

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLLY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Friern Barnet

London

LEA: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101286

Headteacher: Michael Quigley

Reporting inspector: Paul Canham  
1353

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> –11<sup>th</sup> February 2000

Inspection number: 191791

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior with Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bellvue Road  
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London  
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Telephone number: 0181 368 1434

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Elizabeth Pearson

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Canham	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Science; Design and technology; Physical education.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school; The school's results and pupils' achievements; Teaching and learning; Leadership and management; Key issues for action.
Jane Chesterfield	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes and personal development; Pupils' welfare, health and safety; Partnership with parents and carers.
Tom Allen	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History; Music; Religious education; English as an additional language; Provision for special educational needs.	
Nina Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information technology; Equality of opportunity.	
Margaret Lygoe	<i>Team inspector</i>	Children aged under five; Art; English.	Quality and range of opportunities for learning.

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holly Park is larger than most primary schools; it caters for 169 boys and 155 girls aged from four to eleven years. In addition, 53 children attend the nursery part time. Just over three quarters of the pupils are from ethnic backgrounds and a third speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils with some form of special educational need, including those with statements, is well above average. The attainment of pupils on entry to compulsory education at the age of five varies significantly between year groups. Currently, attainment for the large majority of pupils when they start school is average.

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

Holly Park is a good school and pupils benefit from a good standard of education; it provides good value for money. This popular school is unable to admit all the pupils who would like to come to it. The school is very well led and it places a strong emphasis on the care of its pupils and successfully serves the needs of a rich and varied multi-cultural community. Teaching is good and the very good relationships that exist in the school are used effectively to help pupils improve their confidence and achieve well. Pupils' skills in creative and performing arts are higher than those seen in other schools nationally. Standards of work seen in other subjects are similar to those expected for pupils' ages, although pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average.

#### **What the school does well**

- The outstanding leadership sets a clear direction for the work of the school in raising standards.
- The consistently good teaching in Key Stage 2 helps pupils to make good progress and achieve well for their ability; standards in art and music are above average in both key stages.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work; they enjoy very good relationships with one another, and they develop into mature individuals by the time they leave school.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social education is very good and reflects the school's aims for the successful development of a caring and supportive environment.
- The governors are very effective in fulfilling their role and providing very good support for the school.
- The quality and range of extra-curricular activities are good.

#### **What could be improved**

- The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs do not specify learning targets precisely enough to enable teachers to monitor pupils' progress closely.
- The sharing of the good and very good teaching in the school to improve the small but significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1.
- Strengthen the curricular links between the nursery and reception classes to improve childrens progress at the foundation stage.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in February 1997. All three areas identified for action have been tackled successfully. The provision for information technology has improved substantially and now meets statutory requirements. Standards in both key stages are similar to those in other schools nationally. Assessment procedures have been improved, and they are now good for English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. Information is used well to help with planning. However, some weaknesses remain in the individual education plans, some of which lack sufficient detail to monitor closely the progress pupils make. The curriculum is well planned and learning intentions are clearly identified in teachers' planning, now one of the strengths in teaching. Subject co-ordinators know what they are doing; they are responsible for their own budget, and have a clear view of how to raise standards in their subjects. Consequently, several subjects are now well managed. In addition to the improvements made by the school in response to the issues raised in the previous inspection report, shortcomings in the provision for religious education and music, and in the teaching of art, geography and history have been successfully addressed. The quality of teaching, particularly the proportion of very good teaching, has also improved since the previous inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

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

The information shows a declining trend overall in the three core subjects since 1997. However, when compared with schools having a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in 1999 were above in English, and they matched the average in mathematics and science. The proportions of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age were above the national average in English, and close to average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are achieving standards expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. The difference between the results in the table and the current standards is due to the significant proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need and those needing the support of outside agencies in the cohort of pupils which sat the tests last year.



Standards in information technology are similar to those found nationally, and pupils are making enough progress in religious education to meet the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of both key stages. Standards in other subjects are similar to those found nationally, with the exception of art and music which are above average by the end of both key stages. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2000, and the most recent results indicate that the school is on its way to achieving them in both subjects

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are interested in their work and they are keen to learn. They are responsive, show very good attitudes, and are very interested in the activities which the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils clearly understand what is expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Older pupils enjoy the extra responsibilities they are given. The quality of relationships is very good and a distinctive feature of the school community.
Attendance	Good.

Within the rich culturally diverse community, pupils have a high respect for values and beliefs of others. Pupils respond well to the initiatives provided by the school in the curriculum and during extra-curricular activities.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.*

Of the lessons seen during the inspection, 96 per cent were satisfactory or better, of which 71 per cent were good or very good. The quality of teaching was consistently good in Key Stage 2, where 77 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better. Teaching was also consistently good for children aged under five, and particularly for children in the reception. Throughout the school, teachers and other adults manage pupils with a sensitivity which

helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Examples of good teaching were seen in all years and in all subjects, and opportunities to develop pupils' language and numeracy skills were used well. Teaching was consistently good in English in Key Stage 2 and the best teaching of mathematics was seen in Years 5 and 6 when pupils were taught in similar attainment groups. Pupils benefit significantly from the teaching by subject specialists, such as art and music, because it is dynamic and it allows them to express themselves with some confidence. Careful attention is given to pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

The small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen mainly in Key Stage 1. In these lessons, pupils did not make enough progress in their English and mathematics because the tasks were not well matched to their needs and the pace was too slow.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The well-planned curriculum ensures that all pupils are given a balanced range of experiences matched to their wide ranging needs. The good emphasis placed on music and art enables pupils to express themselves creatively and develop their confidence. Children aged under five are given a secure start to their education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is satisfactory and pupils are usually given appropriate work matched to their needs. Pupils benefit from effective support, although the individual education plans do not always contain sufficient details to help with assessments.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The provision is well managed and pupils with English as an additional language are given good levels of support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and for social and moral development it is very good. The school's calm atmosphere, rich curriculum and very good relationships enable pupils to reflect on events and on their lives.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures to ensure that pupils are well cared and there are very good Child Protection procedures.

The school continues to forge good links with parents and they have very positive views of the school. They believe that the school is approachable and works closely with them. The well-planned curriculum is balanced and focuses well on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Through cross-curricular links, and with the help of subject specialists, the curriculum also adds a richness to pupils' learning by giving them good opportunities to be creative and express themselves through practical work and performances. The curriculum in the nursery and the reception classes is based on children's practical experiences, although curricular links between the nursery and reception classes are not sufficiently developed. All adults work well as a team to provide a secure and welcoming environment where children feel safe and can flourish. Pupils benefit from the good quality and consistency of care given to them.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives outstanding leadership and provides his colleagues with sensitive support. He delegates well and key staff have a clear understanding of their role.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Members of the governing body are knowledgeable and conscientious. They are highly effective in shaping the direction of the school because they are well informed and very supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching. Information from assessment and test data is used successfully to help with planning. The school is beginning to identify the value added by its work.
The strategic use of resources	Financial administration and planning are very good. The school makes good use of its resources and it budgets carefully to support the priorities identified for improvement.

The school places a high priority on staffing and pupils benefit from the additional support in lessons and around the school. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers and other adults with subject expertise. The school is undergoing a major rebuilding programme which will give the pupils excellent facilities in the very near future. Currently, some of the accommodation is unsuitable. Resources are generally good. The school benefits from the resourceful, supportive headteacher who has a clear vision for the work of the school. He delegates effectively and all staff are closely involved in the development of the school through strategic planning for their curriculum areas. The headteacher and governors look to provide best value when considering the school's use of resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The children's good behaviour.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The ease at which they can approach the school.</li> <li>• The high expectations about work.</li> <li>• The personal development of their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with parents.</li> <li>• How well they are kept informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence supports all the positive features expressed by parents both in response to the questionnaire and at the meeting of parents with the registered inspector. The quality of the extra-curricular activities seen during the inspection was good and the school is working hard to strengthen the links with parents. The newly-revised reports to parents are informative and of good quality. The quality of the homework seen during the inspection was satisfactory for pupils in Key Stage 1, and good for pupils in Key Stage 2.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In recent years, the school's initial assessment scores have indicated a very wide range of attainment levels of children on entry to compulsory education. These standards have been influenced by the significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Information from early assessments and inspection observations shows that, by the age of five, the majority of children are likely to reach the expected standards in all areas of learning, with the exception of speaking, where attainment is below average. Some children are very articulate and have a good general knowledge; others have limited experience and poor speaking skills. Children with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support. Those children for whom English is an additional language are also supported well to ensure that they participate fully in all activities.

2. Throughout the school, pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding in 71 per cent of the lessons observed, and satisfactory progress in all but 4 per cent of the remaining lessons. Over time, pupils achieve well in several subjects, particularly in art and music, and when they are taught in groups with similar levels of attainment, such as those seen in mathematics towards the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good gains in their knowledge and understanding, and they achieve well over time when the work is closely targeted to their needs. In mathematics, pupils with English as an additional language learn mathematical vocabulary well through good support from classroom assistants because the work is carefully prepared to support the pupils' needs.

3. The results for the 1999 national tests show that standards at Key Stage 1 matched the national average in reading and writing, and they were above average in mathematics. When these results are compared with those of similar schools, standards were well above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in these subjects was well above the national average. This positive picture indicates that pupils achieved well during the key stage. However, in science, the performance levels of pupils in the teacher assessments were below the national average in the 1999 results, although a larger than average proportion of pupils achieved standards above those expected for their age. Over the four years up to 1999, the school's results have fluctuated, though the average performance level overall is above the national average. Standards in girls' reading skills have declined substantially from the well above average level achieved 1996. The school traces the difference to variations in the cohorts of pupils.

4. The results of the 1999 national tests show that standards at Key Stage 2 matched the national average in English, though they were below average in mathematics and science. When compared with the averages for schools having a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were above in English, and they matched the average in mathematics and science. The proportions of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age were above the national average in English, and close to average in mathematics and science. Over the four years up to 1999, the school's results vary considerably, and they show a slightly downward trend overall. The boys show a marked decline in the standards

achieved in mathematics. At face value, this paints a negative picture but the school explains the decline as due to an increased proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need and those needing the support of outside agencies in the cohort of pupils which sat the tests last year. In consequence, some pupils made good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.

5. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2000, and inspection evidence indicates that the school is on its way to achieving them in both subjects. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that pupils are working at levels expected for their age in English, mathematics and science at both key stages. The differences between the 1999 results and the standards seen during the inspection are due in part to the different cohort, but also to the school's decision to teach pupils within similar attainment groups, particularly for mathematics. Standards in information technology are similar to those found nationally, and pupils are making enough progress in religious education to meet the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of both key stages. Standards in other subjects are similar to those found nationally, with the exception of art and music, which are above expectations by the end of both key stages.

6. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully in all classes across the school. Literacy skills are used well to reinforce learning and there are good examples of written work in history, religious education, art, and science, where teachers focus on the use of scientific words such as those used by pupils in Year 6 when considering food chains. By Year 6, writing across the curriculum is well organised and thoughtful, with good attention given to the presentation of pupils' work. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and numeracy skills are used to collect data, for example during science investigations and in geography, derived from an agreed whole-school policy for cross-curricular promotion of literacy and numeracy.

7. Pupils' speaking and listening skills match national expectations by Year 2, and they are above national expectations by Year 6. This is due largely to pupils having many good opportunities to take part in discussions led by teachers who speak clearly and value pupils' contributions. Pupils achieve well through Key Stage 2 and, by Year 6, they listen carefully, speak confidently, and take account of the views and opinions of each other. Standards in reading match national expectations in both key stages. Pupils develop independence in reading from an early stage because they are given positive support and encouragement by teachers and parents. By Year 2, the higher attainers read accurately and with good expression. By Year 6, pupils read a wide range of literature and they examine passages in depth. They discuss their reading confidently and refer to the text to support their opinions. Less confident readers employ phonic skills successfully to tackle unfamiliar words. Standards in writing match national expectations at the end of both key stages. By Year 2, most pupils write short stories and the more fluent writers have a secure grasp of simple punctuation. Handwriting skills vary and there are examples of neat, well-presented work in all year groups, although some pupils form letters incorrectly. Pupils identify words with similar spelling patterns and, by Year 6, many pupils structure their writing well.

8. By Year 2, pupils work competently with numbers to 100 and most are beginning to understand tens and units in mathematics. Most pupils recognise two-dimensional shapes correctly and recognise simple symmetrical shapes. By Year 6, most pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and use this knowledge to solve problems. All pupils develop a good grasp of ordering, and of identifying equivalent fractions. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to develop their skills when working with shape and when collecting data, using frequency charts and recording their findings using charts and graphs.

9. Information technology is beginning to be used well to promote learning in mathematics and other subjects. For example, pupils' confident word-processing skills were used to improve grammar in their writing, and an art program was used to help in designing. By Year 6, pupils confidently enter information onto spreadsheets and they use relevant menus and icons to access programs. They also develop multimedia presentations about the human body, which are carefully linked to their science topic. Pupils develop a broad understanding of science and, by Year 6, their mature attitude helps them to approach aspects of sex education in a meaningful way. Much of their work is well presented and the large majority of pupils write up investigative procedures in an orderly form.

10. Standards achieved by pupils match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education. By Year 6, pupils know the origins of Judaism, and understand the importance of important figures, such as Abraham and Moses. Pupils know the main aspects of the life of Christ and are familiar with other world faiths.

11. Standards in other subjects are similar to those expected for pupils' age, with the exception of art and music, where they are above expectations in both key stages; in dance standards are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's focus on the development of the creative and performing arts helps pupils to develop esteem and improve their confidence. In art, pupils' skills in clay work and in using different media are well developed. Pupils take pride in their singing and musical performances. In dance, pupils respond creatively and interpret music particularly well.

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

12. In keeping with the findings from the previous report, pupils' attitudes, relationships and personal development are strengths of the school. Pupils across all the year groups respond very positively to school, and a high proportion of parents (96 per cent) indicated in their response to the questionnaire that their children like coming to school. Pupils are very keen to play a full part in their lessons and in other opportunities made available by the school. This positive picture reflects the school's commitment to the care of its pupils, with its engagement of additional staff, and its focus on a warm and welcoming environment to strengthen pupils' esteem and facilitate their personal development. The development of good social and personal skills underpins all the work in the nursery. Children learn to choose activities, and become independent in personal skills such as washing their hands after activities. Behaviour is good, and disputes are rare, because the experienced staff are quick to intervene. In the reception classes, children are eager to undertake simple responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. Many reception children sustain concentration well, for example when painting. They try hard with their work and are motivated by the wide

range of stimulating activities. During a literacy lesson, for example, children in the reception class could barely contain their excitement over the tasks they had been set, and rushed off to get started as soon as possible. In Year 6, pupils displayed a thoughtful and considered approach to their health education lesson, reacting to the subject matter, the birth of a baby, with common sense and maturity. Many pupils participate in the good extra-curricular activities the school offers, and do so with enthusiasm and dedication.

13. Pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. They settle quickly in class and most teachers do not have to waste any time establishing a good learning environment. During the inspection, a few pupils in a small proportion of lessons were inattentive and caused the lesson to lose some pace; this was due largely to the limited range of strategies used by teachers. Pupils move around the school sensibly, for example when they move into and out of assembly, and mix well altogether in the playground. The good behaviour reflects the very good relationships between pupils, who show consideration for one another. Pupils show respect and concern for their surroundings, for example, by collecting crisp packets at the end of break, tidying their classrooms, or helping to clear up in the hall at lunchtime. There have been no exclusions since the time of the last inspection.

14. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils work and play very well together. In class they co-operate constructively and value each other's ideas. During a Year 5 literacy lesson, for example, pupils listened attentively to their classmates' storytelling and then applauded spontaneously. Outside, pupils share the available space and equipment amicably, and no particular groups of children dominate the playground with their games. Pupils are open and friendly towards teachers, support staff and other adults, and react to them with courtesy, opening doors, for example, and talking readily about their work. Pupils respond very well to the many good opportunities they are given for personal development. Those who represent their classes on the school council, for example, were seen to express their views confidently and to relate easily to pupils from elsewhere in the school. Those who carry out duties at lunchtime do so wholeheartedly and with a sense of responsibility.

15. Standards of attendance have remained good since the last inspection. Punctuality is also good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and they and their parents try to ensure that they miss as little of their schooling as possible.

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

16. The quality of teaching and learning is one of the school's strengths. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of the lessons seen. Pupils' learning benefits significantly from teaching which was good in 40 per cent, and very good or excellent in 31 per cent of lessons. These figures are higher than those found in the majority of other schools nationally, and they are an improvement on those reported in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching was consistently good in Key Stage 2, where 77 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better. It was also consistently good for children aged under five, particularly in the reception class, where all but one lesson was good. Planning is a strength and language skills are systematically developed in all areas of learning. Groups are well managed and sessions are well resourced, with a good range of activities. Good relationships between adults and children are used well to promote learning.



17. The small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching (4 per cent) was seen mainly in Key Stage 1. In these lessons, pupils did not make enough progress because the tasks were not well matched to their needs and the pace was too slow. In consequence, pupils became noisy, learning opportunities were lost, and they made little progress. However, pupils are encouraged to develop their ideas, increase their understanding and work at a good pace in most lessons and in most subjects throughout the school. Pupils make consistently good progress in music lessons due to the expertise of the subject specialist, who teaches music throughout the school. In the lessons seen, pupils benefited from the rich range of learning opportunities, which were dynamic, and which captured their interest because they were encouraged to become fully involved. Similarly, pupils achieve above average standards in their artwork due largely to the expertise of the teachers and the very good support given to pupils, which allows them to express themselves with confidence and imagination. Teaching is good in English in Key Stage 2 and pupils made particularly good progress in the lessons seen, which were lively and interesting. The best teaching of mathematics was seen towards the end of Key Stage 2 when pupils were taught in attainment groups; in these lessons, pupils were most able to sustain their concentration and learn for themselves.

18. Positive features of teaching identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and almost all aspects have been strengthened further. The quality of teaching is underpinned by the very good relationships which help pupils to work with confidence, understand what they are doing and work productively. Further strong features include very good management skills, particularly for children aged under five and in the Key Stage 2, and the wide range of teaching methods which are used to capture and maintain pupils' interests. Good use is made of time and resources and pupils, particularly towards the end of Key Stage 2, respond well to the use of clearly focused questions to establish and extend what they know and understand. Pupils also benefit from being taught in groups of similar attainment levels because the teaching is consistently well focused and matches their needs very closely to the needs; in consequence they make good progress.

19. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of subjects. A particular strength of effective teaching is the depth of understanding that teachers have of the National Curriculum. They show a willingness to approach the teaching of subjects from different angles, such as that seen in science when pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to relate their knowledge of animals and plants to every day life. Good cross curricular-links were also seen when work in religious education and geography, and science and geography broadened the pupils' understanding. Opportunities for speaking and listening are used to the full in all subjects. In English lessons, teachers read stories well, engendering enjoyment of the written word. Their good knowledge of the teaching of literacy is evident in clear and effective teaching of spelling, phonics, and rhyme. In Key Stage 1, good subject knowledge helped teachers to ask probing questions in geography, history and information technology. In Key Stage 2, in depth subject knowledge of mathematics clarified the teachers' explanations and helped with focused individual support. In Year 6, the teacher's good knowledge and experience of dance ensured that pupils interpreted the music with sensitivity.

20. Pupils are fully aware of the routines and expectations of the large majority of teachers who have consistently high expectations of behaviour. Teachers also expect pupils to work hard, and this is often evident in a brisk manner and the demands made in interaction with pupils. In Key Stage 2, pupils were consistently challenged to examine text closely in English lessons. Planning is generally good and lessons are thoroughly planned in detail and well prepared. A range of activities is provided to cater for the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment, and tasks and materials are usually set out in advance to promote a swift and smooth transition from one lesson to another. However, although teachers are aware of the different attainment levels within each class, the planning does not consistently refer to the differences, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs. Currently, the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not always available for class teachers.

21. There is a good range of methods and strategies to support learning. In good and very good lessons, the teacher works well with one group, while remaining aware of, and responding to, the progress and needs of other groups. Final summary sessions are used well to consolidate and share what has been learnt. There is particularly sensitive and effective use of questioning and other intervention. Sometimes this draws out information from pupils, sometimes it develops their understanding, and sometimes it makes them think harder and express their thoughts more precisely. Very detailed and probing questions helped pupils in Year 6 to think deeply and reflect on their own ideas in English and science.

22. Time and resources are consistently well used in Key Stage 2 and in the foundation stage. Pupils respond well to a brisk pace which is often set. For example, in a dance and a science lesson in Key Stage 2, a brisk pace was maintained in lessons full of teaching points and varied learning experiences. Resources are often well used, such as untuned and tuned instruments in music, and to help with movement in physical education. The school's information technology resources are also used to support learning. Effective use is made of support staff to support individuals and small groups, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Pupils' learning in their art work is substantially improved by the quality of the support given by experienced and knowledgeable specialists. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils through informally and formally assessing their progress in lessons; this information is used well to help teachers with their planning. The quality of the homework seen during the inspection was satisfactory for pupils in Key Stage 1, and good for pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

23. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which has significant strengths in art and music. The curriculum is particularly good in Key Stage 2 because it is enriched by cross-curricular links. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education, and has a good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. The school has successfully introduced the literacy hour and numeracy period, and pupils use their skills in many subjects. Effective links are made between subjects, for example, English, history and art as a result of effective curriculum planning. These links extend pupils' understanding and offer them a coherent framework of knowledge.

24. The school has identified the need to review the curriculum in preparation for the introduction of the amended National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

25. The school has responded to the national Code of Practice with the implementation of a staged referral system. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are firmly established, although they do not consistently identify specific targets. In consequence, the progress made by pupils is, sometimes, difficult to measure with sufficient accuracy. However, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well overall in the classroom and the school is successful in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The provision for information technology has improved considerably since the last inspection and the elements of the statutory programme are covered at each stage. All pupils from reception onwards benefit from weekly lessons in the new computer room. Teachers follow a scheme of work which ensures the progressive development of skills. Pupils work confidently and learning is good.

26. Provision for music and art is very good. All pupils benefit from class music lessons taught by a specialist teacher and there is a strong musical tradition in the school. There are good opportunities for musically talented pupils to receive instrumental tuition. Pupils' experience is extended through regular performances. Skills and techniques in art are systematically taught, and classroom assistants make a significant contribution to learning when they work with pupils in small groups.

27. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social development. There are sound links with the local community, for example: the fire service, the school nurse and the local police. Sex education lessons are competently taught, in line with the school policy. An aspect currently being developed is the programme for alerting pupils against the misuse of drugs and the school is following local authority initiatives.

28. The school arranges a good programme of visits and visitors to extend pupils understanding in many subjects. Links with the local community are suitably developed, for example, through visits by a local minister and the rabbi, as well as by pupils visiting the parks and shops. Links with secondary schools are satisfactory, and the school regularly takes students from the Institute of Education.

29. The curriculum for children aged under five is satisfactory overall. It covers all the required areas of learning and is securely based on practical activities. Opportunities for outdoor play will be good when the classes move into the new buildings in March. Curricular links between the nursery and reception classes are currently insufficiently developed. As a result, some children find the transition from nursery to reception difficult because of a marked increase in expectations. The co-ordinator does not have suitable opportunities to monitor planning.

30. The school provides a good number of extra-curricular activities, mainly in music and sport. A minority of parents would like the school to do more. From Key Stage 1 onwards, pupils have good opportunities to sing in various choirs and to take part in performances. Pupils who are talented musically also have an excellent opportunity to experience playing in the school orchestra. There are football and netball clubs and an athletics club meets in the summer. Pupils have a good opportunity to extend their learning and their personal development by taking part in residential visits in both Years 5 and 6.

31. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and for social and moral development it is very good. The school has maintained this high standard since the last inspection. There is a calm atmosphere in the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their lives and other people's lives in assemblies and within the school curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote remembrance poems and sensitive pieces of writing about what life was like in the trenches, after studying the First World War. In a music lesson, the teacher promoted a sense of awe and wonder and excitement in pupils as she played the violin. Pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to think about different religions as they listen to stories about life as a Hindu in religious education lessons. During whole school and class assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider their own values and attitudes and those of other faiths through the presentation of a range of different themes. These are stimulating occasions, as was demonstrated in a presentation focusing on the Chinese New Year. There is a planned programme for assemblies and the school fulfils statutory requirements for collective worship.

32. The school provides a good moral code for pupils' development. The school's 'Code of Conduct' and the consequences are clearly defined in terms of rewards and sanctions. Consideration for others is shown in circle time. For example, pupils in Year 1 were observed taking turns in recalling nice features about their classmates' characters. All listened very carefully and showed respect when others talked. Moral principles underpin the school's daily routines. Teachers and other adults encourage honesty, fairness, truth and justice in their dealings with pupils and they are rewarded with stickers and certificates. Pupils are made aware of the less fortunate; for example they support a local charity for the homeless and take donations to them at Harvest time.

33. The provision for social development is very good and a strength of the school. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide very good role models for pupils to follow. Pupils of all ages relate well towards each other, in particular at lunch times and play times. They behave maturely as they move around the school generally, or when given responsible tasks to do, such as tidying up in the information technology suite. All pupils are courteous towards visitors as they stand aside or open doors for them. From an early age, pupils work well together in small groups and in whole-class situations. Relationships are very good. The school ensures that all pupils are treated equally, regardless of culture, race, gender or social background.

34. Cultural development is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the richness and diversity of other cultures. The school promotes Western Culture through music, in particular in assemblies and art activities, such as the examples of abstract art completed by pupils in Year 5. Cultural development is enhanced through visits to places of interest such as the Tate Gallery, museums and places of worship.

35. The richness of other, non-European cultures is conveyed in acts of collective worship, focused topics and school displays, such as the informative display about the Chinese New Year. These give pupils the opportunity to think about and discuss the beliefs of others. Visitors invited into school greatly enrich this area of the curriculum, for example the Kenyan artist and the ‘Tudor’ doctors.

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

36. The school has succeeded in sustaining its strong pastoral care for pupils since the time of the last inspection. Teachers, support staff, welfare assistants and midday supervisors all work well as a team to provide a secure and welcoming environment where children feel safe and can flourish. A good range of pastoral policies creates a framework for the consistent treatment of pupils by all staff.

37. Child protection procedures in the school are very good, and the comprehensive policy gives clear guidance to staff. Pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe through their structured programme of personal, health and social education. Health and safety issues are effectively managed, and there are good arrangements for administering first aid and looking after sick children. However, the school does not currently record accidents in line with the requirements of the most recent national guidance.

38. Discipline is very well promoted and maintained in the school. There is a fair system for rewards and sanctions, which is well known and liked by pupils and parents, and uniformly applied by staff. They share high expectations of behaviour, and pupils are rewarded for their efforts with stickers, certificates and letters to their parents. Any instances of bullying are taken seriously and handled firmly. Behaviour of this type is closely monitored by the headteacher. Pupils’ attendance is well recorded, and reasons for absence or lateness are swiftly chased up.

39. At all stages of their school life, pupils’ welfare and personal development are accorded paramount importance. Children in the nursery and reception are well supported to help them settle into school life. In Key Stages 1 and 2, timetabled lessons for circle time, and personal, social and health education enable pupils to think about issues affecting their daily lives and make their own decisions. Sex and drugs education gives older pupils information they need as they grow up. The school’s daily routines run smoothly, and pupils are well supervised at lunchtime by midday supervisors and welfare assistants. These good levels of support and care help pupils to focus on their learning and to make good progress.

40. Procedures for assessments are good. The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of each key stage. All children are assessed at the age of five. Teachers’ on-going assessments, which record what the pupils can do, are consistent and informative and show clearly how the pupils are progressing. Assessment is built into the schemes of work for English, mathematics and information technology. Assessment tasks

are consistently identified in the planning for the remaining subjects. Lessons are evaluated and there is evidence in the planning to show that assessment informs the next step to be taught. In the best instances, evaluative assessment shows that teachers are identifying the needs of individual pupils or small groups and using this information to develop the next step of learning. Information from national tests and assessments, and other standardised tests, is analysed and used with other indicators to develop targets for pupils and place them in appropriate groups in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6.

41. The school has recently addressed the area of assessment and useful files have been developed which assist teachers in the process of assessment. The system of assessing and recording what the pupils can do is resulting in informative individual records being developed on how the children are progressing. Annual reports are of good quality and identify areas for improvement. There has been good progress in this area since the last inspection, although the school is unable to specify targets for pupils with special educational needs with appropriate precision.

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

42. The school has continued to forge good links with parents since the last inspection. Parents have very positive views of the school. They feel that their children are happy there, and that the school has high expectations for their academic and personal development. They are very pleased with the quality of teaching and leadership, and believe that the school is approachable and works closely with them. A significant number, though, have reservations about: the amount of homework their children are given, the extra-curricular activities available, and the information for parents about their children's progress.

43. The school works hard to provide parents with high quality information. Its newly revised reports on children's progress are very good. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection. The reports focus very clearly on how well pupils are doing compared with national standards, and outline pupils' strengths in each subject. They also set out pupils' targets for future development, so that parents know what their children need to do to improve and make progress. Sometimes, teachers' comments in the reports are very brief, particularly in relation to standards pupils have achieved, and there is insufficient detail for parents of what their children have done to reach those standards. The concerns of some parents about information on progress are justified in this respect. Curriculum information for parents is good. Every teacher sends out detailed termly newsletters, explaining the areas they will be covering, thereby giving parents the chance to support this work at home. Other information for parents, such as the prospectus, the governors' annual report and the home-school agreement are satisfactory, but a number of parents would welcome more communication in languages other than English.

44. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school, as governors, helpers and members of the Holly Park Parents' and Friends' Association, and many are able to do so. They make a valuable contribution to the school's work. The Holly Park Parents' and Friends' Association is thriving, and its fund-raising efforts provide useful additional resources for the pupils. In class, parent helpers are well deployed by teachers to provide additional support for individuals and groups. Most parents also promote the work of the school by supporting their children's learning at home. They hear them read regularly, for example, and ensure that their homework is completed. This reinforces the work of the class teachers and helps pupils to make progress.

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

45. The head teacher provides highly effective, resourceful and supportive leadership. Staff work cohesively as a caring team, committed to the welfare of the pupils and the whole community. This gives the school a clear sense of purpose and, as a result, relationships are very good throughout the school. The school's aims are reflected in its daily work; the school community is lively and caring, and pupils are constantly encouraged to be thoughtful and responsible.

46. The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection. He has maintained the strengths highlighted in the previous report and developed the school further, with the help of a knowledgeable and committed governing body, who have been instrumental in the development of the school's curriculum and in securing the substantial improvements to the school's accommodation. The governing body continues to be conscientious, and is highly supportive of the headteacher and the work of the school. Key governors are active and well-informed, and are keen to use and extend their expertise. Parents value the improvements brought about since the appointment of the headteacher, and the capacity for improvement remains very high. The school is meeting all statutory requirements, including the provision for information technology, which was reported as a key issue in the previous report.

47. The headteacher delegates well and staff value the levels of responsibilities given to them. Members of the senior management team have clear roles and responsibilities. They are given time away from teaching to monitor teachers' planning, observe teaching and learning, and support colleagues. This strategy is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, due largely to the openness of the discussion and the teachers' willingness to refine and improve their practice. Formal observations are followed up with written and verbal feedback indicating areas for improvement. There is good professional support for all staff and appraisal systems are well established. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for their own resources, and they help in shaping the direction of the school through their own action plans, which are closely linked to priorities in the good school development plan. Subject co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their role and provide colleagues with helpful support and advice. Some use time away from the classroom to formally monitor their subject, by observing lessons or by working with staff on planning. The targets set by the school for English and mathematics are achievable and reflect the school's realistic commitment to high standards. Several subjects, including mathematics, religious education and music, are particularly well managed.

48. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs. However, the headteacher is aware of the need to review the system and monitor the provision more rigorously. Pupils are assessed with the help of guidelines provided by the local education authority, and the co-ordinator for special educational needs regularly updates the register, of pupils with special needs. Individual educational plans are kept for all pupils on the register and progress towards their targets is monitored termly by the co-ordinator in consultation with the class teachers. However, the targets set in the individual plans are sometimes too general and they are not sufficiently clear or specific. In consequence, information from assessment is not always specific enough to help with the planning. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The co-ordinator is ably supported by a part-time teacher, and they have established effective systems to ensure that pupils are identified early and their work is closely matched to their needs.

49. The school continues to target its budget carefully to support the priorities for improvement which it has identified. Financial management is very good. The headteacher and the governing body have a ready grasp of the school's financial situation, and are forward thinking in their use of the money available to them. Extra contingency funds have been set aside this year, for example, to supplement the funding for the new buildings and ensure that all rooms will be fully fitted and equipped. The school, in conjunction with the local education authority, has established a very good system for development planning and budget setting, which ensures that the two processes are closely linked. Additional grants provided for specific reasons, such as the standards fund, are appropriately used for their intended purpose.

50. Financial administration and control are also very good, as the recent audit testifies. Only minor issues arose from this, and they have all been addressed. There are good procedures for handling orders and invoices, and records are very well kept and cross-referenced. The school pays good attention to the principles of obtaining best value in its use of funding. It puts these principles effectively into practice when dealing with large areas of expenditure, such as the setting up of the computer suite.

51. The school has an appropriate number of suitably trained staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. They are generally well deployed. Pupils benefit from being taught music by a specialist music teacher and, as a result, standards in music are above average. The school places a high priority on the additional support given to pupils and the number of support staff is well above that seen in other schools. They are well deployed and usually support pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language. They regularly work with groups and are skilled in teaching techniques. Two classroom assistants who have an expertise in art make a significant contribution to standards achieved by pupils in their artwork.

52. The school is currently undergoing a major building programme. The school roll is rising and some of the temporary buildings are in very poor condition. The first phase of building was completed just before the inspection. The new classrooms are of a very high quality, and there are exciting play areas for the nursery and reception children. The governors and staff have been very actively involved at all stages to ensure that the new provision is practical as well as attractive. The second phase of work, due to start in March, will replace the temporary accommodation. The school is attractive and well cared for. Pupils' work is very effectively displayed and the school is bright and welcoming.



53. Resources are satisfactory overall. The school has a kiln and potter's wheel and a good range of other art equipment and materials. Pupils benefit from these art resources because they are given a rich range of experience using different media. The new computer suite is used well and the improved provision is having a positive impact on standards.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

54. No major weaknesses were identified during the inspection. However, a number of issues were identified that need addressing. To improve standards of work and the pupils' learning, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Improve the provision for special educational needs by:
  - \* monitoring the teaching and learning more closely;
  - \* strengthening the quality of the individual education plans by the inclusion of clear, specific targets which can be used to assess and monitor progress and inform planning.
- Improve the consistency of teaching in Key Stage 1 by sharing the good and very good practice which already exists in the school;
- Use the information from the good assessment procedures and improve the planning in some lessons in Key Stage 2 to stretch the higher attaining pupils in mathematics;
- Review the planning for children in the foundation stage to ensure that coherent curriculum links are established between the two year groups.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	30	40	25	4	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	324
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	60

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15	155

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

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	115

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

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	18	33

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	15	16	15
	Total	28	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (80)	88 (95)	85 (94)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	15	15	16
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (81)	85(79)	88(85)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	34	26	60

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	23
	Girls	23	19	19
	Total	41	40	42
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (71)	67 (52)	70 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	14	21	22
	Girls	22	19	18
	Total	36	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	60 (65)	67(55)	67(72)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75(72)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	14
Black – other	10
Indian	35
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	12
Chinese	3
White	146
Any other minority ethnic group	42

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR–Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6
Average class size	24.6

#### **Education support staff: YR–Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	295

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	745355.00
Total expenditure	727837.00
Expenditure per pupil	1921.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	20598.00
Balance carried forward to next year	38116.00

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	344
Number of questionnaires returned	106

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	31	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	43	6	1	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	51	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	44	15	5	10
The teaching is good.	54	34	2	2	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	39	21	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	25	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	36	3	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	50	34	10	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	57	37	3	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	39	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	30	19	6	12

## **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**

55. Children enter the nursery at the age of three, and attend part-time for up to five terms. They transfer to the reception classes during the academic year in which they are five, starting in either the autumn or the spring term. A minority of children join the school at the reception stage, having had a variety of pre-school experience. Children enter the nursery with a very wide range of skills and experience. Overall, attainment on entry is broadly average except in speaking, where attainment is a little below average. Some children are very articulate and have a good general knowledge; others have limited experience and poor speaking skills. A number of children are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language.

56. Attainment on entry to the reception classes is broadly average this year. By the age of five, the majority of these children are likely to reach the expected standards in all areas of learning. The school's initial assessment scores reflect a very wide range of attainment, and show significant differences in attainment levels in different year groups.

57. The curriculum in the nursery and the reception classes is securely based on practical experiences, although reception children do not currently have adequate provision for outdoor play. The classes will soon be moving to an excellent new building, where all children will have access to a very good outdoor play area. Curricular links between the nursery and reception classes are not well developed, and a few parents expressed concern that their children were unprepared for the demands of the reception class curriculum. Children with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support. Those children for whom English is an additional language are also supported well to ensure that they participate fully in all activities.

### **Personal and social development**

58. Teaching in this area of learning is generally very good in both the nursery and reception classes. The development of good social and personal skills underpins all the work in the nursery. A few children find the transition from home to nursery quite difficult, and this is managed sensitively. Parents are encouraged to stay and support their children until they have settled. Most children quickly become used to the simple routines. They learn to choose activities, and become independent in personal skills such as putting on aprons and washing their hands after activities. The teacher and nursery nurses quietly, but firmly, guide children in learning how to share and to take turns. Behaviour is good, and disputes are rare, because the experienced staff are quick to intervene. By the time they are aged five, most children achieve the expected outcomes for this age. They play, work and usually co-operate confidently together. In the reception classes children are eager to undertake simple responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. Behaviour is good. Teachers are skilful in managing class sessions, and calmly help children to understand how to listen and to take turns to speak. All staff are consistent in reinforcing good behaviour through praise. Many reception children sustain concentration well, for example when painting. They try hard with their work and are motivated by the wide range of stimulating activities.



## **Language and literacy**

59. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall, but is stronger in the reception classes. Although there is a very wide range of attainment, the majority of children are likely to achieve the expected standard by the time they are five. In the nursery, children are encouraged to talk about their activities and they begin to use new vocabulary. Those children who are just beginning to speak English make good gains as they play alongside others. Staff are careful to emphasise key words, and to ensure that the children understand what they are doing. Children gain confidence in speaking and some talk readily about their activities. Although staff engage children well in conversations during some activities, at other times staff are too passive and opportunities for developing speaking skills are missed. Nursery children enjoy listening to stories. They happily share books together or with an adult, curled up in the cosy book corner. The teacher's evident enthusiasm for books is conveyed well to the children. Most children confidently join in familiar nursery rhymes and songs. They begin to recognise their own names as they file their completed work, and a few children write their names correctly. Children have good opportunities to begin to develop early writing skills. They use a range of pens to make marks and copy letters, and some children begin to recognise a few letters by shape and sound.

60. Most children in the reception classes speak confidently, and some are able to sustain a lively part in conversations. They sustain parts well in the 'doctor's surgery' and 'hospital' role-play areas. Staff speak clearly and set good examples of spoken English for the children. Early phonic skills are taught well, and children learn confidently because of the teachers' supportive approach, good questioning and clear explanations. Teachers have a good awareness of the different needs of individuals, and are careful to ensure that children new to reception are well supported. Children have good opportunities to read with the teacher, and many are supported well at home. Most recognise a few commonly used words, identify some letters and understand how books are organised. They write their own names, and a few children begin to write words independently. Teachers provide a good range of stimulating activities to promote learning. Children with special educational needs are supported well in the classrooms.

## **Mathematics**

61. Teaching in this aspect is good overall, and most children are likely to reach or exceed the expected standard by the time they are five. Children in the nursery have suitable practical opportunities to develop early skills in sorting and matching. They pour sand and water and increase their experience of capacity. They begin to count and to use numbers in their play. Although staff encourage some use of mathematical language, this aspect is insufficiently developed during play. In more formal group settings, children are taught to count and begin to gain some awareness of early subtraction as they sing counting songs such as 'Five currant buns'.

62. In the reception classes, children make good gains as a result of very clear, focused teaching. Many children count confidently to 20 and beyond. Some respond confidently to challenging questioning, knowing for example 'the number that is two more than 12'. Teachers match questions well to the different needs of pupils, supporting those who are still unsure of numbers within 10. Children show a growing awareness of higher numbers as they work with the teacher to order their front door numbers. They begin to develop strategies for solving practical problems, as they suggest different ways of measuring using their hands and feet. They use mathematical language confidently as they explain what a hand span is, using terms such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller'. Children begin to write numbers and record their work.

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

63. Learning in this aspect is good as children take part in a range of practical activities. Children in the nursery enjoy experimenting with corn flour and water and begin to describe what they feel. A few recall a celebration of Chinese New Year, when a parent visited to help prepare Chinese food. Nursery children have good opportunities to select materials independently and to develop skills of cutting, joining and building. They make good progress in developing early computer skills. One three year old quickly gained confidence in using the mouse because of prompt intervention by the teacher.

64. Activities in the reception classes are often exciting and stimulating. By the time children are five, attainment is generally in line with expectations. Children in one class were encouraged to develop listening skills, as they went on a 'listening walk' round the school wearing 'elephant ears'. They learn early skills of scientific investigation as they work on a very well organised activity, smelling and tasting different substances when blindfolded. They confidently describe what they notice, saying that vinegar tasted 'bitter' and 'like chips'. Computer skills are taught well during class lessons in the computer room and learning is good. Children confidently follow the teacher's instructions and are familiar with clicking on icons and the menu. They develop good early skills as they work in pairs to build up faces, moving features across the screen.

### **Creative development**

65. Teaching in this aspect is good. Children have good opportunities to explore different materials and to express their ideas. By the time they are five, most children achieve at least the expected standards. In the nursery, children are confident in painting independently. They begin to learn about mixing paint and printing as they dip toy lorries into paint and run them across the paper. Children choose materials, make models and decorate them with care. The nursery nurses promote imaginative play well as children use the sand and build with the wooden blocks. All children benefit from lessons with the specialist music teacher, and standards of singing are good. The children find the work very exciting, and most join in words and actions with enthusiasm.

66. In the reception classes, children build on the skills learned in the nursery. Many draw with care, and a few children work with sustained concentration as they create detailed pictures with pastels or with paint. They sustain their parts well in role-play as doctors or patients in the 'surgery' and 'hospital'. The role-play areas are imaginatively organised and are linked well with a visit by the nurse. As a result, the quality of children's response is good. No teaching of music was observed in the reception classes.

### **Physical development**

67. Teaching in this aspect is good in both the nursery and reception classes. By the time children are aged five, most achieve the expected standards. Children in the nursery have good opportunities to develop a range of skills through a good range of activities. They work with different tools and equipment as they make models and pictures, gaining confidence and accuracy as they cut with scissors, and use a variety of pens and brushes. They roll, mould and cut dough with increasing control. As they play with sand and water, they develop their co-ordination as they pour. In the small outdoor area children use wheeled toys with increasing skill. They climb, balance, slide and jump, showing developing confidence. Nursery staff encourage children to gain confidence and independence, but are alert to offer support where children feel insecure. In the reception classes children continue to develop their small motor skills through a good range of activities. Children continue to improve their accuracy in cutting with scissors and some children have good pencil control. The reception classes did not have access to a suitable outdoor play area until just after the inspection. Teaching in more formal physical education lessons is good. Children achieve well as they improve their skills in throwing and catching in a lively and well-managed lesson.

### **ENGLISH**

68. By the end of Key Stage 2, results of the national tests in 1999 showed pupils' attainment in English to be broadly similar to that found nationally, but above the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level was above the national average. The most recent national tests in 1999 showed pupils' attainment at Key Stage 1 to be similar to the national average in reading and writing. In comparison with schools having a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' results were well above average. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level was above the national average in reading and well above in writing.

69. The school has a very broad range of attainment on entry and significant number of pupils with English as an additional language. Comparisons between different cohorts are complicated by these factors and by the relatively high levels of special needs in some year groups. Results over time show marked variations, particularly for the boys, but an improving trend overall. When considering the results over a four-year period, the performance of girls and boys show marked variations, with a substantial improvement in the standards achieved by the girls in 1999, but a sharp decline recorded by the boys. The school explains this decline being due to the significant and unusual proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need and those needing the support of outside agencies in the cohort of pupils, mainly boys, which sat the tests last year.

70. Evidence gained from the inspection shows that attainment overall matches national expectations at the end of both key stages, with above average standards in speaking and listening at Key Stage 2. This represents an overall drop in standards at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection in 1997. The school has set high targets for this year's tests and pupils have just started to attend booster classes.

71. Pupils have many good opportunities across the curriculum to take part in discussions and to practise skills in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards match national expectations. A few pupils are confident fluent speakers with a good grasp of standard English. Almost half the pupils speak English as an additional language, and some have a limited vocabulary. All teachers speak clearly and offer good models of spoken English. Pupils are encouraged to extend and explain their answers. They gain confidence in doing this because teachers value all contributions and are sensitive to individual needs. Less fluent speakers are given time to order their thoughts and encouraged to answer. Teachers are skilful in summarising pupils' contributions and occasionally helping them rephrase their ideas. Pupils benefit from this strategy which helps them to reinforce their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are given good support and are encouraged to take a full and active part. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. Pupils listen carefully and contribute thoughtfully to discussions. Most speak confidently, explaining their views clearly, and taking account of other views and opinions.

72. Standards of attainment in reading are average by the end of both key stages. Pupils take books home from the reception class onwards, and many are given very positive support and encouragement. The pupils choose home reading books from the class libraries with little guidance from class teachers. For some pupils in Key Stage 1, this unstructured system gives rise to frustration when they choose a book that is too difficult. Overall, the teaching of reading in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, but there is some variation in the quality of teaching across the key stage. As a result, the rate of learning for some pupils is slower and they achieve less than the pupils in the parallel class. During a very good literacy lesson, pupils made good gains in reading clearly and with expression. The teacher, gently, but firmly, guided the class in recognising how to change expression and tone according to the requirements of the text. In an unsatisfactory lesson, pupils learned little because a phonic activity was undemanding for a few pupils, and too difficult for many. By the end of Year 2, the most fluent readers read accurately and with good expression. Most pupils begin to use simple dictionaries and reference books, and have a satisfactory range of skills, including phonics, for tackling new words. A few pupils need support in reading, either in prompting to use phonics or in developing recognition of key words. Pupils with special educational needs are supported in class with reading activities. The quality of this support varies. Pupils make little progress in activities which are too difficult. Pupils learnt well when supported by a classroom assistant because she adapted an activity to meet their needs.

73. In Key Stage 2, pupils are exposed to a wide range of literature, including older classics and very modern children's fiction. Texts for the literacy period are generally very well chosen and give a very good basis for focused teaching. Pupils learn to examine passages in depth. By the end of the key stage, standards are in line with expectations, with examples of high achievement. Most children read regularly and with good understanding. They discuss their reading confidently and refer to the text to support their opinions. Pupils with English as an additional language generally achieve well, but have not acquired the full range of

vocabulary required for understanding more complex texts. Less confident readers read more hesitantly, but usually employ phonic skills successfully to tackle unfamiliar words. Pupils with special educational needs have targets in reading identified on their individual education plans. Some of these targets are too general for achievement to be measured accurately. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop satisfactory research skills. The most fluent readers skim and scan text and retrieve information quickly. In Years 3 and 4, skills in retrieving information are not well developed.

74. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The development of independent writing is satisfactory and, by Year 2, most pupils write short stories, sequencing their ideas well. More fluent writers produce more complex sentences and gain a secure grasp of simple punctuation. Handwriting skills vary and there are examples of neat well-presented work in all year groups. Teachers set handwriting tasks at both key stages, but often worksheets are uncorrected. Some pupils form letters incorrectly even on the sheets, and others do not transfer their learning to other written work. In Key Stage 1, appropriate phonic skills are taught, and pupils identify words with similar spelling patterns. Spelling skills are developed further in Key Stage 2, but pupils do not always use their learning or check their work critically when writing independently. When studying texts, teachers consistently draw pupils' attention to vocabulary and challenge them to make adventurous choices in their writing. By Year 6, all pupils try hard to choose vocabulary for effect and many structure their writing well.

75. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully in almost all classes across the school. Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. There are good examples of written work in history, religious education, science and art. Teachers generally have a confident knowledge of English. Pupils benefit from clear explanations of grammar and punctuation. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, and good at Key Stage 2. There are examples of very good practice at both Key Stages. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, and little time is lost in organisation of the different aspects of the literacy period. Presentation is often lively and interesting, particularly at Key Stage 2, and pupils behave well and develop good attitudes to learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that teachers in some classes in Key Stage 1, and at the beginning of Key Stage 2, sometimes give the same work sheets to all pupils. In consequence, work is unchallenging for some pupils and too difficult for others.

76. English is competently managed by the experienced co-ordinator. Assessment procedures are good and target setting is usefully being developed for individuals in the classroom. Pupils are aware of their targets and refer to them as they work. Resources are satisfactory overall. A new library area has just been completed for pupils in Key Stage 1. The library for pupils in Key Stage 2 is too small for whole class use, but this is to be enlarged when the next stage of building has been completed. Pupils benefit from visits from authors and from working with the Young Shakespeare Company.

## MATHEMATICS

77. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils achieved standards that were below the national average. The proportion reaching standards above those expected for 11 year olds was close to the national average. Results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. The proportion of pupils who reached standards above those expected for seven-year-olds was well above the national average. When the results are compared to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they are average at Key Stage 2 and well above at Key Stage 1. The trends over time show marked variations, but an improving trend overall in both key stages, although the 1999 results show a marked decline in the standards achieved by boys. The school explains this decline as due to the significant proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need in the cohort of pupils which sat the national tests last year.

78. Evidence from the inspection shows that the majority of pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected standards by the end of both key stages. This picture is slightly different from that reported in the last inspection, when standards were judged to be average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2.

79. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding, and their levels of achievement are satisfactory. By Year 2, pupils work competently with numbers to 100. They count in twos and tens; mentally add and subtract numbers up to ten, and identify odd and even numbers. Most are beginning to understand tens and units. With the exception of the lower attainers, pupils use centimetre rulers, estimate and then measure selected items. The lowest attaining pupils measure without estimating. Most pupils identify two-dimensional shapes correctly and recognise simple symmetrical forms.

80. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in their ability to calculate mentally. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with the extra targeted support they receive in the classroom. Skills in the use of number work develop steadily from Year 3. By Year 5, pupils are familiar with the properties of different triangles, and tell the time using digital and analogue references. They produce line graphs and can interpret them. By Year 6, most pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and use this knowledge to solve problems. All pupils develop a good grasp of ordering and of identifying equivalent fractions. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards of work in all aspects of mathematics, and there are good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical understanding to solve problems. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their skills when working with shape and when collecting data, using frequency charts and recording their findings using charts and graphs. Information technology is beginning to be used well to promote learning in mathematics.

81. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall and it is good in Key Stage 2. Teaching is consistently good towards the end of this Key Stage, where pupils make good progress due largely to the challenging tasks and the extra support which matches the work closely to the needs of the different attainment groups. The unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 1 was noisy and the work did not stretch the higher attaining pupils. This seriously affected their pace of learning. A feature of the good and very good lessons is the ability of teachers to motivate pupils so that they have a desire to solve problems for themselves. A very good example of

this was seen in a Year 5 class where pupils sustained concentration and worked maturely, investigating a problem-solving task. These lessons are set at a brisk pace and this continues until the end. Teachers share the learning intention of the lesson with the pupils and return to it at the plenary to assess whether it has been achieved. In Year 3, pupils develop a sound understanding of tens and units and multiply numbers by 10 with confidence. Mathematical vocabulary and the pupils' knowledge of symbols, such as 'greater than' and 'less than', continue to develop appropriately. Pupils are eager to answer questions and their efforts are usually neatly recorded. Most respond very positively to mathematics lessons. Resources are used well to support learning. Teachers generally manage their classes well and relationships with the pupils are very well developed. The majority of teachers are good at teaching basic number skills and use the structure of the numeracy hour to deliver their lessons effectively.

82. While most teachers plan different work for the different attainment groups within their classes, a few do not. The lower attaining groups are generally well supported, but the higher attainers are not consistently challenged to ensure that they are not coasting.

83. The daily numeracy hour is well established. The framework is properly used to form the basis of teachers' planning, which is thorough and detailed. The co-ordinator, together with the headteacher, has been instrumental in introducing the Numeracy Strategy and in supporting teachers. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly against the key learning objectives. Standardised tests are given at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, and national tests are properly administered to pupils aged seven and 11. Assessment procedures are good and enable teachers to judge attainment effectively and to pass on accurate information to parents and to other teachers.

## **SCIENCE**

84. Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils achieved attainment levels which were below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching standards above those expected for pupils aged 11 matched the national average. When the results are compared to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they are average. Results over time show marked variations but an improving trend overall. When considering the results over a three year period to 1998, the performance of girls reflects the pattern of results achieved by boys. However, the 1999 results show a marked decline in the standards achieved by boys. The school explains this decline as due to the significant proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need, and of those needing the support of outside agencies, in the cohort of pupils which sat the tests last year. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils achieved attainment levels which were below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching standards above those expected for pupils aged seven are well above the national average.

85. In keeping with the findings from the previous report, evidence gained from the current inspection shows that, by the end of both key stages, standards in lessons and in other work around the school are at levels expected for pupils' ages. The difference between the performance of pupils in the most recent national tests and the current standards relates largely to the significant, and higher than usual, proportion of pupils in last year's cohort who had special educational needs requiring substantial levels of support. Currently, pupils, particularly those in Year 6, talk confidently about their work and are keen to show what they understand and can do. A particular strength of pupils' work is the good level of presentation, which includes examples of good procedures for recording their results and findings, and accurately labelled diagrams and illustrations.

86. By the age of seven, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, benefit from good opportunities to record from first hand observations. For example pupils in year two observed a good range of fruits which are grown in different parts of the world. In consequence, pupils are familiar with the different types of fruits and seeds, and understand how they are dispersed. In the lesson seen, pupils with special educational needs made good progress because they were well supported by an additional teacher and given tasks that were appropriate to their needs. The large majority of pupils understand about light and sound, and know that light comes from a variety of sources. Higher attaining pupils label the parts of the body with accuracy and successfully improve their understanding through interesting investigative work. Lower attainers do not record accurately and have difficulty using the scientific vocabulary in their writing.

87. Some aspects of pupils' learning benefit from good cross-curricular links with subjects such as physical education, design and technology and geography. These links reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding, enriching their learning, and they make good gains in their understanding throughout the school. In addition, pupils make good gains in their literacy skills when teachers focus on the use of scientific words, such as those used by pupils in Year 6 when considering food chains. By the age of 11, pupils have a broad understanding of science. Their mature attitude helps them to approach aspects of sex education in a meaningful way. Pupils understand about: materials and how they change, electrical circuits, floating and sinking, forces, magnetism, stretching and squeezing, and temperature changes. Pupils can predict, run a fair test and write it up. Much of their work is well presented and the large majority of pupils write up investigative procedures in an orderly way. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 developed a good understanding, through role play, of the relationship between plants and animals in a food chain. Pupils in Year 5 showed a sound understanding of the water cycle, and pupils in Year 4 undertook several interesting practical tasks to improve their understanding of the body and how it works.

88. The quality of pupils' learning reflects the good teaching seen in almost all lessons. Pupils made good progress because they were given interesting tasks which captured their interest. Pupils are encouraged to learn and use scientific vocabulary and they respond well when working in groups; they value each other's contributions. All but a few pupils take a pride in their work. The quality of teaching is good and almost half the small number of lessons seen were judged to be very good. Pupils have good attitudes to work and they make good gains in their knowledge and understanding especially during stimulating practical



lessons. A strength in teaching is in the management of pupils and the use of incisive questioning to make pupils think about science in every day life. The best teaching is dynamic, lively and underpinned by secure subject knowledge. Science lessons are well planned, with some differentiated tasks, and usually taught at a brisk pace which maintains pupils' interests. Pupils are known well by the teachers, and the good relationships enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

89. The subject is well organised and the newly-appointed co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject to raise standards further. The subject action plan provides the school with a clear set of goals. Planning is at a transitional stage because the school has begun to make use of new national guidance and assessment procedures will be strengthened further.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM**

90. In just a small number of subjects, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, although some conclusions are drawn from the few lessons and the scrutiny of previously completed work

### **ART**

91. By the end of both key stages, standards in art are above those found in other schools nationally. Expectations are high and learning is good because staff have good knowledge of the subject and clear learning objectives. Pupils achieve well, and they have a good understanding of their learning. By Year 2, pupils make very good gains in developing skills in using clay as they learn to roll clay to create tiles. Pupils look critically at their work by testing their colours, and they begin to use subject vocabulary confidently, and to refer to texture, pattern and line. Classroom displays show work of an above average standard, with some very good observational drawings of fruit by pupils in Year 1 and of plants by pupils in Year 2. Pupils have good opportunities to use a graphics program to produce artwork on the computer.

92. By Year 6, pupils' skills are extended well, and they learn to develop and improve their work over a number of weeks. Pupils develop good self-esteem and confidently evaluate their own and other pupils' work. In Year 4, pupils increase their understanding of colour and produce monochromatic paintings. Their work in drawing is linked effectively with history, and some pupils have confidently executed copies of Tudor portraits. Learning is good in Year 5. Pupils develop an abstract painting of an animal by working through a series of transitional stages. They work with sustained concentration and respond very well to the teachers' high expectations. Pupils understand the process, which is explained very clearly. All pupils are achieving well, and talented pupils are suitably challenged. Homework topics show that some pupils in Year 5 achieve a very high standard. As part of a well-developed series of lessons on line and shape, pupils in Year 6 listen to music and begin to develop a picture. They look at works by Delauney and Kandinsky and confidently discuss the artists' intentions. Most pupils develop a good subject vocabulary and all are able to participate and share ideas. The teacher values their comments and summarises very effectively to extend pupils' learning.

93. There has been good improvement in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. The teaching of skills and techniques is a significant strength at both key stages.

94. At both key stages, pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs have full access to the art curriculum. Pupils often work in groups, particularly on practical activities, and individuals are given a good level of attention. Demonstrations of skills and techniques are very good, and these help pupils understand the purpose of the lesson.

95. From Key Stage 1 onwards, pupils are encouraged to look at the works of major artists, and these are effectively linked with the skills being taught. Displays and photographs show that pupils have good opportunities to develop work in sculpture, fabrics and pottery. Pupils benefit from working in groups with two very experienced and skilled classroom assistants. The school makes very good use of small rooms for practical work. Resources are good and used well. Art makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. A project last year in celebration of 'Human Rights' offered pupils an excellent opportunity to work alongside artists from Kenya as well as artists from the local area. Pupils' work is attractively displayed and the school as a whole offers a stimulating environment for learning. The annual art exhibition is an excellent celebration of pupils' achievements as well as providing a useful addition to the art budget when works are sold.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

96. Standards in designing and making are appropriately developed by the end of both key stages. The subject is well integrated into other subjects and enhances other areas of the curriculum, such as history, science, and art. The quality of the inter-subject relationships is one of the school's strengths. In art, for example, pupils design and make picture frames, paying attention to detail and accuracy. By Year 2, pupils generate ideas by shaping, assembling and rearranging materials. For example, pupils in Year 1, made moving pictures with the effective use of sliders. By Year 6, pupils use a good range of materials, including ingredients which are used to make a wide range of different types of bread. In all cases, pupils design and plan before making, and the evaluating process is well emphasised. Standards are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Pupils are proud of what they achieve and are pleased to discuss their finished products.

97. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. The provision for design and technology and the quality of pupils' learning benefit significantly from the support given by two knowledgeable classroom assistants. The richness of the curriculum is seen in the subject's close integration with the high quality art work. At both key stages, pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. In consequence, all pupils' designing and making skills are appropriately developed over time. They enjoy the subject and they responded well in the one lesson. They take care with their work and that of others which is on display.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

98. Standards achieved by pupils in geography are similar to those expected for their age. By Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the local environment, and they make comparisons with a contrasting environment when they compare life in Ghana with that in England. The quality of pupils' learning is enriched significantly when they share the experiences of pupils who have lived in Africa. Pupils develop a good understanding of the climate and the environment in contrasting places. They are familiar with locating places on the globe and on the world map. By Year 6, pupils extend their knowledge of the local environment through field work activities. For example, pupils in Year 5 designed a questionnaire and used it to interview local shop keepers to gain their views about a local issue. In preparation for the study of rivers, pupils in Year 6 investigated a brook near to the school. The practical work involved measuring its depth and width at different localities, and finding its source and direction of flow. This valuable project extended the pupils' vocabulary and they were able to use with confidence such words as meander, erosion, mouth and deposition. Pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge and understanding as progress through the school. By the time pupils leave school their skills of geographical investigation are well established and they have a sound knowledge of places. Pupils also develop aspects of citizenship and concern for environmental issues.

99. Since the time of the last inspection, the presentation of work has considerably improved, and the recently-introduced assessment and record keeping procedures are successfully linked to national guidance. In addition, the quality of pupils' learning is enhanced through cross-curricular links with the National Literacy Strategy, with the use of texts on Ghana, and through links with religious education by studying the geography of countries where Buddhism is the main religion. This area of study provides a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

100. Pupils in Key Stage 1 successfully acquire skills of map reading and interpretation from their drawings of their routes to and from school. They gain new knowledge of places by using atlases and globes to locate places studied, and the place of origin of postcards sent to Bernard Bear from many places abroad. By the time pupils leave school they have developed sound investigative skills in physical geography through their study of the local stream. Pupils make effective use of information technology to support their work. For example, pupils use information from CD ROMs to extend their knowledge of geographical features and to create spread sheets to record their findings.

101. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has a clear vision for the development of geography. Information from assessment procedures is used to help with planning.

## **HISTORY**

102. Standards achieved by pupils in history are similar to those expected for their age. By Year 2, pupils develop a sense of chronology and they become familiar with time lines and sequence events in order of occurrence. Pupils are familiar with the lives of famous people from the past who have contributed significantly to the present, such as Florence Nightingale. They begin to value eyewitness accounts as historical sources, and to empathise with families caught up in tragic circumstances. By Year 6, pupils have detailed knowledge of the Roman invasion of Britain and its contribution to the present day landscape. They expand their knowledge of the Tudors with particular reference to Henry VIII and his influence on English social life, especially religion. Pupils empathise with the plight of the Jarrow Marchers in their study of conditions in the 1930s, and extend their knowledge of social conditions resulting from unemployment, the dole, means testing, and the depression.

103. The school has made good improvements to the teaching and learning in history. It has successfully implemented national guidance; schemes of work have been introduced, and assessment records are maintained for each pupil. The use of information technology has been expanded and pupils now use a variety of software to extend their study of history. New artefacts have been acquired and are used effectively to extend learning.

104. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall in the small number of lessons seen. Good teaching was seen in Key Stage 2. Pupils' learning is enhanced when the teaching is underpinned by good subject knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 6 rose to the challenge and extended their knowledge when asked searching questions about the 1930's. Pupils maintained their interest because of the brisk pace. In another lesson, effective use of good resources extended the pupils' appreciation of other subjects, by linking the paintings of LS Lowry with their history topic.

105. The subject is effectively managed by a co-ordinator who is committed to raising standards through monitoring and giving guidance to colleagues. Good links have been established with other subjects, such as English, where pupils make effective use of Victorian photographs to help them with their extended writing. The school makes good use of visits to places of historical interest, such as the Museum of London and the Imperial War Museum.

106. The curriculum is enriched further through a residential field trip which gives pupils in Year 6 a good opportunity to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Battle of Hastings. Pupils also benefit from visitors from the Actors Guild, who demonstrate the skills of a Tudor doctor with implements from the past, and an Egyptian who helps with the understanding of Ancient Greece.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

107. Standards in information technology are similar to those found nationally by the end of both key stages. By Year 2, pupils develop sound word-processing skills and they can explain their work. Across the school, pupils' skills in information technology are used very well to promote other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils' confident word-processing skills were used to improve grammar in their writing, and an art program was used to help in designing. Throughout the school, pupils develop their skills systematically and, with the regular focused support by the subject specialist, they are beginning to achieve well. For example, pupils in Year 3, can confidently create a box around the text to illustrate their

picture . In Year 4, good links between information technology and mathematics help pupils to organise data, which they have previously collected, create graphs, and then write facts about their graphs. By Year 6, pupils confidently enter information onto spreadsheets, which they have previously collected on a visit to the local supermarket. They have sound basic skills in logging on and off the computer, using relevant menus and icons to access programs, and responding to instructions that appear on the screens. They also develop multimedia presentations about the human body, which are carefully linked to their science topic.

108. The school has successfully addressed the key issue and weaknesses raised in the previous report. It has made very good progress in implementing the National Curriculum, raising standards, and improving assessment procedures. Pupils now benefit from regular focused teaching in the well-resourced information technology suite which has recently been installed. The school makes good use of national guidance, and the school is meeting the requirements in its curricular provisions.

109. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although good teaching was observed in both key stages. Demonstrations are used well to help pupils understand the tasks. Teachers work effectively with classroom assistants and ensure that pupils receive clear guidance, and that those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have good support. Relationships are very good and pupils work co-operatively and share resources well. Adults interact well with pupils, and this enables the pupils to gain confidence as they develop their skills.

## **MUSIC**

110. Standards of attainment in music in both key stages are above what is expected for pupils of similar age nationally. Music is a strength and parents speak highly of its contribution to the life of the school. Pupils take a pride in performing to an audience and are enthusiastic in preparing for concerts given at various times in the year, to parents and other guests. Above average standards are also achieved by pupils who benefit from individual instrumental tuition.

111. By Year 2, pupils successfully recognise different types of sounds through musical games, using percussion instruments to maintain rhythm. They competently practise pitch changes during singing practice, as demonstrated during choir practice. Pupils add accompaniments to songs using a variety of percussion instruments as was seen during a class assembly which celebrated the Chinese New Year. Pupils use clear expression, convey mood and meaning and examine how instruments are used to portray what the composer intends, when studying the ‘Carnival of the Animals’.

112. Pupils make good progress in lessons and they achieve well in their performances throughout the school. Pupils work hard to improve their performance and, by Year 6, they sing competently using two parts, whilst maintaining pitch and harmony. Pupils express moods clearly, for example when performing ‘The Sheriff’s Song’, and feelings through rhythm and articulation when performing the Tango. They perform diction and

characterisation when singing 'The Fat Friar', and convey the changing moods reflected in the composition. Pupils develop confidence in their ability to appraise music and can explain reasons for their judgements, when studying 'The William Tell Overture'. They recognise the use of different instruments of the orchestra when listening to 'Fanfare for the common Man', and contrast and compare the original composition with that of Emerson Lake and Palmer.

113. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to address an imbalance in the music curriculum, and it acknowledges the need to focus further on composition. The subject is very effectively managed by an enthusiastic and committed music specialist who ensures that the subject is given a high profile in the school. She teaches the subject throughout the school, and pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well in both key stages. The very good teaching is underpinned by subject expertise. Pupils benefit substantially from effective teaching which is lively, dynamic, well paced, and full of challenging tasks. Pupils' interests are captured by a good range of teaching methods which engage them in demanding and practical work. Questions are used well to improve pupils' levels of understanding and their contributions are valued; this strategy helps their self esteem and improves their confidence. Pupils are responsive and approach the subject with a sense of enjoyment and a willingness to succeed. In consequence, pupils perform at levels which are above average in lessons and during performances. The school engages specialist tutors to teach brass and woodwind instruments, violin and cello to a significant proportion of pupils; these too achieve good standards. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to improve their levels of performance. For example, the school organises several music clubs which are well attended, Christmas and Spring shows, and a Summer music festival.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. By the end of both key stages, standards in physical education, including swimming, gymnastics and games skills, are similar to those in other schools. Standards in dance are higher than average. Pupils in Year 6 responded creatively to the theme of 'City Life' and interpreted the music particularly well. Pupils' confidence in the dance/drama lesson reflects the school's focus on developing pupils' self esteem through performances and cross-curricular opportunities. By Year 2, pupils are confident and imaginative when interpreting the music during dance/drama. They respond particularly well when given a clear set of objectives, and when they are given opportunities to evaluate their own performances, and those of others. In gymnastics, pupils work well on their own and also collaborate effectively. A small number of pupils in Year 1 held some good balances but were not given enough opportunities to develop their work. Pupils use the gymnastics equipment safely. By Year 6, pupils move with confidence and work collaboratively in order to achieve good levels of performance during dance and games lessons. Pupils are better at expressing themselves through free movement than they are at performing conventional gymnastics movements, such as those seen during a gymnastics lesson in Year 5. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to plan and evaluate their work, though they are not given enough guidance on how to refine and improve the movements. Pupils in Year 6 passed the ball with appropriate pace and accuracy during netball, and they have a clear understanding of the game's principles. These skills were reinforced effectively during extra-curricular activities, which give pupils good opportunities to raise their levels of achievement. These standards are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.

115. The quality of teaching and learning was judged to be good overall, although one of the lessons seen was unsatisfactory. Overall, pupils have a mature approach to physical education. They benefit significantly from teaching that is well paced and includes a very good use of incisive questioning to extend their thinking. Pupils make good progress when the teachers use their subject knowledge to guide and reinforce the development of skills. They make very good progress when knowledge and understanding are reinforced by the teacher through skilful linking with other subjects. In most lessons, appropriate planning and sound knowledge led to an effective use of demonstrations to explain what pupils are expected to achieve. The unsatisfactory lesson lacked pace and included few teaching points. In consequence, the quality of pupils' learning was impeded, and they made unsatisfactory progress because they were not given enough time to practise and improve their skills. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are challenged by most of the practical activities, though higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched.

116. Subject documentation, which contains examples of good guidance, will be reviewed when national guidance becomes available. The school has recognised the need to address the weaknesses in the subject's assessment procedures. The school makes good use of outside agencies to enrich the curriculum further, and it provides pupils with a sound range of learning experiences during extra-curricular activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

117. By the end of both key stages, the standards achieved by pupils match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. By Year 2, pupils understand the importance of the main Christian and Hindu festivals and they know the story of the origin of the Chinese calendar. Pupils identify relationships, such as caring for young persons and things, having friends and neighbours and sharing with others. They also recognise sequences of events as part of the wonders of nature, and the significance of light in religious teachings. By Year 6, pupils know the origins of Judaism, and understand the importance of major figures, such as Abraham and Moses. Pupils are familiar with the customs and practices of the Jews including the celebration of the Sabbath. They know the links between Christianity and Judaism. Pupils know the main aspects of the life of Christ. They are familiar with the beliefs and practices of Buddhism and examine how the teachings of Buddha affect the life of his followers.

118. Standards are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Resources have been improved to support the teaching, which was judged to be good in the small number of lessons seen during the inspection. Pupils' learning benefits significantly from effective teaching which is underpinned by good subject knowledge. Searching questions are used particularly well to challenge pupils' thinking and reinforce their learning. Class management is good and pupils respond well by working hard and keeping to task. In consequence, they made good progress in the lessons seen and met the learning objectives. The teachers' high expectations and rapid pace successfully held the pupils' interest.

119. The subject is efficiently managed by a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who is continually reviewing the curriculum. This is enhanced by visits to places of religious interest and significance, which include a Synagogue, a Gurdwara, and a Reformed Church. Pupils' learning is enriched further by visits to the school by a rabbi and a vicar.