resources with care. They show a keen interest in the subject and are eager to be involved. They have a clear understanding of what they have to do, because they concentrate very well during introductions to each lesson and their behaviour is good. Pupils discuss topics well and talk confidently to visitors about their work.
70. Science teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives and effective introductions that remind pupils of their previous work; this leads well into new learning. Teachers create an effective learning environment, based on very good relationships and high expectations. Pupils respond to this well. Classroom organisation is generally very good and classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The majority of lessons are conducted at a good pace, which encourages the pupils to work hard. Teachers insist on the use of scientific language and as a result pupils accept this as normal and use it confidently themselves. Plenary sessions are used effectively to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding through sharing the outcomes of pupils' individual and collaborative work. Pupils are less productive in lessons where learning objectives are unclear and teaching does not capture their interest.
71. Very effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the science curriculum are in place. These have led to improved lesson planning, with learning opportunities that match the needs of pupils' abilities more effectively. Regular assessments are carried out and the results are used to predict National Curriculum test grades and to track pupils' progress.

ART

72. The pupils make good progress in the development of their skills in art and achieve good standards in their work by the end of Year 6. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Pupils create beautiful designs and objects using a range of materials, and by employing different methods. They skilfully collect visual information about bodylines of movement. They successfully model different sporting poses, sketch a human figure in a pose in correct proportions and bend and twist wire to create a three-dimensional image of their drawing. The pupils create designs based on the craft of lace-making. They understand the importance of design in their artwork. Pupils know that different artists paint in different styles and they make their own pictures using different techniques, painting in the style of impressionists such as Monet and Renoir. The pupils' paintings and drawings show that they are developing good observational skills and an understanding of the importance of line and scale. Some, but insufficient, use is made of IT to support learning in art. Pupils are able to use the computer to create intricate and colourful symmetrical patterns and designs. The finished product is evidence that pupils have a good eye, as well as suitable technological skills.
73. As a result of the good teaching, pupils of all abilities succeed in creating design outcomes of which they are proud. Lessons are well prepared and there are clear learning objectives. Teachers organise the resources and activities well, and therefore pupils have the equipment readily to hand and can start work quickly. They handle tools and equipment carefully and share resources happily with others. The pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour, which means that all can work undisturbed and maintain high levels of concentration. This produces a good working atmosphere in the classroom that encourages the pupils to try their best. Most pupils co-operate and work collaboratively. They make mature comments when evaluating their own and each other's work, contrasting ideas and explaining what they think and feel about them. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and have a clear understanding of what they have to do. Teachers work well with their pupils providing support and advice, and successfully develop pupils' ideas through effective questioning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. Only two lessons were observed in design and technology, but these, along with an analysis of pupils' previous work, displays and detailed photographic evidence show that the pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve good standards in their work by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and teaching is good overall.
75. Pupils investigate products before they start designing. Year 6 pupils looked at photographs of bridges and identified different types of structures, while Year 5 pupils looked at a variety of bags, how they were made and the different materials and fastenings used. Year 3 pupils visited a restaurant to find out about hygiene and food preparation before designing their own sandwiches, and Year 4 pupils carefully examined the different parts of a torch.
76. All pupils make careful designs, often to scale, of the products that they are going to make. They label the designs and show the materials and tools to be used; they consider what the article will look like, its use, how it will work, and possible improvements. Design reports for sandwiches in Year 3 and for toys that move in Year 5 show how well the pupils have grasped the elements of design. The making process is also carried out well, and indicates that a good range of tools and materials are used effectively. Pupils are proud of their achievements and examples of their work are kept as teaching aids. An evaluation of the finished products is carried out to see whether they meet the given criteria.

77. Information technology has been introduced into design and technology through the use of control technology. A Year 6 class designed and made a wall display of London, where different features were timed to light up or work, either all at once or in a set order. They also designed and made letter headings and business cards using the computer.
78. Teachers have high expectations and provide challenging lessons for pupils. Skills are well taught; pupils have good attitudes and show a high degree of concentration, working well together in groups. The success of the subject in the school has been further demonstrated through the school's contribution to the exhibition of work at the Design and Technology Millennium Conference.
79. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work for design and technology is being introduced into the school, and is helping teachers to develop the design process further. Teachers' planning and the work produced are both evaluated, possible weaknesses identified and steps taken to improve. For example, the use of textiles was found to be an area for development and appropriate training was provided. Workshops, such as when Year 6 visited the Glastonbury Centre and took part in different construction activities, are used well to develop skills in design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

80. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography and achieve standards as expected by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the standards reported at the last inspection. The school provides a broad and stimulating curriculum with a good balance between the development of skills and factual knowledge. The pupils study the geography of their locality and learn about countries around the world. In addition they learn the skills to be able to use maps, globes and reference books to extend their knowledge. The annual residential visit gives an opportunity to observe and study a contrasting locality first-hand.
81. The pupils learn the fundamentals of map-making and are introduced to the use of symbols to represent particular landmarks and features. They make simple maps, both real and imaginary, and are able to describe what they are doing using appropriate vocabulary. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were required to plan the route of a motorway using an imaginary map. This activity required them not only to consider environmental issues but the costs involved in constructing bridges, demolishing houses or purchasing land, as the project had to be completed within a set budget. As they move through the school, pupils build on and develop their skills and knowledge. They are able to pinpoint features on a map by specifying co-ordinates, and most know the common symbols to be found on an Ordnance Survey map. Older pupils can explain how the continents came into being, and know basic facts, such as how temperature and climate are influenced by proximity to the equator.
82. The quality of teaching is good and is a major factor in the good progress made by the pupils. Lessons are thoroughly prepared and teachers adopt a range of strategies to ensure that the objective of the lesson is achieved. Work is planned to reinforce pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. Effective use is made of questioning to probe and deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers have consistently high expectations to which the pupils readily respond. They work with enthusiasm and concentration and take pride in what they produce. They co-operate well and make effective and sensible use of the available resources.

HISTORY

83. The majority of pupils make good progress in history, despite changes which have resulted in less time being available to teach the subject. The satisfactory standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned so that knowledge and skills are developed systematically as pupils' progress through the school.

84. The pupils develop a good sense of the passage of time. They can distinguish between events that took place in the recent past and those that happened long ago. They are beginning to develop an understanding of why people in the past acted as they did. A particular strength is the development of research skills. Pupils use books and pictures to discover more about people and events in the past, and by the time that they leave the school they can distinguish between historical fact and legend. They can relate stories that they have heard, for example about Henry VIII, and they understand that the world in which he lived was very different from their own. The pupils develop a good factual knowledge of the periods of history that they study.
85. Literacy is promoted well through work in history. In learning how to carry out historical research effectively, they are taught how to locate specific information, and the techniques of note-taking to record what they have found. In addition to using books, older pupils access CD-ROMS or the Internet to research further. They present their work carefully, taking a pride in its content and appearance.
86. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and teachers strike an effective balance between the direct teaching of facts and the involvement of pupils. Teachers make good use of available resources and ensure that lessons have a lively pace, which holds pupils' interest. Very good use is made of visits to support learning, such as to Hampton Court when learning about the Tudors and to the Imperial War Museum when studying World War II.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

87. A key issue at the last inspection was the need to improve the pupils' skills in information technology. Good improvement has been made, with attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 now being in line with national expectations. The lessons in which skills are being taught are effective, demonstrating the teachers' increased confidence and experience, but the use of information technology to support learning across the curriculum remains inconsistent.
88. Pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of how to present information in different ways. For instance, they are able to create slides of famous people, taking information and photographs from the Internet and displaying them in an eye-catching way. They are also able to search for information stored on CD-ROMs. They are able to explore the effects of changing the variables in a computer model, for example when planning a party with a given budget, and can use information technology to control a sequence of lights.
89. Pupils make good progress as they become more familiar with the use of the computer. In Year 3 pupils are able to copy a design onto the computer using the *Dazzle* software. They use different tools to create the desired effects, for example expanding shapes and colouring in. Year 4 pupils are able to develop a database, amend information and add new records to it. They can then search a database of known criminals to identify a particular suspect. Most Year 5 pupils are able to prepare a text, insert images and set this out in column format for a newspaper. Attention is given to presentation, changing fonts and the size of the text and adding a headline. Most pupils become confident in logging on and off, loading and selecting programmes and saving and retrieving work on disk. Keyboard skills are now developing more quickly as younger pupils become more confident users of IT.
90. All teaching observed took place in the new IT suite. This contains fifteen computers, and enables the pupils to work in pairs at a computer during lessons. They do this very well, helping each other and sharing out the set tasks, for example, one reading the text and the other typing it in, or when creating designs, deciding which piece each will enter into the computer. They are very enthusiastic about IT and enjoy using the new facilities. The teaching of information technology is good overall. Lessons are well planned with clear introductions which consolidate previous learning and enable the pupils to move forward independently, leaving teachers available to give advice and support as required. There are some difficulties with lesson introductions as the suite is rather cramped, with insufficient room for pupils to gather around a monitor screen when being shown what to do. When working at computers, there is insufficient room for the class to be seated comfortably.
91. Although pupils have regular IT lessons, the use of IT across the curriculum still remains

inconsistent. It is used in some classrooms to support learning, for example to compose music, to draw three-dimensional pictures of the classroom, to look at the environment through the *Recycle* programme, to design pictures of snails in the style of Matisse and to compare different sandwich fillings. Some classrooms have donated their computers to the IT suite, leaving some pupils without classroom access to a computer. There are available sessions in the IT suite, apart from each class's weekly slot, but these were not being used during the inspection. The use of these sessions and of classroom computers is not monitored, and leaves some pupils with only one session per week when they have access to a computer.

92. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's materials have been introduced to support the school's development of information technology skills, and are helping to ensure that all strands of information technology are being developed throughout the school with increasing teacher confidence. An action plan has been formulated to ensure access to training for all teachers. Since the previous inspection there has been a range of training for the use of IT in different subjects.

MUSIC

93. The standard of music teaching is good overall and excellent at times. This results in the pupils making good progress, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations to which the pupils respond well. Very skilful questioning impacts positively upon the pupils' developing musical knowledge and understanding. Teachers encourage self-evaluation and the pupils' responses are very mature. Most pupils participate with enthusiasm, working co-operatively and they collaborate very effectively in creating shared compositions.
94. By Year 6 the pupils recognise and explore the way in which music reflects time, place and mood. They are able to create musical compositions with concern for their intended audience. When creating a lullaby, they are very clear about the need for the sounds to be soothing and calming. They use different musical textures to create the desired effect. They know how music can be produced in different ways and how to record their creations through notations. Pupils demonstrate their confidence in the subject when performing their compositions for their teacher and peers. They are able to maintain their own parts whilst performing by ear and from simple notations, showing an awareness of how each performer's part needs to fit in order to achieve an overall desired effect.
95. Pupils sing a good range of unison songs and show an increasing awareness of tone and expression. They have an understanding of many elements of music such as dynamics and tempo; they are able to explore rhythmic patterns and expressive elements. Pupils gain confidence using both their voice and instruments in public. Some pupils are members of the school choir; others demonstrate their ability to play instruments such as the flute, clarinet, violin and piano. They perform in public at the Sutton Music Festival, whole school assemblies and different festivals and celebrations throughout the year.
96. The provision for music is monitored at least annually through classroom observation, and music has been identified for focused development during the next academic year as part of the school's rolling programme.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. The pupils make good progress in the development of a wide range of physical education skills. This is largely because of the good teaching by staff who have considerable expertise, and who provide interesting activities and good opportunities for the pupils to practise and improve their skills. The teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is transmitted to the pupils who thoroughly enjoy their physical education sessions. Standards are enhanced for a considerable proportion of the pupils by their attendance at the excellent range of extra-curricular activities provided before school, at lunchtime and after school. Competitive sports fixtures are undertaken, encouraging the pupils to develop their teamwork and to understand the principles of fair play. This is only possible through a considerable commitment from staff and some parents who help and support these activities.

98. The contribution that physical education can make to the pupils' development is valued by the school. Teachers are trying to ensure that the full range of activities is provided in spite of pressures from other areas of the curriculum. Two sessions are timetabled weekly for each class; however, some of these, particularly those that require pupils to set up and remove apparatus, are too short to be completely productive. This occurs largely because three classes are timetabled to use the hall during the two-hour afternoon session. Teachers rightly give the pupils the experience of handling and moving large apparatus and this practice should be continued; however, the school needs to consider how the timetable can be organised to make these sessions longer. Progress in an otherwise well-taught Year 5 gymnastics lesson suffered because of the limited time available. Following a good warm-up, and once all of the apparatus had been put out, only a few minutes were available for the pupils to explore and practise their routines.
99. Dance was a feature of lessons in three of the year groups during the inspection. A good explanation to Year 6 pupils of the origins of a line-dance and how it is performed, engaged their attention from the start. Confident teaching, with the dance broken down into short routines, enabled the pupils to follow the pattern of the steps well. The pupils' concentration and enthusiasm resulted in a reasonable performance by the end of their first lesson. Pupils in Year 4 produced interesting and imaginative routines in response to music depicting rainfall. The pupils worked well individually and in small groups and were generous to each other when asked to evaluate their performances. Year 3 pupils were able to link a sequence of movements and repeat them, to represent the action of crawling through a tomb, pushing and pulling away the heavy stones.
100. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing and improving the pupils' performance by increasing the degree of difficulty as the lesson progresses. The sequence of activities in a Year 3 hockey lesson built up the difficulty under which the pupils were to practise their passing and stopping skills. This, and the good demonstrations with technical points picked out, enabled most of the pupils to improve the accuracy with which they moved the ball to a partner.
101. Swimming lessons are provided at a nearby pool and although no observations took place during the inspection the teachers' records show that the majority of pupils achieve the requirements of the National Curriculum by the age of eleven with many exceeding them.
102. The non-contact time available to the co-ordinator has been used productively to rewrite the policy, to monitor teachers' planning and to improve the scheme of work. Staff have been provided with further support through the opportunity to observe model lessons on specific activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

103. Pupils reach standards as expected by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education by the age of eleven. There has been some improvement since the last inspection.
104. A carefully planned programme of work gives pupils the opportunity to learn about Christianity and three other major world faiths. Links are often made with the pupils' own experiences, for example after first thinking about places that are special to them, pupils go on to look at places that are special to religion, such as their places of pilgrimage and places of worship. When studying some of the Christian parables, pupils reflect on their significance to life today.
105. By Year 6 the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding about the life of Jesus, the stories he told, and the important events in his life and how these are celebrated today. They

also know about some festivals in other world religions and how these, and the different rites of passage are celebrated. They look at symbolism in religion, for example the importance of light at Christmas and Diwali, and the cross as a Christian symbol.

106. They are able to find out how different religious groups worship through visits to places of

worship. Year 6 pupils, after learning about the Torah, visit a synagogue and find out about its place in Jewish worship; Year 5 pupils visit the local parish church and the Friends' Meeting House, and are able to recognise the complexity and simplicity within the buildings and ways of worship. They understand that religious teachings involve moral issues, which they spend time discussing. For example, in Year 6, pupils were talking about telling lies, and how once you start telling them it is difficult to stop.

107. The overall quality of teaching in religious education is good. Teachers plan lessons well within their year groups. Tasks are carefully planned and ensure that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are suitably catered for. For example, in Year 4 where pupils heard about the parable of the sower, the higher-attaining pupils were expected to write down four statements about the parable, and the lower-attaining pupils were given relevant sentences to put in order. Effective questioning and discussion takes place in lessons, developing pupils' understanding of religion as well as their speaking and listening skills. Writing skills are well developed in religious education; where recorded work is expected in lessons, pupils are expected to do their own writing. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote about Moses and how he received the Ten Commandments.
108. The scheme of work has been evaluated after its first year of use and some improvements made to the medium-term planning. Samples of pupils' work are also used to monitor the provision for religious education and the standards achieved. The school has strong links with members of the Sutton Christian Centre who have been involved in the religious education programmes in Years 3 and 5.