

INSPECTION REPORT

MOORLANDS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bath

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109000

Headteacher: Mr John Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian McCutcheon
2414

Dates of inspection: 24th - 28th January 2000

Inspection number: 191658

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chantry Mead Road Bath
Postcode:	BA2 2DE
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Simon Banks
Date of previous inspection:	27 - 30 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian McCutcheon	Registered Inspector	Mathematics Geography History Information Technology	Characteristics Results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? Overall effectiveness
Lizzie Forster	Lay Inspector	Equal Opportunities	Care for pupils Partnership with parents
Sandy Wellstead	Team Inspector	English Physical Education Religious Education Special Educational Needs	Attitudes, values and personal development
David Westall	Team Inspector	Science Art Design and Technology Music	Curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moorlands Junior School admits pupils aged 7–11 years, and currently there are 254 pupils on roll. The number of pupils has fallen from 281 in 1997 and this trend is likely to continue, mainly because of demographic changes in the area. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of Special Educational Needs, (SEN) and the proportion with statements of SEN, are above average. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry is below average. Three pupils come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language. There are eight classes, with two parallel classes for each year group.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound school with good features. It is a very caring community where pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are well promoted. Almost all teaching is at least satisfactory and was good or very good, and occasionally excellent, in nearly half of all lessons. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school and they make mainly good, and otherwise sound, progress. However, more able pupils mark time in some lessons, particularly in science. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced, and the quality and range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. The headteacher has effectively promoted a very positive school ethos and an excellent team spirit amongst staff; and governors make a sound contribution to the life of the school. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening, and in reading, are broadly in line with the national expectation but, despite some strengths, there are significant weaknesses in pupils' writing. The majority of pupils demonstrate average standards in mathematics and science, however, a significant minority do not reach this level and relatively few do better. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher is a strong and positive presence, and has established a good ethos in the school and an excellent team spirit amongst staff.
- The school is a very caring community where the well being of pupils is strongly promoted.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, and very good provision for their moral and social development.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are strengths of the school.
- The quality of teaching was good or very good, and occasionally excellent, in nearly half of all lessons.
- The teaching of pupils with SEN is a strength of the school, and these pupils make mainly good progress.
- The quality and range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school are excellent.
- There is a strong partnership with parents, and this benefits pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, by placing a much greater emphasis on developing pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation, handwriting, grammar and presentation.
- Standards in mathematics, by making more effective use of the oral and mental starter activities, in some classes, and of the plenary across the school.
- Standards in science, particularly teachers' expectations of more able pupils and progress in pupils' investigation skills especially in Years 5 and 6.
- The use of assessment information to set focused learning targets, improve planning and raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The headteacher and subject co-ordinators do not check the quality of teaching, learning and standards with sufficient rigour, across the school.
- The length of the school week is one hour shorter than the minimum recommended time.

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 satisfactory progress, overall, in addressing the key issues identified in the last OFSTED report (1997). Additions have been made to the school handbook, and daily acts of collective worship have been established, in order to meet statutory requirements. Curriculum planning has been improved and teachers now clearly identify the learning intentions of all lessons. Overall, tasks are mainly well matched to the needs of pupils. However, the provision for more able pupils is not as good as it is for pupils with learning difficulties; and there is still considerable scope for improving elements of current practice in assessment. The school has made slower, and mainly unsatisfactory, progress in developing the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators. Overall, the school is in a sound position to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	C	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	D	E	D	
science	C	D	E	D	

The table shows a downward trend in standards over the last three years in English, mathematics and science. Evidence suggests that fluctuations in results from year to year arise, at least in part, because of differences in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Currently the percentage of pupils on the school's register of Special Educational Needs, (SEN) and the proportion with statements of SEN, are above average. Inspection findings indicate that, at the end of the key stage, pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly average and that most pupils achieve standards in reading which are in line with the national expectation. However, despite some strengths in writing, there are basic weaknesses in pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting. Pupils in most classes are benefiting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and inspection findings show an improvement in the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics. In this subject, and also in science, the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the national average. However, in both subjects, a significant minority of pupils still do not reach this standard and relatively few pupils exceed it. Achievement in science is generally best in one Year 3 class and in Year 4. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is barely adequate, overall, and the development of pupils' investigation skills is mainly unsatisfactory. The school has agreed appropriate targets with the local authority in order to raise standards in English and mathematics. It was not possible to judge the standards achieved by pupils in design and technology or geography but they are satisfactory in all other subjects

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested in, and enthusiastic about, school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of pupils is consistently very good and this has a beneficial effect on their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils feel valued by their teachers and are not afraid to ask questions or to take risks in their learning. Pupils of all ages respond well to opportunities to use their initiative and to take responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was sound, or better, in 94% of all lessons; and was good or very good, and occasionally excellent, in nearly half of all lessons. In English, most of the teaching in the literacy hour is good or better, and otherwise satisfactory. Teachers use suitably challenging texts, demonstrate good questioning skills, effectively develop pupils' vocabulary and carefully match tasks to their capabilities and needs. However, they place too little emphasis on the development of high standards in spelling, grammar, punctuation, handwriting and presentation, and this is a significant weakness. In other subjects, opportunities to redraft, refine and complete pieces of work to a high standard are often missed. In mathematics the quality of teaching, including the key skill of numeracy, is mainly sound and occasionally good. However, the effective use of oral and mental starter activities, and of the plenary, is not yet consistent across the school. In science, teaching is mainly sound. However, some teachers give insufficient attention to the development of pupils' investigation skills and more able pupils are sometimes given tasks which provide them with insufficient challenge. This is an important weakness in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is a particular strength. The support provided by all staff is of a high standard and, as a consequence, these pupils make mainly good progress. In all subjects observed, the strengths of teaching include positive relationships, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and skilful use of questioning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Statutory requirements are met and the curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced, but does not always meet the needs of more able pupils in science. The school allocates sufficient time to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The length of the school day is an hour below the recommended minimum and this limits the time available for some subjects. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities is a strength of the school and provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. Work planned for these pupils takes very good account of their individual strengths and needs, and they receive good support from class teachers, the co-ordinator, special needs teacher and general assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The three pupils who have English as an additional language are all fluent English speakers and require no specific provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, and very good provision for their moral and social development. The school has a very strong moral and social ethos, and pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and to take responsibility for a wide range of school duties.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All adults know the pupils well and the school is a happy and very caring community where the well being of pupils is strongly promoted. Careful attention is given to all matters relating to health and safety and good communication with parents ensures that pupils' pastoral needs are shared. There is a strong partnership with parents and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school and their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a strong and positive presence in the school and, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has established a very positive ethos, a very orderly atmosphere and an excellent team spirit amongst staff. Subject co-ordinators make a valuable contribution through the formulation of policies and guidance for teachers, and through the organisation of resources. However, strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the standards achieved by pupils are insufficiently rigorous and require further development by both the headteacher and co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a sound contribution to the management of the school. Governors take a keen interest in the school and most are able to visit regularly to observe it in operation. A start has been made in scrutinising the results of statutory assessments, and trends over time, but this role as 'critical friend' of the school requires further development, to secure school improvement. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities, with the exception of the appraisal of teachers.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has undertaken an analysis of the results of the statutory assessments in English and mathematics. However, strategies for using assessments to set targets, improve planning and raise standards need further development. In science, the SATs results have not been analysed with enough rigour to assess pupils' needs accurately.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient teachers and they are appropriately qualified. They have the necessary knowledge and expertise to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. General assistants are well briefed and provide good teaching support. Good use is made of the accommodation and extensive school grounds. Overall, the range and quality of resources are satisfactory and the school operates an effective 'best value for money' policy.

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 headteacher and staff are dedicated, caring and easy to talk to. • The range of extra curricular activities. • The caring ethos of the school. • The effective promotion of good behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work pupils are expected to do at home. • More information on how pupils are getting on. • Working closely with parents.

Inspection judgements fully support parents' positive views about the school. There is no evidence to suggest that the school does not work closely with parents or that parents are not well informed about progress. The school has recently published guidelines for parents about homework expectations.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the school, pupils' standards in reading and writing are variable but, overall, are mainly below average. This is reflected in the 1998 Key Stage 1 SATs results (from the partner infant school) when standards were well below average, and from inspection findings for the 1999 cohort, which indicate that while attainment was broadly average in speaking and listening, it was slightly below average in reading and well below average in writing. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 SATs, the percentage of pupils attaining, or exceeding, the standard expected was below the national average and below that of similar schools. Pupils' performance in writing was weaker than in reading. In 1997, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4, or better, was well above average; while in 1998, the school's results were in line with the national average.
2. Inspection findings show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils achieve standards in reading which are broadly in line with the national expectation; a small but significant number of pupils with special educational needs do not reach this standard; and a significant minority exceed this level. Most pupils in Year 6 read fluently and expressively and read different kinds of texts, and different genres, with a sound level of understanding. Speaking and listening skills are broadly average and all pupils enjoy taking part in discussions. In writing, pupils plan well, often write in a lively and imaginative way, and produce written recounts and reports which are concise and tightly structured. However, despite these strengths there are some very basic weaknesses. Pupils' work is often spoiled by weak spelling, poor punctuation and incorrect use of grammar. Too many pupils do not have fluent handwriting or take enough care with the quality and presentation of their day-to-day work; and they lack experience in refining their written work to a high standard, in other subjects
3. On entry to the school, the majority of pupils demonstrate standards in mathematics and science which are below average. In mathematics, the results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 SATs indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving, and exceeding, the national standard was well below average. Overall, these results were below those achieved by pupils in schools with a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school's 1998 results were also below the standard expected, although in 1997 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was a little above the national average. Inspection findings show that standards are now improving. Evidence suggests that pupils in most classes are benefiting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy from the beginning of the current academic year. At the end of the key stage, the attainment of the majority of pupils, including the key skill of numeracy, is in line with the national average. However, a significant minority of pupils still do not reach this standard and relatively few pupils exceed it.
4. In science, the results of the statutory tests show that, in 1998, the school's results were below the national average, while the 1999 results were well below the national average and were below the results achieved by similar schools. Inspection findings show that pupils generally achieve best in Years 3 and 4, apart from in one Year 3 class where a good scheme of work is not properly implemented. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' progress is particularly spasmodic, and is barely adequate, overall. Progress in developing investigation skills is mainly unsatisfactory. At the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils demonstrate average overall standards but a significant minority do not reach this level and relatively few do better. More able pupils make mainly satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4 but are coasting through too much of their work in Years 5 and 6.
5. At the end of the key stage, the attainment of the majority of pupils in information technology is in line with that expected; and in religious education, most pupils attain the standards required by the locally agreed syllabus. In art, the standards pupils achieve are mainly

satisfactory for their ages, but are sometimes good. Standards in singing are above average and pupils make good progress in the extra-curricular music clubs, achieving well above average standards as handbell ringers, and when playing brass and woodwind instruments. They demonstrate satisfactory standards in history and physical education. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about the standards pupils achieve in design and technology or geography. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or between different ethnic groups.

6. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught either within their classes, in small groups, and, sometimes, in one-to-one contexts with staff. They make optimum gains in their learning in lessons, and good progress over time in relation to their prior attainment. They achieve standards which are commensurate with their capabilities.
7. The governors, with the headteacher, have agreed appropriate targets with the local authority to raise standards in English and mathematics, and the school has set targets in other areas of the curriculum for particular pupils and groups. In English, the school is unlikely to achieve its projected results unless significant weaknesses in the 'secretarial' and technical aspects of the writing of many pupils are addressed. In mathematics, the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is helping to raise standards in most classes. Monitoring of teaching across the school is weak and will require a more rigorous approach in order to raise standards and to meet targets. Weaknesses in teachers' planning for the development of pupils' enquiry skills in science, which were identified in the last OFSTED report, still exist in one Year 3 class and in the older half of the school. These will need to be rectified to raise the achievements of pupils in this subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are strengths of the school.
9. Pupils are interested in, and enthusiastic about, every aspect of school life. They enjoy coming to school, and they are happy there. Rates of unauthorised absence are below the national average, and attendance, overall, is broadly in line with the national average.
10. Relationships are very good at all levels. Pupils enjoy the company of their friends and of their teachers and are at ease in lessons. They feel valued by their teachers, and, as a consequence of this, are not afraid to ask questions or to take risks in their learning. Very many pupils take advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided, developing enduring enthusiasms, in particular for sports and for music, which they also pursue in their leisure time outside school.
11. Pupils enjoy lessons and come prepared to listen and to learn. They listen attentively and with interest to their teachers and to their peers, taking turns politely and naturally, and responding positively and sensitively to others' ideas. They sustain concentration well, think before they speak, but are always ready to join in discussion and to learn from others. In religious education lessons, in circle-time, and in some musical activities, the strength of the bonds between teachers and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, is particularly evident. At such times, there is often a unity of purpose and a certainty, in both spoken and unspoken communication, that has a spiritual quality.
12. Pupils behave very well. Instances of bullying are very rare indeed, and there is no evidence of sexist or racist behaviour. In lessons, in the dining-room, in assemblies and in the playground, pupils behave in a calm, orderly, open and friendly way. Instances of off-task behaviour are not the norm, and very rarely happen. The pupils like and respect their teachers and the other staff who work with them. They care for one another, they care for their environment, and they care about the world in which they live.

13. Reflecting the good example of trusting, supportive relationships set by all the staff in the school, the pupils respect others' beliefs and faiths, and take pleasure and pride in others' successes. For example, they show genuine warmth in their applause for pupils who receive commendations and awards during assemblies. They respect people for their strengths, accept any weaknesses, and work harmoniously and productively in groups when required to do so, building on others' ideas and collaborating well when sharing equipment and resources. In circle-time, and in assemblies, they reflect thoughtfully on their own behaviour and on the impact of their actions on others. For example, pupils in Year 5 considered how, if they really loved someone in the true sense of the word, they would readily forgive them for an occasional error of judgement.
14. Pupils of all ages respond well to opportunities to use their initiative and to take responsibility. For example, a dance-club set up by pupils is run almost exclusively by the pupils themselves; the school book-shop is managed and run very efficiently by pupils; and, in lessons, even the youngest pupils are capable of setting out the gymnastics apparatus safely and quickly, without fuss. Older pupils are sometimes invited to 'teach' their peers, for example by leading a warm-up session at the beginning of a games lesson.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching was sound, or better, in 94% of all lessons; and was good or very good, and occasionally excellent, in almost half of all lessons. These findings are very similar to those reported in the last OFSTED inspection. All teachers effectively promote equal opportunities and are particularly good at avoiding gender stereotyping.
16. In English, most of the teaching is good or better and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully and teachers plan effectively for the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In the literacy hour, the tasks set for pupils are well matched to their capabilities and needs and, as a consequence, pupils make good progress in these lessons. Teachers use suitably challenging texts for shared text work, use sharply focused questions during discussion and are skilled at analysing, and building on the responses which pupils are confident in making. They effectively develop pupils' technical and general vocabulary and provide an appropriate range of purposes for writing, within English. However, most teachers place too little emphasis on the development of high standards in spelling, grammar, punctuation, handwriting and presentation; and in other subjects, opportunities to redraft, refine and complete pieces of work to a high standard are often missed.
17. In mathematics the quality of teaching, including the key skill of numeracy, is mainly sound and occasionally good. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection. Teachers plan well and lessons reflect the requirements of the recently introduced National Numeracy Strategy. Introductions to all lessons appropriately include a variety of short oral and mental activities and, in the best practice, all pupils are involved and the pace is brisk. In most lessons, teachers carefully match tasks to the previous attainment of pupils and this results in satisfactory, or better, progress in pupils' learning. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers' expectations are insufficiently high and the pace of the lesson is too slow, particularly for more able pupils. Teachers do not always ensure that there is sufficient time at the end of the lesson to draw together what has been learned and to highlight key facts, ideas and vocabulary.
18. In science, teaching is mainly sound, although examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching were observed. Overall, teachers have secure subject knowledge and they usually organise lessons well. In the most effective lessons, teachers use good questioning, ensure that the work is challenging for all pupils and make good use of time. However, teachers give insufficient attention to the development of pupils' investigation skills in one Year 3 class and in the older half of the school. The last OFSTED inspection also identified weaknesses in planning for the development of pupils' enquiry skills. Across the school more able pupils are sometimes given

tasks which provide them with insufficient challenge, and this is an important weakness in Years 5 and 6.

19. The teaching of physical education is mainly sound or better and only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. In most lessons, teachers use both demonstration and evaluation well to raise pupils' aspirations. As a result, the teaching has a marked impact on the quality of learning and on the standards attained. In religious education, teaching is mainly sound and occasionally good, and one lesson seen was exceptionally well taught. In the best lessons, very good relationships enable adults and pupils to share their innermost thoughts and feelings, but some teachers are less knowledgeable and less confident in their approach.
20. As a result of timetabling arrangements, insufficient teaching of other subjects was observed to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. In the two art lessons seen in Year 4, teachers made good use of a range of reproductions, motivated pupils well, organised their lessons effectively and set high standards in behaviour. As a consequence, pupils made good progress in their learning, concentrated and persevered with their tasks, and behaved well. In the Year 3 and Year 6 lessons in design and technology, teachers' organisation was sound and the tasks captured the interest of the pupils. As a result, pupils concentrated well, had positive attitudes to their work and made satisfactory progress in their learning. In the history lessons observed in Years 3 and 5, the quality of teaching was either good or very good. Teachers used good questioning to assess and challenge pupils understanding; and carefully chosen resources enabled pupils to develop appropriate enquiry skills. The management of pupils in Year 5 was excellent and pupils were keen to contribute ideas and listened carefully to those of others. In information technology, the school makes very effective use of a small group of volunteer parents and the help available from the local technology college. Some teachers effectively promote information technology by using computer generated pictures and posters in their classrooms but evidence suggests that others provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information technology across the curriculum. The music co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and makes a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' musical development through his leadership of extra-curricular music activities. Teaching was sound or better in the music lessons seen.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is a particular strength. The learning support provided by the special needs co-ordinator, the special needs teacher, and by other learning support staff, is of a high standard. All are very aware of pupils' individual needs, and plan their work accordingly. Pupils benefit from sharing the more advanced work taught to classes, for example, during shared text work at the beginning of the literacy hour. In addition, independent work is appropriately tailored to their specific needs, in line with targets identified in their individual education plans, or any additional targets they may have been set by their class teachers. As a consequence, pupils with special educational needs, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress over time.
22. Overall, the common strengths of teaching are characterised by very positive relationships between teachers and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and skilful use of questioning. The learning intentions of lessons are clearly defined and are appropriately shared with pupils; and general support staff are well deployed. All staff demonstrate a good awareness of equal opportunities. As a consequence, pupils respond well during most lessons, sustain their concentration and make sound, or better, progress.
23. Weaknesses in teaching lie mainly in the setting of tasks which lack challenge, particularly for more able pupils and, on occasions, in a lack of rigour in promoting high standards. These result in more able pupils marking time in some lessons, particularly in science; and in inconsistencies in the quality and presentation of pupils' work, in a range of subjects.

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

24. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced, and statutory requirements are met, including for the provision of religious education. The school allocates sufficient time for the development of literacy and numeracy, and uses sound strategies for teaching these basic skills. However, the length of the school week is an hour below the recommended minimum period, and this limits the time available for some subjects. For example, very limited evidence of pupils' work in design and technology and geography was available for examination during the inspection and suggests that these subjects would benefit from more attention.
25. The last OFSTED inspection also found that statutory requirements were met, and that the curriculum was generally broad and balanced. However, the inspection judged that pupils' key skills and knowledge were not progressively developed in art and science, as pupils moved through the school. Improvements have been made to continuity in pupils' scientific learning in Years 3 and 4, but insufficient attention is currently given to the development of pupils' investigation skills in the subject in one Year 3 class and generally in the older half of the school. The current art curriculum is sound. Opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' writing skills through work across the curriculum, and this is a weakness in the present provision.
26. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. All pupils with SEN enjoy their full entitlement to the whole curriculum and to the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities provided. Work planned for these pupils draws on the combined skills and knowledge of class teachers, the special needs co-ordinator, support staff and, where appropriate, outside agencies and specialists, and takes very good account of pupils' individual strengths and needs. Support for pupils with learning difficulties related to literacy is particularly effective. They may benefit, at various times, from participation in small groups receiving Additional Literacy Support, in groups receiving additional handwriting tuition, in literacy 'booster' sessions, or in one-to-one support involving a support assistant.
27. The school has been pro-active in seeking, and receiving, specialist advice and support for the few pupils who have learning needs associated with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The recent development of a support base equipped to help these pupils cope with their most immediate problems at times of crisis is working well. The introduction of a new 'social use of language programme' will further benefit pupils with learning needs related to communication, language and behaviour, but is still in the very early stages of development.
28. The provision for more able pupils is not as good as it is for pupils with learning difficulties, but it is satisfactory, overall. However, the curriculum does not always meet their needs in science, and they mark time in the subject sometimes in Year 3 and often in the older half of the school.
29. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities available for the pupils is a strength of the school, as it was when the school was last inspected. The after school activities include clubs for French, judo, gardening, drama, football, girls' football, handball, recorders and the school band. Lunchtime opportunities include clubs for dance, recorders, handbells, woodwind and brass and choir. These are led, in the main, by the conscientious teaching staff and are popular with pupils, who derive considerable benefit from this curriculum enrichment. There is also a school bookshop which pupils are able to use during lunchtimes. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equal encouragement is given to boys and girls to participate in extra-curricular opportunities.
30. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Healthy eating, drugs awareness and sex education are appropriately covered as part of the science curriculum. Visiting speakers from the police and fire service help ensure that pupils learn about road safety and other aspects of personal safety. Pupils have regular opportunities to

reflect on issues about their personal development in Circle Time. The value of this is evident in the mature, caring and responsible behaviour of pupils and the positive relationships that exist throughout the school community.

31. The school sees itself as an integral part of the local community. Pupils' achievements are well publicised in the local press and pupils are encouraged to participate in community activities as well as using the local area to support their learning. The school welcomes visiting speakers and theatre groups to broaden pupils' horizons and there are sound links with the local church. It has yet to use links with business and industry to enrich the curriculum for pupils.
32. The school has a good working relationship with the adjoining Infant school, with well planned procedures, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, to ensure a smooth transfer and continuity of learning. There are regular opportunities for pupils to mix with others in sporting and musical activities. The school has established close links with the local technology college and pupils and staff benefit from their expertise in information technology.
33. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, and very good provision for their moral and social development.
34. Acts of collective worship fully comply with statutory requirements, in contrast to the situation when the school was last inspected, and successfully foster pupils' spiritual development. Work in religious education provides pupils with knowledge and insights into values and beliefs, and enables them to reflect on their experience in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self knowledge. For example, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were skilfully and sensitively encouraged to reflect on the places they regard as special, and about the reasons that make them special. Through the judicious use of readings and music, and by sharing her own feelings about special places with the pupils, the teacher generated a spiritual atmosphere where personal thoughts and images were shared and valued. Work in art and science encourages pupils to recognise and appreciate the beauty of the world, and elements of pupils' music-making have an obvious spiritual dimension.
35. The school has a very strong moral and social ethos. Honesty and fairness are strongly promoted, and pupils are taught the principles which distinguish right from wrong. All teachers provide good role models by valuing pupils' achievements and fostering good relationships. Care and concern for others are very effectively encouraged in the daily routines, and are reflected in pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, to take responsibility for a wide range of school duties and to use their initiative, for example, when organising fund raising activities.
36. Pupils' cultural development is promoted effectively through a wide range of clubs, both during lunchtimes and after school. Their multi-cultural awareness is soundly promoted through work in religious education, including visits to Hindu and Sikh temples in Bristol, and by visits by a school governor to explain the principles of Judaism. The school's 'European Project', which forges information technology and other links between the school and schools abroad, contributes to pupils' awareness, together with lessons in art when work from different cultures is discussed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Moorlands Junior School is a community where the care and well being of pupils is of great importance. All adults know the pupils very well and are particularly sensitive to their emotional and learning needs. The headteacher and staff promote good communication with parents so that pupils' pastoral needs are shared. Relationships in the school are invariably based on respect, trust and encouragement, with each pupil's contributions being valued. Support staff are well briefed to maintain the same high standards of care and sensitivity outside the classroom. Good use is made of outside specialists, where appropriate, to support

specific medical, educational or pastoral needs. This integrated approach ensures that any significant changes in pupils' needs are quickly identified so that appropriate support can be given. As a consequence, all pupils feel secure, develop high self esteem and have very positive attitudes to school life and learning.

38. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' good behaviour and a strong sense of personal responsibility. All staff provide good role models for pupils and have a consistent approach to implementing the behaviour policy. The school creates a variety of opportunities for pupils to undertake activities without close supervision and their high expectations of trust and sensible behaviour are fully met. The school appropriately encourages pupils to share any concerns they might have about school with a support assistant, who is designated as a counsellor; and a sanctuary area has been created where pupils may go to take time out from the normal school routines. Both these strategies enable pupils to make their own decisions about how to best cope with school life; and, as a consequence, they are confident to alert staff to the very rare instances of bullying or harassment so that they can be addressed quickly.
39. All staff are aware of the importance of being alert to child protection concerns and the need to follow agreed procedures. Care is taken to ensure that adults in the school are properly vetted and that pupils are reminded about issues of personal safety. The school promotes the importance of regular school attendance and carries out appropriate monitoring of the school registers.
40. The staff and governors pay good attention to all matters relating to health and safety on the school site. The caretaker plays a prominent role in checking the buildings and grounds each day and in ensuring that routine checks, such as those required for electrical equipment, are correctly completed. Safe practice is properly promoted in lessons; and pupils follow simple rules to ensure that movement around the school is quiet and orderly. There are sound procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies, and appropriate documentation is maintained. The building is very clean and the grounds are well kept. The school has ensured appropriate security arrangements for the buildings but has yet to secure funding to enable the complete fencing of the grounds.
41. The last OFSTED inspection found there were weaknesses in the implementation of the school's assessment policy. Teachers often failed to identify specific learning targets in their planning, and their marking included few written comments to help pupils to improve. The last report also found that teachers did not assess the needs of more able pupils with consistent accuracy, and that their work was sometimes too easy, as a result. Overall, the school has made broadly satisfactory progress in addressing most of these weaknesses, but there is still considerable scope for improving elements of current practice in assessment. Teachers now identify the learning intentions of their lessons clearly, which helps them to assess whether targets have been met in their lessons. All teachers know their pupils well and, in the best lessons, they make skilful use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. The learning requirements of pupils with special educational needs are assessed carefully and well, and are accurately addressed in the tasks they are set. Teachers' assessments of the learning needs of more able pupils are usually satisfactory but their expectations are often too low for these pupils in science in one Year 3 class and in the older half of the school. As a consequence, their science work is insufficiently challenging and their progress suffers.
42. The school has undertaken an analysis of the results of the statutory assessments in English and mathematics to assess the areas which require further improvement. While appropriate issues have been identified, the school's strategies for using assessments to set and monitor focused learning targets, improve planning and raise standards needs further development. In science, the SATs results have not been analysed with enough rigour to assess pupils' achievements and needs accurately. In English, mathematics and science, subject co-ordinators make insufficient use of work sampling to assess pupils' standards and progress in their learning. The school has recently introduced a commercially produced assessment scheme to help judge pupils' progress from a baseline when they enter the school; and this is a sensible strategy. The school

appropriately recognises the need to provide more opportunities for teachers to discuss examples of pupils' work in order to agree the standards that have been achieved, and to promote consistency in assessment. At present, there are no portfolios in use which include examples of pupils' assessed work to help teachers to judge standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The headteacher and staff have maintained the strong partnership with parents, which was identified in the last inspection, and this continues to be a strength of the school. Parents feel their views are listened to and they fully support the school's caring ethos. They value the openness of the school and the approachability of the staff. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and their learning.
44. Parents receive clear and comprehensive information from the prospectus and are kept well informed about school activities through regular newsletters. The termly summaries about what is to be taught, and occasional opportunities to see the school in action on open days and in class assemblies, give parents a sound understanding of the curriculum. They are invited to discuss how their children are progressing each term and targets for improvement in the core subjects are shared with them. Annual written reports generally give clear indications of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
45. Links between the school and parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. All parents are informed of their child's special needs as soon as they are identified, and almost all parents are able to attend reviews of their child's progress. Where this proves difficult, staff may, when appropriate, make home visits to ensure that parents remain involved and well informed. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the support teacher are currently preparing an information booklet for parents to explain the various stages of the Code of Practice, and to help parents to understand what is involved and which agencies are available to support their children.
46. The home/school agreement is well established and parents have recently been given additional information on the amount of homework that is normally expected. The school also provides parents new to the school with a helpful guide on how best to help their children's learning at home. It carries out surveys of parents' views from time to time and ensures that any matters of concern are followed up. This is good practice.
47. The school makes particular efforts to encourage parents to help in the school and has successfully achieved the target set in the development plan to increase the number of those who are prepared to come in regularly to hear readers or assist with other tasks. Their expertise is used well in areas such as information technology and art, and in supporting school performances. An active Parents Liaison Group organises popular social functions, and successfully runs fund-raising activities to provide useful additional resources and equipment for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a sound contribution to the management of the school. Deficiencies in meeting statutory requirements, which were identified in the last OFSTED report (1997), have been addressed and governors fully carry out their statutory responsibilities, with the exception of teacher appraisal. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and works in an effective partnership with the headteacher. Agendas for meetings are well planned and appropriate committees have been established. Most governors visit the school to observe it in operation, mainly through a 'governor of the month' arrangement, and all are linked to a subject co-ordinator in order to improve communication. Appropriate targets have been agreed for standards in literacy and numeracy and the governors

with specific responsibility for monitoring these areas have attended appropriate training. Governors take a keen interest in the school and, in particular, in the personal development of pupils. However, they recognise that procedures for evaluating the school's performance are not well established. The end of key stage SATs results have been analysed this year and, together with the staff, a start has been made in tracking pupils across the school, to evaluate progress. This role, as critical friend to the school, will need to be developed further to secure school improvement.

49. The headteacher is a strong and positive presence in the school. In collaboration with the deputy headteacher, he has established the very positive ethos which is a strength of the school. Well organised routines, and high expectations of behaviour, relationships and equal opportunities reflect the aims of the school and ensure that it has a very orderly atmosphere. The headteacher effectively promotes an excellent team spirit amongst the staff and has developed constructive relationships with governors, with whom he works effectively. A sound development plan has been formulated by staff and governors and this provides clear direction for the school across a three year period. The headteacher is very competent in the use of new technologies and is successfully promoting the use of electronic mail, CD-ROM, the National Grid for Learning and Internet applications across the school. He undertakes some teaching in all classes and also receives teachers' planning in order to maintain an overview of the school. However, little focused teaching observation or work sampling is undertaken and, as a consequence, his strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching, and pupils' attainment and progress, require further development. This is recognised by the headteacher who, accompanied by the deputy headteacher, is to attend relevant local authority training.
50. Subject co-ordinators are conscientious and make a valuable contribution through the formulation of policies and guidance for teachers, and through the organisation and provision of resources. The last OFSTED report identified the need to develop further the monitoring role of co-ordinators to include judgements about the progress of pupils' learning across the key stage and the standards achieved. Overall, the school has made slow progress in responding to this requirement and the role of subject co-ordinators remains largely underdeveloped. Job descriptions have been formulated, which appropriately include the monitoring and evaluation of subjects; and each co-ordinator is allocated non-contact time on a regular basis which enables them to have greater impact on the quality of planning for their subjects. However, no lesson observations have been undertaken by the co-ordinators of core subjects, and there has been little analysis of work samples in any subject, in order to judge pupils' progress and standards. As a consequence, co-ordinators lack a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality and range of teaching and learning in their subjects, and require more guidance about how to monitor these more effectively.
51. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision are very effective. All teaching and support staff are involved constructively in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Liaison between teaching and support staff and between special needs staff and outside agencies is effective, and works to meet the needs and to serve the best interests of the pupils. The SENCO and the support teacher work together well to develop new initiatives, and there is a strong sense of team-work amongst all teaching and support staff. Liaison with the linked infant school is effective in ensuring smooth transition and continuity in learning for pupils with special educational needs.
52. The school successfully puts into practice all aspects of its detailed policy for equal opportunities and has a strong ethos of respect for each member of the school community.
53. The school has sufficient teachers and they have the experience and expertise to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. One full-time teacher was absent, through illness, during the inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure and all have a good understanding of the requirements of the literacy and numeracy hours. However, evidence suggests that some teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and understanding about information technology. Induction arrangements for new staff, particularly for newly

qualified teachers, are good. General assistants are well briefed, develop positive relationships with pupils and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The governors appropriately follow local authority guidance on staffing arrangements but procedures for teacher appraisal are currently not in place and the headteacher has not been appraised since 1993.

54. Internal alterations, including improving access for pupils in wheelchairs, have maximised the use made of the available accommodation and facilitates the effective delivery of the curriculum for all pupils. Teachers take care to create interesting displays of pupils' work in the classrooms and corridors, and the school environment enhances pupils' learning. The school is kept in an excellent order of cleanliness by the conscientious caretaker and cleaning staff. The school grounds are extensive, have been developed by the school in consultation with pupils and staff, and provide an excellent resource. The range and quality of learning resources are satisfactory, overall. However, the school is aware of the need to continue to improve resources for mathematics, following the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy; and those for information technology are soon to be enhanced through funding from the National Grid for Learning.
55. The day-to-day administration of the budget is carried out efficiently by the headteacher who is well supported by the school's two secretaries. Spending is also carefully monitored by the finance committee of the governors, which provides good support for the management of the school. The most recent audit report (May 1996) found that records were well maintained and that budgetary control was good. Financial planning is appropriately linked to the strategic planning identified in the school development plan. Following a fall in the number of pupils on roll, the school has been working closely with the local authority to reduce expenditure, particularly on staffing, to ensure that the school manages within its financial resources in the future. The finance committee has analysed the current budget with particular care and all available data is collected to predict future rolls and their likely effect on the budget. Care is taken to obtain value for money when purchasing materials and equipment; and funds to support pupils with special educational needs are well-targeted and used efficiently.
56. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, and behaviour is also very good. The quality of teaching is rarely less than satisfactory and is often better. Pupils make mainly sound progress in all subjects but there are significant weaknesses in the writing of many pupils and progress is barely adequate in science in Years 5 and 6. The use of staffing is satisfactory and all staff make good use of the accommodation. Overall, the school makes sound use of its budget and provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve pupils' standards and achievements, and the quality of teaching, the school should include in its post inspection plan the following issues for action;

Raise standards in writing by:

- giving more explicit and more rigorous attention to the teaching of punctuation, spelling, grammar, handwriting and presentation skills when pupils write in English and in other subjects;
- creating more opportunities for pupils to produce, redraft and complete pieces of extended writing in English and in other subjects;
- monitoring the standards of pupils' written work more rigorously.

Raise standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring that all teachers maintain a brisk pace, and use differentiated questioning to target individual pupils or small groups, during the oral and mental starter activities;
- allocating sufficient time for the plenary in order to draw together what has been learned and to highlight key facts, ideas and vocabulary;
- organising opportunities for the headteacher and co-ordinator to observe the teaching of mathematics to enable them to disseminate good practice and to identify areas for improvement.

Raise standards in science by:

- increasing teachers' expectations of more able pupils in one Year 3 class and in the older half of the school;
- ensuring that pupils are taught the skills of systematic enquiry more effectively, particularly in the older half of the school.

Improve the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards by:

- the headteacher allocating more time for observing teaching and learning across the curriculum; work sampling to assess and evaluate the standards achieved; and guiding the monitoring work of co-ordinators;
- the co-ordinators making more use of work sampling and lesson observation to assess the standards and areas for improvement in their subjects.

Improve elements of current practice in assessment by:

- ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to set focused learning targets, improve planning and raise standards;
- providing more opportunities for teachers to discuss and agree the standards achieved by pupils.

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider increasing the length of the school week to at least the recommended minimum.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4.3	12.8	29.8	46.8	6.4	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	Y 3- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	254
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	34
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	62
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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	33	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	21
	Girls	31	22	29
	Total	42	36	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (59)	49 (49)	68 (56)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	22
	Girls	31	24	30
	Total	44	41	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (63)	58 (49)	70 (58)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	246
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	31.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	460,509
Total expenditure	464,724
Expenditure per pupil	1,748
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,163
Balance carried forward to next year	2,948

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

254

Number of questionnaires returned

106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	51	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	31	58	8	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	62	9	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	48	25	7	0
The teaching is good.	30	56	7	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	48	22	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	46	8	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	37	52	7	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	23	45	23	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	25	49	14	4	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	50	8	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	41	2	0	5

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

ENGLISH

57. The standards attained in reading and writing in the Key Stage 1 tests (SATs) taken by pupils who entered the school in Year 3 in 1998 were well below the national average. All available evidence from the inspection indicates that the standards attained by the current Year 3 cohort are broadly average in speaking and listening, slightly below average in reading, and well below average for their age in writing. Throughout Key Stage 2, the school builds well on pupils' prior attainment in reading, in many important aspects of their writing, and in their knowledge about language. They make good or better gains in their learning, in relation to the specific objectives set, in most lessons. Nevertheless, these marked gains in pupils' achievements are not readily apparent in the overall results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. This is largely because significant weaknesses in the 'secretarial' and technical aspects of the writing of many pupils have an adverse effect on their overall results. Unless these weaknesses are addressed, the school is unlikely to achieve its projected results in the year 2000 or in subsequent years.
58. In 1999, the percentage of pupils attaining or exceeding Level 4 in the English tests (SATs), at the end of Key Stage 2, was well below the national average. These results were better than had been anticipated by the LEA, which based its predictions on the attainment of the same cohort of pupils in their earlier tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' performance in writing was weaker than in reading, a result which is confirmed by the school's own analysis of the results, and which is also reflected in the findings of this inspection. The 1999 results were also below those of 'similar' schools, as measured by the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. In 1997, the school's results were above the national average, and there is some evidence to suggest that fluctuations in results from year to year arise, at least in part, because of differences between cohorts, including differences in the proportions of pupils with special educational needs. There is no statistically significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
59. Measures taken by the school since the last Ofsted inspection in 1997, including the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the provision of Additional Literacy Support, are already having a beneficial impact on pupils' learning and on the standards achieved. In response to criticisms in the last Ofsted report, the school has taken very positive steps to improve the range and quality of pupils' personal reading. During the current inspection, the standards of reading were judged to be broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2, with a small, but significant number of pupils with SEN below that standard, and a significant number likely to exceed the national expectation and achieve Level 5. Most pupils in Year 6 read fluently and expressively. They have a secure grasp of decoding strategies, including phonic awareness, and they read different kinds of texts and different genres with a sound level of understanding. Higher attaining pupils respond appropriately 'to the vocabulary and organisation of language in literature', a skill which they were said to lack at the time of the last Ofsted report. Pupils of all abilities know how to find information in the library and in information books, and some are also skilled in retrieving information from CD-ROMs and from the Internet. During 'shared text' work in lessons, pupils demonstrate a sound ability to appreciate and to respond critically to texts, and most use inference well.
60. Pupils listen well in class. Their speaking skills are broadly average, and all pupils enjoy taking part in discussions. They take turns, articulate their ideas clearly, and, for the most part, adapt their language to suit their audience and purpose. The majority of pupils use spoken standard English appropriately.
61. Pupils' written work has some strengths, but some very basic weaknesses. On the whole, pupils plan their writing well. They have learned a great deal about the writing process from the texts they have studied, and they know how to use language for effect, how to choose words

for their 'weight' in particular contexts, and how to match the form and style of their writing to its audience and purpose. They rarely lack ideas, and their stories and descriptive writing are often lively and imaginative, while written recounts and reports, for example, are concise and tightly structured. Nevertheless, their work is often spoiled by weak spelling, poor punctuation and incorrect use of grammar. In addition, too many pupils still form their letters incorrectly, do not have fluent handwriting, and do not take enough care with the quality and presentation of their day to day work.

62. Since the last inspection, the introduction of a commercial scheme of work has helped teachers to plan their work and, with the National Literacy Strategy, now provides a secure framework for the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Teachers consider pupils' differing needs, plan work accordingly, and, with rare exceptions, secure an appropriate match of work to pupils. Resources for reading have been improved, and pupils are now encouraged to read widely, keep reading records, and write regular reviews.
63. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully. Most of the teaching is good or better, and there were no unsatisfactory English lessons during the inspection. All teachers relate well to their pupils, clearly value their ideas, and have created a climate in which pupils dare to take risks in their use of language. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour, and they successfully engage pupils' interest and commitment. They plan their lessons well, and they make pupils aware, from the outset, what they are intended to learn. They choose suitably challenging texts for shared text work, drawing pupils' attention to the particular features of different kinds of writing, with the expectation that pupils will learn to adopt similar techniques in their own written work. They use sharply focused questions during discussions, and they are skilled at analysing, and building on, pupils' responses.
64. The teaching and support of pupils with special educational needs is a particular strength. These pupils benefit from a variety of support mechanisms, often receiving help in class, in small groups and as individuals. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve standards which are commensurate with their capabilities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also receive appropriate support and make good progress.
65. Weaknesses in the teaching are generic rather than associated with particular lessons. Although some very good and excellent practice was observed during guided writing sessions within the literacy hour, most teachers intervene too little, when pupils write for real purposes, and place too little emphasis on pupils achieving high standards in their use of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and handwriting. Overall, teachers' expectations for the presentation of writing, in draft and finished form, are too low.
66. Teachers are effective in making sure that pupils acquire a wide general vocabulary and a suitable repertoire of subject-specific terms to support their work in English and in other subjects. Pupils cover an appropriate range of purposes for writing within English, and special projects such as the European project encourage pupils to write for real purposes. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their writing skills in other subjects are often missed. Overall, pupils produce too little by way of extended writing, and have too little experience of redrafting, refining and completing pieces of work to a high standard.
67. Pupils' attitudes to work are very positive, and this is a significant factor which accounts for the good progress they make in lessons. They are enthusiastic and interested, sustain concentration well and behave responsibly. Some pupils 'man' and run the school bookshop with obvious enjoyment and with great efficiency.
68. The co-ordinator has been effective in her role and has prepared staff well for the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and there has been some useful analysis of SATs results which has informed teaching, for example in regard to non-chronological writing. All pupils have individual targets for English, many of these related to basic writing skills. Some teachers mark pupils' work rigorously, providing helpful

written commentaries which show pupils how to improve, but marking, like teaching, rarely addresses the secretarial aspects of pupils' writing rigorously enough to have a lasting impact. Teachers' planning is monitored, and there is an effective mechanism for monitoring curriculum coverage through the 'notice-boards' in classrooms. More routine monitoring, of the standard of pupils' work and of the quality of teaching and of marking, is less well developed and needs to be improved.

MATHEMATICS

69. On entry to the school, there is a wide range of mathematical attainment; however, the majority of pupils demonstrate standards in mathematics which are below average. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 SAT's indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving, and exceeding, the national standard was well below average. Overall, these results were below those achieved by schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school's 1998 results were also below the standard expected. In the 1997 OFSTED inspection, pupils' attainment was judged to be above average in relation to national standards.
70. Inspection findings indicate that standards are improving. Whilst the progress which pupils make in their mathematical learning is uneven, across the key stage, it is mainly sound and occasionally good. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, overall, in developing their numeracy skills, in extending their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and in handling data. They make slower, but mainly satisfactory progress in using and applying their mathematical skills. At the end of the key stage, the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the national average. However, a significant minority of pupils still do not reach this standard and relatively few pupils exceed it.
71. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils show an interest in mathematics. They respond particularly well to practical activities such as investigating right angles in Year 3; and when working out strategies to solve 'real life' problems, for example, involving currency exchange in Year 5. All lessons are characterised by positive relationships between pupils and teachers and behaviour is consistently good. The majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to the contributions of others, and persevere with their tasks. When given the opportunity, pupils work very well together in pairs, or in small groups, to complete a task. In less effective lessons, a small minority of pupils find it difficult to listen attentively and to sustain their concentration.
72. Teaching in mathematics, including the key skill of numeracy, is mainly sound and occasionally good. Throughout the school, teachers plan conscientiously and all lesson plans reflect the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Learning outcomes are clearly defined and these are appropriately shared with pupils at the beginning of each session. All teachers provide introductions to their lessons which appropriately include a variety of short oral and mental activities. In the best practice, they use differentiated questioning to involve pupils fully but this is not yet well established across the key stage and there is significant variation in maintaining a brisk pace. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the pace was too slow and more able pupils, in particular, were insufficiently challenged by the teacher's questioning during the introduction, and also by the main activity.
73. Resources are well organised and instructions and teaching points are clearly explained. In most lessons, teachers carefully match tasks to the previous attainment of pupils and this results in satisfactory, or better, progress in pupils' learning. General assistants are well briefed by teachers and provide valuable support for pupils with special educational needs. In the most effective lessons, teachers use good questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking, during the main activity. However, in a minority of lessons teachers' expectations are insufficiently high and the pace of the lesson is too slow, particularly for more able pupils. Teachers do not always ensure that there is sufficient time for the plenary in order

to draw together what has been learned and to highlight key facts, ideas and vocabulary. Information technology is sometimes used to support the development of pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding but there is scope to extend this good practise in order to promote data handling. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning in school.

74. The co-ordinator has only recently assumed responsibility for the subject. She is enthusiastic about mathematics and has attended appropriate training. The headteacher, previous co-ordinator and a governor have attended local authority training for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy (N.N.S.) and the N.N.S. Audit has been completed. The school recognises the need for a more thorough scrutiny of the Key Stage 2 test results and has appropriately involved the local authority adviser in an analysis of the 1999 outcomes. Staff have observed the teaching of mathematics in other schools and time has been allocated, during regular staff meetings, to address issues arising from the introduction of the N.N.S. However, no monitoring of the teaching of mathematics has been undertaken by the headteacher or co-ordinator and the scrutiny of pupils' work across the school currently lacks rigour.
75. Resources for mathematics are just adequate to meet the demands of the N.N.S. Teachers and general assistants have conscientiously made some new equipment and, following an audit of resources, the school recognises the need to continue to make improvements.

SCIENCE

76. On entry to the school, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils are below average. The results of the statutory tests were below the national average in 1998, while the 1999 results were well below the national average and were below the results achieved by similar schools.
77. Inspection findings show that pupils generally achieve best in Years 3 and 4, where a good scheme of work for the subject has been recently introduced. Overall, pupils in the younger half of the school make satisfactory progress in their learning in science. However, in one Year 3 class, the pupils do not achieve as well as they should since the new scheme is not being properly implemented, and pupils have few opportunities to develop the skills of scientific enquiry. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' progress is particularly spasmodic, and is barely adequate, overall. Although inhibited by a planning framework which provides insufficient emphasis on science in some terms, most Year 5 and 6 pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in acquiring factual knowledge in the subject. However, their progress in developing investigation skills is particularly uneven, and is mainly unsatisfactory. At the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils demonstrate average overall standards in the subject, but a significant minority do not reach this level and relatively few do better. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in science. More able pupils make mainly satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4, although they sometimes mark time in one Year 3 class. In Years 5 and 6, the progress of more able pupils is mainly unsatisfactory, and they are coasting through too much of their work.
78. The most effective teaching in Year 3 results in pupils in one class making good progress in learning that some materials are particularly suitable for specific purposes, and developing a sound understanding of the need for healthy eating and dental hygiene. They conduct simple experiments to discover whether plants need leaves to grow well, and record their results carefully, demonstrating satisfactory achievement. In the other Year 3 class, pupils make sound progress when learning about the properties of materials but their investigation skills are underdeveloped. In Year 4, pupils in both classes make sound gains when learning about the human skeleton and how muscles work. They achieve sound standards when conducting experiments to discover the insulation properties of different materials; and make satisfactory progress when learning the characteristics of liquids and solids.

79. In Year 5, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning basic facts about forces. In both classes, pupils undertake experiments but, in one class, they have little opportunity to develop their investigation skills properly since their predictions, methods and results are all copied from the same text provided by the teacher. In the second Year 5 class, pupils have appropriate opportunities to engage in their investigations and to make decisions, but their skills in presenting their results are often a little below average. In Year 6, most pupils know that the position of the sun affects the length of shadows, and have satisfactory knowledge about electrical circuits. However, their awareness of the principle of fair testing requires further development; and their science experiments are often written up in their books with insufficient care. Few pupils, including the more able, can distinguish adequately, between a description and an evaluation of the results of investigations.
80. Across the school, pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate well and persevere with their tasks. Relationships between pupils are good and they work together co-operatively. Their behaviour is consistently good in science lessons.
81. The quality of teaching is mainly sound, although examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching were also observed during the inspection. Teachers' planning is generally satisfactory, and they clearly identify what pupils are expected to learn in their lessons. Their subject knowledge is sound, and they usually organise lessons very effectively. All have good relationships with their pupils, and this has a beneficial effect on pupils' motivation and learning. In the most effective lessons, teachers use good questioning skills to probe pupils' understanding, ensure that work is sufficiently challenging for all pupils and that good use is made of time. Teachers give insufficient attention to the development of pupils' investigation skills in one Year 3 class and in the older half of the school. In the single lesson where unsatisfactory teaching was observed, Year 6 pupils were not given enough guidance about how to conduct systematic investigations, and made slow progress in their learning, as a consequence. The last OFSTED inspection also identified weaknesses in teachers' planning for the development of pupils' enquiry skills. Across the school, more able pupils are sometimes given tasks which provide them with insufficient challenge, and this is an important weakness in Years 5 and 6.
82. The science co-ordinator is enthusiastic, and has secure subject knowledge and good teaching skills. She organises resources efficiently, and these are broadly satisfactory in quality and range. The co-ordinator has introduced the good scheme of work, produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, in Years 3 and 4, and sensibly plans for its future use in the older classes to improve continuity in pupils' scientific learning. Procedures for monitoring the subject are generally underdeveloped, and this is recognised by the co-ordinator. Insufficient use is made of the results of the statutory assessments, and of work-sampling, to assess the standards achieved by pupils and to judge their progress. This lack of analytical rigour leaves the school in a weak position to devise strategies to raise standards. There is no portfolio of assessed work in science to promote consistency in teachers' assessments, and the school appropriately plans to provide more opportunities for teachers to discuss examples of work and agree standards, using National Curriculum criteria.

ART

83. Evidence from an examination of pupils' completed work, and from lesson observation, shows that pupils make sound progress, overall, in art, and achieve standards which are mainly satisfactory for their ages, but are sometimes good. Current standards are similar to those found on the last OFSTED inspection. In Year 3, pupils achieve good standards when mixing their own paint colours to create a range of greens in their paintings of leaves. They achieve satisfactory standards when making wax-resist patterns and creating collage pictures. In Year 4, pupils make sound progress in learning about the work of Klee and Kandinsky; and their bold observation paintings reflect elements of the work of Kandinsky. During the inspection, the Year 4 classes achieved well when learning about Aboriginal art, as a result of effective

teaching. Their drawings of plants and animal skulls demonstrate careful observation and their developing skills in using shading techniques. In Year 5, pupils have a sound knowledge of the work of William Morris, and create their own wallpaper designs which demonstrate standards which are mainly satisfactory, but sometimes good, for their age. In Year 6, pupils draw and paint a range of flowers and plants from direct observation. While these are generally of a sound standard, some demonstrate good drawing and painting skills. Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress when learning about the work of Bruegel.

84. Art lessons were only observed in Year 4, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. In the lessons seen, teachers made good use of a range of reproductions to explain the characteristics of Aboriginal art, motivated pupils well, organised their lessons effectively and set high standards in behaviour. As a consequence, pupils made good progress in their learning, concentrated and persevered with their tasks, and behaved well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Only two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, and there were few examples of pupils' completed work available for examination. As a consequence, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the standards pupils achieve or the quality of teaching in the subject.
86. In Year 3, pupils create model bridges, using paper and card, and make broadly satisfactory progress in learning how to create the strongest structures. They also make adequate gains when creating tall towers, using art straws and rolled newspaper, which enable them to experiment to find the best ways of providing stability. In Year 6, pupils make sound progress when studying mechanical toys to discover how they use cams; and create simple models which incorporate cams. These demonstrate satisfactory making skills. In both lessons, teachers' organisation was sound and the tasks captured the interest of the pupils. As a result, pupils concentrated well, demonstrated positive attitudes to their work and made satisfactory progress in their learning.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching, the progress which pupils make, or the standards which they achieve, in this subject.
88. Planning for geography indicates that pupils undertake an appropriate range of studies which includes rivers, settlements, environmental issues, the weather, the school's locality and contrasting localities in England and overseas. There are satisfactory and well organised resources to support this work. The school's current involvement in a European Education Project is effectively promoting pupils' interest in other countries; and older pupils are establishing contact with their peers in France, Norway, Sweden and Portugal. The co-ordinator has prepared a sound action plan for the subject which appropriately identifies the need to audit the current scheme of work in order to formulate a new framework which reflects the requirements of the revised National Curriculum. He has also encouraged staff to evaluate helpful guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority which is aimed at promoting progression in pupils' geographical skills across the school. Some informal monitoring of the standards achieved by pupils is undertaken, but, this does not sufficiently inform the co-ordinator, or management team, about the progress which pupils are making in their learning across the key stage.

HISTORY

89. As a result of timetabling arrangements, only two history lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. Throughout the school, pupils make mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress and attain satisfactory standards in history. They develop a secure understanding of chronology and extend their knowledge of the similarities and differences in various periods of history; and their understanding of people and of change.
90. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4, make mainly sound, but sometimes good, progress through their studies of, for example, life in Roman times. In one Year 3 lesson, the co-ordinator of the subject enabled pupils to make good progress in applying their research skills to their studies of the Celts and Romans. Through her careful organisation of appropriate resources such as artefacts, information books and photographs, pupils were able to extend their understanding of the importance of evidence to historians and their knowledge of this particular period of history. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6, continue to make mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress in their studies of the key people, events and daily life in Victorian times. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of famous monarchs such as Queen Victoria and of the differences in the home, clothing, education, and in public health earlier this century, is commensurate with their age. However, across the key stage, difficulties encountered with writing slow the progress of a significant proportion of pupils in recording their work in this subject.
91. Pupils have positive attitudes to history and, in the lessons observed, are motivated by the enthusiasm of their teachers. Many are keen to contribute ideas and they listen with interest to the suggestions of others. Behaviour is very good and older pupils, in particular, settle to their tasks quickly, concentrate well and persevere. Pupils respond especially well to visits to places of historical interest and the opportunity to handle artefacts.
92. Insufficient teaching of history was observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in this subject. However, in the lessons which were seen the teaching was either good or very good. Teachers use good questioning techniques to assess and challenge pupils' understanding and resources are well prepared and appropriate. The management of pupils is at least good and, in the Year 5 lesson observed, was excellent. Teachers appropriately arrange visits to places of historical interest, for example, to the Roman Baths and to the Bath Industrial Heritage Museum. In order to celebrate the Millennium, the whole school has contributed to a Millennium timeline which runs the full length of the school's long corridors. It includes paintings, pupils' writing, puppets and word processed accounts and makes a good contribution to extending pupils' understanding of chronology. Time lines are also used effectively in some classrooms.
93. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject, has attended relevant training and has good subject knowledge. Her action plan for history appropriately includes the development of the use of drama in history and making closer links between the subject and the work pupils undertake in literacy. She has encouraged staff to use helpful guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in order to secure continuity and progression in pupils' learning across the key stage. The co-ordinator gains an overview of the work undertaken in this subject by scrutinising teachers' planning but there are few strategies in place to monitor the standards of pupils' work.
94. Resources are satisfactory and include a small collection of artefacts which are used to support the development of pupils' skills of observation and enquiry, video material and CD Roms.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Pupils make uneven, but mainly satisfactory, progress across the key stage. The majority demonstrate keyboard and computer mouse skills which are commensurate with their ages and a minority, who often have access to a computer at home, have above average knowledge and skills. At the end of the key stage, the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with that expected. Inspection findings are broadly similar to those identified in the last OFSTED report.
96. Overall, pupils make mainly sound progress in their work with texts and design but slower, and just adequate, progress in data handling and control. Year 3 pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills when using a painting program and printing their pictures. They make sound progress in developing word processing skills, for example, when writing about the Romans as part of their history topic; and develop effective editing skills by presenting non-fiction writing about food and teeth which also incorporates digital photographs. Year 4 pupils extend these editing skills when combining the writing efforts of all pupils to produce a whole class story. As part of the literacy hour, pupils with special educational needs make good use of the school's laptop computers, for example, to write instructional texts such as 'Making a Balloon Puppet,' and they achieve sound or better standards. Year 4 pupils also achieve sound or better standards when using spreadsheets to explore differences between the size of collar bones, spines and skulls, in adults and children, and printing bar charts to illustrate their findings. In their art work, they make sound progress in understanding the shape and texture of paintings by Kandinsky and Klee through their own efforts, using the painting program first encountered in Year 3.
97. Older pupils use their developing information technology skills to present their work in an interesting and attractive way. For example, in Year 5, they use different styles and colours of fonts and borders to enhance their poems; and add clip-art pictures to illustrate and enliven their writing. Contributions made to the school's Millennium Timeline on topics such as the Great Fire of London or George Washington also demonstrate sound standards in word processing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding, and their information technology skills, through the school's European Education Project. They take photographs of each other with a digital camera, re-size them and insert them into letters which they have word processed; and these are then e-mailed to pupils in participating schools in Norway, Sweden, France, Portugal and Spain. Year 6 pupils satisfactorily extend their understanding of spreadsheets when entering and formatting data on variations in shadow lengths during the school day, and printing a line graph to illustrate their findings. Older pupils demonstrate good skills when completing homework tasks using computers, for example, when compiling newspaper style reports.
98. Insufficient teaching of information technology took place during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. The school makes very effective use of a small group of volunteer parents and they provide good support for pupils. Pupils work in information technology is displayed in classrooms and corridors and some teachers use information technology themselves in order to promote the subject, for example, to produce labels and posters or photographs of pupils, using the digital camera. Teachers and general assistants working with pupils with special educational needs make good use of the school's laptop computers and CD-ROM's are used throughout the school Staff from the local technology college provide additional expertise particularly in control and monitoring and work with older pupils in the school. However, evidence suggests that some teachers provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information technology; and that more emphasis should be given to data handling in some classes.
99. The subject is co-ordinated by the headteacher who is well informed and enthusiastic about the development of information technology across the school. He has a good overview of provision and practice and, through his efforts, the subject is well promoted. The headteacher has nurtured the development of the European Education Project which is providing a clear

purpose for the use of information technology and, in particular, the Internet and video conferencing. He has created an interesting and attractive school website and has encouraged parents and pupils to visit the site and to e-mail comments to the school. The Internet has also been effectively used to access information to support pupils' studies. In English, for example, copies of the 'Bookworm Newsletter' and 'Authors on the Net' are made available in the school library to stimulate pupils' interest in books and authors. A sound action plan has been formulated for the subject which includes training for staff and raising overall standards in information technology. The current scheme of work is to be revised to take into account the requirements of the revised National Curriculum and guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

100. Resources are broadly satisfactory and are soon to be improved by using funding obtained through the National Grid for Learning and the support of parents. A computer suite is to be established in a spare classroom and the headteacher has appropriately visited other schools with this facility in order to maximise the funding available. Where deficiencies currently exist, the school makes good use of equipment and expertise provided by the nearby technology college.

MUSIC

101. During the inspection, music lessons were observed in Years 3 and 5, and three lunchtime music clubs were also seen. In addition, whole school singing was assessed during morning assemblies. This evidence does not provide a secure basis for an overall judgement about standards in most elements of the subject. However, it is clear that standards in singing are above average. The pupils enjoy singing and perform with a secure control of pitch and good diction. In Year 3, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve sound standards when recognising and repeating simple rhythms, using instruments and body percussion. They demonstrate satisfactory listening and appraising skills, and make sound progress when creating and performing their own compositions. In Year 5, pupils listen attentively to recorded music, and achieve well when singing in a round.
102. Pupils make good progress in the extra-curricular music clubs. For example, the performance of the handbell ringers is of an exceptionally high quality, and pupils' skills in playing brass and woodwind instruments are well above average in these clubs. During the inspection, the Year 3, 4 and 6 pupils, who comprise the handbell group, played at the Millennium Dome and will have represented the school very well.
103. The music co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and makes a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' musical development through his leadership of extra-curricular music activities. Insufficient lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about the quality of music teaching across the school. However, the teaching was sound or better in the lessons seen. The teachers organised their lessons well and made effective use of the Nelson Music Scheme to support their teaching. As a result of well organised lessons that captured their interest, pupils concentrated well and persevered with their tasks, and their behaviour was good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. The standards attained by pupils in physical education are broadly average for their age overall, although better in dance and football than in gymnastics and hockey. No swimming lessons were observed during the inspection, but almost all pupils are able to swim the recommended distance unaided by the time they leave Year 4, and this indicates that they learn quickly. Many pupils derive particular benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular activities and sports provided by the school. These pupils often pursue their chosen sports both inside and outside school, achieving high standards of individual performance, and often contributing to the school's successful record in local leagues and competitions. In a football lesson observed

in Year 6, the majority of pupils demonstrated particularly skilful control when sending, stopping, receiving and dribbling a ball. In a Year 4 dance lesson, pupils achieved above average standards in their movement, control, and response to the rhythm of music. In almost all lessons, pupils work safely; explain clearly the effects of exercise on their bodies; use space well, having due regard for others' safety; and, work conscientiously to improve their own performance. They often use evaluation well, applying the criteria of successful performance to their own work and to that of their peers. Occasional weaknesses in pupils' performance stem from the apparent unwillingness of a minority of pupils to sustain energetic activity, the disregard of a few pupils for safety issues in a hockey lesson, and the relative underachievement of the highest attaining pupils in both games and gymnastics lessons when their teachers lack the specific expertise necessary to help them raise their performance even further.

105. The quality of teaching is mainly sound or better, and only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. All teachers plan their lessons well, with clear objectives and with structured sequences of activities designed to develop pupils' skills and to provide ample opportunities for practice. The detailed schemes of work introduced since the last OFSTED inspection in 1997 now provide a very secure framework for the progressive development of skills in all aspects of physical education. In most lessons, the teaching has a marked impact on the quality of learning and on the standards attained. Where this is the case, teachers use both demonstration and evaluation well to raise pupils' aspirations and to foster their understanding of the criteria associated with high standards of performance. As a result, the pupils work purposefully towards known objectives, concentrate well, and practise specific skills with increasing control. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the impulsive behaviour of a very few boys made too many demands on the teacher's attention. As a result, not only they, but also the other pupils in the class, made unsatisfactory progress.
106. In some of the best lessons, the teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, pupils in Year 3 behaved with a mature sense of responsibility, setting out the gymnastics apparatus quickly, silently and efficiently, without fuss. In Year 6, one pupil ably led his peers through a sequence of warm-up activities before a football lesson.
107. The co-ordinator has worked hard to respond to the few criticisms raised about physical education in the last OFSTED report. She is pro-active in her role, constantly seeking to broaden the range of opportunities available to pupils, and she has a clear overview of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. A recent audit of skills and resources highlighted teachers' lack of confidence in teaching gymnastics, and measures are in place to address this. Many staff and parents already give generously of their own time to lead extra-curricular PE activities, and great care is taken to avoid any notion of gender-stereotypes in sport. There is scope for further improvements to the range of outdoor and adventurous pursuits offered to pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

108. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain the standards required by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils acquire sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of other major world faiths including Judaism, Islam and Sikhism as they move up through the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 preparing for a visit to the local Anglican church show a satisfactory level of understanding of outward features of Christianity and of Christian beliefs. They discuss church buildings, Christian symbols and Christian ceremonies such as weddings, baptisms and funerals, and recognise some significant differences in the practices of those who belong to different Christian churches. In their written work, pupils in Year 5 show a sound knowledge of Sikhism when they write about the life and teachings of Guru Nanak and about religious worship at the Golden Temple. Pupils in Year 4 are able to reflect meaningfully on their own journeys through life, recalling not only happy and sad times, but also recognising the various challenges they have already faced.

109. Pupils in all years show a degree of spirituality in their response to life, and to religion, that is unusual for their ages. Often, during discussion, they engage spiritually with others, empathising with their friends' experiences and feelings, and responding sensitively to thoughts and questions related to the meaning and purpose of life. In an excellent lesson, in a Year 5 class, pupils draw on past memories, family associations and moments of solitary contemplation as they recall the 'special places' which have had significance in their lives. Personal thoughts and images are shared, and such is the pupils' respect for one another that even the most tentative ideas are welcomed and valued. Pupils in Year 6 show a similar level of sensitivity when discussing the difference between casual expressions of love, for example, 'I would *love* a cup of tea', and a genuinely felt emotion which might lead someone, for instance, to show remarkable restraint when faced with a loved one's weaknesses or wrongdoing.
110. All available evidence indicates that, overall, standards have risen since the last OFSTED inspection. The quality of teaching is mainly sound, and occasionally good, and one lesson seen was exceptionally well taught. As a consequence, pupils make satisfactory or better gains in their learning. All teachers plan their lessons well, identifying very clearly what the pupils are intended to learn, and making precise links to the scheme of work. The strong contribution made by religious education to the development of pupils' spirituality is a marked feature in some lessons. In the best lessons, the very good relationships that have been fostered between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves set the tone for a learning climate in which adults and pupils alike are able to share their innermost thoughts and feelings. Teachers ensure, without pressure, that all pupils contribute to discussions, and that all views are respected. Where lessons are taught satisfactorily but are not of the same high standard, teachers tend to be less knowledgeable and less confident in their approach.
111. In a broader context, the quality of learning is enhanced by visits to a number of different places of worship, including local Sikh and Hindu temples, and local Christian churches. Regular visitors to the school include the local Christian minister and a Jewish governor, both of whom talk to the pupils about their faith and about the place of religion in their work and in their daily lives.
112. Although the subject co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and gives helpful advice to colleagues about the scheme of work, he has, thus far, been unable to monitor either the quality of teaching or the standards achieved by pupils. A new Agreed Syllabus is shortly to be introduced. The co-ordinator has received training in relation to its implementation, and there are plans for the training to be disseminated for the benefit of other staff.