

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTH NORWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Norwood

LEA area: South Norwood

Unique reference number: 101736

Headteacher: Mrs Amelia Rydzewski

Reporting inspector: Mr Fred Riches
23235

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 February 2002

Inspection number: 191717

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: 34 Crowther Road
South Norwood
London

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mick Vincent

Date of previous inspection: 3 - 6 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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23235	Fred Riches	Registered inspector	Art, music and English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13828	Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30618	Paul Story	Team inspector	Science, history and physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31046	Chris Nuttall	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology and equal opportunities	
17352	Lorna Flowers	Team inspector	English and religious education	
23812	Carol Slade	Team inspector	The foundation stage, geography and special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

South Norwood is a large community primary school for children aged four to eleven. There are 523 pupils on roll full time, including 60 children in the reception classes. Numbers are much the same as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Almost all pupils live in the local area in a mix of owner-occupied and rented homes. Just under 27 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and cultural roots. These include 40 per cent from white United Kingdom families and another 40 per cent from black African, Caribbean and other black heritages. The remaining 20 per cent are from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, including Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. A total of 29 different languages are spoken in the school. Just under a third of the 93 pupils speaking English as an additional language are at an early stage and require additional support. The main languages spoken at home are Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Creole. Seven pupils are recently arrived refugees. Children's attainment on entry to reception classes is wide-ranging, but a little below average overall. Just over 22 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is broadly average. The school has twelve places in two special needs facilities for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Each of these pupils has a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

South Norwood continues to be a good school. Pupils of all abilities, cultures and backgrounds achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and includes a high proportion that is either very good or excellent. The headteacher gives a very good lead and is ably assisted by the deputy head, senior management team and governing body. Despite the high staff turnover and recruitment difficulties, the school is doing well and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils of all abilities, cultures and backgrounds achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and religious, personal and social education;
- Almost all pupils show positive attitudes to their work and behave very well;
- Teaching is good, and consistently strong in reception, Year 6 and senior staff's classes;
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and she is well supported by the deputy, senior management team and governing body;
- The staff supporting pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are highly professional and very effective;
- The school's care, guidance and provision for pupils' personal development are very good, with cultural development outstanding;
- The school has a very strong partnership with parents.

What could be improved

- Consistency in developing investigative work in mathematics and science and research skills in a number of subjects;
- The use of planning and assessment in subjects in the broader curriculum, so that pupils build consistently on previous skills, knowledge and understanding;
- The school's heating system, which has a detrimental effect on learning.

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 sound improvement overall since it was inspected in February 1997. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen in line with the national trend. The school fully addressed the key issues raised in the first two years after the previous inspection, with particular sustained success in raising standards in writing. Long-term absences and secondments of senior staff and a high turnover of teachers in the past two years, with associated recruitment difficulties, have brought management challenges which the school is meeting well. It is in a good position to move forward.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	D	C
Mathematics	C	B	D	C
Science	C	B	C	B

Key

Well above average A

above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

Similar schools in this table are those with 20% to 35% of pupils eligible for free school meals

The fall in standards at age eleven in 2001 was associated with a year group whose difficulties had been recognised and addressed well by the school. The school introduced booster classes and various strategies to lift the self-esteem of a significant minority of disaffected pupils. This raised pupils' overall performance so that it matched that of similar schools in English and mathematics and was better in science. Standards in the current Year 6 are better. They are average in all three subjects. This shows good achievement by all pupils, whose attainment on entry was below average overall. The school's results have risen in line with the national trend since the last inspection at ages seven and eleven in English, mathematics and science. The improvement in standards of writing at age seven over the past three years is a particularly impressive outcome of strategies introduced to raise standards, especially for higher attainers. The school is on course to meet the challenging targets set for attainment in literacy and numeracy in 2002. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. They achieve particularly well in religious education and in personal and social education, where enthusiastic teaching leads to thoughtful discussion. Pupils with special educational needs do very well because of the well-planned support they receive. Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, including recently arrived refugees, also make rapid strides as a result of well-focused, stimulating teaching and support. Higher attainers do well in English and mathematics as a result of setting arrangements and good challenge from their teachers. They achieve satisfactorily in the wider curriculum. The inspection found no significant difference between boys' and girls' attainment. The school has improved boys' attainment by taking positive measures to raise their self-esteem. There is no significant difference in the attainment of different ethnic groups. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds are represented broadly equally in all ability groups. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), though still below average at ages seven and eleven, are improving as a result of better facilities and increased teacher expertise. Standards in design and technology are below average because resources are poor and insufficient time is allocated to the subject. In all other subjects, standards are average, although there are inconsistencies, particularly in art and music, where teachers' confidence and expertise vary.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well around the school, at lunchtimes and playtimes, and in all but a very small number of lessons. The two exclusions last year were appropriate measures.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are polite, relate well and show respect to each other and staff. They are gaining a positive sense of citizenship and belonging through the school council and clubs.
Attendance	Below average; improving as a result of positive steps taken.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. Seven out of ten lessons seen were of good quality or better, including a third of very high quality. Teaching is very good in reception classes, Year 6 and in lessons taken by senior and middle management staff. Teachers new to the school receive good support and their teaching is largely satisfactory, with several good lessons seen. The school is aware that a small amount of teaching is unsatisfactory and is giving effective guidance. The teaching of English is good, with good attention to reading strategies, including phonics, and thoughtful development of pupils' writing skills. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where teachers give more focused attention to developing numeracy skills, including mental and oral recall. Teachers assess pupils' abilities very well in English and mathematics, successfully challenging higher attainers and supporting pupils with special educational needs. There is less challenge for higher attainers in other subjects. Little investigative work was found in mathematics and science and pupils' development of research skills to improve learning in science, history and geography, is limited. A major strength in teaching is the consistent sharing of lesson aims with pupils. These are usually reviewed at the close. In the very good and excellent lessons, teachers know their subject well, prepare thoroughly, use resources thoughtfully and imaginatively, deploy assistants effectively and carry pupils along with their own enthusiasm. In the very small number of unsatisfactory lessons seen, teachers' class management skills were weak. Teachers and assistants in the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant team and those working with pupils who have special educational needs make very effective contributions to pupils' learning. Good teamwork between these staff and class teachers improves learning for all groups in jointly led lessons. Teachers ensure equality of opportunity for boys and girls, for pupils learning English as an additional language and for pupils from all ethnic groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Meets statutory requirements. The school uses stimulating themes, focuses well on literacy and numeracy, and balances time for most other subjects satisfactorily. Good breadth and depth in the foundation stage curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school meets all of these pupils' needs by using individual education plans carefully and deploying staff very effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. These pupils' needs are carefully assessed and those at an early stage receive very caring and focused support both in classes and, where necessary, in small groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A major strength. Very good overall, with excellent cultural development. The school curriculum is planned so that opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development abound. Staff raise pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures and teach respect for all.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school offers very good care and guidance, with excellent child protection and health and safety procedures. Good assessment procedures have been introduced in English and mathematics. They need developing in other subjects. .

The school's partnership with parents is very effective.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's and deputy's skills complement each other and a stable senior management team gives very good support in monitoring and inducting new staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body gives good support. Governors receive comprehensive information on standards, staffing, curriculum planning and assessment to help them in their monitoring and strategic planning roles. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching are thorough. Performance management is under way. The school's improvement planning process is democratic and ensures good choice of priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and management are very good. Staff are deployed well; accommodation and resources are used effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well.

The school enjoys a full complement of teachers, assistants, administrative and other support staff. Recruitment has been difficult, however, and during recent high staff turnover, not all recruits were trained to teach the National Curriculum or use the literacy and numeracy strategies. The school has given very good support to these teachers. The school's antiquated heating system results in rooms being too hot or too cold for pupils to concentrate well. Otherwise, accommodation is satisfactory and resources in most subjects are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Of 523 questionnaires distributed, 95 were returned. 20 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children like school and the school is helping them become mature.Teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and do their best.Leadership and management are good.Staff are approachable and the school works closely with parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A small minority feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities.A few at the meeting and in written comment expressed concern about staff turnover.A few parents feel their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home.

The inspection fully supports the very positive views about teaching and leadership expressed by the large majority of parents who returned questionnaires and those who attended the meeting. The school provides very good information for parents and welcomes them regularly into the school to observe lessons and take part in workshops. The inspection finds the range of activities provided is good, more than in most schools. Most concerned parents have children aged 7 to 9 and many clubs are for the oldest pupils. Parents would clearly welcome more for younger children, but staff are already highly committed, providing extra booster classes as well as clubs. The headteacher shares parents' concern about the high staffing turnover at a time of national difficulties in teacher recruitment. The school does all it can to support teachers new to the school. The inspection finds the school's homework arrangements are good and contribute effectively to pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards at age eleven

1 Standards at age eleven in the current year are average in English, mathematics and science. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory improvement in these three subjects. Results have improved overall since 1997 in line with the national trend. Last year, there was a slight dip in a year group that included a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs, whose education had been disrupted more than usual by staff changes and absence. The school had recognised the difficulties faced by these pupils, several of whom had become disaffected, and set up a number of strategies to support them when they were in Year 5. These included highly successful strategies to raise the achievement and build the self-esteem of pupils from ethnic minorities. As a result of the systematic procedures introduced, although the school's results in 2001 were below average in English and mathematics, they still matched those of schools serving a similar socio-economic community. The school continues to benefit from the strategies used and is employing them to create a very positive attitude towards learning among pupils from all ethnic backgrounds. Higher attainers achieved well, with the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5 at age eleven exceeding the performance of similar schools in English, mathematics and science.

Standards at age seven

2 Standards at age seven have also improved in line with the national trend since the last inspection. The inspection found average standards in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 2. Between 1999 and 2001 the school raised writing standards at age seven significantly. This was due to a strong focus on writing across the school and a particular focus on challenging higher attainers in Year 2. With considerable input from the literacy and assessment co-ordinators at the time, the school enabled 21 per cent of pupils to reach the higher level 3 in writing, which put it among the top five per cent of similar schools and well above the national average. The school has a very successful model to follow when planning its strategies for raising attainment in other subjects. In the same year group, no pupils achieved above the expected level for seven-year-olds in science. This stems partly from the lack of sufficient investigative work in this subject and partly from insecure assessment by teachers. Standards in reading and mathematics have remained close to the national average and the proportion of pupils attaining higher has also been close to the national proportion.

Standards in the foundation stage (reception classes)

3 When children start school their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide ranging, but a little below average overall. Almost a quarter of the pupils in the current reception year receive support from the team teaching English as an additional language. These children make very good progress as a result of this early, focused intervention. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the early learning goals in their personal, social, emotional, creative, mathematical and physical development, and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's skills in communication, language and literacy are more wide ranging. Many meet the early learning goals¹ in this area well before the end of

¹ Early learning goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage (the reception year). The areas of learning in the foundation stage are: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

the reception year and begin working at the early stage of the National Curriculum, but approximately a quarter are still on their way to meeting them. Those with special educational needs or whose communication, language and literacy skills in English are still developing, are well on their way to these goals. They all meet the carefully set targets in their individual education plans.

Standards in other subjects

4 Standards in religious education are a strength. They meet the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and exceed them by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching, interesting debate and a stimulating curriculum. Standards in design and technology and ICT are below average, however, at ages seven and eleven. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection as a result of the well-planned use of the new computer suite and the training of teachers in the subject. However, these improvements in provision are recent and have not yet had time to show their impact on standards. Standards in design and technology were also below average in 1997. The school had addressed the weakness, but since 1999, when the school's focus turned to literacy and numeracy, the subject has not been a focus. Pupils spend insufficient time on the subject and do not achieve well because they do not build sequentially on the knowledge and skills acquired in each unit of work. The inspection found insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music overall, but standards in singing are average at the end of both key stages. Standards in all other subjects are average at ages seven and 11. However, there is some inconsistency in achievement in different classes across the school. Although pupils in parallel classes follow the same planned series of lessons, teachers do not all have the same level of confidence and skills. Also, pupils achieve satisfactorily, and sometimes well, in individual lessons, but in several subjects, such as art, music, geography, history and science, pupils do not achieve as well as they could over their time in the school. This is because they are not reminded sufficiently of their previous achievements and each series of lessons on a theme does not necessarily build on knowledge and skills learned in a previous term or year.

Achievement by different groups of pupils

5 Almost three fifths of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups. These pupils achieve as well as their peers. The school regularly analyses their progress as a separate group to ensure that they continue to do well. As a result of the school's careful analysis, strategies are put in place to raise the standards achieved and these have been highly successful over the past two years.

6 Pupils at an early stage of learning English make very good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing as they receive very well targeted support, which makes them feel positive about themselves and their learning. Bilingual pupils make similar progress to their peers and require no extra support.

7 Higher attaining pupils have been more effectively challenged in the last few years and this is reflected in the higher proportion attaining the higher level 3 in Year 2, except in science, and the higher level 5 in Year 6. Although the school does not formally identify gifted and talented pupils, teachers are aware of the higher attaining pupils in their classes and setting arrangements help them recognise their abilities and work hard to achieve as well as they can. Higher attainers do not do as well as they could in the wider curriculum, as the tasks set do not extend them sufficiently. The lack of investigative work in mathematics and science limits the progress of higher attainers in this aspect of these subjects, and pupils are not challenged sufficiently to develop and apply research skills, in science, history and geography for example.

8 Overall there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and all make similar progress. Last year, however, statistics indicated that girls did better than boys in Year 6 tests, particularly in the higher levels. The school is alert to regularly checking and analysing the differences in attainment between boys and girls. Analysis reveals that the difference last year, and in the current Year 5, is not related to the school's provision. The boys in last year's cohort, for example, had very wide-ranging levels of attainment including many with special educational needs.

9 Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, usually make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Where best progress is made targets are finely tuned and pupils are exposed to consistently good quality teaching. Learning tasks are also carefully matched to defined needs and well-informed support assistants provided sympathetic intervention during lessons. Pupils whose special needs include emotional and behavioural difficulties achieve well because of the very good strategies used to build their self-esteem and recognise their individuality.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Overall judgement

10 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school has maintained the high standards reported at the last inspection. They contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement.

Attitudes

11 Most children are eager to learn and have very positive attitudes to their work. A Year 6 girl said children liked coming to school because 'teachers make the lessons fun and really interesting'. In a reception class children listened carefully to the class teacher's instructions and tried very hard to follow them. Year 3 pupils in a lesson on cross-stitching showed great concentration when threading needles and much patience during stitching when the cotton kept slipping out of the needle. They persevered and produced neat work. These are just a few examples of the positive attitudes pupils of all ages show towards school.

Behaviour

12 Most pupils behave very well in lessons. They listen to their teachers, are hard working and have sustained concentration. In some classes one or two misbehave and divert the teacher's attention but good control by teachers and support staff ensures that disruptions are kept to a minimum. In and around the school most pupils' behaviour is very good. They are considerate to one another and cheerfully greet visitors when passing in the corridors or meeting in the playground. At these times they are polite and friendly. They are very loyal to their school and enjoy talking about it. Before lunch, junior pupils sensibly form a queue to enter the hall. They see lunchtimes very much as a social opportunity to talk to friends. They are well supervised and the noise level is reasonable. Even the youngest children act in a sensible and mature way when waiting at the kitchen to collect their meals and eating them with friends in the infant hall.

Oppressive behaviour

13 No oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. There were no signs of bullying, racial or any other aggressive behaviour. A few arguments in the playground were seen and, on occasions, some jostling, but these incidents were quickly resolved. Pupils know what is acceptable and what is not and the school is quick to deal with any infringement of the school's rules. There were no indications of vandalism or graffiti in the school and the school was free of litter. Although there were problems of vandalism in the past with outside youths entering the school, these ceased following new security measures.

Exclusions

14 In the past year two boys were placed on fixed exclusions for unacceptable behaviour. The measures taken were fitting on these occasions.

Relationships

15 The relationships pupils have with each other and their teachers are very good and have a positive effect on their development. Some Year 4 pupils, practising passing skills in a physical education, lesson found time during the activity to congratulate opponents who did particularly well. Two boys playing the African game of Oware, which is fast and very competitive, managed to maintain a sense of humour when deciding at one point if the rules of the game had been broken. An amicable agreement was quickly reached. When pupils are required to work in pairs or in small groups, as in many lessons, they co-operated very well. In a Year 4 history lesson children collaborated well when recalling the sequence of the wives of Henry VIII.

Personal development

16 Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities offered by the school to exercise their initiative and accept responsibilities. The school council in particular gives pupils a chance to actively participate in decisions affecting the life of the school. For example, the council is now discussing suggestions put forward by all classes for improving the school playground. Through personal, social and health education lessons and also in religious education lessons, pupils are able to discuss and reflect upon personal and social issues. In a religious education lesson, for example, Year 6 pupils discussed the prejudices involved in accepting stereotypes and revealed how they shared the high values of the school.

Attendance

17 Although most pupils attend school regularly and promptly, a small number of pupils have a poor record of attendance so that the overall rate of attendance over the past year was well below the national average. Unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national picture, but authorised absences are well above average. The school has taken rigorous steps to improve the situation since the very low rate of attendance of 87.9 per cent recorded in 1998/9. In 2000/01, overall attendance stood at 92 per cent. This shows good improvement, but is still almost two per cent below the national average. Pupils with good attendance enjoy recognition through the award of certificates as the school's drive for improvement continues.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18 The quality of teaching is good overall, with seven out of ten lessons of good quality or better. These include almost three in ten lessons where teaching is of very good or excellent quality. Four lessons observed were outstanding. Five lessons were unsatisfactory. Overall, the high proportion of good teaching ensures that pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard and achieve well. These findings represent good improvement since the last inspection, when just under half of lessons were good or better.

19 The school now has a higher proportion of very good teaching and has lowered the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The improvement is due to the quality of monitoring and the high quality teaching and good support given by senior and middle management staff to newly qualified teachers. Staff also offer good support to other teachers who have been recently recruited, but these need further guidance, as the unsatisfactory teaching observed was almost entirely in this context. In the small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching observed, teachers' class management skills were weak. Teaching is very good in Year 6

and in lessons taken by teachers in senior and middle management positions. Inexperienced teachers, new to the school, receive good support and their teaching is almost entirely satisfactory or better.

Teaching of children in the foundation stage

20 Teaching in the foundation stage is very good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when it was 'sound, with some good examples'. In all lessons, teachers question children well and involve them effectively in discussions, encouraging them to ask questions and share their views, ideas or feelings. With a good ratio of adults to children, especially when supported expertly by the teacher and assistants helping children learn English as an additional language, children develop good social and communication skills. Teachers also set up interesting opportunities for children to write and the teaching of reading focuses well on the enjoyment of books and a range of reading strategies, including phonic skills. Teachers present a good balance of chosen and directed activities, through which children develop their creative and physical skills very well and make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Through the full range of activities in all areas of learning, children learn very successfully and the range of teaching approaches helps pupils achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. Both class teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They have formed very good relationships with the children, who in their turn trust the teachers and feel safe and secure in their new classes. Both classrooms are very well organised and provide a very stimulating and interesting environment.

Teaching in Key Stage 1

21 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is mainly good or better. One third of the teaching observed was very good. Two fifths of lessons were satisfactory. Where teachers show secure knowledge of the subject and share their enthusiasm through positive introductions to lessons, pupils respond and learn very successfully. In one very good Year 2 history lesson, the teacher's use of artefacts and pictures and her linking of the experience of evacuees to the pupils' school visit to Brighton brought lively comment. The pupils were clearly enjoying their teachers' company as they discovered about the Second World War together and she made sure they felt valued as she praised their spoken and written comments. In this lesson, the tasks of writing accounts, drawing and labelling diagrams were very well matched to the abilities of the different groups. In the following music lesson, pupils were set to learn songs from the era. This shows another strength of the school's approach, whereby teachers make learning relevant for the pupils by linking the subjects taught under a common relevant theme. The school's planning structure supports the several new teachers in Key Stage 1. They work hard to affirm positive behaviour and effort by pupils, which helps pupils who are less motivated to focus better. The quality of pupils' paintings of African scenes, displayed from a previous topic, shows a good example of teachers' high expectations and of the way they recognise and celebrate the effort and skills shown by the pupils in their learning.

Teaching in Key Stage 2

22 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Three-quarters of lessons observed were good or better, including almost one in five that were very good and two that were excellent. Four of the 54 lessons observed were unsatisfactory, but the school is giving good support to the teachers who need it. In by far the majority of lessons, teachers share the lesson objectives with the pupils, plan tasks that are well matched to pupils' ability and manage pupils very effectively. In one excellent Year 5 lesson in religious education, the teacher led pupils to demonstrate good knowledge gained from previous lessons before discussing the concept of 'sacrifice', relating it to their own experiences of giving up something important and looking at parallels between Lent and Ramadan. In many of the very good lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, it was teachers' clear expectations and the brisk

pace of lessons that urged pupils to respond and focus well, maintaining concentrated effort. In an excellent singing lesson in Year 4, the teacher showed outstanding skills of listening, assessing and encouraging until the class corrected their errors and refined the quality of their performance. Marking is almost consistently good and teachers' groupings, matching of tasks to pupils' ability and assessment comments in Key Stage 2 classes contribute very positively to pupils' learning. Despite the positive assessment and mainly high expectations within a series of lessons, there is little evidence, however, of teachers building on pupils' prior skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. It is difficult, for example, to see clear progression in the quality of sketching and painting year on year. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, problems arose because teachers' class control was weak when the lesson content and their presentation of the subject lacked sparkle. Teachers make good use of homework throughout the school, and particularly with the older pupils. Teachers ensure that homework is regularly set and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

The teaching of English and mathematics

23 The teaching of English is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. It was particularly strong in a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher of English as an additional language and the class teacher combined to present a very good literacy lesson, in which all pupils learned very successfully and those receiving focused support made excellent progress. Teachers give good attention to phonics and contextual reading strategies and keep thorough records of their progress. They provide thoughtful opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills within the literacy hour and in extended writing sessions. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where teachers give more focused attention to developing pupils' numeracy skills, including mental and oral recall. Teachers match tasks well to pupils' abilities in English and mathematics, especially in sets, challenging higher attainers and supporting pupils with special educational needs, without neglecting pupils of average ability. The teaching of numeracy skills is good, but there is room for further development of the use of mathematical investigations, to help pupils apply their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills at their own level of challenge. The school has implemented both the literacy and numeracy strategies well. Skilled and experienced teachers are giving the benefit of their training to recently recruited staff from overseas, who have not had the benefit of training in either strategy. While both literacy and numeracy skills are developed and used at times in other subjects, there is no planned structure to apply particular forms of writing within certain geography, history or science studies, for example. Research skills are underdeveloped. Pupils learn successfully through their teachers' well-planned, carefully directed lessons. They have limited opportunity, however, to conduct and record investigations and research, in order to apply their knowledge and show their understanding by using independent study skills, either individually or collaboratively.

Teaching of other subjects

24 Science was taught well in lessons observed. Overall, it is clear from work samples that it is taught satisfactorily throughout the school, but teachers give insufficient attention to developing pupils' investigative skills and to the use of numeracy and literacy in scientific investigation and recording. The teaching of ICT is good both in the suite and in classrooms, where pairs of pupils often make good use of well-prepared programs. This good teaching is resulting in successful learning, but pupils do not yet have the broad experience of ICT to reach the standards required. Teaching is varied in quality in art and music, where some teachers have confidence and subject expertise while others do not. The school has not yet found fully effective ways of sharing the expertise available to ensure equality of opportunity for all classes, but the provision of a specialist singing teacher shows one successful way of addressing this challenge. The teaching of religious education is good overall and includes some of very high quality. Teaching in all other subjects is good in the main at both key stages. However, the lack of regular focus on developing a series of skills in design and

technology means that pupils' learning in this subject is not broad enough and they do not build on previously learned skills when they start a fresh theme.

Equality of opportunity

25 The school's 'Equalities Statement' is well promoted and clearly evident in the teaching of boys and girls. Teachers skilfully ensure that all pupils are actively involved in lessons and have the opportunity to comment and answer questions. The school's setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 cater well for most pupils. However, the lower set in mathematics in Year 5 contains predominantly boys, who are currently underachieving as a result of weak teaching. The school is aware of this and working hard to improve the situation.

26 Teachers and assistants in the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant team and those working with pupils in the special needs facilities make very effective contributions to pupils' learning. As a result of planned teamwork, the joint contribution of these staff and the class teacher often raises the quality of teaching for all groups in the jointly led lessons. Teachers involve boys and girls equally and ensure equality of opportunity for pupils from all ethnic groups, as well as those learning English as an additional language.

27 Class teachers are very aware of the high proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups and they are consistent in their provision for these pupils. Positive attitudes are promoted and teachers praise the quality of work produced by pupils from all ethnic backgrounds. Displays in classrooms and around the school also promote positive attitudes towards racial diversity. Teaching styles, the choice of mixed cultural themes and the provision of additional club activities related to pupils' cultural heritage, such as the African Drumming club and the 'alternative choir', ensure that pupils from ethnic minorities feel recognised and valued.

28 Teachers' planning shows evidence of good attention to challenging higher attaining pupils in literacy and numeracy. Pupils move forward well as teachers develop appropriate challenges to extend and enrich their learning. There is less evidence of planning to extend these pupils in other subjects, however.

29 Teachers usually have a good understanding of pupils' special educational needs and are keen to help them. They prepare effective individual education plans, which clarify pupils' needs and set realistic, achievable targets. Everyone involved in supporting a pupil with special educational needs has a copy of the pupil's individual education plan and is aware of the learning steps to be taken. In lessons where teaching is strongest, pupils learn very successfully. Work at varying levels of difficulty is provided to meet individual and group needs. Teachers establish good liaison with learning support assistants so that each has a good understanding of what needs to be achieved. Learning support assistants are caring and sensitive. They usually have a good understanding of when to intervene with support and when to stand back.

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

Balance, breadth and relevance of the curriculum

30 The school provides its pupils with a broad curriculum and a good range of other opportunities to promote their intellectual, physical and personal development well. The curriculum is rich, varied and very relevant to the needs of its pupils. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and covers all prescribed subjects. Religious education is taught in accordance with the new Croydon Agreed Syllabus. Good links are made between subjects through the use of cross-curricular themes. The school has recognised that its modular approach means pupils' experiences in science, history, geography and design technology in particular can be spasmodic, with skills and

understanding not being developed sequentially. It is now considering how best to address this and yet retain the benefits of a curriculum linked and made interesting through overarching, relevant themes. Good progress has been made on addressing the issues in the last inspection relating to music in the foundation stage and the provision of an outdoor play area.

Development of the curriculum and improvements since the last inspection

31 Since the last inspection, considerable staff and subject leadership changes have meant the school's energies have rightly focused largely on ensuring continuity of teaching and learning. A sensible focus on the priority of implementing the numeracy and literacy strategies to improve provision in English and mathematics has further diminished time available for the development of other subjects. Progress on the revision and updating of schemes of work in the light of recent national guidance and new requirements has not therefore always proceeded as quickly as the school might have wished. The school acknowledges this and is working to address it.

32 The new national Foundation Stage curriculum has been successfully implemented in the reception classes. The school's planning incorporates steps towards the early learning goals and is well arranged to make learning enjoyable. The school has introduced a scheme of work for ICT based on a commercial one and the music scheme is being updated with the help of the local education authority adviser. These initiatives show that the school has addressed planning issues raised by the last inspection in these aspects of its work.

33 However, in all other areas of the curriculum, revision of curricular documentation in the light of recent national guidance and new requirements is at varying stages of development. The scheme for art continues to require development to identify the skills to be taught in each year group and that for design and technology to provide clear guidance to non-specialist teachers. The school has curriculum maps in place for all subjects, but several subject leaders are in the process of updating curricular guidance to take full account of the new National Curriculum. The school intends to introduce weekly science lessons from the next academic year to ensure greater opportunity for regular development and application of skills and knowledge in this core subject. In both mathematics and science, investigative work is not taught on a regular basis and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in these subjects through practical application. In most subjects research skills are not being consistently and systematically developed.

34 The school has provided clear guidance on the allocation of time to individual subjects over the year but because of timetable slippage and the modular approach it is not consistently applied in all classes. This leads to patchy coverage, particularly in design and technology.

Strategies for teaching numeracy and literacy

35 The clear and detailed guidance provided by the national strategies for numeracy and literacy form the basis of the school's English and mathematics teaching. Both strategies are well embedded in practice and provide teachers with good support for planning work for the different ability groups and sets. The school correctly recognises the need to raise pupils' understanding and skills in these subjects and places strong emphasis on them in both the allocation of teaching time and its development priorities. Guided reading and extended writing sessions are both good developments that are supporting and extending learning opportunities provided in the literacy hour. Numeracy and literacy skills are occasionally consolidated well as pupils employ them in accessing and completing tasks in other subject areas. However, this is not yet systematically or consistently developed across all classes.

Equal opportunities

36 Equal opportunities are enshrined in the commitment the school has to providing a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils. In practice, staff work hard to ensure that the curriculum gives full access to boys and girls. Booster classes are provided regularly to improve standards and cater for pupils of different ability. These sessions, together with support study groups in Year 2, are being well used to raise standards and improve pupils' access to the curriculum. In some lessons the provision for the more able pupils is not as effective as in others. Ethnic minority groups have their needs particularly well met and many additional activities are based on traditions from other countries and cultures. Pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve very well because their needs are carefully assessed and the curriculum is adapted to support those at an early stage. Refugees, for instance, who have arrived only recently at the school and understand very little English, receive regular, focused support with an assistant in a small, withdrawn group to help them begin to access the class curriculum. Most support is provided within the classroom context, however, with the teacher of English as an additional language, supported by another assistant, working in harmony with class teachers to plan and deliver a curriculum suited to pupils' English language development needs.

37 Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Most teachers carefully match work to pupils learning needs. The standard of specialist teaching is high, both alongside pupils in mainstream classes and in the group sessions, where pupils with statements benefit from the additional teaching facilities. Both teachers attached to the facilities have recently been specially trained to work with autistic pupils. Although pupils sometimes work in small groups outside the classroom, particularly for literacy support, the main aim is to include and support pupils as much as possible in class lessons. Withdrawn support, when it does occur, is seen as a short-term strategy to boost learning, which will ultimately lead to higher levels of inclusion in the longer term. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 receive additional English support before school in the morning in the Literacy Club. This effective extra help, which is popular with pupils, is well managed by experienced learning support assistants.

Extra-curricular and other activities, including educational visits

38 Eighteen staff, including the caretaker, are currently providing a good range of lunchtime and before- and after-school clubs for pupils from Year 2 onwards. They include singing, netball, football, drama, science and art. Whilst more are open to older pupils, all will have the opportunity to participate in this broad range during their school career. Although parents would welcome an increase on this, the school is already providing a programme well in excess of that found in many schools. Visits are well used to support work in lessons, extend pupils' learning and enrich curricular provision. They have included visits to the Royal Academy and the British Museum, as well as visits to local facilities and a day trip to France for Year 5. An annual residential visit to Bournemouth for Year 6 provides opportunities for environmental studies as well as outdoor and adventurous activities.

Links with the community

39 The school has very good links with its community and makes very good use of these to enhance the curriculum it provides. Representatives of local emergency services regularly visit the school to help with the programme of health, sex and drugs education. Visitors from rail, road and electricity organisations reinforce safety messages. Leaders of local faiths provide a continuous programme of visits to support worship and religious education that are reinforced by visits to local places of worship. The local library is regularly used as a resource for visits, loan services provide materials for supporting learning and the local swimming baths provides a very good facility.

Links with partner institutions

40 Good links exist with the local feeder nursery school and secondary schools. Prior to

entry to the school from Crosfield Nursery a full programme of visits and liaison will have ensured a smooth transition. An information booklet, prepared by Year 6 pupils last year, supports these arrangements very well. Transfer from Year 6 to Year 7 is more problematic because of the number of schools involved, with pupils moving on to up to 14 different schools. However, similar supportive arrangements exist. A programme of taster visits, teacher exchanges and sharing of information is well supported by the recently introduced 'moving on' pack that has been developed by local schools to ensure all pupils are similarly prepared for the next stage of their education.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

41 The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through an extensive programme that is integrated into subject lessons throughout the school. The programme is further supported by circle time sessions that are well used to work through specific issues. Work on sex, drugs and health education is very well linked to studies in science and is reinforced through mention in other subjects such as physical education.

42 Pupils are self-aware and develop a good understanding of their role as members of the school and the wider community. They demonstrate a high level of mutual respect through their daily life in school. In each class, rules are displayed that the pupils themselves have developed. These are very appropriate to the different age groups and reflect the sensible approach pupils take to issues of behaviour. The School Council is made up of representatives from each year group. It addresses issues raised by the pupils. In Key Stage 1, the importance of taking turns and sharing is sensitively stressed and pupils see this as the norm for behaviour. In discussion times pupils in all year groups listen well to one another and respond in sensible and sensitive ways. They are considerate of each other's feelings. This was observed in several instances where pupils were invited to evaluate each other's work and comment on how improvements could be made. The 'Buddy' system, run by the pupils, is a further example of their consideration of the feelings of others. Participation in this scheme enhances feelings of self worth, as do the various monitor roles that pupils may undertake.

43 A drama lesson was very effective in giving pupils the opportunity to act out feelings of loneliness and then to consider how these could be overcome through simple acts of friendship. Circle times are used well to give pupils opportunity to express ideas and feelings. A wide range of subjects come under discussion and pupils' contributions are valued. Health education issues are successfully addressed and, where appropriate, linked into other subjects. For example, the pupils' attention was drawn to electrical safety when they were passing an electrical substation on their way back from swimming. Pupils were reminded of their science homework on the electrical safety set for the previous evening, and further discussion took place on return to school. Displays of pupils' views of feelings illustrate this well in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, a display entitled 'Showing Racism the Red Card' exemplifies the thought and consideration given to this issue. A range of quality posters are displayed around the school that positively promote responsibility and caring.

44 The children clearly learn well about the importance of good social relationships and healthy living. They reflect this in the way they behave and the consideration and respect they show to others.

45 The PSHE co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. She has worked hard to promote a consistent approach to this aspect of pupils' development, ensuring secure development of self-awareness and progression in their confidence and ability to examine various social, health and environmental issues. Staff are well supported in planning and delivering this subject. The collaborative approach to the development of planning and

teaching in the subject has contributed positively to the impact it has had on the school. The caring ethos of the school where every individual feels valued is a strength that prepares pupils well for life beyond school.

46 The school's commitment to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils continues to be a strength of the school.

Spiritual development

47 There is very good provision for promoting pupils' spiritual development, particularly through religious education lessons, where respect for a range of religious beliefs and values is engendered. Through the study of major world religions and through reflection on their own experiences, pupils develop awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. This is also fostered through acts of collective worship. During the inspection, one assembly focused on the Muslim festival Eid. A parent explained the significance of this festival and two Muslim boys demonstrated prayer rituals. The pupils were fascinated and all joined in the assigned time for reflection in a sensible and serious manner. All assemblies are planned to include an appropriate time for reflection, termed 'thought for the day' and symbolised by the lighting of a candle. Spiritual elements also occur in other areas of the curriculum. In a history lesson, pupils were amazed to see and handle a Victorian Family Bible.

Moral development

48 Pupils' moral development is fostered through many areas of the curriculum and aspects of school life. Again, assemblies are used well to encourage pupils to consider moral issues, such as the parable of the prodigal son and the importance of forgiveness. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their actions, and to support this, each class has discussed and decided their own class rules. There is also an active School Council that considers issues raised by the pupils. From their behaviour towards each other, the respect they show for the feelings of others and the care they take of their school environment, they are clearly developing a good understanding of right and wrong. This is a direct result of the example set by staff and the regular opportunities for debate and participation in decision-making.

Social development

49 Again, pupils' social development is addressed through many aspects of school life, including the curriculum provision for personal, social and health education. Pupils operate a 'buddy' system whereby no child is left to feel unhappy or left out at break times. As many new children enter the school during the year, this is a valuable strategy in helping them to settle in. The responsibilities undertaken by the pupils acting as 'Buddies' has had a positive impact in boosting their self-confidence. Drama lessons also give pupils opportunity to explore feelings and emotions in a safe environment and this helps them in relating to one another.

Cultural development

50 The provision the school makes for the cultural development of the children is excellent. The rich cultural nature of the school and community is highly valued and used very well. Visitors are frequently invited into the school to share their cultural traditions and customs. Displays around the school illustrate the high value placed on achievements of different cultural groups. The recent celebration of Black History resulted in pupils carrying out some high quality research and the production of some very informative work. The pupils' own cultural backgrounds are celebrated and valued. There is a club for African drumming and singing groups focusing on various ethnic singing forms. At his own suggestion, one boy has set up a regular lunchtime club to teach about and play the game of Oware, the oldest game in Ghana.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51 The school's provision for the care, welfare and safety of its pupils is excellent. The high standards in this area have been maintained and developed well since the last inspection.

Child protection

52 There is a designated teacher to deal with child protection matters who co-ordinates action within the school and liaises with appropriate external agencies. Training courses are regularly undertaken to keep abreast of child protection issues and information from these is passed on to all staff. Records are made of each child protection case and are kept in secure conditions. All staff are aware of the need to be vigilant and do not hesitate to bring any suspicions they may have to the attention of the designated teacher.

Pupils' welfare

53 Health and safety arrangements are excellent. The school is well equipped with fire fighting appliances and all statutory tests on these are carried out regularly. A fire alarm system is in operation and fire doors are installed. First aid posts are manned at break and lunch times in both infant and junior buildings and there are several qualified first aiders in the school. Although pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes, minor injuries do occur in the playground, which are quickly dealt with by caring staff. The very good relationships between pupils and teachers ensure that children trust their teachers and can confide in them. In lessons, particularly with the youngest children, teachers and support staff are very caring and quick to see when a child is in difficulty. All staff know their pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs are well looked after and make good progress.

54 The governors are mindful of their responsibilities for the security of staff and pupils in the school and appropriate measures for this have been taken. The governing body regularly reviews the adequacy of the security system.

Monitoring and supporting regular attendance

55 There are very good procedures for the promotion and monitoring of attendance and the school spends lot of time and effort on this. There are several incentives to encourage pupils to come to school regularly and on time. Certificates for good attendance are presented each week in assemblies. The Educational Welfare Officer, who visits the school every two weeks, says the school is quick to take up any suggestions on ways to improve attendance. An electronic system for recording attendance is used and a full printout of the week's figures is available each Friday. Registrations are taken smoothly and accurately at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and lessons begin on time.

Monitoring and supporting good behaviour

56 The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There are numerous exhortations in displays around the school to act sensibly and to show concern for others. There are rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. The latter, in extreme cases, can lead to exclusions but these are rare. All staff consistently follow the school's behaviour and discipline policy. There are continuous reminders in lessons of the need to behave well and to consider others. All staff actively discourage bullying or other aggressive behaviour, including racism. Records of any incidents involving racism and bullying are kept.

Monitoring pupils' personal development

57 Pupils' personal development is closely monitored by staff. Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils to exercise their initiative and take on various responsibilities,

appropriate to their age. These include such duties as taking registers to the office after registration, clearing away after lessons, acting as librarians, serving as lunch-box monitors and serving on the school council. Year 6 pupils have a particular duty to look after young children in the playground under the 'buddy' system. All these duties are rotated so that everyone is involved at some time. Through personal, social and health education lessons, pupils receive guidance in such matters as sex education and the misuse of drugs.

Assessment

58 The school continues to develop assessment procedures to monitor children's progress. The recently updated assessment policy gives sound guidance on assessment practice and procedures, with an appropriate emphasis on the importance of day-to-day assessment as a means of promoting secure learning. The format used for planning enables teachers to make appropriate ongoing notes of pupils' attainment or difficulties and gives them the opportunity to adjust their planning as a result. Where this is happening, notably in English lessons, the positive impact on pupils' learning is evident. Setting targets for learning, and involving pupils in assessing their own progress against these, is developing. In English and mathematics it is well established.

59 Tracking progress in English and mathematics has been well developed over the past 18 months and good records are being maintained by the deputy headteacher. The use of annual optional national tests to help track pupils' progress in English and mathematics is a comparatively recent venture for the school. With high staff turnover, individual class teachers are not yet all confident in using this information to set expectations and to check that all pupils continue to achieve as well as they should. Annual records are maintained in terms of children's attainment by National Curriculum levels. The results of end-of-key-stage assessments are analysed. In mathematics, further analysis has been undertaken to identify strengths and weaknesses in different areas of learning, and the findings are being used to inform future curriculum planning in Key Stage 2. Results of optional national tests at the end of the academic year help check pupils' progress against predicted levels. These results will shortly be entered into an ICT system. This will facilitate the analysis of data that has already begun, and will enable the school to track individual pupil progress and also the progress of different groups of pupils more closely. The school currently analyses pupils' performance in statutory and optional tests satisfactorily by gender, ethnic, social and ability groupings to ensure that all groups of pupils are making sufficient progress. Where disparity occurs, the headteacher and senior staff investigate possible causes and initiate action to address the differences. The school recognises the need to promote consistency in teacher assessment judgements in all subjects through further training, particularly in the light of the recent high staff turnover.

60 The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is well recorded and informs the writing of individual education plans. The school's provision for pupils with statements of special educational need closely matches the requirements outlined in their statements. The progress of pupils acquiring English as an additional language is also clearly recorded. In both these aspects, the specialist teachers and assistants work closely with class teachers to ensure that the children have full and appropriate access to all learning situations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61 The school's very good partnership with parents makes a major contribution to pupils' learning. The school has continued to make good improvement in what was already a strong aspect of its work at the last inspection.

Parents' views of the school

62 Parents have a high regard for the school and appreciate what the school is doing to

further the academic, personal and social development of their children. Parents spoken to during the inspection praised the efforts of the headteacher in managing the school and their only reservations were about the recent turnover in teaching staff. A few in particular expressed concern with new and inexperienced teachers. Most parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire, however, felt that teaching in the school is good. Parents spoken to were content that their children were happy at school and making good progress. A parent was pleased that her daughter, previously a very shy child, was 'growing in confidence day by day'. Parents have a high regard for the headteacher.

Parents' questionnaire

63 Responses in the questionnaire were very favourable, with the only reservations (by a small minority of parents) being about the amount of homework set by the school and the range of activities outside lessons. The findings of the inspection, however, were that the amount and standard of homework set was appropriate to the ages of the pupils and that the school provided a good range of both after-school and lunchtime clubs.

Information to parents

64 The quality of information provided to parents is very good. Parents' open evenings are held each term, with alternative dates being made available. These are well attended and give parents an opportunity to talk to class teachers about their children's work. The autumn meeting is a general discussion between class teacher and parent. In the spring meeting the child's progress to date is discussed and targets are set for the rest of the year. At the summer meeting the child's end-of-year report is discussed. For parents of reception children a meeting is arranged at the beginning of the school year to discuss the child's entry profile. Parents (particularly of younger children) appreciate the opportunity to see their children in lessons at Thursday afternoon open sessions, held once a month. The school encourages parents to help in the classrooms and some parents do. Parents also accompany pupils on school visits. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are very informative about the life of the school and both meet statutory requirements. Parents are advised of their children's progress through annual reports. The reports cover all curriculum subjects and targets are shown; children's personal and social development is also included and all statutory requirements are met. The reports enable parents to see their children's progress over a year. The school sends out questionnaires annually to parents to ascertain their views of the school. There are regular newsletters as well as letters covering future topics.

The contribution of parents to their children's learning

65 Parents make a substantial contribution to their children's learning. The school runs a 'Keeping up with children' workshop for parents, consisting of a total of 12 hours over several weeks. The workshops are designed to inform and support parents on their children's literacy development. A workshop for numeracy is planned to start in the autumn. Parents are enthusiastic about the workshops and see them as a way of helping their children. Parents ensure their children come to school smartly dressed in the school uniform. Most parents are conscientious of the need to inform the school of reasons for absence and appreciate the importance of children attending regularly and punctually. Many parents use the reading diaries provided for younger children as a means of communication with the class teacher. Most parents take an interest in their children's homework and encourage them to complete it.

66 The school establishes close links with most parents of pupils who have special educational needs. Parents are informed when concerns are first raised and pupils are to be placed on the special needs register. They are invited to school to discuss their child's individual education plan and to attend review meetings. Should they be unable to do so, a copy of their child's plan is sent to them. Home/school liaison books are sent home each

week with pupils from the moderate learning difficulties facilities. These are a particularly significant method of liaison, when pupils with statements are brought to school by taxi.

Parents' Association

67 There is an active Parents' Association that successfully arranges fundraising events for the school. Events such as the summer and Christmas fairs, annual children's talent show, and quiz shows are well attended. The association has a room in the infants' building where they can meet and where parents can purchase 'nearly new' school uniforms. Through its fundraising, keen interest and support for the school, the association fulfils an important role in the life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

68 The headteacher gives very good leadership. The deputy head's effective management skills complement the headteacher's leadership qualities and they work extremely well together as a team. All senior management team members fulfil their roles and carry out their responsibilities well. Roles and responsibilities of senior and middle management are clearly defined and understood. The governing body is well informed and offers thoughtful and helpful comment and support. Overall, leadership and management have been maintained as strengths of the school, despite the headteacher's long-term absence and the deputy's secondment during the past five years. The headteacher is a visible presence around the school, particularly at the start and end of every school day. She instils confidence among pupils, staff, parents and governors.

69 The school has a clear educational direction. Education is for all and the school is about raising the expectations and achievement of every child. The headteacher has won the admiration and respect of parents, governors, staff and pupils. Together with the deputy, she involves everyone associated with the school in looking at strengths and weaknesses before deciding priorities for the annual improvement plan. Once a course of action is required, the school takes swift, decisive and effective action. Performance management procedures are in place and the headteacher and designated staff ensure that teachers' individual targets are linked helpfully to the school improvement plan. All staff have clear job descriptions. However, the high staff turnover has resulted in the temporary loss of an effective system of co-ordinators and shadow co-ordinators for all subjects, which helped continuity and the spread of good practice across the two key stages in separate buildings. The school is eager to re-introduce this once there is a settled staffing situation.

70 The headteacher's written self-evaluation of the school shows a comprehensive grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses in all aspects of its work. The school is meeting current management challenges well. Two particularly difficult challenges have faced the school in the past two years. Firstly, a year group contained a number of pupils who had become disaffected with school. The management team set about changing pupils' attitudes to school in order to raise their achievement. The resulting strategies successfully kept pupils at school and raised their achievement, particularly that of pupils of African and Caribbean origin. In the wake of this success, the school has built on these strategies to create a very purposeful, yet stimulating ethos, where pupils are expected to work hard, but do so in an atmosphere which respects and celebrates their cultures. The second challenge has been a high turnover of staff at a time when recruitment in the South-East has been a major difficulty. The school has good links with local higher education establishments and has successfully engaged former students who had enjoyed their school experience at South Norwood. Still needing to recruit through agencies and having to appoint teachers with little experience of teaching the National Curriculum or implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies, the leadership team has carefully placed new staff alongside experienced senior teachers. The very good procedures for monitoring of teaching and standards include very

supportive mentoring of teachers new to the school. The careful identification of their training needs leads to placements on courses as well as the provision of effective support within school. The school has met these challenges with vigour, ensuring that pupils are served as well as possible and that new staff receive all the support and training available.

71 The school's warm and inclusive ethos meets all who enter. Displays celebrate pupils' cultures and the work in all subjects is pervaded by carefully structured links to the variety of cultures represented in the school and its locality. The celebration of Black History Month last term gave pupils in every class a focus for work in many subjects, particularly art and design, English, music, science, history and geography. Displays in corridors and books made by groups of pupils tell of visits to the Samuel Coleridge Taylor Centre, of the pupils' and staff's experience in trying the hair-pieces of Madame C J Walker and of the homeland in French Guyana of one of the support staff. The school assemblies at the close of the studies gave each class a chance to share something of their work. The way pupils and staff talk of these activities reflects the message of involvement and enjoyment shown in the displays. The leadership role of the co-ordinator and the energising roles of the Ethnic Achievement Grant team gave considerable impetus to this project and continue to give very positive support to staff and pupils.

72 The leadership and management of special educational needs is also strong. The governing body is kept well informed about new developments by its designated member, who is also a learning support assistant on the school staff. The special needs co-ordinator is an experienced teacher who works well with staff in supporting pupils with special needs across the school. Together with the teachers from the units she helps to train the highly effective learning support team. She is to shift the emphasis of her role in the near future to a greater support for the early diagnosis of pupils' special educational needs in Key Stage 1. At present there is no dedicated computer provision or software for pupils with special educational needs, which would help support these pupils' learning.

Equal opportunities

73 The school's aims to provide equality of opportunity are fully embedded in all aspects of its work. Displays around the school show a very positive tone and they successfully raise the expectations for pupils from all cultures, including those from ethnic minorities, pupils learning English as an additional language and refugees. Arrangements for boys and girls to experience the same opportunities both in lessons and in activities out of school are particularly good. The headteacher and her staff put a great deal of thought into ensuring equality by avoiding stereotyping when giving pupils responsibility and monitoring roles. The emphasis on everyone being equal is extremely apparent through the many posters visible around the school for example, 'Everyone smiles in the same language'.

Governors' Role

74 Changes in the governing body have also presented a challenge to the school, but the conscientious service of the chair and other longstanding members has enabled the governing body to meet all of its statutory requirements. Many governors are regular visitors to the school and they monitor the school's provision through their working knowledge from these visits and from regular termly reports given by the headteacher and occasional reports by co-ordinators on specific focus areas. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the full and comprehensive reports provided by the headteacher. They also play a full part in the consultation process leading to the setting of priorities and then a budget for the school improvement plan. Committee procedures are efficient and minutes show good attention to monitoring standards and all aspects of the school's provision. Performance targets for the headteacher have been set. Governors review the school's progress towards its development targets, providing good checks for the headteacher and senior management team through their perceptive questioning. Governors

agree with the headteacher's strongly held view that a plethora of national initiatives and increased bureaucracy in recent years have presented barriers to school improvement and helped create a recruitment crisis. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and training for staff in ICT are viewed as positive contributions to development.

Staffing

75 There are sufficient appropriately qualified teachers for the number of pupils on roll. Staffing levels for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the two special facilities, and for pupils learning English as an additional language are sufficient and well organised. However, the school has experienced considerable staff turnover in the last two years. Difficulty in recruiting staff to replace those who had left has resulted in several new and inexperienced teachers being employed, including some from overseas who lack training in the National Curriculum. This is having a major impact on the need for training and support. Many initiatives to improve standards and teaching during the last two years have been missed by the new staff. However, the induction procedures and support for new staff are very good and the school is well placed to improve the effectiveness of new teachers. Senior staff have had to take on additional responsibilities for managing curriculum subjects and there is therefore currently some work to be done to redevelop the roles of subject managers.

76 Experienced and well-trained support assistants provide extremely effective support for pupils. They are enthusiastic and committed in their work with pupils who have special educational needs. The very efficient administrative staff, the school keeper and his team, kitchen staff and lunchtime supervisors all contribute considerably to the effective care of the pupils.

Accommodation

77 The school is housed in three separate buildings. The two main buildings are reasonably spacious with rooms on two floors. A smaller building accommodates one classroom, a food technology room and store rooms. The buildings are well cared for and well decorated. Staff work hard to make rooms and shared areas attractive by displaying pupils' work well. The school makes very good use of its accommodation and has developed a useful ICT suite to facilitate teaching of skills. The heating system in the infant building has been updated recently, but the process caused considerable problems. Unfortunately, the heating system in the main building is inefficient. Frequently the school is too hot for pupils and staff to work comfortably and there is no means to control the temperature apart from turning the heating off completely. The new ICT suite suffers particularly from this problem, as the additional heat generated by the computers make this room unacceptably hot and oppressive. The headteacher and governors are aware of the problem and are working extremely hard to solve it.

78 There is no field available at the school, although use is made of ground within easy walking distance of the school, particularly for competitive games against other schools. The school makes very good use of the large hard surface areas available and continues to develop the grounds to provide stimulating play areas. There is a new fenced area specifically for early years and this provides a good foundation for staff to develop the use of outside toys and equipment. Bright paintings on the outside of the school buildings create an inviting area for the children to enjoy their leisure activities.

Learning resources

79 Learning resources are adequate to meet the needs of almost all aspects of the National Curriculum. In the majority of subjects they are good but there are insufficient resources for pupils to work with tools, equipment and materials in design and technology. This inadequate supply requires some urgent attention in order to improve the learning opportunities for pupils.

Resources in ICT are very good. As well as the new computer suite, there are computers in each classroom. The addition of specific computers for pupils with special educational needs would greatly enhance the work being done by support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator.

Efficiency

80 The school's control and management of finance is very efficient and effective. This maintains the positive picture reported at the last inspection.

Governors role in financial planning and monitoring

81 The governing body is very effective in planning and monitoring expenditure and there are very good procedures for the control of finance. Governors are very aware of their responsibilities. The good working partnership between the governing body and the head teacher enables all matters with financial implications to be effectively discussed. The school development plan is used effectively to set educational priorities and allocate costs. At meetings of the finance committee governors receive quarterly financial statements. Expenditures for the cost centres are compared with budget allocations. Governors check that funds received for designated purposes, such as special educational needs or major building costs, are effectively used for these purposes. The comparatively high proportion of the previous year's budget carried forward included, for example, a considerable sum earmarked for playground resurfacing and additional enhancement of the play area facilities.

Day to-day management of finance

82 A designated person in administration efficiently and effectively implements the good procedures for the day-to-day management of finance. The school has an agreement with the local authority for the assistance of a finance officer and is very satisfied with the service provided. Records are well maintained on the computer, but the school's inventory requires updating. The school has not had a full audit for four years and would welcome a new one.

Seeking best value

83 The school does make value-for-money checks on spending to review the effectiveness of expenditure. The headteacher, deputy and governors make good use of comparison and consultation when listing priorities for improvement and making spending decisions. The school challenges itself to raise funds through lettings and through fundraising by the Parents' Association. Staff and governors look carefully at best value when considering tenders for works and services and when purchasing resources. Overall, the school applies the principles of best value well. Taking into account the effectiveness of the school and the income it receives per pupil, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

84 In order to build on current strengths, further raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the headteacher, governors and staff need to:

- (1) (a) develop investigative work in mathematics and science to improve pupils' independent study skills;
(paragraphs 3, 6, 23, 24, 33, 120, 123, 125, 127-136)

(b) develop research skills in English and ICT, in order to apply them in science, design and technology, history and geography, particularly to challenge and benefit higher attainers;
(paragraphs 6, 23, 24, 33, 35, 112, 127, 156, 157)
- (2) improve the focus on skills in curriculum planning and develop manageable assessment procedures in science and all subjects in the broader curriculum;
(paragraphs 4, 22, 24, 30, 31, 33, 59, 128, 129, 136, 141-144, 148, 151, 153, 157, 169)
- (3) solve the problems created by the school's heating system, to overcome the detrimental effects on pupils' learning.
(paragraphs 77, 163)

85 The headteacher, staff and governors should also consider the following minor points for inclusion in the improvement plan:

- raise standards in ICT by raising expectations for each year group now that resources and a scheme of work are in place;
(paragraphs 4, 24, 158-164)
- allocate sufficient time and resources to design and technology, in order to raise standards in this subject;
(paragraphs 4, 24, 34, 79, 144-146)
- re-introduce the pattern of subject leadership and shadow roles as soon as practicable to strengthen the monitoring of standards, planning and assessment across each key stage;
(paragraphs 24, 69, 75, 143)
- continue to raise levels of attendance.
(paragraphs 17, 55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	21	37	21	5	0	0
Percentage	5	24	42	24	6	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	523
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	141

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	117

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	93

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	41
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	50	36	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	38	44
	Girls	33	32	33
	Total	72	70	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (81)	81 (83)	90 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	43	45
	Girls	32	33	35
	Total	66	76	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (78)	88 (86)	93 (79)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	24	38	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	21
	Girls	30	26	35
	Total	42	40	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (72)	67 (84)	93 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	19
	Girls	30	30	32
	Total	44	47	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (68)	76 (81)	82 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	97
Black – African heritage	35
Black – other	68
Indian	14
Pakistani	19
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	4
White	196
Any other minority ethnic group	22

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	2	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	381

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	1283042
Total expenditure	1265314
Expenditure per pupil	2378
Balance brought forward from previous year	108408
Balance carried forward to next year	126136

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	14.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	523
Number of questionnaires returned	95

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	25	1	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	61	35	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	42	8	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	46	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	29	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	34	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	28	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	26	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	56	37	6	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	77	20	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	40	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	40	18	2	13

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents expressed concern about the turnover of staff and recruitment of inexperienced overseas-trained staff to replace experienced staff.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

86 There are currently 60 children in the two reception classes. They come from a rich variety of cultural backgrounds. Many have already experienced the early steps of the foundation stage curriculum in local nurseries. Children enter reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five and attend part-time for the first half of the autumn term. The school makes very good provision for the foundation stage but whilst a few children are advanced in their attainment when they start, a greater than usual number enter at below average levels in the communication, language and literacy aspects of their learning. This means that overall children's attainment on entry to the school is below average. As a result of very good teaching in the foundation stage most children make very good progress during their time in reception. The majority reach the early learning goals set for children in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. A significant minority, including children learning English as an additional language, whose attainment in communication, language and literacy skills in English was well below average on entry, are still working towards the goals in this area of learning. A few higher attainers are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum by that time.

87 The teachers and trained nursery nurses are very well versed in meeting the needs of young children. They are a caring, cheerful team, who know the individual personalities of the children well. Good use is made of information passed on from meeting with parents, feeder nurseries, and baseline assessments in meeting the children's needs. At the moment, thirteen children in the foundation stage speak English as an additional language. They receive very good additional language support from an expert teacher and assistant. Very good systems are in place for early identification of children with special educational needs and careful targets are set to address their additional requirements within reception. Staff work hard to make the reception classes exciting, happy learning environments and generally the children are very responsive and achieve well. There is a good balance between structured, formal activities and independent learning through play.

88 From the outset a co-operative dialogue is established between parents, carers and reception staff. Informative home visits are made by the teachers during the children's first few weeks in reception. Parents are regularly told about the curriculum focus for the term and further information for them is frequently displayed on the outside windows. Each week parents are invited to help their children choose appropriate picture books to share at home and parents have access to a support group, which provides guidance on how best to help their children with their learning in literacy and numeracy.

89 The reception teachers and nursery nurses plan well together to ensure that all children in the foundation stage are provided with a full, enjoyable inclusive curriculum, which is well targeted to their ages and stages of learning. The new foundation stage co-ordinator is a very positive role model for early years teaching and is keen to raise further the standards of provision for the Foundation Stage. Classroom environments are generally lively, stimulating and relevant to the children's interests and resources are mostly adequate to meet the needs of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Though good resources are available for mathematical development, some look well used and ready for replacement.

90 A soft surface has recently been laid on the enclosed outdoor reception play areas and plans are taking shape to develop additional resources for them. This will improve

opportunities for regular outdoor learning, which have been hampered previously by the lack of facilities.

Personal, social and emotional development

91 The reception experience provides children with a strong foundation for their personal and social development and sets the tone for the happy positive attitudes that prevail throughout the school. Teachers and nursery nurses make a very good contribution to this aspect of children's learning. They are sensitive to individual needs and try hard to make all the children feel unique. Weekly good work assemblies celebrate individuals' achievements and every day a special person is chosen to take extra responsibilities and to sit on a gold chair. The adults' nurturing, consistent approaches provide a framework of expectations for good behaviour and learning effort, which most children succeed in achieving. Children grow in confidence and self-awareness. They make suitable independent learning choices when given the opportunity. Even where they are still at an early level in their English language development most children will 'have a go' at contributing to discussions, confident that their efforts and ideas will be warmly received and respected.

92 A majority of children are already achieving some of the early learning goals set for the foundation stage in their personal and social development and many will be exceeding them as they move into Key Stage 1. The children follow class management conventions well. For example they line up sensibly to go to the hall for assemblies. When there, they concentrate fully and participate well. Most change independently for physical activities and manage their personal hygiene fully.

93 There is a varied cultural mix in the children's family heritages across reception, which is valued and celebrated fully. The children show great respect for each other's feelings and ideas.

Communication, language and literacy

94 Provision for language development is given a high priority and the teaching of this aspect of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very good, with one session being excellent. A strong emphasis is placed on speaking and listening in all areas of learning. Teachers work systematically to extend children's vocabulary and to create a warm, receptive atmosphere in which most children are willing to share their thoughts. Whether the focus is on the language of position in children's mathematical development or looking at old and new methods of transport in their knowledge and understanding of the world, language communication skills are the effective starting point. A variety of independent role-play activities are well designed to promote sociable conversation.

95 Teachers also use carefully chosen books for a similar purpose. As children become familiar with simple repetitive stories they join in more and more with whole class reading. Most are aware of book conventions in the English language. They know the direction in which pages are turned and print is written. They have an increasing awareness that books contain enjoyable stories and a good look at the illustrations will help them to interpret the words. Most children discriminate the visual appearance of letters and begin to make good phonic connections with them. They are helped in this learning by a well-chosen, published phonics scheme, which engages children in meaningful physical actions which reinforce their learning. Children accurately identify rhyming words both from their written appearance and similarities of sounds.

96 Teachers contrive a variety of enjoyable contexts in which children can begin to write. For example, one reception class has a role-play 'post office' with a variety of forms for children to fill in. More formally they regularly practise accurate letter formation. Many identify and write their own names accurately from memory or by copying. Some use their

understanding of how rhyming words function, in order to spell sets of words and write simple accurate sentences. For example one boy proudly wrote the phrase 'a bat in a hat' .

97 As a result of their rich communication, language and literacy experiences, children achieve very well at the foundation stage. By the time they move into Key Stage 1 a majority are set to achieve the required early learning goals and a few will be already working at Level 1 in the National Curriculum.

Mathematical Development

98 The teaching of this area of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good. Most children achieve well in their mathematical development and will have achieved the early learning goals by the time they move on to Year 1. Children are involved in effective mathematical learning through purposeful independent play as well as more formal class and group activities. The careful teaching of relevant mathematical language is the key to the children's successful learning. Counting rhymes are a regular cheerful feature of whole class activities. Children also count in unison to twenty, using the visual impact of a large-print one hundred square as a prompt. During the inspection the well-planned focus for formal mathematical development activities was the understanding and use of the language of position. First the children experienced relevant stories based on the theme. Then they took turns to place a teddy in relationship to a toy house and to explain to their peers where they had put him. Some children began to ask pertinent questions and solve problems as they estimated and then programmed a robotic machine to move within a confined space.

99 Through well-chosen, independent learning activities with water play, children gain a meaningful early understanding of capacity. In the role-play areas they become more familiar with the appearance, function and value of coins. Whilst the resources available for mathematical learning are good in most respects, some are well used and need replacing and updating.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

100 The children experience very good teaching in this area of the curriculum and provision for it is very good. By the time they move from reception to Year 1 most are achieving the required early learning goals.

101 Amongst many experiences, children have recently made an enjoyable visit to the local town centre to look at its different amenities. They subsequently studied photographs of themselves outside various sites and discussed what happens there. A group of children receiving valuable English language support were pleased to identify themselves standing outside the police station. Other children reinforced their understanding of what happens there as they dressed up in the classroom as policemen and enacted law enforcement through their role-play.

102 To extend children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world, teachers make very good use of pupils' rich and varied family backgrounds. Photographs taken with their families on holidays to visit relatives are placed appropriately on a world map. Children also create their own inventive maps. They begin to gain a sense of time through interesting experiences, as they explore the differences between old and new means of transportation. They confidently operate audio machines to listen to their chosen stories and music. Equally confidently, some children activate programmes on the computers, using the mouse proficiently to move the cursor around on screen and to select items by clicking.

Creative development

103 The programme for creative development is effectively linked to all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching in this area is very good. Hands-on creativity

effectively raises children's sense of wellbeing and pride in achievement. By the time children reach the end of their reception year, most will have achieved the early learning goals for creative development.

104 Role-play facilities are stimulating and give children an interesting informal context for communication and language development. They have relevant opportunities for drawing and creating three-dimensional models as part of their focus on transport 'then and now'.

105 Children have regular and informal access to musical instruments and greatly enjoy creating sounds with them. One child systematically explored the differences in sound produced on a xylophone by the varied impact of different parts of the beater and his fingers. In a very well managed whole class music lesson, children confidently, and with great pleasure, took turns to select a musical instrument. They then rhythmically shook, banged or beat appropriately as the rest of the class sang along.

Physical development

106 Both fine manipulative skills and more robust physical development are, with the exception of equipment due to be provided shortly for the outdoor area, well provided for throughout the foundation curriculum in both reception classes. Teaching for this area of learning is very good. Most children will have achieved the required early learning goals by the end of their reception year.

107 Children experience daily a wide range of activities designed effectively to improve their eye-and-hand manipulative skills and to enhance learning through physical engagement as well as mental activity. Children use such tools as pencils and crayons regularly. Progress, for example in the development of controlled letter formation, for most children is evident over time. Most manage to use such tools as scissors, spatulas and brushes adequately to construct models to their own satisfaction.

108 In a formal physical education setting, most children moved freely and confidently on large apparatus in the hall. They took turns safely and respected each other's space. They enjoy crawling through a tunnel or balancing carefully on a bench, reinforcing the focused vocabulary of mathematical position as they did so. The children are already aware of the need to warm up their bodies gradually and lay very still with mature self-discipline during the cooling down session towards the end of the lesson.

109 Reception staff are planning resources for the recently resurfaced, fenced outside learning areas. These will include resources for independent physical development, which are lacking at present.

ENGLISH

110 Standards achieved in both key stages are securely in line with national expectations. Over the time of the inspection, the teaching of English was observed in each class and over thirty pupils were heard read. In addition, samples of pupils' written work from each class were scrutinised and work on display was studied. Pupils' abilities in speaking and listening were also observed in a variety of situations. Pupils achieve well in English, they enjoy this subject and make good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress and so do those speaking English as an additional language.

111 In Key Stage 1, the rising trend in attainment over the last few years is set to be consolidated this year in both reading and writing. This reflects the school's commitment to raising pupils' achievements through clear strategies that directly address their learning needs. Their day-to-day progress is carefully monitored and the teachers skilfully adjust their

teaching to ensure that pupils make secure and steady progress. Pupils' confidence in speaking and listening is sensitively fostered by the adults working with them. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to express ideas or tell about what they know. They listen well to each other and clearly understand the need to take turns when speaking. This was clearly seen in one instance where pupils were asked to discuss with a partner how they could turn a 'boring' sentence into a 'fantastic' sentence. The resulting feedback to the class showed how well they had conducted the discussions and their enthusiasm to share their ideas. Pupils' development in reading is promoted through a mix of different methods. Thus, pupils gain a secure knowledge of phonics and use this to work out unfamiliar words. They also develop a wide sight vocabulary and use contextual clues well to help them understand what they are reading. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils read with fluency and expression and clearly gain a great deal of enjoyment from their reading. Pupils confidently express ideas in writing and are developing a good understanding of story structure and how to organise and present information. They use interesting vocabulary and simple punctuation accurately. They use their phonic knowledge well to attempt unfamiliar spellings and use simple dictionaries well to help with their spellings and vocabulary choice. Their handwriting skills are developing well, with the majority of pupils forming their letters correctly and some beginning to develop a cursive style. Their developing ability in organising and presenting information was seen when they were working on books about cats.

112 In Key Stage 2, the strategies implemented to address the recent fall in attainment, particularly in writing, which was also identified as a weakness in the previous report, are clearly having a positive effect. Standards in speaking and listening are good throughout the key stage and reflect the importance the school places on respecting the contributions of all. This was exemplified in situations where pupils were asked to evaluate each other's work. They did this sensitively and constructively when considering a pupil's description of a treasure island, for example. In another instance, older pupils discussed, in a mature manner, the interpretation of the poem 'Jabberwocky', exploring the manipulation of language and the use of archaic forms. By the end of the key stage, the majority of the pupils are reading fluently and with expression. In discussion, they express an enjoyment in reading and many read at home and use the local library. The reading journals produced by the older children contain well-structured and honest reviews of the books they have read. They use reference sources in order to access information and use skills in skimming and scanning text to locate specific information. The pupils are clearly developing skills in writing for a range of purposes and in a range of genres. This is well exemplified in the 'tracking books' where pupils produce a piece of independent writing each half term. By the end of the key stage, they are able to organise and present their work well. They write grammatically and are confident in using punctuation. Older pupils spell the majority of words they use correctly, and are confident in applying knowledge of spelling rules to attempt the spelling of unfamiliar words. They use dictionaries and thesauri effectively. They are happy to evaluate and redraft their work, seeing this as a necessary part of the craft of good writing. They also support each other well in this process. Their handwriting is generally joined, fluent and individual styles are becoming apparent. Their developing confidence in writing is beginning to be applied in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, writing about different religions illustrates the pupils' ability to research, organise and present information clearly. There is less evidence of pupils using research skills in history, geography and science, however.

113 The teaching of English is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. The teachers plan lessons well, ensuring that the children know what it is they are to learn about. The flexibility built into the planning process gives teachers the opportunity to adjust their teaching to meet specific learning needs. This was well exemplified in one instance in Key Stage 2 where the children needed more experience in selecting and using vocabulary in order to put together an effective argument. The teacher skilfully adjusted the planning for the next day's lesson so

that this could happen. This had a positive impact on pupils' learning, and by the end of the lesson they were more confident in formulating effective arguments and were in a good position to develop the case for or against the wearing of school uniform. Teachers conduct lessons enthusiastically and at a good pace, ensuring that the children know what they have to do and that they keep to task. Good use is made of questioning techniques to ascertain pupils' current knowledge and understanding and to encourage thought and expression. Teachers are very supportive of pupils' learning, both through marking techniques and through discussion with individuals or groups. Every care is taken to ensure that the learning needs of pupils are addressed. Activities are well matched to pupils' needs and those with special educational needs are well supported by staff who work closely with the class teachers to ensure the children make progress. The support given to pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Through carefully designed activities and the use of well-chosen artefacts, pupils at a very early stage in English acquisition were able to participate in a poetry lesson where the descriptive language in 'The Lamplighter' by R. L. Stevenson was being explored, leading to the writing of their own descriptive poem.

114 Pupils learn well in English. They are attentive in lessons and follow instructions carefully. They maintain a good level of concentration and independence when working on individual tasks. When working with a partner or in a small group, they discuss and evaluate each other's work sensitively and sensibly. This was seen when a group of younger Key Stage 2 pupils were working in pairs on re-drafting pieces of writing. They are confident to talk to adults about what they are doing and seek help if they feel they need it. They are keen to share their work with others and actively participate in class discussions. They are enthusiastic about their work in English and strive to do their best.

115 The provision for the teaching of English has been effectively developed. The subject is well led and managed. The resources to support and enrich the teaching and learning are good. ICT is used appropriately, children being confident with word processing. The identified areas of weakness have been successfully addressed, and the resulting confidence that pupils have in all aspects of English is beginning to have a positive impact on their learning in other subjects of the curriculum. The guidance on planning the teaching of English, together with the systematic methods for recording and tracking progress, ensure a consistent approach to this subject throughout the school. The commitment to meeting the learning needs of each pupil is having a very positive impact on their progress and confidence in this subject.

MATHEMATICS

116 The school's performance in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 was below average, but matched that of similar schools. Results have improved since the last inspection in line with the national trend. Standards are average in the current Year 2 and this represents an improvement.

117 National test results in Year 6 in 2001 were also below the national average but, again, pupils at South Norwood did as well as pupils at similar schools. Higher attainers did well, with more pupils gaining the higher Level 5 than in similar schools. Inspection findings confirm the school's view that standards in the present Year 6 are average and therefore results are set to be better than those of similar schools in 2002. The school is well placed to achieve the target set for 80 per cent of pupils to reach level 4 or higher.

118 Better teaching has contributed to these positive improvements. Effective and consistent use of the numeracy strategy framework has helped teachers to improve their planning. In addition, careful tracking of pupils' progress has recently been introduced and this is enabling teachers to focus support where it is most needed. Although the results in

Year 6 in 2001 showed that girls achieved better than boys, this is not the case currently. Boys and girls have achieved equally well in previous years. Only in the current Year 5 is there a significant disparity between boys' and girls' attainment and this is related to specific year group factors. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those learning English as an additional background are spread across the ability groups and make good progress, in line with their peers.

119 The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Teaching sessions for pupils with special educational needs are well organised and teachers deploy support assistants effectively to develop pupils' understanding and confidence. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught in sets of similar ability. This has a positive effect on their achievements, except in the lower set in Year 5, where tasks set are not always effectively planned to improve pupils' understanding.

120 By the time they are in Year 2, most pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of place value in numbers to 99. They are confident when adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and beyond, although a minority are still working with single digit numbers and require additional support. Work in number is revisited and new concepts introduced regularly although there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding. Investigative and problem-solving work is covered infrequently and pupils have difficulty relating their work in number to new situations. Work on data handling is successfully covered and pupils are encouraged to use correct vocabulary. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils collected data about favourite crisp flavours amongst the class and then used it to produce a pictogram. They are aware of the lesson aims and can describe these using suitable mathematical vocabulary. Good opportunities to use ICT are evident in Years 1 and 2 with appropriate software being used to support and enhance learning.

121 By Year 6, most pupils have acquired a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide and show a satisfactory understanding of the relationships between these operations. Year 6 pupils draw line graphs of $y = x + 3$ using positive as well as negative co-ordinates. In one Year 6 lesson the pupils confidently related fractions to their decimal equivalent in a brisk mental and oral session. In another Year 6 lesson pupils tested out various nets to see which will make a triangular prism. This work is well supported by the use of ICT, for example when pupils created complicated nets on the computer then enhanced their design by making the finished 3D shape into a house. In Year 5 the higher attaining set successfully recognised equivalent fractions and applied their knowledge during a mathematical game.

122 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make similar progress to their peers. Teachers usually ensure their planning is matched to these pupils' different needs. When learning support assistants support them, pupils make better progress.

123 A little evidence was seen of pupils practising their mathematical skills in other subjects. For instance, in a Year 6 science topic they displayed the results of an investigation into thermal conductors on a variety of graphs. In a Year 6 ICT lesson, pupils consolidated their knowledge of perimeter and area by using measurements of rectangles to input on spreadsheets and use the calculate facility. In Year 1 pupils reinforced work on time when looking at a time line in history.

124 Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 overall and good overall at Key Stage 2. Four out of ten lessons for juniors were very good, making the overall quality of teaching in the school good. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be variable, but satisfactory overall. The quality of relationships established within the classroom is frequently the key to successful teaching and learning. In the best lessons

teachers make mathematics interesting and practical for pupils by sharing their enthusiasm with them. In a Year 5 lesson on equivalent fractions, for example, the teacher used humour well to encourage and motivate the pupils. As a result, pupils respond with excitement and enjoy their lessons and work hard during them. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher pretended not to recognise the scale used on a bar chart as she encouraged the pupils to assist her. The pupils were extremely well motivated and excited as they came up with the correct answers. In most lessons teachers manage behaviour well by using a variety of positive strategies. In the few weaker lessons, teachers fail to control inattention and disruptive behaviour and this, consequently, affects the progress the pupils make.

125 Teachers' planning is thorough and based on the national framework for numeracy. It takes account of pupils' needs and sets appropriate tasks for different ability groups. Most teachers make clear what pupils are to learn at the start of the lesson so that all understand the purpose of the session. However, this focus is not regularly returned to at the end of the lesson to ensure pupils have understood what they have been taught. In the best lessons, teachers use the plenary to summarise learning, sort out misconceptions and to discuss the next steps. However, the majority of teachers do not make maximum use of this plenary session. Teachers use a variety of methods in their lessons although there is an overuse of worksheets in some lessons and mathematical investigations are underused. Marking is variable and whilst it always praises pupils' efforts, it rarely tells pupils what they have achieved and informs them of the next stage in their learning.

126 The subject co-ordinator demonstrates strong leadership and he is well supported by a 'shadow' co-ordinator. He has an effective action plan and knows the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Good whole school procedures for assessing information and tracking pupils' progress have recently been introduced, although they are not yet firmly embedded in the teaching and learning process. The subject co-ordinator recognises what needs to be done to further raise standards and is addressing the key priorities for improvement.

SCIENCE

127 In both Year 2 and Year 6 standards are currently average, a similar picture to that found by the last inspection at Key Stage 2, but not as strong at Key Stage 1. Since then the focus on implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies and inducting new staff has left little time for development in science. In 2001 national tests 11-year-olds attained standards better than their peers in similar schools. Seven year-olds achieved similar results in their teacher assessments, although higher attainers are clearly not extended sufficiently, as no pupils achieved level 3. Pupils with special educational needs and from ethnic minorities, including those learning English as an additional language, are well supported and achieve well. Provision for more able pupils is not so well developed. Test results from 2001 show Year 6 higher attainers doing well, but the inspection found insufficient investigative work and research, which inhibits their development.

128 The curriculum is currently arranged so that all pupils study science for only half of each term through an integrated theme, except those in Year 6, who study science continuously for the autumn and spring terms. This meant that during the inspection science was only timetabled for pupils in Years 1, 5 and 6 and not being taught in the other year groups. Evidence was therefore also drawn from analysis of pupils' work, talking to teachers and pupils and viewing planning. This pattern of teaching science in separate half-termly or termly blocks, thus allowing periods of several weeks without coverage, is unusual. Since the introduction of science as one of the three core subjects, most schools have timetabled weekly science lessons, in order to ensure that pupils build regularly on their skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. The school is planning to introduce weekly

science lessons in the coming academic year, recognising the need for regular, consistent development and application of pupils' knowledge and skills in all year groups.

129 Pupils' work shows that over their time in the school pupils achieve well. From an initial below average overall level on entry to the school, pupils make sound progress or better so that by the end of Year 2 most are working at the expected level. Few achieve beyond this, however. Progress continues at a similar rate through Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 most are attaining the expected level and over a quarter go beyond this. As they proceed through the school pupils develop their scientific knowledge and understanding. However, the intermittent nature of learning created by the modular approach means that learning is sometimes forgotten and skills are not systematically developed.

130 Year 2 pupils recalled how they had found out that light, air, warmth and water were needed for plants to grow by observing what happened when each was eliminated. They know that the test had been 'fair' because each group, under the direction of the teacher, had only changed one element, yet used the same equipment and method. Pupils from only one of the three classes recalled another investigation when they had found how a plant absorbs water by observing how the stain moved up the stem of a flower placed in dye. Pupils are developing some knowledge, but are less secure when talking about scientific enquiry, as they have insufficient experience of this.

131 By Year 6 pupils are measuring, recording their findings with increasing detail and using a recognised format. 'Hands on' activities are carefully planned and prepared by teachers to ensure maximum benefit by building well on previous learning. In a Year 6 class, pupils drew well on their knowledge of the properties of liquids, gases and solids to predict whether sound would pass through different materials before testing their ideas by tapping the table, ringing a bell underwater or talking through a tube. Careful questioning by their teacher extended pupils' understanding of how this was linked to the density of the material and drew well on what they already knew about molecules. In another Year 6 class pupils discovered through their teacher's detailed questioning that varying the length of string in their telephones effected the transmission of sound. All pupils could explain how to ensure the test was fair and knew that varying one element would allow comparison. However, their ability to plan their own investigations was less developed and it was necessary for the teacher to direct their activities.

132 Observation of lessons and pupils' work shows that teachers make occasional good use of practical activities to reinforce scientific understanding by encouraging pupils to predict outcomes of investigations, measure and record results appropriately. However, this is not consistently developed and progress and coverage varies from class to class. Outside Year 6 and classes taken by senior staff, pupils' recorded work shows relatively few examples of investigations and is less consistent in quantity and quality of presentation.

133 Pupils enjoy their science lessons, are very attentive to their teachers and work very well with one another on practical tasks. They take turns, share equipment and use it carefully for its intended purpose. Pupils with particular needs, whether in language or learning, are well supported by their teachers, well briefed learning support assistants and their peers in accessing tasks.

134 The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1 was very good, although this quality was not reflected in pupils' work over the current year, where learning was mainly satisfactory. Teaching was good in the three lessons seen in Key Stage 2. Teachers shared the intention of the lesson with pupils at the outset so that they understood the purpose of the learning and what was expected of them. They drew well on their own subject knowledge and experience in planning and preparing their lessons and

chose activities that would capture pupils' interest and develop their understanding. They gave full and detailed explanations using correct scientific terminology and reinforcing this in their questioning of pupils. As a result pupils' knowledge and understanding was extended and they use the correct terms in their replies. This was well demonstrated in a Year 1 class where pupils quickly identified 'harmful substances' from a display of household items assembled by their teacher and explained in detail in response to their teacher's questions why they were not 'safe'. However, in other lessons the opportunity to use questioning to challenge and extend the thinking of more able pupils was not often exploited.

135 Teachers' maintained a brisk pace in their lessons and had very good expectations of pupils' behaviour. The effectiveness of this was seen in the good relationships, sustained concentration and safe use of equipment. Good use was made of homework to reinforce and extend work begun in lessons. In a Year 5 class work on circuits was introduced by pupils' feedback on an electrical safety homework sheet. Teachers made good use of the correction of errors and misunderstandings to reinforce and extend pupils' understanding. In the same Year 5 lesson pupils prompted by their teacher identified that the failure of the bulb to light in one circuit was due to connection to the plastic not the terminal and in another to a faulty bulb. However, in most lessons teachers' direction of practical activities restricted opportunities for more able pupils to develop and test their ideas and did not sufficiently challenge and extend their thinking.

136 Systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' work are not yet sufficiently developed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and inform the setting of targets for improvement. Marking is variable and although a new policy has been introduced does not often indicate to pupils how well they are doing or how they could improve. The experienced subject leader and the shadow leader are currently reviewing the scheme of work and looking at arrangements for assessment in the subject. They intend to take account of recent national guidance and requirements to ensure greater continuity in learning and emphasis on scientific enquiry. To support less experienced colleagues and ensure consistency of approach this should include clear expectations for each year group together with clear guidance on the development of subject skills and the allocation of time to study units. Accessible central resources are well stored in good condition and sufficient for current need. An outdoor environmental area and pond are a good but underused resource and the use of ICT varies between classes but is largely undeveloped.

ART AND DESIGN

137 Standards are average at ages seven and 11. This shows sound improvement since the last inspection, when standards at the end of both key stages were below average and pupils made unsatisfactory progress overall. The school addressed the key issue related to art by developing a comprehensive scheme of work, allocating suitable amounts of time to the subject and giving staff further training. These measures were effective, but the staff turnover and the introduction of a revised National Curriculum in 2000 has left further work to be done.

138 Pupils in various classes achieve well on individual units of work linked to themes. Examples of such good achievements include the displays of paintings by Year 2 pupils showing African scenes and the observational sketches of fruit and flowers in Year 6, based on William Morris designs. All displays of artwork around the school are presented with care and show satisfactory coverage of a range of two-dimensional techniques. Most work in pupils' books, folders and on display is of a standard appropriate to pupils ages.

139 The wax rubbings of textured surfaces in Year 1 and the self-portraits as part of the 'how do you feel today' display illustrate attention to the techniques required. The skyscapes and

scenes using card prints by various artists as starting points show good brushwork and pastel work with effective use of colour to present vivid, bold skies by Year 2 pupils. The current Year 2 lessons based on the work of Paul Klee give pupils good opportunity to look at the effects they can create using line and colour. In the lesson observed, and in a number of other situations, teachers are making good use of computer programs to support pupils' work in art. The teacher in Year 2 made very good use of praise to build pupils' confidence in their art work, focusing well on individual choices and use of brush and colour.

140 In early Key Stage 2, the string print designs being created by Year 3 pupils and the black and white patterns by Year 4 pupils, after the manner of Bridget Riley, show similar focused attention during an individual theme to produce mainly satisfactory and some eye-catching results. Displays of work in one of the Year 5 classes show pupils receiving considerable breadth of experience in a range of techniques. Displays of exciting, bold brushwork on painted Yam Harvest Masks, the creation of wax resist patterns using candle wax and water colours, Roman mosaic patterns and tie dye fabric pieces all show clear explanations of techniques and processes alongside the effective displays. Pupils in Year 6 have used a range of brush techniques, including stippling, and have considered the effect of different tones of colour in their work on impressionism, using Monet landscapes and have used vivid wax crayon colours in their portraits after the manner of Picasso. There is also evidence of a little attention to the use of different grades of pencil lead in shading, as well as the current focus on observational sketching of natural objects, intended to lead to printing linked to the work of William Morris.

141 These examples show the breadth of opportunities offered to pupils, who clearly enjoy exploring the range of art techniques. What is lacking is a sense of progression year on year in the different techniques taught. The art portfolios and the few displays showing work from year groups across the school, such as the portrait sketches of staff, do not show consistent development of pupils' skills based on the standards reached through previous learning. It is as if each separate art activity is a new beginning. Teachers and pupils focus well for the series of four to six lessons, but once finished, the skills learned are left at that point. There is little sense of teachers in different year groups having different expectations, nor is there a manageable system for assessing pupils' standards in the range of techniques offered.

142 Teaching and learning in individual lessons are mainly good, but the overall effect of curriculum planning and teaching the current sequence of themes is that pupils achieve satisfactorily in art during their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs benefit well from the current approaches, with instructions in every new unit of work explained fully. Pupils of average ability achieve satisfactorily as a result of teachers' clear explanations and supportive comment during art lessons. The school's approach does not promote high attainment in art, however. Teachers' expectations are not high enough to recognise and extend gifted and talented pupils, whose work could then be used to raise the quality of all pupils' work, through the use of demonstration. The school's good focus on a range of art techniques from many cultures, particularly African art, offers increased stimulus to the large proportion of pupils of African and Caribbean origin. These pupils, and those learning English as an additional language, achieve similarly to their peers, in line with their ability.

143 The school currently lacks an art co-ordinator and the deputy head is temporarily managing the subject. The scheme of work gives broad coverage, although comparatively little three-dimensional work is tackled. The current scheme links usefully to historical themes studied in different year groups such as 'Greeks', 'Egyptians' and 'Romans' and to whole school themes, such as the celebration of 'Black History Month'. The link to the theme is sometimes given greater stress than the artistic content of the linked work, but usually there is a skills and techniques focus. The scheme has not yet been updated to link studies to the revised National Curriculum. The school will be able to use this review to develop a

more consistent approach to challenging pupils year on year in their development of artistic skills and techniques.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

144 During the inspection three lessons were observed. Evidence was also gathered from teachers' planning and discussion with them and the new subject co-ordinator. Examples of pupils' finished work were seen as well design drawings and the school's resources provision. The scheme of work and curriculum planning are partly based on national guidelines but time allocations for the subject are tight. Not enough time is allocated to allow teachers to fully develop the subject and staff expertise and confidence is low. As a result, standards by the time pupils reach Year 2 and Year 6 are unsatisfactory. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds do not achieve as well as they should throughout the school. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.

145 In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall, with one good example observed in Year 3. In the good lesson the teacher provided effective opportunities to encourage pupils to improve their use of different stitches on a sample of material. From the scrutiny of work available, Year 6 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the design process in their work on designing a T-shirt. This is linked to work on conservation in science, as the pupils develop a slogan to save endangered animals for the front of their finished product. In discussion with pupils it is clear that they have good attitudes to the subject and are enthusiastic learners. However, teachers lack subject knowledge and they are not confident about teaching the subject. A draft scheme of work is developing well and this provides a solid foundation for teachers to ensure progression in the subject. Pupils currently have insufficient opportunities to work with tools, equipment and materials.

146 A new co-ordinator has taken over the management of the subject. He recognises that staff need further training in order to improve their confidence and ability to teach the subject. Resources are inadequate both in quality and quantity and the co-ordinator sees this area as a priority in order to improve teaching and learning. The school has provision for food technology and this is regularly taught. Future training needs will need to be addressed if the school is to improve its overall provision for design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

147 No lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from a limited quantity of pupils' work, the curriculum map for the whole school, the subject portfolio, work on display and from resource provision. Further key evidence was gained through discussion with groups of pupils from Years 2 and 6.

148 Even though the available time for allocation to foundation subjects has decreased since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment at ages of seven and eleven remains satisfactory. Boys and girls of all abilities and from all ethnic backgrounds, including those learning English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily overall throughout the school. In specific themes, where teachers' enthusiasm stimulates pupils' interest, pupils achieve well, produce work of higher quality and talk with interest about their activities. Currently, however, teachers do not link the skills and knowledge learned through the different themes, in order to develop these more securely year on year.

149 Time for geography is blocked, with each year group working on two themes annually. Often these have cross-curricular connections. Well-chosen topics fully utilise field study opportunities, some local and others more distant. The varied geographical and cultural origins of pupils are also explored. For example, Year 2 pupils keenly describe their learning

last term about the island of St Lucia. Some were able to locate the Caribbean region accurately on a world map.

150 Exciting geographical work from Year 3 is on display, showing carefully developing mapping skills. This work was produced as a result of a memorable visit to South Norwood Country Park. Year 5 regularly base their geographical study for the summer term on a day visit to Boulogne. They make well-planned use of local tourist maps and information to explore the town and learn more about the nature of settlement. They then make meaningful geographical comparisons between South Norwood and Boulogne. Year 6 make good use of their time allocation for geography as they undertake an in depth study of contrasting localities by spending five days on a well organised residential visit to Bournemouth.

151 The curriculum map provides a suitable framework on which to build geographical content. At present there is no scheme of work with a structure of progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding across the school. When this is in place a set of assessment measures will be possible. A well-presented portfolio shows samples of work from each year across the school. Its value as an assessment tool will be increased by the addition of annotations to indicate the National Curriculum level of each piece of work.

152 A new co-ordinator for geography, also new to the school, was appointed in January. She has some clear ideas about the future direction for the subject and has recently downloaded the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work to discuss with colleagues.

HISTORY

153 Standards at ages seven and eleven are average. The last inspection found a similar picture at the end of Key Stage 2 and a slightly stronger picture at the end of Key Stage 1. Although teaching continues to be good overall, the best teaching is largely centred on the more experienced teachers. History is currently taught through themes that are timetabled on a half-termly or termly basis and alternated with geography and science. Each year group studies two of these units during the year and at the time of the inspection only Years 2, 3 and 4 were engaged on this. Year 6 does not have any history timetabled until the summer term. Evidence is therefore also drawn from analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils enjoy learning about the past and making connections with other areas of learning. They are not always, however, developing skills of historical enquiry or building on their current historical knowledge, as the school's scheme of work does not put sufficient focus on developing and assessing these year on year.

154 The quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is good overall. In the better lessons teachers make very good use of questioning and resources to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. Since the last inspection teachers throughout the school have continued to make good use of primary sources and artefacts to develop pupils' skills of historical enquiry successfully within individual themes studied. Year 2 pupils studied photographs of scenes from World War 2. They quickly noticed and commented sensibly on differences between life then and now and suggested reasons for this. They are developing a sense of chronology and know that this was before they or their parents were alive. Their interest was captured by the good explanations given by teachers and they recalled key facts they had learnt, as for example, that during the Blitz of 1940-41 London was bombed for 57 consecutive nights. Good links were made with other subjects and learning made relevant as pupils in one class learnt the song 'Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye' and used a CD ROM called 'I remember' to find out more.

155 Year 6 pupils recalled significant facts from most of the periods they have studied and

placed them in chronological order but their recall of specific detail was more limited. They knew, for example, that Elizabeth I was the daughter of Henry VIII, both Tudor monarchs, and that the Ancient Egyptians pre-dated the Romans. They have begun to develop opinions and ventured that children in Victorian times were not seen as important since they did not have schooling and were sent to work in factories. Good use is made of visits to enhance pupils' understanding and they remembered clearly visiting the Imperial War Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of London.

156 Although teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully, pupils' experience varies from class to class and the quality of learning is often dependent on the teacher's subject knowledge. In one Year 3 class questioning extended pupils' thinking as they discussed a Victorian Bible and nursery puzzle. This made them think about their owners' lives, whereas in another Year 3 class this was not so well developed. In a Year 4 class the teacher carefully reinforced what 'secondary' sources were. Pupils researched the lives of Henry VIII's wives using worksheets and a homework sheet was set to extend the activity. Teachers ensure poor literacy skills or language difficulties do not disadvantage pupils by providing adult support and using pictorial methods of recording. As a result pupils with special educational needs or learning English as an additional language achieve well. However, opportunities to extend more able pupils through more complex tasks or challenging questions are not often planned or developed.

157 It is clear from pupils' work that the development of research skills and the use of ICT to support learning are not systematically or sufficiently developed. The school has recognised the need to look at the history curriculum and is investigating ways in which a more continuous process can be implemented whilst retaining the benefits of an integrated approach. The new subject leader is looking with the headteacher at ways in which the curriculum can be updated in the light of recent national guidance and requirements. This will also support the development of assessment arrangements so that teachers have a clear view and record of what pupils know, understand and can do. Central resources are easily accessible and well maintained. They contain artefacts and topic boxes developed to support work on each theme and are sufficient for current use.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

158 Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the expected levels. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection although they are beginning to improve rapidly over the past year as a result of recently improved resources and training for teachers. The school now provides many opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, to develop confidence in their computer skills. These encourage positive attitudes to learning and have a corresponding impact upon the standards that they achieve. Word processing and data handling are especially well developed and the use of ICT in other subjects has improved considerably since the last inspection.

159 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a sound level of independence in their work. They know how to enter information into a computer, save it, load and retrieve the information when needed and how to shut down a computer correctly. They confidently use the computer for word processing and they know how to use icons and menus on familiar software to create pictures and text. Pupils in Year 2 create a garden design inserting colourful backgrounds and pictures. Year 2 pupils use data collected in mathematics to create bar charts on their classroom computer. In a history lesson in Year 2 pupils word-process their ideas from a picture of the blitz.

160 Key Stage 2 pupils, especially from Year 6, are learning and consolidating new skills

rapidly because of regular access for full classes to the computer suite. Examples of high standards among Year 6 pupils include designing a brand new chocolate bar using computer graphics and word processing to create the wrapper. Pupils successfully show ingredients, best before date, bar code and manufacturer, as well as using an art program to produce an exciting and appealing wrapper design. Year 6 pupils also investigate nets on the computer in connection with their mathematics work. They add graphics, including windows, doors and flowers, to create a house when the net is constructed into a three-dimensional shape. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils use primary colours software to design a duvet cover. During the lesson the pupils learned how to insert different shapes and patterns onto their duvet and also how to adapt their design, using different colours and images.

161 Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic users of the computers. They co-operate well in their pairs and support each other in lessons in the computer suite. They treat resources with respect and behaviour during lessons observed in the ICT suite ranged from good to very good. Pupils are highly motivated and remain on task both in the suite and when working at classroom computers. As a consequence they are making good progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Currently, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop ideas, exchange and share information particularly using the Internet and e-mail facility. The school is aware of this and plans are in hand to have this facility available soon.

162 The quality of teaching is now good overall. The teachers have an agreed policy and have recently adopted a scheme of work to ensure a progression of skills is taught. All staff have assessed their professional development needs and these are being met using the New Opportunities Fund. Notebook computers are available for all teachers and these enable new skills to be practised and improved. Teachers have a good understanding of what needs to be taught and are beginning to develop assessment records of pupils' progress. Planning is clear and opportunities to use ICT in other subjects are well developed. Classroom computers are used well especially in literacy for word processing.

163 The school has significantly improved resources since the last inspection. In addition to the ICT suite and the classroom computers, the school has a digital camera, a scanner and suitable printers. At the time of the inspection there was no access to the Internet. However, the school has plans for this to happen in the near future. Roamers and Turtles are available for younger pupils to use and there is a good range of software to support learning in different subjects. The heating in the ICT suite is oppressive and the school is actively seeking ways to overcome this problem. The subject manager has identified the need for an interactive whiteboard and projector to enable teachers to demonstrate new skills and techniques. He had the opportunity to trial this facility during the inspection.

164 The subject manager is enthusiastic about the subject. He sets good examples in his own teaching and leads the subject well. He is keen to support staff in their training needs and to continue to raise standards for all pupils. The school is now well placed to continue to improve teaching and learning, having demonstrated an improvement since the last inspection.

MUSIC

165 Standards in singing are average at the end of both key stages. The school has made singing a focus in order to raise standards. It was not possible to judge standards in music overall at the end of either key stage, as lessons and club activities during the inspection focused mainly on singing. The African Drumming club is an exception, however, where a

small group of older pupils exhibit high levels of musical talent, maintaining exciting Ghanaian rhythms under the direction of a Year 5 teacher, who shares his skills and enjoyment of this music at lunchtimes. Discussions with headteacher and co-ordinator, together with the observation of lessons and a perusal of planning documents, show that the school has clearly addressed the key issue of low attainment in music at the time of the last inspection. It has made satisfactory improvement in improving the quality of provision and raising the profile of the subject since that time.

166 The initial development of a scheme of work alongside the provision of training for teachers bolstered staff confidence. The recent turnover of staff has included the loss of the previous co-ordinator, who also ran the school choir. The current co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has continued to run an 'alternative choir', focusing on songs mainly from African and Caribbean cultures, including distinctive reggae rhythms and soul music. This appeals particularly to older girls of all cultures. The co-ordinator is eager to develop further opportunities with a wider musical appeal, particularly to encourage boys to sing. The school does offer opportunity to Year 3 pupils to learn the recorder and to a small number of pupils who show musical ability and learn orchestral instruments.

167 In assemblies and class lessons, all pupils enjoy singing and the use of songs from a range of cultures stimulates their interest. 'Count your blessings' and 'We are here together' both provide fascinating rhythms and positive messages for pupils in both key stages. A few teachers with excellent subject knowledge, including the co-ordinator and a specialist singing teacher, who takes lessons with each Year 4 class, develop very successfully the skills associated with good quality singing. In the Year 4 lesson observed, pupils achieved very well as a result of the teacher's choice of songs, brisk pace and excellent focus on skills to improve pupils' performance through listening, insisting on good posture, breathing and vowel formation and then praising successful performance.

168 While some excellent teaching was observed, in a lesson and during club activities, class teaching by staff who are not subject specialists is mainly satisfactory. Teachers with less confidence in singing still offer sound support to their classes through the well-planned use of cassettes. They point up techniques to improve performance, including good breathing, clear enunciation and comfortable posture as they go along. However, they do not always observe pupils' response, in order to make comment and ensure pupils understand the teaching points and refine their performance. In the one lesson seen where pupils used musical instruments, the teacher had planned and prepared well so that pupils learned the names of instruments by choosing and using them in turn, singing a repetitive jingle to reinforce their knowledge. Teachers' planning shows sufficient attention to listening and appraising and to performing, using rhythmic and melodic percussion instruments, but there is little evidence of pupils composing.

169 The co-ordinator is set to use a revised scheme of work about to be published by the local education authority. The school's decision to employ a specialist singing teacher has been a very effective use of funding to develop pupils' skills. Pupils and teachers enjoy participation in lively performances for parents at Christmas and other festival times. Videos show excited involvement and some good levels of musical skill. Resources are accessible and in good condition. The African drums represent an excellent resource and are very well used. The school is considering ways of using the expertise of the co-ordinator and singing teacher to give opportunity for more pupils to benefit from their skills. The co-ordinator is aware that teachers' confidence in the subject varies considerably. The subject has a high profile as a successful vehicle for raising achievement among pupils from ethnic minorities and all pupils show enjoyment in their singing of assembly songs. The main task facing the school is how to use staff expertise to boost the confidence of other teachers and to ensure equality of opportunity for boys and girls in all year groups.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

170 Standards in physical education at ages seven and eleven are average. This is similar to the position found by the last inspection at age eleven but not so strong at age seven. The teaching of dance has improved and swimming remains strong. All Key Stage 2 pupils benefit from regular sessions at the local swimming pool. By Year 6 almost all swim the expected 25m and many go well beyond this. Although teaching of physical education overall is now better than it was, the time available for activities after pupils have changed often does not allow adequate opportunity for them to improve their performance through observation, reflection and evaluation. There is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other pupils because of the good support they receive from the teaching assistants and their teachers.

171 Pupils' achieved above expectations in lessons where they received coaching and support in small groups and had opportunities to watch others, think about their own movements and then work to improve. In swimming, pupils in both Years 3 and 5 achieved well. Year 3 pupils steadily increased the number of strokes they managed and Year 5 pupils worked hard to improve the quality of their front and back crawl. In a Year 1 lesson pupils observed how other pupils travelled across the bench and mat. They thought about their own moves and, taking account of their teacher's good coaching, they quickly incorporated strength of moves and awareness of space into their sequence. Year 6 pupils worked well in twos and threes with guidance from their teacher and by observing the work of others refined and developed their star shape balances. By the end of the lesson they were using a good combination of mirror movements and supporting counterbalances to create more complex and sophisticated sequences.

172 Teachers make good use of partner and group activities to support and extend pupils' skills and of their own subject knowledge to improve performance by coaching and increasing the level of challenge. Year 2 pupils quickly showed greater accuracy in catching and returning a beanbag to their partner and their technique improved as the distance was increased. Working in threes Year 4 pupils showed increasing accuracy and control as they passed a football. The teacher made good use of pupils to demonstrate the next activity of 'piggy in the middle' and successively increased the challenge until pupils were running and passing the ball in order to 'score'.

173 A range of different music styles is used to support work in dance. Year 2 pupils began to develop a dance sequence using stretches and balance to convey awakening and beginning a new working day to African music. Year 4 pupils practised a musical entry to the circus arena. They acknowledged the crowd and flexed their muscles during a weight lifting sequence with some including a grimace or two. The use of a commercial scheme supported teaching but limited creativity by not encouraging pupils to develop their own interpretation. Greater use of reflection and evaluation would improve this.

174 Throughout the school there is good attention to safety. Pupils are suitably attired and teachers ensure that apparatus is carefully moved and positioned. Pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and the need for warm-up and cool-down to avoid injury. Year 1 pupils recognised that after exercise their body felt warm and they breathed more quickly, whilst Year 6 were reminded by their teacher of the importance of stretches in the warm-up to avoid injury.

175 The quality of teaching and learning in almost all lessons seen in both key stages was good, with only one unsatisfactory lesson in the upper end of Key Stage 2. In the better

lessons teachers plan and prepare thoroughly, taking account of the guidance of the scheme of work and what pupils have already learnt. They ensure that activities develop and extend pupils' skills and understanding. Limited time often detracts from the learning, as in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils did not have sufficient opportunity to comment on the performances they observed because the teacher was conscious of the need to move on. The majority of pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and are attentive to their teachers. In the less successful lesson the behaviour of some pupils, largely boys, who did not follow instructions or enter fully into activities, limited learning and this was not managed effectively by the teacher.

176 The enthusiastic new subject leader, currently on maternity leave, has revised the scheme of work to ensure that it takes account of recent national guidance and requirements. It will provide good support to non-specialists in their planning of lessons and ensuring continuity of learning. It will also help with the formulation of arrangements for assessing pupils' progress and recording their attainment. Extra-curricular activities and the school's successes in competitive sport further extend and lift performance. Outdoor and adventurous activities form part of the Year 6 residential visit and the school is currently considering how it can extend this. Resources are well stored and in good condition and the school makes good use of its limited outdoor space for games and the local park for football. The two large halls further enhance this provision and the good quality floors allow the opportunity for barefoot work in gymnastics and dance. Some of the large gymnastic apparatus in the Infant hall is cumbersome, limiting its use by younger pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

177 Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attain standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above those expected.

178 In Key Stage 1, the pupils are taught about Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. It is evident from pupils' work that a factual approach, enriched through discussion, is used in the teaching. In the study of Christianity, pupils produce their own versions of the parables and offer simple explanations. From the study of Judaism, they produce simple interpretations of some of the Ten Commandments. In Key Stage 2, pupils study Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism. The interpretation of key teachings and associated discussion is consistently addressed. Pupils are confident and thoughtful when discussing ethical and moral issues. When examining the significance of Lent, pupils gained a clear understanding of the nature of sacrifice and reached their own conclusion that giving up time to help others was a worthwhile sacrifice to make. The mature level of discussions witnessed, together with written accounts and interpretations of different facets of the religions studied, indicates that older pupils are achieving well in this subject.

179 Teaching is undertaken in an enthusiastic and committed manner. The cultural and religious richness of the school and surrounding community is highly valued and teachers take appropriate opportunities to point out to pupils the many similarities that occur between the religions studied. This was well exemplified when, having examined the nature of sacrifice in the Christian religion, Muslim pupils were invited to explain about Ramadan and the significance of sacrifice within that season. Similarly, having considered symbolism within the Sikh faith (the five Ks), pupils then had opportunity to discuss symbolism within the Christian faith.

180 Pupils' learning in religious education is secure. Pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds achieve well. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well because of the strong focus on discussion in the subject. In lessons pupils are attentive, concentrate well and strive to produce good work. The mature level of discussion they

become involved in and the way they are able to apply the ethos of their learning to their daily lives is a clear indication of the impact of the school's approach to this subject.

181 The subject is expertly led and managed. The co-ordinator provides colleagues with a clear scheme of work that reflects the local agreed syllabus. The syllabus has recently been revised to include 'New Challenging Attitudes' units. This aspect of the subject is being incorporated into the teaching and the co-ordinator is very aware of the desirability of regular evaluation to ensure that the learning needs of the pupils are effectively met. She maintains a useful check on standards achieved in the subject through the compilation of a portfolio of work samples. This is a high quality document that clearly reflects the range and depth of study achieved. Her enthusiasm and commitment to effective teaching in this subject is well reflected in the teaching. Consideration is given to making the subject interesting and relevant to pupils' own experiences. A good range of quality resources is available to support the teaching. The high element of mutual respect engendered through the teaching in this subject is evident throughout the school.