

INSPECTION REPORT

IVER HEATH JUNIOR SCHOOL

IVER HEATH

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110279

Headteacher: Ms V Canter

Reporting inspector: Ms G Tomes
25366

Dates of inspection: 8th-12th May 2000

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Margaret's Close Iver Heath Bucks
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Mowat
Date of previous inspection:	10 th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Glynis Tomes	Registered inspector	Design and technology Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Sally Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jerry Royle	Team inspector	Science Art Music Equal opportunities	The effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' performance
Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Physical education English as an additional language	
Stephen Hopkins	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Paul Roberts	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Iver Heath Junior School is larger than most schools of this type, with 304 pupils aged 7-11 organised into 12 classes. In September 1998, the school changed from a middle school to its present junior school status and the department for children with moderate learning difficulties was fully replaced in 1999 with a department for language disorders. Children are admitted into the school in Year 3. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds. The local area is generally a mixed area, with both affluent and social housing and about 21 per cent of pupils are bussed by the local authority from the George Green area on the edge of Slough. The eleven language department pupils come from a much wider area. The socio-economic mix is above average, although attainment on entry is average. An above-average proportion of pupils, 30 per cent, is identified with special educational needs for learning difficulties and 5 per cent have statements. Both these proportions have increased since the last inspection. A below-average proportion, 4 per cent of pupils, is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is 1.4 per cent and higher than most schools but nearly all are at the higher stages of language acquisition. A small number of settled travellers are also on roll.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring, well-organised school. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and the good partnership with parents contributes to the good provision for their personal development. By the time pupils leave school, results in English tests are above average and standards in mathematics and science are rising. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection with some very good features. The headteacher and senior staff exercise strong leadership and support the many newly-appointed teachers effectively. There are clear plans for school improvement in order to raise standards further. The strengths outweigh the weaknesses and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Results of National Curriculum tests for English are above average. Pupils are given good opportunities for extending their speaking and listening skills, writing and reading skills.
- The good range of extra-curricular activities and involvement of the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning experiences.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is good and contributes to their very good behaviour.
- Parents are effectively involved in the work of the school and in pupils' learning.
- Provision and teaching in the language department are very good and promote pupils' very good progress.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide strong and purposeful leadership and have clear priorities. The many recent changes in teaching staff have been absorbed smoothly, to the benefit of the school.

What could be improved

- The overall consistency of teachers' daily lesson plans and day-to-day assessment.
- The system for monitoring teaching and learning.
- The way spending decisions are linked to priorities for school development.
- Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology and all statutory requirements for the subject to be fully met.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1997, there has been a constructive response to the action points and the school has continued to improve. National test results overall have risen in line with the national trend. The curriculum framework is better structured and promotes pupils' step by step progress as they move through the school. There has been good improvement in aspects of school management, such as, the role of the subject co-ordinator, which is more focused and in the monitoring of teaching and learning. Due to significant staff changes during this period, co-ordinators are not yet fully involved in monitoring teaching standards and the monitoring programme is insufficiently structured. There has been good improvement in the overall quality of teaching, which is no longer a weakness. Standards have improved in mathematics and science, although there is some inconsistency in the quality of teachers' daily plans and daily assessments. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good.

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	C	C	B	C	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	C	E	E	
science	B	B	D	E	

In 1999, test results for mathematics and science did not keep pace with the rise in English results or the rise in national results. However, over time, test results overall have improved in line with the national trend. Currently, standards in English and science are above average. This represents an improvement on the 1999 results and reflects the better curriculum for science. Standards in the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books for mathematics show standards to be average. Test results for mathematics are lagging behind the good effects of the national numeracy strategy on standards. There are strengths in pupils' speaking and listening, writing and reading skills but some minor weaknesses in their ability to solve mathematical problems due to previous deficits in the mathematics curriculum for this particular Year 6 group. Standards in information technology are below those expected for pupils' ages because the National Curriculum requirements are not being met. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the school has set sufficiently challenging targets aimed at raising standards further.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good, pupils are enthusiastic about lessons, concentrate well and enjoy extra-curricular activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons and in the playground. Behaviour in collective worship is exemplary.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very good relationships with each other. There is good racial harmony. Pupils are very polite and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are in line with the national average and unauthorised absence is less than other schools. Punctuality is very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features in several lessons. During the inspection, over nine out of ten lessons were satisfactory or better; over five out of ten were good or better and nearly two out of ten were very good. Evidence from pupils' prior work confirms that there has been good improvement since the last inspection, which found 35% of lessons to be unsatisfactory and teaching overall to be a serious weakness. Pupils' learning needs are met more accurately now they are taught in sets based on their prior attainment for literacy and numeracy. Most lessons follow a similar structure, which increases the opportunities for interaction and enables teachers to frequently check that pupils understand and that the work is pitched at the right level. In a few weaker lessons, however, there were unclear learning objectives and insufficient assessment of what pupils knew and could already do. Overall, the teaching for literacy is good and for numeracy it is sound with many good features. In all classes, teachers manage pupils effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is mainly broad and balanced but National Curriculum requirements for information technology are not met. A good range of extra-curricular activities, visits, visitors and residential trips make a good contribution and enrich pupils' experiences, although there is insufficient use of reference materials. Overall, planning for the curriculum fits effectively within a tightly managed working week.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans have appropriate targets and pupils are supported well by additional help.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are well integrated into the school community. Appropriate individual targets are set for the pupils and progress towards targets is tracked on a regular basis.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school's climate of good relationships and positive ethos contributes much for these areas of development. Staff provide good role models.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides appropriate care and pays due regard to health and safety and child protection. The school rewards good behaviour and good attendance. There is a clear behaviour policy and bullying is dealt with swiftly. Pupils' attainment in test results is carefully tracked and monitored.

The school has good links with parents. Parents were consulted on the content of pupils' annual reports, resulting in much improved information to parents about how their children can improve their work and make better progress. The school invites parents to helpful information sessions on topics such as the numeracy strategy and forthcoming residential visits. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. The parent teacher association and governors also make significant contributions to the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the	The headteacher has managed the big staff changes well and has quickly built an effective team of teachers. The headteacher and curriculum co-

headteacher and other key staff	ordinators have good plans to continue to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed and provides good support for the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Assessment information is analysed well, which enables the school to set appropriate targets and improve the curriculum. Teachers' lesson planning and some lessons are monitored to help improve standards. The school has a clear view of what it should do to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Teachers match the demands of the curriculum well and support staff work effectively with pupils. Learning resources for information and communication technology are unsatisfactory and pupils do not use reference or information texts sufficiently. Other resources are soundly used. Financial planning is generally sound but does not always drive school development initiatives. The school applies the principles of best value in its spending.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Pupils behave well and make good progress in their learning. • A high proportion of parents considers that teaching is good and that teachers have high expectations. • School helps pupils become mature and responsible. • The school is approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents consider there is too much homework and others consider there is too little.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views about the school. Pupils like school and behave well. Most express enjoyment of school. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now sound, with good features. The school encourages pupils to be responsible and the school is very approachable. Homework is generally suitable for pupils' ages.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the end of key stage assessment tests in 1999, results for English were above average. For mathematics, results were well below average and for science, below average. Compared to similar schools, pupils' performance was average for English and well below average for mathematics and science. In 1999, results for English were better than in previous years, although pupils did not perform as well in mathematics and science. Taking the three subjects together, pupils' overall performance in the 1999 tests was average. Since 1996, there have been dips in pupils' attainment in mathematics and science, but overall, pupils' results in these tests have improved in line with the national trend. At the time of these tests, a few pupils missed the mathematics and science tests due to a contagious illness within the school. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in English and science and average standards for mathematics.
2. In all three subjects, standards have continued to improve since the 1999 tests. Samples of pupils' work completed during the current year and achievement in lessons observed during the inspection indicate pupils' overall satisfactory achievement. Standards in the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books, for mathematics, show standards to be average. Test results for mathematics are lagging behind the good effects of the national numeracy strategy. Standards in mathematics have risen because pupils have more opportunity for developing mental strategies, but there are still some minor weaknesses in solving mathematical problems due to previous deficits in the mathematics curriculum for the current Year 6. In science, pupils are completing more investigative and experimental activities, which are helping to raise the standard of their work. The literacy and numeracy strategies are now fully in place and the new science curriculum has been implemented. The quality of teaching has also improved and these aspects have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Pupils in Year 6 made particularly good, and sometimes very good progress in their learning, as a result of good teaching, during the course of the inspection.
3. Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with attainment that is, on balance, average. Recent Key Stage 1 test results show a small proportion attain above average scores, but with the majority attaining below average results. An above average proportion of pupils is identified as having special educational needs and pupils who attend the department for special educational needs take part in all national curriculum assessments. Due to the school's change of status from a middle school to a junior school, the current Year 5 and 6 classes joined the school in Year 4. The school has set, and recently revised, realistic, suitably challenging targets for attainment in future end of key stage tests, based on a good knowledge of pupils' previous attainment and the characteristics of each year group.
4. Teachers have been effective in analysing previous end of Key Stage 2 assessment results and using the information to plan and adapt pupils' work. For example, teachers have taken care to ensure there are no gaps in pupils' knowledge of National Curriculum expectations for science. This has helped raise standards in the subject. However, teachers' daily planning does not always provide suitably challenging work for pupils of all levels of prior attainment. Girls and boys attain similar standards in all of their work and there is no significant difference in achievements. Most pupils who

Speak English as an additional language are at the higher stages of English acquisition and achieve standards commensurate with peers, although a few are less confident in taking part in class discussions. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Targets on their individual education plans are relevant and used appropriately by teachers when organising groups for additional focused support. Two pupils have individual education plans to support their high achievement, which supports their progress appropriately.

5. Pupils' attainment has become more consistent across the core subjects. By the age of eleven, pupils currently achieve similar above-average standards for English and science and average standards for mathematics. Pupils study a good variety and range of writing styles, which helps them understand new texts more easily. Literacy skills are used and developed well through work in all areas of the curriculum. Specialist vocabulary is promoted effectively by teachers in science and mathematics lessons and this encourages pupils to use words precisely when explaining their work. Speaking and listening skills are particularly enhanced during personal and social sessions and team meetings. However, reference books and CD-ROMs are generally used insufficiently.
6. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. They cover large quantities of work in a well-organised systematic way. Explaining and discussing their work, such as how to measure a range of angles accurately with a protractor, helps pupils make good progress in their use of mathematical vocabulary. Progress in mental arithmetic is good and confidence in these skills is helping pupils with other aspects of mathematics. A minor weakness is the lack of real-life problem solving activities. In science, pupils' good knowledge is acquired and consolidated through relevant and interesting practical investigations. A strength is pupils' understanding of investigative science and their ability to predict and then later explain what they have discovered. Numeracy skills are used appropriately in other subjects to practise and extend new learning. Pupils regularly collect data and measuring skills are extended in science and geography.
7. Throughout the key stage, standards in information technology are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Although many pupils show well-developed keyboard skills, there are insufficient opportunities to use the computer to support work in other subjects and there is less evidence of word-processed writing and control work than might be expected from pupils of this age. Resources are currently poor and those that exist are under-used. The school has identified this area as a priority for development.
8. Achievement in religious education is in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in their understanding of bible stories, stories from other religions and in their knowledge of significant religious festivals and artefacts from world religions. Pupils have studied a range of religious art, rituals and sacred books and have developing understanding that religion can be a way of life. Achievement in the work seen for art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is broadly in line with that expected for pupils' ages. In art, pupils soundly develop a range of skills leading to some individual work of a high standard. For design and technology, pupils build upon their design and evaluation skills from year to year.

9. In geography, pupils have considered the influence of human factors on the world from their comparisons with a village in India and this country. A good variety of field trips provides a meaningful context for learning mapping skills. Pupils make sound progress in history, learning to gather and use a range of evidence. In physical education, there are clear strengths in games and swimming and a good variety of extra-curricular clubs enhance the curriculum. In music, pupils sing tunefully and with good rhythm. They have regular opportunities to learn new songs, listen to a range of music and compose and perform their own compositions. The overall sound attainment and achievement observed during this inspection is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection, although standards in information technology were reported as being higher in 1997.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, and have improved since the previous inspection when they were good. The vast majority of pupils are enthusiastic about school and this has a positive impact on standards of attainment and their achievement. Pupils listened carefully to the teachers' instructions and answered questions keenly during a Year 6 lesson about making an emergency call. They quickly formed pairs and enjoyed developing a role-play. Year 4 pupils helped each other automatically in a mathematics lesson, without copying each other's work. This is typical of the way most settled quickly to their work and concentrated well on the tasks they had been given. In over nine out of ten lessons observed, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged to be good or better and very good in nearly half. Parents are impressed by pupils' behaviour and good manners.
11. Pupils understand that the teachers have high expectations of behaviour and respond well to the system of rewards. Sanctions are rarely needed. Behaviour in collective worship is exemplary, and this helps to create a suitable atmosphere for worship and reflection. Pupils are trustworthy and show respect for property. There were no exclusions last year. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils socialise maturely at lunchtime and during breaks and establish good relationships with adults working in school. They are polite and courteous to visitors and talk to them with confidence. Pupils' personal development is good. They are keen to take responsibility and enjoy helping in the classrooms and around the school. At house meetings, pupils make decisions about sports days and fund-raising events. Pupils of all ages benefit from educational visits and learn social skills such as teamwork. Many pupils take part enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, although, during the week of the inspection, very few boys attended after-school activities such as choir and performance club. There is good racial harmony and pupils show respect for other beliefs and cultures. Year 3 pupils showed great sensitivity when handling the Qu'ran, and understood its significance as a sacred book.
12. Attendance is generally good, and has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The attendance rate of 94 per cent is broadly in line with the national average and the unauthorised absence rate of 0.3 per cent is below that found in similar schools. Nearly all parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time, and the school day starts promptly. Pupils' attendance rate and punctuality have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features in several lessons. During the inspection, over nine out of ten lessons were satisfactory or better, over five out of ten were good or better and nearly two out of ten were very good. Evidence from pupils' prior work confirms that teaching has recently improved. Good efforts are being made to overcome previous weaknesses in teaching, which have led to pupils' unsatisfactory achievement and below-average standards in mathematics and science during the previous academic year. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, which found 35 per cent of lessons to be unsatisfactory and teaching overall to be a serious weakness.
14. Improvements have been made in increasing the consistency, pace and challenge of teaching for all pupils through better planning and grouping arrangements. Pupils learning needs are met more accurately now they are taught in sets for literacy and numeracy based on their prior attainment. Most lessons follow a similar structure, with agreed times for an introduction, for working on tasks and for a closing plenary. This increases the opportunities for interaction and enables teachers to frequently check that pupils understand and that the work is pitched at the right level. Most teachers continually make assessments during lessons and adapt their questioning and future lessons accordingly. In a few weaker lessons, however, there was insufficient assessment of what pupils knew and could already do. For example, in a Year 4 numeracy lesson, work was not matched appropriately to pupils' prior achievement and the mathematical problems set were too easy. There has been a good response to the previous key issue in providing a range of investigative work in geography and science and in the teaching of art, which has led to better standards of work.
15. Overall, the teaching for literacy is good and for numeracy it is sound with many good features. Most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and teach basic skills soundly. There are, however, particular strengths in several classes. In a very good Year 6 literacy lesson, the teachers' clear and focused questioning very effectively helped pupils to explain features of good writing. These responses were then elaborated to demonstrate to pupils how they could incorporate these linguistic aspects in their own work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding was developed very effectively. Pupils made very good progress in a Year 6 mathematics lesson because very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject enabled the teacher to inspire and motivate pupils to achieve high standards. Pupils were encouraged to recapitulate their findings and explain their working methods clearly. This helped to consolidate all new work effectively. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, very good lesson planning, devised as key questions, enabled the teacher to gradually unfold the new learning and constantly reinforce the objectives for the lesson. The teacher drew on lots of examples, reference to previous work and interesting resources to illustrate the new ideas about report writing. This promoted pupils' very good interest, concentration and independence and they made rapid gains in their understanding.
16. There are good arrangements for planning in year groups, which gives good support to all teachers, especially those new to the school, by the sharing of expertise and ideas. This is helping to address inconsistencies and raising teachers' expectations. In a few lessons, however, teachers pitched the lesson at an unchallenging level and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. Sometimes, the work was too easy but more often this was because the initial discussion was too brief and not searching enough to develop pupils' new learning and ideas. This was generally because learning objectives were not crisp enough, as in a literacy lesson, when pupils did not understand fully how to adapt the ending for their story to best effect and time was

wasted. In several information technology lessons, unclear learning objectives, coupled with inadequate resources led to work which was too easy. Overall, teachers' day-to-day planning has improved since the last inspection but there are still some inconsistencies.

17. In all classes, teachers manage pupils effectively and use a range of appropriate methods to present work to pupils. A very carefully structured Year 5 numeracy lesson made good use of resources to introduce the task and to consolidate pupils' developing concepts. This enabled pupils to build their knowledge and understanding, drawing and measuring angles in a methodical way. A very well-managed physical education lesson in Year 6 encouraged pupils to improve their performance and also promoted co-operation and team spirit. The teacher clearly established the rules for the lesson, set targets for pupils to achieve, and encouraged their self-assessment. Teaching points were made throughout and correct vocabulary was promoted. Pupils' skills were increased in an enjoyable and relaxed lesson.
18. The constructive and effective help from learning support assistants, including those assigned to pupils with special educational needs makes a good contribution to pupils' progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also supported to ensure they understand lessons. Information technology and non-fiction books, however, are used insufficiently to extend learning across other subjects. Appropriate homework is set and completed regularly. Relevant tasks support work in reading, spelling, mathematics and writing effectively and also help parents check what their child is achieving. Parents are very positive about the standard of teaching and have noticed the recent improvements.

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

19. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its curricular strengths and made satisfactory improvements. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched through extra-curricular activities and contacts with the community. Each subject is taught separately, with good links between subjects to provide coherence across the curriculum. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory and sex education and drugs awareness are taught in line with agreed policies. Religious education follows the local Agreed Syllabus and pupils benefit from French lessons. The curriculum is planned effectively and now constitutes a coherent framework, with schemes of work for all subjects. This fits well into a tightly managed school week. The statutory requirements for the curriculum are not being fully met, however, because the school is not teaching all the necessary elements of information and communication technology and this is unsatisfactory.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their learning needs are addressed through targets on their individual education plans and they are effectively supported, through additional help, to have access to National Curriculum work. All pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, have full access to the curriculum. Grouping pupils by ability for literacy and numeracy is having beneficial effects on their achievement and is helping to address the needs of higher attainers more effectively. However, the limited opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in using information books and information technology are weaknesses. Opportunities for practical and investigative work in geography and science have improved but problem solving remains a weaker element in mathematics.
21. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities continues to be a strength. Pupils

also receive football and tennis coaching from organisations such as Chelsea Football Club and the local Lawn Tennis Club and instrumental music tuition is available from peripatetic teachers. Governors and parents work with pupils in food technology, literacy and numeracy. Community activities such as visits to the local church, involvement from the vicar, links with a local synagogue and geography and history field trips provide relevant and meaningful practical experiences. Pupils have the opportunity to perform for parents in an annual production and the choir performs for local audiences. Good relationships and effective liaison with other local schools, including those with units for pupils with special educational needs, help pupils transfer between schools smoothly.

22. The positive ethos and good relationships have a significant impact on pupils' personal development. There is good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered during religious education, although this aspect of pupils' development is not sufficiently planned for or addressed within all subjects. Pupils are not only taught how to behave but also how to make decisions about what is right and wrong. More important than their good response to the school's behaviour policy is their ability to make their own decisions about how to behave. This is seen in courtesies such as opening and holding doors for others and in pupils behaving sensibly when not directly supervised. Pupils value the opportunity they have been given to be involved in devising the school code and the range of positive motivators such as house points and public displays in assembly of praise and congratulation. They are presented with moral messages in assemblies and by the role modelling of teachers.
23. Pupils are expected to show respect for others and to share ideas and equipment, and they do this well. Emphasis is placed on listening skills during discussion, so that pupils learn to accept the right of others to be heard and to express personal views. Opportunities are provided for older pupils to take responsibility around the school and to be involved in decision-making. Pupils have raised money for local and national charities. Such involvement is effective in developing pupils' understanding of living in a community. Throughout the school, pupils are given a range of responsibilities in their own classrooms. Parents value the emphasis placed on citizenship and 92 per cent of those responding to the parent questionnaire consider that the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.
24. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils have the opportunity to visit art galleries and to study appropriately selected texts in literacy. They listen to a wide range of music in assemblies, study African art and learn about a range of religious traditions. These activities in lessons, assembly and in extra-curricular clubs, help pupils understand and appreciate the richness of their own and other cultural traditions. The school staff share their own cultural and religious backgrounds, which has a positive impact on pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The school provides appropriate educational and personal support and guidance for its pupils, and pupils feel happy and safe. Pupils say that they can talk to their teachers if they have any personal worries. Lunchtime supervision is well managed. After school, staff ensure that pupils are safely escorted to the coach and taxis. Arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Staff follow up unexplained absences and there are good links with the educational welfare officer. Certificates for good attendance encourage pupils to attend regularly and

procedures to encourage good punctuality are effective.

26. Satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are in place. Pupils with special educational needs are identified speedily and set appropriate targets. These are reviewed regularly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive satisfactory support. Personal achievements are encouraged and celebrated and teachers make comments regarding pupils' personal development on annual reports to parents.
27. Satisfactory procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are in place. Good arrangements for child protection include a clear child protection policy and basic awareness training for staff. The head teacher carries out the duties of the designated child protection officer effectively. Arrangements for first aid are generally satisfactory. The medical room is well equipped, and pupils who are ill or injured receive appropriate care and attention. The safety issue in design technology raised in the last report has been addressed, and no unsafe practice was seen during the inspection. Governors make termly checks of the premises to undertake risk assessments.
28. Good procedures are in place for monitoring behaviour and promoting good conduct, and the school operates as a very orderly community. High expectations are positively reinforced in lessons and by the example of adults working in the school. Rewards are effective and, during the 'Special Mention' assemblies, good behaviour and effort is celebrated and recorded. Sanctions are rarely needed. Overall, procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils say that any incidents of anti-social behaviour are dealt with swiftly.
29. Since the last inspection, procedures and arrangements for assessing pupils' achievement and attainment have improved. Academic performance is assessed regularly and when careful analysis has been undertaken it has led to useful improvements. Analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum assessments for eleven-year-olds led to the identification of weaknesses in some aspects of science, which have been addressed. Half-termly tests have helped teachers set targets for pupils and to track attainment more carefully. Pupils are formally assessed on entry to the school using a baseline test and this, along with Key Stage 1 national tests establish the attainment of pupils at the start of Year 3. Throughout the school, non-statutory National Curriculum tests in the core subjects are used to track pupils' progress. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. Parents and carers express a positive view of the school. They consider that teaching is good and teachers have high expectations. They say that their children like school and make good progress. They feel that behaviour is good. A significant minority of parents has concerns about homework. Some think there is too much and others, too little. The inspection team found homework to be appropriate and does not share the negative views of the parents.

31. The school has effective links with its parents and carers. There is an 'open door' policy and most parents feel comfortable contacting the school to discuss their concerns. Teachers are not generally outside the school either before or after school, and this limits informal opportunities to talk to parents. The school entrance is not signposted and is difficult to find. Good quality information is provided for parents and this helps them to take an active part in their children's education. At the time of the last report, parents commented on the lack of curriculum information in the prospectus. The current prospectus meets statutory requirements, but does not give details of what is taught. However, the school has invited parents to several very informative meetings on topics such as the numeracy hour and residential visits. The school has made good efforts to address the concerns raised in the last report about the format of pupils' annual reports. Parents were consulted and reports are now very readable, and contain good information about how pupils can improve their work. At the suggestion of parents, they also contain details of pupils' personal development. Newsletters are informative, but do not celebrate the school's successes sufficiently. Termly parents' meetings provide valuable opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss progress.
32. Parents make good contributions to their children's learning at school and at home and this has a good impact on pupils' achievement. Several parents help in classrooms, on school trips and with after-school clubs. Most parents listen to their children read and support their children at home with learning spellings. Parents of pupils identified with special educational needs are invited to review meetings and contribute to their child's individual education plan, often helping with additional activities at home. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement. The active 'parent teacher association' raises considerable sums of money to enhance education provision and governors make significant contributions to the life of the school. Parents give good support to events such as special assemblies and productions. Overall, the school works in effective partnership with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

33. The headteacher exercises strong leadership and is well supported by her deputy headteacher and senior management team. Her principal responsibilities have been to improve the school in line with the key issues from the previous inspection and to maintain continuity and progress through a period when there has been significant staff and organisational change. Members of the senior management team carry out their delegated roles effectively and the year group leaders play a significant part in ensuring consistency across classes. All staff have clearly defined roles and co-ordinators work hard to support the work of their colleagues by providing suitable schemes of work, appropriate resources, formal in-service meetings and informal day-to-day support. There is a shared understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, a commitment to improve and a good level of trust and openness to support improvement. The curriculum is now managed effectively and assessment procedures are in place for all core subjects. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
34. Governors are well-informed about all school matters through their visits to school, reports from the headteacher and co-ordinators and from committee and full governing body meetings. They effectively fulfil their responsibilities. They discuss spending decisions and outcomes from school development initiatives and occasionally challenge the headteacher's policy decisions. There has been improvement in the way they assess the impact of expenditure, since the last inspection, and governors now

have a good understanding about standards within the school. Some success criteria on the school improvement plan are insufficiently quantifiable however and could lead to superficial evaluation.

35. Monitoring procedures have improved and the headteacher and some co-ordinators now monitor the quality of teaching and learning. There is sound analysis of national tests, teachers' planning is scrutinised and pupils' work sampled. Teachers receive helpful feedback, as, for example, when literacy and numeracy hours were introduced, and they set targets for self-improvement. These appropriate and successful strategies need to be more systematic and embedded within school improvement initiatives to raise standards further. There is no formal appraisal at present but the school operates effective professional development interviews, which offer linked opportunities for further training and support.
36. Despite very high teacher changes recently, the current teaching force is cohesive and effective, with very good specialist expertise to match the demands of the curriculum. The exception is information technology where there have been three changes of co-ordinator since the last inspection. This has affected continuity of planning for the subject. Newly-qualified teachers and staff new to the school are smoothly introduced into the daily routines, policies and expectations. The support they receive from colleagues and senior staff has helped them settle quickly and purposefully into their role.
37. Financial planning is satisfactory. All expenditure is carefully considered and the school seeks to secure the best value for money in all purchase of new resources. Occasionally, as in the budget allocated to monitoring and management time for the deputy headteacher, the budget is regarded as a limitation to educational development, rather than a flexible tool to drive initiatives. The surplus in the budget has been planned to cover the reduction in the school roll for the next two years. Grants are used appropriately for their designated purpose. For example, pupils on the special needs register benefit from the support of additional staff and grants for training are used effectively.
38. The school's use of new technology is unsatisfactory because National Curriculum requirements for information technology are not met and resources are poor. However, the school has accumulated funds specifically for this area, to be spent when the information and communication technology action plan has been agreed. Classrooms are of an adequate size and there is generous accommodation for assemblies, dining and physical education. However, the libraries are small and pupils have less opportunity than is usual for developing library skills and for carrying out independent research using reference books. Resources for religious education are good and help pupils learn about and from other religions accurately. A good programme for educational visits supplements the sound range and quality of geography and history resources.
39. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in addressing the weaknesses identified. Results overall, in national tests, have risen in line with the national trend and there has been recent improvement in mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching is better and is no longer a serious weakness. There has been good improvement in developing the curriculum. The overall effectiveness of the school is now satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. To improve further the quality of education and pupils' standards of work, the governors, headteacher and staff should devise an action plan for the following areas:

(1) Teaching:

- Improve the overall consistency in the way teachers implement the learning objectives for each lesson.
- Improve the consistency of day-to-day assessment to ensure that the information helps teachers plan appropriate work for pupils of all levels of prior attainment.

(2) Management:

- Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning, by developing a more systematic and focused structure, linked to very clear targets and criteria.
- Ensure that spending decisions are made on the basis of priorities on the school development plan.

(3) Information and communication technology:

- Fully implement the scheme of work to ensure all National Curriculum requirements are being met.
- Devise a policy for using information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- Purchase suitable control and programmable equipment
- Complete the information and communication technology development plan.
- Ensure all staff are fully trained in how to implement the curriculum.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Increase the opportunities for real-life problem solving in mathematics.
- Ensure higher-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged, especially for science.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to use reference books and research materials.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to read regularly to adults to monitor their acquisition and development of reading skills.
- Highlight opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum.

DEPARTMENT FOR LANGUAGE DISORDERS

41. Pupils who attend the language department are receiving a very good standard and quality of education. There is an ethos of high expectations, which encourages pupils to make the most of the educational opportunities offered to them. Currently, there are eleven pupils, all with statements of special educational needs. They are included in mainstream classes for as much time as possible, depending upon how much support they require. The teacher in charge of the department incorporates selected pupils from mainstream classes in groups when working with the department pupils in their own classes. This is good practice.
42. There is appropriate emphasis on pupils working alongside their peers. Much work is directed towards equipping pupils to tackle new situations. Teaching focuses effectively on literacy and numeracy that pupils will encounter in mainstream lessons. This supports pupils in understanding new concepts. For example, one pupil was learning about Henry VIII in history. The department teacher encouraged and reinforced the use of oral language by using a good range of questioning and resources. Much of the literacy and numeracy work is carried out in the department classroom to ensure that the pupils keep up with their mainstream peers. The good focus on word and sentence building and on mental arithmetic is having a positive effect on the levels of attainment being achieved.
43. The positive attitudes within the department ensure that pupils make good progress. There is a “can do” atmosphere in the classroom, which encourages pupils to do their best. They are supported to be self-reliant and to take responsibility for themselves and their own learning. Each day, they are expected to arrive in the room at the correct time. They know how and where apparatus is stored in the classroom and collect it confidently themselves. Pupils have good attitudes to work and want to do well, both to please their teacher, but more importantly for their own benefit. They are enthusiastic and prepared to talk about their work to each other, their teacher and visiting adults. They are proud of their photographic album of class achievements and are keen to celebrate their own successes, which in turn leads to further success. Pupils clearly understand what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour.
44. The quality of teaching in the department is very good. The teacher is aware of the pupils' specific needs and matches teaching to each pupil individually. Activities are challenging and often require pupils to explain what they have done previously and how this helped them to learn something new. For example, during a numeracy lesson, one pupil had to explain how he/she had worked out his/her shopping bill without the aid of the number line. The teacher has high expectations of behaviour and expects pupils to behave well during lessons and around school. Pupils are taught to accept each other and to be tolerant of each other's problems. The two classroom assistants are well managed and trained, and this contributes to the progress made by pupils. Pupils' progress in mainstream classes is carefully monitored by the unit teacher through a “support book”, which is completed by all adults concerned in teaching or supporting the pupil.
45. Individual education plan reviews are held regularly to discuss each pupil's attainment and progress. Parents and other professionals are invited and attend these meetings. Following the meeting, individual education plans are updated, identifying specific targets that cover English, mathematics, speech and language, and personal and social development. The targets are clear and state exactly what is expected of each pupil. They are reviewed each term, but changes are made during the term, if

required. Very good, detailed records of attainment are kept and an annual report of progress is sent home to parents. These clearly identify work pupils have covered during the year and their progress. Good relationships exist between the department teacher and parents. Expertise is shared with mainstream colleagues to support their work with department pupils. Good relationships also exist with the feeder schools of the department pupils and other professionals who visit the school. The department has clear aims and objectives, which are followed and met. It is suitably staffed and all resources, including the attractive classroom, are used effectively.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

74

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

82

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	19	34	38	9		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	304
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	10
Special educational needs	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	89
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	26	27	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	15	18
	Girls	23	15	21
	Total	40	30	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (73)	57 (60)	74 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	34	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (79)	68 (75)	72 (89)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	2
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	294
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: Y3-Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	127

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
	£
Total income	493,466
Total expenditure	482,278
Expenditure per pupil	1,710
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,500
Balance carried forward to next year	38,688

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	302
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	50	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	58	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	60	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	20	1	0
The teaching is good.	40	60	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	57	11	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	35	11	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	52	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	55	15	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	45	45	7	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	60	8	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	55	10	0	2

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

ENGLISH

46. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2, in 1999, were above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining beyond the expected level was well above the national average. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is similar to that reported in the 1999 national tests. Throughout Key Stage 2, achievement is good and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
47. Standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils are good listeners and they express themselves fluently and articulately. For example, higher attainers offered extended, reasoned arguments, to explain the feelings of a character in a book and Year 6 pupils made relevant contributions to a group discussion, by listening well to previous comments. Most pupils have the confidence to contribute their ideas to class and small group discussions.
48. Reading standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. Most pupils read fluently and expressively. Higher attainers make inferences and deductions from texts. In Year 5, one pupil used the author's choice of vocabulary as evidence to support her ideas about the feelings of a character in 'Comfort Herself'. Pupils use terms such as character, plot, fiction and genre appropriately and have preferences for different styles of narrative. Most read unfamiliar words using a reasonably secure knowledge of phonics and clues from the meaning of the text. Although higher attainers have sound library skills and use non-fiction texts competently to research information, there is insufficient focus on this area and other pupils have poorly developed skills in using reference books or CD-ROMs.
49. Standards in writing, by the end of Key Stage 2, are above average. Pupils write confidently in a range of forms, using punctuation correctly to enhance meaning and expression. Higher attainers write with regard for the impact their writing has on the reader and incorporate literary features such as metaphor and simile effectively. Most pupils use paragraphing correctly and make good vocabulary choices, spelling these with accuracy. Pupils are taught to write with a fluent, joined style and to present their work neatly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve standards commensurate with peers. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are supported effectively by learning support assistants, who provide focused activities for individuals and groups. However, there are too few opportunities for lower-attaining pupils to read regularly to adults so that the development of their reading skills can be more closely monitored.
50. Pupils eagerly answer questions, communicate their ideas and willingly demonstrate what they know during literacy activities. They usually work purposefully, both individually and collaboratively. In one lesson, however, pupils were chatty and did not focus on their task. This was because the teacher had not made the purpose of the activity clear and they were insufficiently challenged.

51. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage pupils very well and generally use time effectively, so that lessons have good pace and pupils work productively. They use a wide range of methods to ensure that pupils concentrate on their learning, including whole-class, small-group and individual work. The most effective learning takes place in lessons, which are carefully planned to build progressively on pupils' existing knowledge and skills. In reading, teachers extend and deepen pupils' interpretation of texts effectively by using focused questions that engage pupils and require them to give extended responses.
52. Teachers use a range of good quality literature and other interesting texts to teach comprehension skills and to model effective writing. In one good lesson, a letter, a newspaper report and an account were used effectively for pupils to identify the key words associated with different styles of writing. In a good writing lesson, the teacher communicated technical information and an enthusiasm for language when using an extract from the 'Diary of Anne Frank' as a model for diary writing. This promoted very good writing from higher attaining pupils. Teachers often model writing, using the pupils' ideas, which promotes their good progress. One teacher very effectively demonstrated on the computer how pupils should record the content of a newspaper report. In another lesson, a collection of artefacts was used as a powerful stimulus for pupils' ideas, resulting in high quality writing. Learning is most effective when teachers communicate clear expectations to pupils about the features that they need to build into their writing.
53. Teachers take good opportunities to develop literacy skills through all areas of the curriculum. Discussion skills are practised during 'circle time' and team meetings. Pupils have written well-constructed letters to the British Museum about the Elgin Marbles for history, and for geography, creative poetry using a range of metaphors stemmed from a field trip to Bournemouth Pier. The grouping of pupils, by prior attainment makes a significant contribution to their good achievement. Work is matched more closely to pupils' learning needs and this promotes good progress. Teachers usually mark pupils' work thoroughly and give extended written feedback, incorporating evaluative comments and suggestions. Pupils' progress is monitored thoroughly and all pupils have individual targets for improvement. An appropriate range of reading, spelling and writing is set for weekly homework and these support work in lessons and contribute to pupils' progress.
54. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Since then, standards have risen and the progress made by higher attainers has improved. The implementation of the literacy strategy, supported by joint lesson planning, has improved the consistency of teaching and learning across the school. The curriculum co-ordinator has managed the implementation of the literacy strategy effectively. Some monitoring has taken place but not in a systematic way. There is a realistic plan for development of the subject. Priorities to establish a system for more closely tracking and assessing reading, and development of the use of information technology, are appropriate, whilst further expansion of resources, including the library, are under constant review. Targets for future attainment in national tests are appropriate.

MATHEMATICS

55. Results in the 1999 tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, were well below the national average and well below results of similar schools. A few pupils missed the tests due to a contagious illness and overall pupil performance was lower than in previous years. Currently, the majority of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are close to levels expected nationally, in most aspects of mathematics. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls or between the achievement of pupils from different ethnic minorities. There is much improvement in the subject since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching, which in turn affects standards. Standards in mathematics have risen because pupils have more opportunity for developing mental strategies, but there are still some minor weaknesses in their ability to solve problems due to previous deficits in the mathematics curriculum. The numeracy strategy and the grouping of pupils by prior attainment are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement
56. By age 11, pupils confidently handle two, three and four digit numbers. They have a good understanding of place value and round up to the nearest whole number. Pupils place decimal fractions on an appropriate position on the number line and use tally charts, bar graphs and pie charts, to show the result of their traffic survey. Pupils draw and measure angles accurately using a protractor and calculate the missing angles of a triangle, using their prior knowledge. They have a sound understanding of links between fractions and division, and record their answers in two different ways, showing equivalence in numbers. Pupils are developing effective strategies for mental arithmetic in Year 3, learning to sort three digit numbers to make the biggest and smallest number within the series and adding two, three and four digits mentally.
57. Progress in relation to individual targets is satisfactory for most pupils, and good for pupils with special educational needs and for the higher attainers. This is because of well-targeted support for individuals. The good opportunities for mental and oral work, the greater flexibility in methods of calculation, good demonstrations from teachers and the good use of resources, all help pupils to develop interest in the subject. Their attitude and response is very good. As pupils develop their confidence, they enjoy calculating mentally, using a variety of strategies to reach their answers. Pupils' capacity to apply their previous knowledge in meaningful contexts, and to carry out their independent investigations, is still a minor weakness.
58. Overall, teaching is satisfactory with many good features. In the best lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge, reflected in a high proportion of enthusiastic and clear direct teaching. In a Year 5 lesson, good step by step instruction of how to use a protractor and good use of mathematical vocabulary ensured pupils were well prepared for their individual tasks. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the introductory mental and oral work developed pupils' calculation strategies effectively. The teacher asked pupils to calculate the quickest route to answers and encouraged them to share their strategies for others.
59. Teachers involve pupils through good questioning, especially at the beginning and end of lessons. Individual targets for improvement are shared with the pupils and teachers set homework to consolidate new learning. These features have good impact on pupils' progress. In a few weaker lessons, teachers planned undemanding mental activities and did not use the plenary well enough to assess pupils' understanding or address misconceptions. Marking is not yet consistent in suggesting how pupils should improve. Most teachers make good use of the number line, number squares, fans and

a variety of cards, to raise pupils' awareness of different number patterns, and to establish the position of numbers within the number system. Teachers reinforce mathematical vocabulary in every lesson, which is helping pupils discuss their work confidently. Lesson planning is generally well structured and teachers use key objectives from the numeracy strategy well to assess pupils' progress. This has helped to raise standards in the current year. There is a balanced coverage of all the National Curriculum attainment targets, with considerable strength in data handling, which is used well by pupils in a variety of situations across the curriculum.

60. The co-ordinator is well informed and provides effective leadership and support for colleagues. There is an appropriate action plan, which includes identification of how standards can be raised further by developing problem-solving activities. Monitoring of plans has helped ensure consistency within year groups and pupils' work is reviewed to check progress from year to year. There is some monitoring of teaching by the head teacher and the deputy head, which has been useful; however, the role of the co-ordinator is under developed in this regard.

SCIENCE

61. Standards at the time of the previous inspection were judged to be in line with the national average. Results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds were below average when compared with all schools and well below average for similar schools. Standards of attainment currently are above average. Evidence from the lessons observed and analysis of pupils' previously completed work shows that the main factors for this improvement are the improved curriculum and improved quality of teaching.
62. The quality of pupils' learning is good and directly reflects the quality of teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with work designed to meet their individual needs and with extra support of learning assistants. Pupils steadily build up their knowledge across the various areas of science; however, the progress of the higher attainers is not as high as expected with limited evidence of personal research. Pupils reach a satisfactory standard in experimental skills and knowledge. When experimenting, Year 6 pupils observe well and successfully predict the outcome and record their findings in a systematic way. Pupils use the correct scientific vocabulary when describing their work. For example, when discussing an experiment about changing substances, they accurately described the outcome as having 'reversible and irreversible' qualities. They have a good understanding of a fair test and use this knowledge effectively when carrying out experiments.
63. Pupils enjoy the practical aspects of science and respond positively. When conducting or observing an experiment, they are sensible and are mindful of the safety aspects. They listen carefully to their teachers and absorb new concepts quickly, describing their ideas and demonstrating a growing understanding of scientific vocabulary. They collaborate well when working in pairs, discussing the work with enthusiasm.
64. The quality of teaching is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The good scheme of work provides detailed guidance and is used well by teachers to plan appropriate practical activities for each age group. For example, pupils in Year 4 investigated the habitats of animals and insects during a residential trip to a local environmental centre. This promoted their experimental and investigative skills. Year 5 pupils gain a good understanding of different food groups in a balanced diet through their healthy eating topic. In Year 3, pupils made good progress in their

learning about growth in plants. The teachers' good focus on prediction skills and how pupils should record their findings helped pupils to reflect on their activities in a systematic way.

65. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of questioning strategies to ascertain pupils' understanding and to extend their answers. Lessons are appropriately planned with a good choice of resources, enabling pupils to make good progress in their understanding. There are effective and well-structured procedures with regular testing to ascertain pupils' understanding and progress. This is used to inform planning and set future targets in most classes. Although work is marked regularly, with comments that recognise achievement, they are not always sufficiently annotated to indicate how pupils can improve. The use of information technology has not been sufficiently considered and is a weakness.
66. Good leadership is provided by the two subject co-ordinators. They have begun monitoring teachers' plans and pupils' work to identify how standards can improve further. Good use is made of a local residential environmental centre to develop pupils' scientific skills.

OTHER SUBJECTS

67. Few lessons were observed in the foundation subjects during the inspection. Judgements are based on these lessons, together with evidence from pupils' previously completed work.

ART

68. Standards of work generally match those expected for pupils' ages and have been maintained since the last inspection. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills through a wide range of interesting and varied art activities. Pupils study the style and techniques of different artists such as Van Gogh, Monet and Picasso and learn effectively about colour, composition and texture. Study of other artists such as William Morris gives pupils ideas about designing skills and develops their appreciation of symmetry. Close observational skills are well developed. This was particularly noticeable in landscape sketches by pupils in the Year 5 art club and in pencil drawings by pupils in Year 6.
69. Good use is made of sketchbooks and pupils learn how to mix paints and to practise shading techniques. Art is used effectively to support work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5, as part of their Victorian topic, have made accurate cut out silhouettes of themselves, which have been placed in decorated frames in keeping with the Victorian style. Art activities in Year 6 contribute well to pupils' understanding of Ancient Greece through mask making and clay work.
70. Pupils' work is valued by the school and is carefully labelled and displayed in classrooms and corridors. It reflects and celebrates the range of artwork that pupils undertake. This is motivating for pupils and gives encouragement to their efforts. Pupils are anxious to talk about their work and are proud when it has been displayed. This contributes effectively to their speaking and listening skills. There is now a scheme of work that provides support for teachers, ensuring progression as pupils move through the school. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has appropriate plans for the development of the subject and is planning in-service training in the near future. Teachers record the new skills pupils are learning and assess the standards attained. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

71. Standards in design and technology are in line with expectations for the ages of the pupils. By Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of how to design, plan and evaluate products. Planning has improved since the last inspection, with the introduction of a new scheme of work. This ensures that the full range of activities is covered, especially the areas of textiles and food technology, which were previously identified as requiring greater attention. There is appropriate emphasis on evaluation and so over time pupils develop an increasing awareness of fitness for purpose.
72. Pupils design and make products using a wide range of materials and techniques, developing their skills from year to year. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum such as art, science, and mathematics and good opportunities for extending literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils in Year 3 designed and made their own sandwiches. These were evaluated by taste and also for their contribution to healthy eating. A graph was constructed from the results of a survey. This promoted pupils' understanding of the design process effectively. Year 5 pupils wrote more detailed evaluations of their Easter biscuit activity identifying the mistakes they had made by being over-ambitious at the initial design stage. Parent helpers make a significant contribution to food technology activities.
73. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils made good progress in their understanding of mechanisms. They identified how the cam, follower and axle made their toys move, turn and blink. The teacher focused appropriately on the key vocabulary and, by the end of the lesson, many pupils incorporated the correct terminology in the explanation of their findings. Pupils enjoy design and technology and are proud of their results. They are given interesting challenges such as designing torches, evaluating slippers and making motorised vehicles, and are encouraged to use their imagination. They are also taught a range of correct techniques that will enable them to achieve success. Year 4 pupils were taught how to make a lever and linkage system and they were given good advice about how to develop these. Pupils quickly saw the possibilities for making a range of pop-up designs and they were loath to stop at the end of the lesson.

GEOGRAPHY

74. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the standard expected for that age. In Year 3, pupils study the school's environment and become familiar with different types of roads and housing. At this level, they can identify the world's climate zones and higher attainers use appropriate terms to describe the hot and cold regions. Pupils in Year 4 extend their local studies and also make a contrasting study of an Indian village. They make proper use of grid references and symbols on maps. This is extended in Year 5, when pupils visit Bournemouth for practical fieldwork. By Year 6, pupils have acquired an appropriate range of geographical skills. They give clear explanations of the meaning of estuary, tributary and confluence and talk about various forms of land usage in the local area competently. A few pupils know the distinction between industrial and commercial land usage.
75. Pupils use their numeric skills to present their work on climate and soil temperature in the form of bar charts or graphs and there is good emphasis on correct vocabulary. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made an imaginative response when asked to draw suitable symbols on a map to indicate patterns of land usage. Teachers also make profitable use of resources to extend pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, the use of a torch and a spinning globe helped pupils to appreciate why the Equatorial region

is the hottest on earth. In a Year 4 lesson, however, the main task set was too involved for most of the pupils to carry it out successfully.

76. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory across the school. Teachers use strategies that promote and encourage pupils' thinking and there is no longer dictation of notes. Opportunities for independent research and personal study on the part of pupils are still limited. There is a good scheme of work and geographical skills are methodically and cumulatively developed throughout the school. Planning is better but the assessment and recording of pupils' work and achievements has yet to be developed. Resources have improved and there is good use of the environmental centre and fieldwork visits in the local area.

HISTORY

77. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is appropriate for the age of the pupils. They build their sense of chronology soundly as they move through the school. In Year 3, pupils experience contrasting areas of study in their work on Ancient Egypt and the Second World War. Pupils in Year 4 examine the problems facing Henry VIII and his attempts to resolve them. This helps them develop an understanding of cause and effect. In Year 5, work on transport in the Victorian era enables pupils to consider differing interpretations of history with regard to the perceived advantages and drawbacks of the railways. This also helps them to appreciate the concept of development over time. Skills of numeracy are used to present work on housing and occupational patterns in the form of bar charts. Literacy skills are promoted through a variety of activities and Year 6 pupils have completed good quality extended writing in their work on the Greek Wars. Pupils' empathetic skills are engaged when they compose letters from a Greek citizen to the British Museum about the Elgin Marbles.
78. In a well-planned Year 6 lesson, a brief recapitulation of prior learning at the start helped pupils to focus on the learning objectives and gain sound understanding of the essential distinction between primary and secondary sources of evidence. A very good use of resources for task work maintained their interest and curiosity. Through their enthusiastic examination of modified household items, they were able to understand how archaeologists form deductions about objects discovered under the ground.
79. Greater attention is now given to the interpretation of history, although historical enquiry remains a weaker area because pupils make insufficient use of the library for research work. Pupils' curricular experiences are enhanced, however, by visits to Hampton Court, Stratford-on-Avon and to the Cabinet War Room. History topics stimulate much attractive artwork and there are some eye-catching displays around the school. For example, work on Henry VIII is prominently displayed in the central area of the school. Successful Victorian and Tudor Days were organised last year and these contributed effectively to pupils' understanding about the past. Parents made a good contribution in organising these and similar events are planned for the current year.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

80. The school has identified information technology as an area for improvement and the school is awaiting the installation of new computers. Currently, pupils do not cover all the areas required by the National Curriculum and standards attained at the end of the Key Stage are below what is expected for their age. Standards are better in younger classes, particularly in Year 3, where pupils are introduced to a range of skills. They use the word processor, changing font, size and style of writing as they choose, and print and save their work on disc competently. In other years, activities generally cover word processing and data handling. Work in controlling and monitoring and modelling is limited to discussing the every day use of technology and reflecting on cause and effect of different actions. Information technology is not yet extended to enhance the pupils' library and research skills. The subject is increasingly being taught in separate lessons and opportunities for using information technology are not identified in most other subjects. There has been decline in the subject since the last inspection. The school is aware of this and has carried out an audit of needs recently to establish an action plan for improvements in the subject.
81. Teaching is unsatisfactory, although some satisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. The best teaching had a balance between class discussion and practical use of equipment; it was focused on achieving intended learning objectives and on a systematic development of skills and technical vocabulary. Teachers made good links with the outside world through drawing pupils' attention to the news about the virus, and the possible damage to the industry. This was also used to stress the importance of accuracy in the data that are stored. The fundamental weaknesses in teaching included the lack of regular opportunities for pupils to use the computer for different purposes and the lack of a challenge in activities, to meet the developing needs of pupils. There was little ongoing assessment to adjust the work to meet individual needs. Most staff are able to use the basic programs and are working towards a self-sufficient approach to the subject but there was insufficient use of the computer during the inspection. Weaknesses identified in teaching and resources have a direct impact on standards overall and progress within lessons and over time.
82. Pupils enjoy the use of the computer and show good levels of concentration while doing their work. Discussion of work in pairs and in small groups enables pupils to learn from each other effectively. They are developing positive attitudes towards using the new technology, in making things easier.
83. The subject manager has a clear view of the direction for moving the subject forward and has sound subject and technical knowledge. The scheme of work gives suitable guidance for all year groups but there is a lack of systematic recording of pupils' progress in skills. There is no monitoring of teaching and the use of equipment and there is an urgent need for improving the provision of training to develop staff expertise and confidence. Pupils' annual reports for parents include pupils' progress in information and communication technology, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. Each class is equipped with a computer and some computers have CD-ROM facilities but the available equipment is not sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum.

MUSIC

84. Pupils' level of achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with that expected for their age. This judgement is similar to that of the previous inspection. As pupils progress through the school, they develop an understanding of the main elements in music and use the appropriate vocabulary when appraising music. Pupils' creative skills are developed using graphic scores and when producing compositions that are beginning to have shape and form. Pupils have the opportunity to experience music from other cultures. In a Year 5 topic on Indonesian Gamelan music, pupils composed their own version of the style and confidently performed their composition keeping a steady beat. Pupils in Year 6 gained sound knowledge about early music and recognised the instruments played. Their sense of rhythm was promoted well by adding and performing a dance.
85. Singing is of a good standard. This was most noticeable in the 'whole school' weekly singing session. Here pupils learnt a complex African song, successfully maintaining good pitch and rhythm when singing in the round. The school choir is of a very good standard, learning a variety of songs and performing them in different idioms. Pupils have opportunities to become familiar with a good range of music from various musical traditions. Listening to recorded music being played further develops their listening skills as they enter and leave morning assembly. During the inspection, this ranged from Mahler to African dance music. The school presents several events during the year, for pupils and parents, which include the school choir and instrumentalists. The choir also has the opportunity to perform at a music festival with other local schools. Pupils who learn a musical instrument attain good standards.
86. In one lesson, the teacher showed confidence and expertise, which generated a lively musical focus. The teacher's good knowledge and skills promoted pupils' enthusiasm and knowledge very effectively. When teaching was particularly good, the teacher used a good range of warm-up procedures to develop both singing and diction. The quality of singing greatly improved during both the choir and singing practise. Where teaching is less effective the planning is unsatisfactory, failing to build on pupils' previous knowledge. The commercial scheme of work generally supports teachers' planning effectively, providing continuity and help for the non-specialist. Music in the school makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

87. Standards reached by eleven-year-olds are at least in line with those expected for their age and often exceed these. Pupils are developing good team game skills, good body control and an awareness of the ways in which exercise affects the body. In athletics, they become aware of different techniques of running, pacing and sprinting. They practise and refine their movements until they have reached the expected level of accuracy and speed. They show an increasing capacity to follow instructions and quickly learn how to improve their performance. In dance and gymnastics, pupils make good progress in planning, performing sequences of actions and in evaluating their work. Pupils demonstrate good awareness of the principles of health and safety. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to physical education, that is, through additional adult support, a modified programme of activities and use of resources; consequently, they make good progress overall.

88. Pupils have good opportunities for indoor and outdoor activities. In lessons that were seen, teaching was mostly good. Lesson plans showed clear sequence of progressive activities and clear learning objectives, which were shared with the pupils. Teachers expected high standards of work and behaviour and made good use of praise and encouragement, to improve the pupils' performance. In the best lessons observed, there is clear guidance from teachers, and pupils are expected to plan, perform and evaluate their work within a clear teaching framework. Pupils are taught well how to prepare for and to recover from a vigorous activity. Through well-prepared activities, pupils learn about the effect of various exercises on their bodies and develop a good understanding of the principles of health and fitness. In a less successful lesson, however, the planning was less focused, the available time was not used effectively and the activities provided insufficient challenge for the pupils.
89. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good and they are well behaved throughout the lesson. They enjoy activities they are involved in and they participate with a good level of enthusiasm. They are attentive and reflective, and observe others to see how they could improve their performance. Pupils show responsible attitudes while lifting, carrying and placing the apparatus. Relationships between adults and pupils and within peer groups are good. They take turns in games and practise a variety of ways of sending and receiving a ball, such as striking, catching and throwing with increasing skill.
90. Physical education is well organised and managed by the new subject manager, who has a clear plan of action for the development of the subject. Teachers' plans are monitored; however, the monitoring of teaching is not yet firmly in place. All aspects of the National Curriculum are covered, including out-door adventurous activities, which aim at developing pupils' problem-solving skills. However, the programme as a whole lacks a systematic development of skills from one year to the next. There is a good programme of swimming lessons for pupils in Year 5; most pupils are able to swim with a degree of confidence, at least 25 metres, by age eleven.
91. A good range of extra-curricular clubs, open to all pupils, includes athletics, football, table tennis, netball, dance and aerobics. Staff provide valuable support in organising and running the school's extra-curricular clubs, to enhance pupils' experiences and to enrich the curriculum as a whole. The satisfactory range of resources is well organised, maintained and used. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers make good use of the spacious and well-equipped hall, the extensive school grounds for outdoor sports and the hard surface play area.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

92. Attainment at the end of the Key Stage is in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In Year 3, pupils are introduced to the modes of prayer of Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus. They gain an understanding of differing conceptions of the divine. These studies promote their spiritual and cultural development. Moral and spiritual development are also enhanced in Year 3 and in Year 4 as pupils examine issues such as family relationships, the meaning of friendship, the essence of leadership and living in a community. In Year 5, they compare Judaism, Christianity and Islam with regard to rites of passage, important festivals and sacred books. Pupils correctly identify similarities between the Christian season of Advent and the Jewish Festival of Light. In Year 6, their comparative studies are extended to include other religions. Pupils learn how spiritual dedication can mould the entire personality and vocation of an individual as they consider the lives and influence of Gandhi and Gladys Aylward.
93. Teaching displays several key strengths that help to promote pupils' learning. Lesson

plans are thorough and learning objectives are communicated to pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers make good use of questioning to assess the state of pupils' prior learning and to broaden their perceptions. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils were already aware that strength and decisiveness are essential ingredients of good leadership. The teacher's questioning prompted them to consider and suggest other traits such as caring and honesty. Resources, and in particular religious artefacts, are used to very good effect to stimulate interest and arouse curiosity. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were shown various symbols of the Sikh religion – sword, turban, badge and comb. They quickly became familiar with each of these and also gained a good understanding of their representation.

94. There have been several notable improvements since the previous inspection. Teachers now enjoy a sufficient breadth of subject knowledge. They employ sound strategies for class management and for securing the full participation of pupils in lessons. The tasks that are set are closely related to learning objectives and to the ability level of pupils. However, suitable arrangements for the effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not as yet fully in place. The co-ordinator is an enthusiast for the subject: her leadership and management are making a prominent contribution to the improvements that are in evidence.