

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MICHAEL AND ST MARTIN'S RC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Hounslow

LEA area: Hounslow

Unique reference number: 102531

Headteacher: Sister Pauline Fenton

Reporting inspector: Mrs Sue Chesters
23196

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd March 2001

Inspection number: 192167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Voluntary aided
School category:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Belgrave Road Hounslow
Postcode:	TW4 7AG
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Byrne
Date of previous inspection:	21 st February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Geoff Humphrey 9163	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
John Williams 22516	Team inspector	Science Physical education	How high are standards? Interpretation of results How good are curricular and other opportunities? Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Suzi Metcalfe 20003	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Learning opportunities
Rob Isaac 23080	Team inspector	English Art History	How well does the school care for its pupils? Assessment
Jan Allcorn 1068	Team inspector	Mathematics Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How high are standards? Attitudes, values and personal development/attendance

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Hounslow. It is much larger than most primary schools, with 498 pupils on roll (229 boys and 269 girls) compared with the national average of 243. The school is about the same size as when it was inspected in 1997, when there were 510 pupils. Sixty-one pupils (13 per cent) are identified as having special educational needs. This figure is below the national average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is an average figure for the size of the school. Forty-one per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is high. Thirty-two per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is also high. Seven per cent of this group are at a low stage of acquisition of English. This is higher than the national average. Seventy-seven pupils claim free school meals, which is broadly average. The vast majority of children receive some form of nursery or pre-school experience. Most attend the school's own nursery. Children enter the reception classes in the year in which they become five. At this stage, they have a wide spread of ability, but have levels of attainment in line with those expected for the age group. During the inspection a major building project was taking place.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school which fully meets its aims and of which the community is proud. The staff is totally committed to the spiritual development of all pupils and continually strives to raise standards. The school is a warm, welcoming and happy community where pupils and adults are enthusiastically committed to their work. The teaching is consistently very good. Pupils make good progress over time and achieve very well. Relationships within the school community are excellent and the school provides high quality pastoral care. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher gives inspirational and sensitive leadership. She, together with the exceptionally talented deputy headteacher, gives very strong professional leadership to the school.
- The senior managers and governors very capably support them.
- Pupils receive excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural guidance and develop into mature, confident and caring young people.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in English and well above average in mathematics, by the time they leave school aged 11 years.
- The pupils behave very well and they have very positive attitudes to school. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and for future fulfilment in their lives.

What could be improved

- There are no major issues. However, the balance of the curriculum could be improved by seeking opportunities to extend the use of information and communication technology in all subjects. The school could also allocate more time to areas such as music, art and design, design and technology, history and geography.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then it has made good progress and is very well placed to continue to improve. The monitoring of teaching and learning meets the needs of all pupils, including the more-able. Physical education now fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is supported by a comprehensive scheme of work. Child protection procedures are fully implemented. There are good procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A*	B	B
Mathematics	B	A*	A	A
Science	B	A*	C	C

Key

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

The above table shows that, in the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, pupils reached well above average standards in mathematics and above average standards in English. Standards in science were in line with the national average. When compared with schools in similar contexts, these results were also well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. The table also shows some fluctuations in the last few years. The school can well account for these variations, as it keeps good records of pupils' attainment and analyses results carefully. This analysis shows clear differences in cohorts. For example, in 1998, the Year 6 group taking the tests had a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Each year group has differences in the numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who are at an early stage of English acquisition. They also have variations in the number of pupils with special educational needs. These factors contribute to the fluctuations seen in results year on year. Standards are rising and the upward trend reflects the national picture. Similar variation is seen in the results in national tests and tasks set for seven-year-olds. Standards were in line with the national average in reading, well above average in writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with schools in a similar context, results are above average.

Inspection evidence showed that standards, by the time pupils leave the school aged 11, are well above average in mathematics and above average in English and art and design. They are in line for this age group in science, information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education. By the age of 7, pupils' standards are above average in English, mathematics, and art and design. They are in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum in science, information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education. There was not enough evidence available during the inspection to make secure judgements on standards in design and technology for pupils aged 7 or 11 years. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet or exceed the expectations set out for them within the Early Learning Goals because of the very good teaching that they receive. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. Those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. The quality of learning in most lessons is good and often very good. Pupils achieve very well because they are taught very well. The school is on course to meet its targets for English and mathematics in 2001.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive. They show outstanding enthusiasm and high levels of interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. This has a beneficial effect on learning. They are very polite, friendly and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show an exceptional level of maturity and confidence for their age. The quality of relationships in the school is excellent.
Attendance	Standards of attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

The pupils' attitudes and values are a significant strength of the school. Older pupils care about younger ones and look after them at break and dinner times. Pupils are polite and trustworthy and show great respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They know right from wrong and have high expectations of acceptable behaviour from each other.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

The pupils learn happily at this school. One of the reasons for this is that the quality of teaching is consistently very good. One hundred per cent of teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Half was very good or excellent. This was the picture across all key stages and most subjects. Excellent lessons were seen in English, mathematics, science and history and in the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The consequences of this very good teaching are seen in the very good learning and achievements of all pupils. Teaching, in both literacy and numeracy, is good. The staff form a very strong team and work together exceptionally well. This results in the purposeful, but warm and relaxed, atmosphere in school, in which pupils thrive very well and learn very successfully. Teachers plan lessons very effectively. They make particularly good use of resources to promote rapid learning. They involve the very good quality support staff, most effectively. This helps to keep the pupils interested in their work and, consequently, they learn well. Teachers do not over-direct the pupils, but have the confidence to allow pupils to explore their own ideas. They intervene at timely moments to move individual pupils forward to the next stage of their learning. The very good teaching that the pupils receive is a major strength of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is good. However, there is scope for further extending the use of information and communication technology in all subjects and for more time to be allocated to other subjects. The school provides very well for the children in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good. It enables them to make good progress and to work alongside their peers.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and are well supported by the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides exceptionally well for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school knows and understands its pupils very well. All staff know the pupils well and care for them in a very sensitive and supportive way.

The school has very good links with partner institutions, such as the local secondary school. There are also effective links with parents, who have high regard for the school's work. The school cares for its pupils very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides inspirational and sensitive leadership. The dedicated and hard working staff support her very well. All are committed to raising standards even further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a very good, long-term, overview of the school and fully understands its strengths and weaknesses. Governors are fully involved in shaping the future of the school. The governing body is perceptively led by a very experienced chairman, who has a long association with the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very good strategies for self-evaluation and plans effectively to meet its priorities.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very effective use of its resources. It applies the principles of best value very well.

The school very effectively evaluates its performance and takes decisive action to ensure that teaching and learning are good. There is a good match of suitably experienced and qualified staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Learning resources are good. The accommodation is bright and pleasant. It provides a stimulating environment. An extension to the building that will provide four additional classrooms is currently under construction.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifty parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 241 questionnaires were returned.

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like coming to school and enjoy their work.• Children make good progress and standards are high.• Relationships in the school are good and children care for each other.• The quality of teaching is good.• The children's behaviour is good.• The school provides a good Christian ethos.• The school recognises the needs of children requiring support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils' annual progress reports, to provide more individual information on how well their children are doing.• A more consistent approach towards homework.• More regular information on what is happening in school.• A wider and more interesting range of additional activities, outside of lessons.

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. They also agree that the computer generated annual reports do not provide a clear picture of individual pupils' attainment and progress in relation to national expectations. Nor do they give clear guidance as to what it is the children need to do next to improve or move on to the next stage of learning. However, the school has also identified this and is addressing the issue. The inspectors concluded that the use of homework to support learning is good. The inspectors judged that the information provided for parents about the curricular and other school activities is good. The range of additional activities, outside of lessons, is satisfactory, particularly at the current time with the building project in operation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils achieved levels that were well above average in English, mathematics and science, for all age groups. Standards in art, music and design and technology also exceeded the expectations of the National Curriculum. Standards in history, geography, physical education and information and communication technology were in line with those expected for the age groups. The school has maintained standards in English, mathematics and art at a good level. In information and communication technology, geography, history and physical education standards remain in line with the expectations of the age groups. There was not enough evidence to make secure judgements about standards in design and technology. Standards in science and music appear to have dipped since the last inspection. This is due partly to the increased emphasis that the school has placed on literacy and numeracy in order to maintain standards in English and mathematics. It is also partly because of the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs and those at a low stage of acquisition of English, in each cohort. As a result, less time has been allocated to subjects such as science and music, with a resulting dip in standards. To a certain extent, this also applies to other subjects such as geography and history, where standards have remained static. The school has recognised this deficit and is already focussing on these other subjects in order to raise standards to a level equivalent to those in English and mathematics. For example, the greater emphasis on information and communication technology has resulted in a steady rise in standards. The temporary computer suite is used for group lessons in information and communication technology skills and this is also having a positive impact on standards. Over time, progress is good in all subjects. Learning in lessons is nearly always good and often very good.
2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to the targets set for them on their individual education plans. Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress throughout the school. Most pupils at the early stages of learning English are in the nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2. In lessons they listen carefully, follow what the teacher does and, although they may not always respond to the teacher's questions, usually understand what is taking place. Very good teaching significantly contributes to this.
3. In lessons, no significant differences were observed in the achievement of girls and boys, nor of pupils from different ethnic groups, apart from those whose first language is not English. Many pupils, including those identified in the groups mentioned above, attain above the expected level (Level 2) at age 7 years. Similar large percentages attain above the expected level (Level 4) at 11 years. The proportion of pupils using English as an additional language, who do well in national tests in English, mathematics and science, is greater than the average for the local education authority.

Foundation Stage¹

4. Children enter the reception year with a wide range of ability. In general, levels of attainment across all areas of learning are those expected for the age group. They make good progress in the reception year and most children are in line with, or exceed, the stepping-stones for their age by the time they move to Year 1. In their first year at school, they begin to listen well and confidently answer questions. They begin to build up a sight vocabulary, when reading, and learn to form letters correctly. Many count to at least 10 and recognise two-dimensional shapes and most primary colours.

Years 1 and 2

5. The results achieved by the seven-year-olds in the 2000 tests and tasks were in line with the national average in reading, well above average in writing and below average in mathematics. The number of pupils reaching Level 2, the expected level for the age group, was above the national average in reading and writing. An average number reached the expected Level 2 in mathematics. The percentages reaching the higher Level 3 were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, these results are above average. This represents a steady upward trend over the last four years in all three subjects, although fluctuations have occurred when some year groups have a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs or pupils at a low stage of acquisition of English. In science, on the basis of the teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, Level 3, was well above the national average although the number of pupils achieving the expected level, Level 2, and above was below the national average. This resulted in raising the level of attainment to the national average. In the tests for seven-year-olds in summer 2000, girls performed slightly better than boys
6. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are good. Pupils listen carefully to each other and to adults. They speak in sentences and answer questions clearly, using appropriate vocabulary. Reading has a high focus. Pupils enjoy books and talk about them with understanding. They read confidently and use different methods to tackle unknown words. Pupils write well and begin to use full stops accurately and spell regular words correctly. Some pupils use extended vocabulary correctly in their writing.
7. In mathematics, the current pupils aged seven achieve good standards. Many pupils discuss their mathematics confidently, recognise patterns in numbers and understand place value. In science, attainment is satisfactory. Pupils develop understanding across all aspects of the science curriculum, through practical investigation and exploration.
8. By the age of seven, pupils achieve at the levels expected in information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education. They achieve at above average levels in art and design.

Years 3 - 6

9. The rate of improvement over the past four years in the national tests for 11-year-olds is below the national trend. This has been caused by the larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in two year groups. The results achieved by 11-

¹ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the reception year. QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

year-olds in the 2000 national tests were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When compared with schools in a similar context, these results were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. The number of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 4, in these tests was average. The number reaching the higher level, Level 5, was well above the national average in mathematics and above average in English. Results were close to the national average in science. Unlike most schools, however, there is no measurable underachievement of boys in these subjects. The performance of boys exceeds the national average for their age group. Girls exceed the national average in English and mathematics and match it in science.

10. In information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum. In art and design they exceed the standards expected of 11-year-olds. Standards of speaking and listening are good by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Pupils listen carefully, discuss issues confidently and explain their work fluently. Reading standards are good. Pupils discuss literature in depth and use reading skills well in other subjects. For example, they scan texts in science to identify key information. Pupils develop skills of using non-fiction texts well. Standards in writing are good. Pupils write for different purposes and include the expected level of grammar. For example, in history they write descriptively or in reporting style. They take pride in the presentation of their work and have regular opportunities to practise their handwriting.
11. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 work confidently with fractions and decimals to calculate answers to problems. They interpret data from graphs and explain well the meaning of 'mean' and 'average' and how to calculate percentages. In science, pupils reach good levels through practical investigation. They study, in depth, different aspects of the science curriculum. They use correct scientific language and write scientific symbols correctly.
12. Standards of literacy and numeracy are well above expectations throughout the school. Good use is made of literacy skills in other subjects, such as science and history. For example, pupils use their speaking and listening skills well to discuss and describe a range of toys and what makes them move. Numeracy skills are used well in geography and science. For instance, pupils use their knowledge of negative numbers when measuring temperature. Standards in information and communication technology are rising rapidly and pupils achieve well. For example, pupils' word-processing skills are beyond those expected for pupils of their age by 11 years.
13. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs through carefully planned work that matches their changing requirements well. These pupils progressively need less help through the year groups. The same positive picture is true of pupils who use English as an additional language, in that the numbers requiring extra help get smaller as they grow older. The local education authority provides valuable additional support for pupils with English as an additional language, through individual tuition provided by well-informed, specialist teachers. Thirty-two percent of the school's pupils are bilingual and the management of their teaching is very good. As a result, in Year 6, a significant number of the pupils attaining above average standards are pupils who have spoken a language other than English at home. Pupils attaining standards just below average are supported through additional literacy groups. They make good progress in these groups because the work is clearly focused on what they need to improve. Both teachers and teaching assistants lead these sessions well.

14. The school's current focus on teaching the basic skills for pupils to succeed in the tasks set ensures that the majority reaches the targets set. The school sets itself appropriate targets and strives to exceed them. It works hard to raise standards in all subjects, although there is scope to improve the time allocated for subjects such as history and geography. The thorough coverage of the curriculum throughout the school ensures that pupils make good progress over their time in school. This, together with the clear learning objectives set by teachers in most lessons, has a positive effect on raising standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. During the inspection, inspectors were left in no doubt that pupils enjoy their work and are very keen and eager to come to school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are enthusiastic learners. This is due to the very good teaching that they receive and the encouraging support of all adults within the school. In lessons, pupils listen with interest to their teachers, follow instructions carefully and respond readily to questions. This leads to very good progress over time in their learning. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson with the objective of developing pupils' skills of argument, the teacher used very demanding vocabulary whilst considering the reasons for and against capital punishment. Pupils responded well to the challenge and, in discussion with their teacher of the meaning of words such as 'eminent', 'conclusive', 'homicide' and 'psychologist', gained a greater understanding of the issues. Even when, on occasions, lessons are not as interesting or well planned as they could be pupils continue to work well.
16. Pupils are confident and mature by the time they leave the school at the age of 11 years. Year 5 pupils spoke clearly and with expression and conviction during their assembly. This made the assembly very effective and an uplifting start to the school day. Pupils are polite and friendly to visiting adults and are willing to share their views with them. High levels of concentration, co-operation and the ability to work without supervision were observed, from the very youngest pupils through to the oldest 11-year-olds. These qualities were particularly impressive in the nursery, where pupils work and play together purposefully and without any 'squabbles', for considerable lengths of time.
17. Behaviour is very good, both within lessons and around the school. This ensures that lessons move at a good pace, with no time wasted, and that all pupils benefit from the very good and good teaching that they receive. Given the high level of disruption due to the building work currently taking place, the sensible manner in which pupils move around the school, taking note of the instructions of their teachers, is impressive. Bullying is very rare and there is no record of any racist incidents. No pupils have been excluded. Although there are merit and reward systems within the school, these are not used as 'a carrot' to ensure that pupils behave well, but to value outstanding effort. Pupils behave well, not only because of the high expectations of the headteacher and her staff, but because they understand the kinds of behaviour that contribute to a happy and caring community. A very good example of this is the 'good behaviour charter' developed by one Year 5 class and which all visitors to the classroom are invited to sign. The last expectation states 'Do something wonderful today, because it will never come again'. This epitomises the very positive learning environment in which all pupils' work hard.
18. Relationships between pupils and adults within the school are excellent. Pupils appreciate and value the care and very good teaching they receive from teachers and other adults in the school. Year 6 pupils commented that the best thing about the

school was the teachers. They particularly appreciate the opportunities teachers provide for them to talk about any difficulties they are having. All staff treat pupils with respect and everything they do promotes pupils' understanding of right and wrong, with a strong emphasis on the teachings of the catholic faith. Pupils from all ethnic groups get on very well together. They care for each other and help each other in lessons. Parents commented on how well pupils look after each other. Older pupils recognise and understand the need for, and the value of, the 'Rainbow' support group that provides counselling for those pupils with particular emotional needs, such as family bereavement.

19. Pupils very willingly take on responsibilities. All Year 6 pupils take turns to be a prefect and conscientiously undertake lunchtime and break-time supervision of younger pupils and work with them. Other pupils take it in turn to be class monitors, with younger pupils confidently and sensibly taking dinner registers to the school office. Pupils enjoy supporting local charities. Pupils have good opportunities to develop initiative and are ready to take even more responsibility.
20. Attendance is satisfactory, although slightly below the national average. However, inspectors had no concerns because the school rigorously checks on pupils' absence. It follows through, carefully, the absence of those pupils about whom it is concerned. The school cites extended holidays abroad as a contributory factor to the lower than expected attendance. The computerised system needs to be used more effectively to monitor the most common reasons for absence. Local traffic conditions, especially as some pupils live some distance from the school, often contribute to a small but significant number of pupils arriving late in the morning. However, the start of the school day is organised in such a purposeful way that lateness does not affect the pupils' learning.
21. The high focus that the school places on pupils' personal development, as well as their academic achievement, significantly contributes to the good, and often very good, standards pupils achieve. Pupils take full advantage of the very good learning opportunities provided by their teachers. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are strengths of the school. Parents agree.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. During the inspection, in all of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching and the consequent learning was satisfactory or better. Of those lessons, 21 per cent were satisfactory, 39 per cent were good, 29 per cent were very good and 11 per cent were excellent. This very good quality teaching was seen in all year groups and in all subjects. This is a major strength of the school.
23. In the previous inspection, a very small minority of teaching was judged unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case, as the quality of teaching is very good. The unsatisfactory lessons in the previous inspection were mostly attributed to a lack of challenge in the work set. Standards in teaching have improved, partially due to the very good monitoring systems in place. Teachers now challenge pupils of all abilities very well and the outcome of this is that pupils achieve very well.
24. The quality of teaching and learning for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. During the inspection, 13 per cent of lessons observed were excellent, 47 per cent were very good and 33 per cent were good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This consistently high quality teaching is reflected in the rapid rate of progress that the children make in their early years at school. This has a positive

impact on the development of the children's knowledge and understanding. The teachers and all members of the support staff work very well together to develop and increase children's learning. They have a clear understanding of the educational and social needs of young children. All members of staff have realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. They speak precisely and clearly. This helps the children to make good progress in developing their speaking skills. Children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make very good progress in their learning. All members of staff place careful emphasis on the teaching of specific skills; for example, how to use pencils, paint, musical instruments and the computer. They encourage pupils to work independently and to make good choices.

25. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. In lessons seen during the inspection, 11 per cent of the teaching was excellent, 34 per cent was very good and 22 per cent was good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Excellent literacy and history lessons were observed. As a result of this high quality teaching, pupils achieve very well and make rapid progress. All staff work very well as a team and share their expertise very effectively to ensure that pupils learn well in all subjects. Teachers match the level of work very closely to the needs of all pupils and challenge them very well, ensuring good success.
26. The quality of teaching in Years 3-6 is also very good. Excellent teaching was seen during the inspection in 9 per cent of lessons. These were literacy, numeracy, science and art and design lessons. In 40 per cent of lessons, teaching was very good. It was good in a further 30 per cent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can do and plan work to extend their knowledge and understanding very effectively. As a result, pupils achieve high standards and enjoy the challenging tasks set, confident that they will do well.
27. The teaching of literacy is consistently good or better. Teachers plan effectively to the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. They use a good range of ways in which to teach pupils, including drama and role-play. Classroom activities are often purposeful and interesting. This motivates pupils to want to concentrate and do well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage pupils to have high expectations of themselves. Lessons develop at a good pace and pupils complete a good quantity of work. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and accurately and have a very good knowledge of how well they are doing. They provide pupils with achievable targets; for example, when they work in groups or classes composed according to ability. Most pupils take these targets very seriously and do their best to meet them. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their written and spoken work, as well as that of their peers, in plenary sessions and when they work alone. Teachers can then judge how to help pupils to improve further. Marking is regularly undertaken and is often useful in assisting pupils to identify how they can improve, although it occasionally varies in quality between classes. Relationships are usually excellent and, as a result, pupils feel secure, are unafraid to ask questions and learn willingly from their mistakes.
28. Numeracy teaching is very good. Teachers have worked hard to adjust what they do in lessons to meet the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the excellent and very good lessons observed during the inspection, the teachers had very high expectations.
29. Particular strengths of the teaching are the very good planning and organisation. The two teachers in each year group plan together, very often with a good experienced teacher working with a newer and younger member of staff. This is good staff

- development. Teachers have very good strategies for capturing pupils' interest and use practical resources effectively to make the work easy to follow and to understand.
30. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers plan very well to meet the needs of individual pupils. They match work carefully to their levels of attainment. They brief and deploy support staff very well. This results in pupils making very good progress. The very good team work between the teachers and support staff results in very good learning for these pupils.
 31. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are met well. Teachers, during question and answer sessions, are very well aware of the needs of different pupils and make sure all participate. They provide tasks well matched to individual pupils' learning needs. The very good teaching that occurs in lessons enables pupils with English as an additional language to make good progress in most lessons.
 32. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. They use good subject-based language to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of each subject. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher used words such as 'reacted' and 'irreversible' in the class work on reversible changes. The pupils became confident in the use of these terms and their understanding of their work increased noticeably.
 33. Teachers are effective in teaching to their strengths and this is seen in the parallel classes where the teachers give one another good support. They share their expertise successfully and are enthusiastic to improve their skills in subjects such as information and communication technology. The skills of specialist teachers are used very well to promote good knowledge and understanding of subjects such as French and music. In these lessons, pupils make rapid progress and learn very well.
 34. Planning is very good. Teachers in the Foundation Stage plan very well for the areas of learning for young children. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the teachers plan very closely to the structured frameworks of the national strategies. This is a strength of their work. Teachers set out clearly what it is that they expect the pupils to learn during the lesson. They share this with the pupils at the beginning of the lessons. This is a consistent feature of teaching throughout the school. The teachers clearly understand the need to develop the pupils' learning through carefully structured work and they mostly challenge pupils well. For example, in a literacy lesson, the teacher's very clear explanation of how to use the most powerful words in writing ensured that all pupils understood the task. The activity was set up in such a way as to challenge the pupils' understanding and to enable them to use good descriptive language. They were challenged well and consequently responded well, making rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding. At the end of the lessons, teachers check, by questioning, whether pupils have learned what was expected. This carefully constructed work means that teachers are fully focused in their teaching and pupils on their learning.
 35. Teachers' expectations of the pupils and their work are very high. The talented and gifted pupils have been identified and receive work well matched to their needs. Occasionally, in less successful lessons, teachers do not sustain sufficient challenge and tasks planned are less interesting. However, such is the pupils' enthusiasm for work that they remain interested and attentive and, therefore, still learn satisfactorily.
 36. The excellent relationships between pupils and adults add to the quality of the work produced and the way in which pupils learn. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and to the very best of their ability. Pupils work well in groups, pairs and individually.

Teachers encourage them to concentrate on their work and not to waste any time. Pupils collaborate very well in class and listen to each other as they discuss and talk about their work. They are prepared to be critically supportive of each other as they deliberate about their work and talk about improvements.

37. Teachers organise their lessons very well. They group pupils very effectively and this helps them to learn well. Staff use the format of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well to support teaching in other subjects. Teachers use cross-curricular links constructively. For example, pupils use information and communication technology effectively to support many other subjects, including art, mathematics, English, history and geography. They also integrate very effectively much geography and history into religious education topics.
38. The management of pupils throughout the school is very good. Consequently, the pupils work in a busy, interested and active manner. All staff manage pupils consistently. Teachers organise time and resources very effectively. They keep the pupils actively involved in their lessons. They move lessons along at a good pace. They use resources well to support the work in the classrooms.
39. The quality of day-to-day assessment is very good. Teachers mark pupils' books regularly in an encouraging and supportive manner. The day-to-day recording of pupils' individual levels of attainment is systematically and consistently developed throughout the school. There are very good systems for recording and passing on information to other teachers, both at the end of the year and to supply teachers. This enables teachers to effectively stretch and challenge all the pupils in the class. Pupils have a good range of homework. The work that pupils do at home is valued by the teachers and enhances pupils' learning.

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

40. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. For the children in the Foundation Stage the standard is very good and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is good. However, there is an imbalance in the time allocated to some subjects in Years 3 to 6. This is particularly the case for design and technology, history, geography and music. Pupils do not, therefore, have enough opportunities on a regular basis to practise the skills learned in these subjects. The school has very sensibly concentrated on implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in the last three years. It has done this to maintain high standards in English and mathematics and it has succeeded in doing that. To succeed in those two subject areas, the emphasis on other subjects has necessarily been reduced. As a consequence, standards in these subjects, although satisfactory, have not risen as rapidly as in English and mathematics. The school has recognised this and has already developed plans to raise the status of subjects, such as music and design and technology, so that standards will improve.
41. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the last inspection. There are now schemes of work in all subjects that match the requirements of Curriculum 2000, although plans for design and technology are not yet complete. The issue regarding physical education has been addressed. Outdoor and adventure activities are now covered during the residential trip made by all Year 6 pupils. This represents good improvement since the time of the last inspection.
42. The curriculum now satisfies all statutory requirements and includes a very good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. This includes appropriate provision for sex education and drugs awareness. Educational visits,

including residential opportunities for all pupils in Year 6, are well established and form an important part of the development of pupils' social skills and independence. A lack of space, caused by the building work, has resulted in a number of extra-curricular activities, such as choir and recorder club being suspended. However, the school does still give pupils satisfactory extra-curricular options to participate in sport, French and chess.

43. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Planning for these young children incorporates the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Lesson planning is corporate and detailed, giving the children access to a wide range of suitable activities and learning experiences. These prepare them very well for the National Curriculum, from Year 1 onwards.
44. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and they are having a positive impact on standards. The school has detailed provision for promoting literacy and numeracy that is in line with the requirements of the strategies. The work in both subjects is carefully planned to ensure consistency across the school. Opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are also carefully planned. For example, in science, pupils are encouraged to use scientific terminology when describing their observations. They also use numeracy skills to measure accurately the results of their scientific experiments.
45. The senior management team monitors the quality and range of opportunities offered to pupils. Every four years there is a school curriculum audit. This considers parental comments, as well as governors' findings, and informs planning to take advantage of improvements in the opportunities provided. This system is good. It ensures that what is taught is suitable for pupils' ages and abilities. It builds well on previous skills and knowledge in order to extend pupils' learning as far as possible. However, the senior management team is large and it is possible for potential problems to be overlooked. The school has identified this and subject leaders have increased their role in monitoring their subject.
46. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all. The mission statement, prospectus and staff handbook reflect the policy of the school. The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of age, ability or gender, have equal access to the curriculum. This is noticeably effective in the cases of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. They integrate well in classroom work and work well alongside their peers.
47. Support for pupils at the early stages of learning English is satisfactory. The specialist support that they receive in withdrawal sessions is good, helping them to make progress. However, there is limited support in lessons other than the literacy lessons. Very little support is available for older pupils who have attained a basic level of competency, except for help in national tests at 11 years of age when needed.
48. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. It complies fully with the Code of Practice² for pupils on the register of special educational needs. Pupils are very carefully assessed and their needs are very accurately diagnosed. They receive good support in school and from outside agencies. The quality of individual education plans is good and activities are very well matched to the targets set. Pupils receive good quality teaching and high quality support in class. This

² Code of Practice: this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

enables them to follow a broadly similar curriculum to their classmates. Records are very well maintained and progress is very carefully monitored. All reviews and statutory assessments are properly carried out.

49. The school has good relationships with nearby schools. It meets other primary schools for sporting fixtures. There are curriculum links with the nearby Catholic high school. These extend to sharing resources and staff expertise, especially for information and communication technology. Records of pupils' progress and achievements are shared with the high school and there is good liaison between the two schools. This ensures that pupils transfer smoothly to the high school when they are 11 years old.
50. The community contributes positively to the life of the school. The police force, fire brigade, St. John's ambulance and road safety teams regularly come into school to support specific programmes of work. Student teachers and nursery nurses, and work experience pupils from local schools, are welcomed in school. They give valued support to pupils and enrich the life of the school. The Bishop and local priests support pupils' religious education and their personal, social and health education. The school has connections with local businesses and senior citizen residences. The school choir, for instance, goes to sing to the senior citizens. In return, the older folk share information about the local area with the pupils and act as 'living artefacts' for history lessons.
51. The school provides for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. The dedicated headteacher, ably supported by caring and committed staff, is pivotal in this provision. This is an even more positive picture than was found during the last inspection, when it was judged to be very good. St Michael and St Martin's School is a very caring place, where the principles of showing compassion, love and respect for each other, the wider community and the world are evident. There are powerful and spiritually uplifting displays in many corridors and in most classrooms in the school. This excellence is also evidenced in subjects such as art, English and music and in other lessons where the teachers encourage the pupils to think about their attitudes and feelings. Through very carefully planned assemblies, the pupils develop a very good insight into citizenship and these help to strengthen the sense of belonging to a community.
52. The school has aims and principles for these important aspects of school life and these underpin all learning activities for pupils. As a result, there is a calm purposeful atmosphere, in which the pupils learn very comfortably. The pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and their behaviour is very good. At the time of the inspection, this was evidenced by the way in which the pupils worked during their lessons and did not allow the severe restrictions, brought about by the activities of the builders, to distract them from their enthusiasm for their learning. The parents are justly proud of the way in which the school helps their children to become confident, responsible people with enduring values, able to contribute effectively to society. The rich experiences and activities that are offered to the pupils, both in lessons and in educational visits, effectively help them to prepare for life as adults.
53. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent. There is a very well planned programme of collective worship that is mainly Catholic in character, but includes an appropriate range of festivals and events from other religions. A spiritual element of awe and wonder is apparent in these assemblies where the pupils are encouraged to reflect upon some of the fundamental questions in their lives. The teachers take care to value the pupils' ideas for others to see; for example, in lessons there are plenary sessions where the pupils are helped to take pride in themselves

through discussions on new learning. There are also moments of genuine awe and wonder in lessons, such as when Year 2 pupils imagine what it is like to be a seed in the warm ground and then burst into life. Similarly, there is joy in the faces of the reception pupils who finally make the bulb light up or those in Year 5 as they proudly show their Greek pottery. As the pupils move through the school they are provided with numerous opportunities to reflect upon world issues and their place within the scheme of things. Their responses are thoughtful and display a deep spiritual awareness and self-knowledge.

54. The school provides outstandingly well for pupils' moral development. The school places a very strong emphasis on moral issues and the staff work very hard to develop high moral standards. The pupils are taught the principles of right and wrong; these are embedded in all aspects of school life and are respected by the pupils. Teachers reinforce moral principles and use praise effectively to support these ideals. They understand the importance of leading by example and treat each pupil with individual respect. The school operates as an honest and fair society, which actively promotes equal opportunities, regardless of ability, background, gender or belief. The pupils know and respect class and school rules; they understand the importance of self-discipline, fairness, trust and honesty. They are proud of their school. The success of the school's endeavours is demonstrated by the careful manner in which the pupils handle resources and equipment during their lessons and in their responsible behaviour when sharing space in and around school.
55. The provision for the pupils' social development is excellent. Social education permeates all aspects of school life, as exemplified by the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school and by the way in which staff set excellent role models. This is further enhanced by the active support that the school receives from the parish priest and the governors. They regularly participate in the daily life of the school. Many aspects of school life successfully promote positive relationships. A class of older pupils, for instance, performs an assembly for younger pupils. The warmth of the response is testimony to the success of this policy. Opportunities for social contact outside the classroom, such as extra-curricular activities and visits, further encourage this development. The school benefits greatly from the strong support it receives from parents and the wider community. This has a significant impact upon pupils' social development. The pupils are encouraged to show sensitivity and consideration for the needs of others. This is reflected in the wide range of charity and fund-raising activities, such as the Harvest Fast Day, carol singing for the Save the Children Fund and fund-raising for the Holy Childhood mission and the Catholic Children's Society.
56. The pupils' cultural understanding is also developed outstandingly well, through subjects such as English, geography, history, art and music and particularly through religious education. A wealth of experiences, visits and visitors heightens the pupils' awareness of some of the wider dimensions of life. The pupils celebrate other festivals beside Christmas and Easter. These include the Chinese New Year, the Muslim Eid and Hindu Divali. Pupils learn about Buddhist symbols for love, friendship and peace. There are planned opportunities for the pupils to appreciate their own culture and recognise its beauty. For instance, the school organises a Book Week, when pupils meet a variety of storytellers, poets and authors. There are also visits from travelling theatre companies and musicians from a range of different cultures. Pupils visit art galleries as they study the work of famous artists as well as art that originates in other cultures. An essential feature of St Michael and St Martin's School is the way that it celebrates the cultural diversity of its pupils and this ensures that its pupils are prepared outstandingly well for life in a modern, multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. The support, guidance and welfare provided to pupils are very good. Teachers and support staff know and understand the pupils well and care for their personal and academic needs in a sensitive and supportive way. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, and those who returned questionnaires, confirmed that the school recognises the needs of children requiring support, and expressed a consensus view that the school is a safe, secure place. They feel comfortable leaving their children there. The high quality of support and guidance has been consistently maintained since the last inspection.
58. Health and safety practice is very good. Attention given to the health and safety requirements, during the construction of new classrooms, is excellent. There is good provision for first-aid, including a dedicated medical room. Child protection procedures are effective. The deputy headteacher is the child protection co-ordinator and well-trained school staff are diligent. The issue raised in the last inspection report, that 'child protection procedures were not fully understood by all participants in the life of the school, and routines for reporting concerns not clearly identified', has been fully addressed. There are established links with all the appropriate external agencies.
59. The policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are good. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the school and incidents of unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying, are dealt with effectively and sensitively. Pupils respond well to the rewards and incentives that promote extra effort, high quality work and considerate behaviour. The procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and punctuality are good and have improved since the last inspection.
60. Personal, social and health education is included in the curriculum and in dedicated timetabled lessons. The programme covers all aspects of social education, hygiene, sex and awareness of drug misuse. Good hygiene practice is actively promoted, particularly the washing of hands before lunch.
61. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are very good. Teachers make very good use of assessment data. Homework and schoolwork are marked regularly and pointers for improvements are given in the pupils' books.
62. Progress is recorded against national criteria and used appropriately to plan for improvement. Assessments made at the end of each key stage conform to statutory requirements. The school carries out additional testing at regular intervals to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics. Teachers analyse the results of these tests and set realistic targets for pupils. These targets are then regularly reviewed. This information is used well to inform teachers what to teach next.
63. Teachers maintain good records in English and mathematics of what pupils have understood and the skills that they develop. These systems are less well developed in other subjects. Teachers hold common expectations of attainment because the school keeps very good portfolios of pupils' marked work. Teachers identify targets for pupils' individual academic development and this helps them make progress from day to day. The assessment co-ordinator uses assessment data very well to check the progress of different groups of pupils; for example, those with special educational needs, those from different ethnic groups, those who are gifted or talented, and those who use English as an additional language. Pupils who need extra help are identified early and their progress is monitored closely. The success of coupling an early-intervention

strategy with rigorous analysis of assessment is plain to see in the success many achieve in national tests.

64. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development are very good and make a significant contribution to the high levels of attainment. The school provides very good support and guidance and the issues raised after the last inspection have been fully addressed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. The consensus view of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires was that the children like coming to school, enjoy their work, make good progress and that the educational standards are high as a result of good quality teaching. They were united in the view that relationships and behaviour in the school are good, that children care for each other and that the school provides a good Christian ethos. The parents also expressed the view that the school recognises those children who require additional support.
66. A number of parents expressed concern about the lack of individual information in the annual progress reports, regarding how well their children are doing. They also raised questions about inconsistencies in the setting of homework across the school, the lack of regular information about the curriculum and school events, and the limited range of additional activities outside of lessons.
67. The inspectors agree that the annual progress reports have a number of shortcomings. The computer-generated reports lack individuality and provide no real measure of attainment in relation to national standards other than reporting the results of national tests at the end of key stages. There is no facility for pupils to assess themselves.
68. For pupils with special educational needs, the quality of information provided to parents is good. There are regular review meetings where the progress of pupils towards the targets specified in their individual education plans are discussed and new targets agreed. Specialist support teachers of pupils for whom English is not their first language attend parents' evenings and, when required, contact parents at home. The bilingual support teacher for pupils who speak Portuguese is especially helpful in this respect.
69. The inspectors found that the use of homework to support learning is good. The school has an established homework policy and the amount of homework increases appropriately as pupils progress through the school. For younger pupils the emphasis is on reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. Older pupils are, in addition, encouraged to undertake investigative and research tasks, to help them develop their independent learning skills. Homework supports the learning process well.
70. Pupils have access to a number of additional activities during lunch breaks and after school and the concerns expressed by some parents in regard to this are not justified. For example, there are netball, football, chess and French clubs. The inspectors considered that the additional activities provided by the school are satisfactory, particularly while there is building work in progress.
71. The quality of information provided to parents about the curriculum and other school activities is good. There are regularly scheduled opportunities for parents to visit the school, consult with class teachers and gain information about the curriculum and other topic work being undertaken within each year group. The home-school agreements clearly define the expectations and responsibilities of the school, the

parents and the pupils. The contribution of parents towards the learning of their children, and the impact of their involvement in the school, is good.

72. There is an active parents' association, which organises social and fund-raising events and forms an important link between the school, the church and the wider community. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection and is very good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and provides inspirational and sensitive leadership. The very skilful deputy headteacher and the dedicated and hard-working staff support her very well. Staff with specific management responsibilities make a valuable contribution to maintaining good standards. There is an excellent commitment towards raising standards even further and good capability to succeed. The school has explicit Catholic aims and values that are reflected in its daily life and work. These include a strong commitment to the social and educational inclusion for pupils of all abilities and circumstances.
74. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good. The governors' long-term over-view of the school is very good. They understand its strengths and weaknesses and are involved in planning for its future. A very experienced chairman, who has a long association with the school, perceptively leads the governing body. There are a number of recently appointed, enthusiastic governors who have already undertaken training for their role. The governors have established strategies that enable them to monitor and evaluate the performance of the school against agreed objectives and take effective action when needed.
75. The school development plan is fully costed and is a very effective working document that provides a clear perspective on educational priorities. The criteria for monitoring progress against the established priorities are clearly defined. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, the curriculum and the attainment of pupils are good. Planning procedures are dynamic and consistently respond to the needs of pupils and the demands of the curriculum. For example, plans to upgrade information and communication technology resources are an integral part of the building and refurbishment programme.
76. Financial and administrative systems are effective and support the smooth running of the school. The last financial audit, conducted in July 1999, confirmed good financial practice. Regular budget reports enable the senior management and governors to monitor and control expenditure. Specific grants are effectively used for their dedicated purposes. The special educational needs provision is effective and well managed. The support provided for pupils who have English as an additional language is effective. The best principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are effectively applied. Good use is made of new technology for school administration. Its use is being effectively developed to support teaching and learning, and to record and analyse pupil records.
77. The school has a clear commitment to provide equal opportunities for all pupils and a new co-ordinator has been appointed to monitor and develop this aspect of its work. The school already analyses its results in national tests, by gender, free school meals and ethnicity, but aims to extend this monitoring to other areas, such as attendance.

78. The management of the specialist support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is the responsibility of senior management and the equal opportunities co-ordinator. The specialist language support teachers have good skills. However, the school does not always maximise the use of these skills effectively to support work in the classroom.
79. The match of teachers and support staff to the requirements of the National Curriculum is good. Teachers, learning support assistants and ancillary staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. They are effectively managed and deployed. The procedures for appraisal and performance management are established and comply with the latest statutory requirements. Opportunities provided for the professional development of all staff are good. There are effective induction and support procedures for new staff. The school provides excellent training opportunities for student teachers. Newly qualified teachers receive excellent support from a mentor and have a structured induction programme with appropriate and protected non-contact time.
80. The accommodation is satisfactory. Its use is well planned and managed to provide some degree of flexibility for grouping pupils for different activities. The classrooms for the Foundation Stage are spacious and fully meet the needs of the number of pupils on roll. There is a dedicated and well equipped outdoor play area for children in the nursery class. The reception classes are mainly open-plan and provide a good degree of flexibility for teaching and other learning activities. Mobile classrooms provide satisfactory accommodation for the two Year 6 classes.
81. Infant and junior classrooms are small for the number of pupils on roll. The small rooms, particularly those upstairs, restrict the flexibility of teaching; for example, making the use of overhead projectors and audio visual aids difficult and less effective. In some classrooms, it is not possible to gather the pupils into one group for a plenary session in literacy or numeracy. Many of the classrooms are irregular in shape and this can make it difficult for pupils to hear the contribution being made by another pupil.
82. Some of the small non-classroom areas are used very effectively to provide separate libraries for the Foundation Stage, infant and juniors. There is a small, temporary information and communication technology suite. Other small areas are used to store learning resources, for small group activities, and for viewing audio-visual presentations. Good quality displays in classrooms and throughout the school provide a stimulating, Christian ethos. Displays celebrate the work of pupils or visits to places of historic and environmental interest. Others foster interests in literacy, numeracy and other subjects, as well as a wide range of cultural and multi-cultural imagery.
83. The school is located on a partly landscaped and enclosed site. The grounds are well maintained and are free of litter and graffiti. They are a tribute to the caretaker. The hard surfaced and grassed areas provide adequate facility for physical education, organised games and play. An extension to the building, that will provide four additional classrooms, is currently under construction. The additional accommodation will open up opportunities for a comprehensive reorganisation and the allocation of more space for specialist subjects, such as music and information and communication technology.
84. Learning resources are good and fully meet the needs of the National Curriculum. The libraries provide good support to the curriculum. They house an adequate range of fiction to encourage pupils to develop an interest in literature and sufficient non-fiction to support independent investigation. There are sufficient up-to-date working computers to meet the requirements of information and communication technology and

there are a number of others waiting to be installed once the additional space is available in the new suite.

85. This is a very effective school that provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

86. There are no major issues. However, in order to improve the quality of education provided and raise standards achieved in all subjects, the headteacher, staff and governors should consider how the balance of the curriculum could be improved to include:

- extension of opportunities for information and communication technology in all subjects;
- more time allocated to subjects such as music, art and design, design and technology, history and geography.

(paragraphs 1, 14, 40, 63, 100, 103-104, 114, 116, 12- 128, 132-133, 141, 143, 147-148 and 153)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	59

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
11	39	29	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	446
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	61

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	119

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	39	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	20	26	21
	Girls	37	39	35
	Total	57	65	56
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (82)	100 (96)	86 (91)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	23	21	20
	Girls	37	35	36
	Total	60	56	56
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (82)	86 (87)	86 (81)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	39	27	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	31	32	36
	Girls	21	23	23
	Total	52	55	59
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (94)	83 (90)	89 (93)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	25	29	29
	Girls	20	22	20
	Total	45	51	49
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (85)	77 (88)	74 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	19
Black – other	0
Indian	61
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	5
White	200
Any other minority ethnic group	100

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	34

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	251.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	883,976
Total expenditure	870,107
Expenditure per pupil	1,809
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,412
Balance carried forward to next year	39,281

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 48%

Number of questionnaires sent out	498
Number of questionnaires returned	241

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	20	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	27	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	29	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	35	7	1	7
The teaching is good.	76	24	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	29	7	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	28	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	22	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	60	29	6	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	25	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	24	17	11	15

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

87. Children enter the nursery in the September after they are three years old. Importantly, the very good induction procedures give them a smooth start to their learning. The nursery is close to the reception classes and the children have regular contact with other Foundation Stage children. This helps them settle comfortably and securely into the school routines. At the time of the inspection there were 52 children in the nursery class. Half attend the morning session and half the afternoon class. Children enter school with a wide range of attainment. Assessments made over the first few weeks of their schooling suggest that attainment is slightly below that of children of this age nationally. A high proportion of children are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a significant number speak English as an additional language. This can inhibit their ability to communicate when they begin school, but they quickly make very good progress. Inspectors saw no children having difficulties in communicating with classmates and staff.
88. The majority of the children from the nursery class move into the reception classes in the September after they are four years old. They settle into these classes very well and very quickly and continue to make very good progress. At this stage, there is a wide range of ability, but tests undertaken in the first few weeks in reception indicate that most children attain at levels expected of the age group. The curriculum for the pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good and children make good progress and achieve very well in their learning. By the end of the year most are on line to attain the standards expected for this age group, with many likely to achieve beyond this. This is an improvement on the judgements made at the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

89. Staff place great emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is very good and pupils make very good progress. As a result, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are likely to surpass the levels in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills expected of pupils at this stage nationally. Children come happily into their classes and settle quickly into the caring atmosphere, where they are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They become increasingly confident and familiar with the well-established routines. They thrive in the stimulating and secure environment and soon learn to relate well to adults and each other. They are quick to learn the conventions of good social behaviour and share and take turns amicably, for example when in their role-play. Children clearly enjoy their work and co-operate happily with each other and adults. For example, children in reception were eager to make a card for Mothering Sunday. They shared resources and ideas happily with each other, and talked confidently with staff, while producing a card. Staff constantly reinforce good habits, such as getting the children to put up their hands to answer questions or make comment, and make sure that they tidy up after activities. Children are encouraged to dress themselves independently for physical education activities.

Communication, language and literacy

90. The development of communication, language and literacy is very good. It is in this area, and in particular language and literacy, that some children can encounter difficulty. This is particularly evident for those who speak English as an additional language. However, due to the very good quality of the teaching, most of the children

make good and often very good progress. As a result, by the end of the Foundation Stage nearly all are likely to reach standards typical of children of this age in this area of their development, with many surpassing it. Children quickly understand that pictures and print convey meaning. The teachers use and adapt the literacy strategy well to meet the developing needs of these young children. This effectively enhances children's listening, speaking and reading skills. It also improves their knowledge of letter sounds. Some of the quicker learning pupils are beginning to blend sounds to make simple words. The teachers choose books and stories carefully to increase children's interest in reading and to encourage a love of literature. All staff use precise and clear diction to assist children's speech. They encourage the children to speak clearly in sentences. Most children consolidate and develop their early writing skills well. They hold and use pencils correctly and most make very good attempts at writing their own names.

Mathematical development

91. Children's mathematical development is good. Most children are on line to at least meet the goals set at the end of the Foundation Stage. Most children make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills through very effective teaching. All staff develop these skills very effectively through a carefully planned range of activities. They use everyday situations, such as registration and music times, to make number work real for the children. For example, teachers play games using the numbers of children having school dinner or packed lunches to re-enforce numbers. Children play games, for example matching and counting numbers up to 10. Most count to 10 easily, and many beyond. They become aware of number operations, such as adding and subtracting in ones. They name shapes, such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles, accurately and use them to make patterns and pictures.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

92. The school provides very well for children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are on line to meet, or exceed, the goals set for the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and teachers provide many exciting activities to promote this area of development. The children have many opportunities to explore the natural and man-made world in the development of their scientific skills. For example, through their cooking activities in the nursery, children observe how heat changes everyday materials and some are beginning to predict what might happen when they make 'Spring Sunshine Cookies'. In reception, they develop very good understanding of how toys move by sorting a variety of toys into battery operated, magnetic and wind up groups. They begin to understand the importance of electricity and how it works by 'role-playing' being a power circuit. They develop their design and making skills well through building, for instance, towers using wooden blocks, interlocking plastic bricks and other construction toys. Children use computers regularly. Many are developing a good understanding of familiar programs and of how to use the mouse for accurate control.

Physical development

93. Children's physical development is good and most will reach, or exceed, the goals set for this area of learning. From the nursery onwards, they have access to, and use proficiently, a suitably wide range of tools, such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue, to make pictures and models. Children develop their physical skills well in indoor and outdoor activities and most are well co-ordinated and agile. In a lesson in the hall, the nursery children used the space well, avoiding bumping into one another as they

moved around. They learned the importance of warming up before physical activity and knew that exercise was 'good for them'. In an outdoor session, they were not deterred by the cold. They practised rolling hula-hoops, jumping and skipping and experimented on the outdoor climbing frame with agility. In reception, children dance rhythmically, representing toys. They use space well and show good co-ordination as they develop imaginative sequences. These physical activities also contribute greatly to pupils' social development. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff always ensure that pupils are working safely both outdoors and indoors, for example making sure that pupils use scissors correctly.

Creative development

94. Children's creative development is very good. Most children are likely to achieve or exceed the expectations for this area of learning by the time they begin Year 1. Children hold brushes correctly and apply paint to paper with great confidence. Most children show a good awareness of shape, pattern and basic colours and mix paint to achieve different colours. They sing a variety of songs from memory, accompanying themselves with appropriate actions. Through these activities children also develop their language, literacy and social skills further when, for example, they were 'answering the telephone' in their French lesson. The teaching is very good and children enjoy the well-planned activities.
95. The level of staffing is good. All teachers have very good support from the support assistants. In all classes, there is good support for pupils who have special educational needs and, when needed, for those who speak English as an additional language. All members of staff who teach children under five have a clear commitment to raising standards. They plan carefully to meet individual needs and effectively challenge differing abilities. They work closely with teachers of the five to seven-year-olds to continue to develop the current good practice.
96. The co-ordinator for the early years works extremely hard. Since September, with the rest of the staff, she has put in place a very effective and suitable programme of work covering well all the areas of learning outlined for the Foundation Stage. The classrooms, although small, are very stimulating and safe. Learning resources are good and used very well.

ENGLISH

97. Pupils attain highly in English and all age groups make good progress from the nursery to Year 6. Standards are above average for pupils aged 7 and 11 years. Teachers have achieved good progress in recent years in establishing good standards of literacy. Most pupils enter Year 1 with average language skills. They learn quickly to read and write because they receive good teaching. Boys do as well as girls, which is against the national trend. The analysis of results attained by pupils from different ethnic groups shows few differences. Most pupils achieve well in relation to their prior learning. The percentage of pupils using English as an additional language who attained at least National Curriculum Level 4 in 2000 was 6 per cent higher than the average for the area. A significant proportion of pupils makes very good progress in all aspects of English. Less-able pupils make good progress throughout the school because of the skilled support that they get from teachers and teaching assistants, as well as through their own hard work. More-able pupils also attain well and make good progress. Those few who are gifted or talented make early progress in becoming literate because they are identified quickly and provided with suitably challenging work. About 10 per cent of pupils enter the school at different times other than recognised starting points. They invariably make good progress and a few make great strides in their learning in a very short time.

98. Pupils throughout the school listen very carefully. They concentrate very well in lessons and respond eagerly to the questions or instructions that they are given. Younger pupils speak well and articulate their views simply and boldly. They are happy and confident with adults. They give their views candidly and articulately, for example, about the need for co-operation between people from different cultures in a school assembly of the highest quality. Through work in all subjects, pupils broaden their spoken vocabulary and, by the age of seven, use a good range of words when talking about their work. The older pupils' standards in speaking are usually above average and, sometimes, well above average. Many pupils can adapt their speech to suit formal and informal occasions; for example, when answering their teacher's questions in class or when making a speech to 250 other pupils. Most speak clearly, expressively and sometimes with vivacity. They learn to show awareness of the needs of the text and their audience. Pupils develop confidence and considerable skill in performance through their participation in school assemblies of very high quality and extra-curricular drama workshops. On public occasions pupils achieve very high standards in speaking, mime and role-play. This is a direct result of the very high examples of production and direction presented by their teachers.
99. Standards in reading by the age of seven are above average. Teachers place a strong emphasis upon reading and give pupils good opportunities to read to themselves, in groups or to the teacher or other adults. This helps most to achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in learning to read. Many pupils read and understand both fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils use a wide range of strategies in order to read unfamiliar words. A significant minority of pupils reads fluently, enjoying reading their own choice of fiction as well as graded reading scheme texts. They use phonic skills as well as context and picture clues to help them to read simple texts independently. When pupils share reading in class with 'big books' it helps them to become aware of simple aspects of grammar, such as the use of tenses, singular or plural. Few pupils remain hesitant readers and those who do receive very good individual support. These pupils lack a good awareness of phonics and some are unsure how to read new words, but they catch up quickly. By the age of 11, pupils have improved their skill in reading well. An increasing number in each year group read independently, both for pleasure and to obtain information. In Years 3 and 5, reading standards are well above average. Pupils predict how a story may unfold with increasing sophistication. Many discuss and compare texts and authors, and describe characters. Those with special educational needs make good progress in reading. Many pupils have above average research skills. They use indexes to locate and use information for their topic work. Older pupils use good techniques when searching for information in non-fiction books. They understand well the features of reference books, such as the glossary, the contents page and the index. Pupils understand how books are classified in libraries and how to search for particular books. The libraries and classrooms are well stocked with attractive, well-displayed books. Pupils use them to help with research in other subjects as well as to obtain fictional texts. Teachers boost the home-school partnership wherever possible by the links they make with parents to help children read. These links help many pupils to become fluent readers.
100. Attainment in writing is above national expectations throughout the school. Teachers set accurate individual targets for improving pupils' early writing because they effectively analyse baseline assessments on entry to the school. Pupils' writing then improves steadily as they grow older. They become competent in constructing and punctuating sentences. Standards in spelling are very good. Pupils use their phonic skills and their knowledge of common words to write legibly with few mistakes. They learn to write in a variety of formats, including instructions, historical reports, persuasive writing, stories, personal writing and poetry. By Year 2, many write at considerable length. Many

understand how to adapt style to suit different genres of writing. Standards of handwriting throughout the school are excellent. Most pupils achieve a joined, regular cursive style of writing by the end of Year 3 and some by the end of Year 2. Older pupils learn to draft and redraft their writing usually using a pen, but sometimes on a computer. Most pupils have a good written vocabulary. They learn how to use adjectives, adverbs, metaphors and similes to give their writing interest and colour where applicable. Pupils have a good understanding of the formal conventions of grammar, and are confident to discard these when appropriate. By Year 4, most pupils incorporate much of this into their work and occasionally standards are very good. By the age of 11, pupils experience writing for a real audience that is wider and more varied than the people in the immediate school community. Year 6 pupils, for example, have written letters to famous people, such as the footballer Dennis Wise and the astronomer Patrick Moore, and received positive responses. Older pupils also become more aware of the needs of different audiences, when they read their work back to pupils in Years 1 and 2. Collaborative writing of short pieces of prose or a class poem, where the teacher acts as a facilitator, effectively develops pupils' creative writing. The use of information and communication technology is helping pupils to reach a wider range of audiences, but this is not a strong feature of learning.

101. Teachers sometimes create strong links between their work in other subjects, such as reports about Queen Elizabeth I, and aspects of English like the use of speech-marks. Teachers plan collaboratively for writing and as a result pupils have an improved range and balance of writing experiences. As well as writing narratives, letters and leaflets, pupils also compose poetry and other imaginative forms of writing, such as descriptions of mythical monsters. Pupils regularly use subject vocabulary and specific sentence patterns to strengthen their writing. In many classes they gain a sense of themselves as writers. Pupils' writing benefits from the display of stimulating language materials, such as labels, captions, extracts from texts, vocabulary lists, class 'books' and portfolios. Displays often include examples of pupils' own writing, allowing them to acquire a growing sense of audience and pride in the celebration of their achievements. The best displays include writing activities related to work in many areas of learning. These displays help pupils to appreciate writing as a means of communication in a range of contexts.
102. Teaching is consistently good or better throughout the school. Half of the teaching seen during the inspection was very good or excellent. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy in a very effective way and this has played a key role in raising standards in reading and writing. Teachers have built a good knowledge of how to teach English consistently from year to year, and they have received excellent guidance from the subject leaders. Lessons usually start crisply. Pupils listen carefully from the start, respond accurately, and steadily gain basic skills and a deeper understanding. Teachers plan lessons very thoroughly, both in the short term and through each year. They tell pupils what they are going to learn, orally, in writing on whiteboards and on cards or posters. At the end of lessons, they revise what they have learned. Consequently, pupils know exactly what is expected of them and develop a very good understanding of how to learn. Occasionally, however, learning objectives are not stated clearly and the relevance of lessons is less obvious. Teachers assess pupils' reactions skilfully and develop their thinking through careful questioning. This successfully encourages pupils to think deeply, to consolidate what they have learned and to become more mature.
103. Teachers use information and communication technology to support learning. Pupils use word-processing to assist with editing and presentation, and educational games to help with the raising of reading standards. They are given some opportunities to read and write during their work in other subjects and use writing frames to help structure their writing.

104. The subject is led excellently by two able, well-qualified and experienced subject leaders, who plan, evaluate and guide the work of the school very effectively. The school is very well placed to raise standards even higher over the next few years, given the imminent improvements in its accommodation.

MATHEMATICS

105. By the time they leave school at 11 years of age, pupils' standards in mathematics are well above average. They achieve very well given their below average attainment on entering the nursery. This achievement is reflected in the school's well above average performance in national tests for 11 year olds over the last three years. The school was in the top 25 per cent of all schools nationally in summer 2000, and in the two previous years the top 5 per cent. These results are very much better than those of pupils in similar schools.
106. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and build well on the very good start that they have made in the nursery and reception years. The attainment of current Year 2 pupils is at the level expected for their age (Level 2). Most can count to 100, many to 200 and a few to 1,000. They are confident in adding numbers up to 10 and some pupils can add numbers up to 20. Pupils gain good knowledge and understanding of higher level work (Level 3). They count confidently in twos and tens, both forwards and backwards, and the most able pupils are beginning to have good quick recall of their two and ten times tables. Results in national tests for seven-year-olds have varied from below the national average to above over the last few years. The school can well account for these variations as it keeps good records of pupils' attainment at five years and analyses results carefully. In summer 2000, when results were below the national average and those of similar schools, most pupils achieved as expected, with a third doing better. The identification of aspects less secure in mathematics teaching through an error analysis programme also identified areas for improvement in teaching. The school is now addressing these, both with current Year 2 pupils and those pupils who were in Year 2 last year.
107. In Years 3-6, pupils make very good progress. The good teaching in basic skills in Years 1 and 2 makes a significant contribution to the very good achievement of pupils at this stage of their education. It results in the pupils' very good performance in national tests at 11 years. Standards for the current Year 6 pupils are well above average. Very few are working at levels below those expected nationally for their age and at least half are working at levels above. Number skills are very secure. Pupils have quick recall of the times tables to ten, confidently work in decimals to two decimal places, know how to find the average of a set of data and are developing good problem solving skills. Given their average results in national tests at seven years of age, this group of pupils is achieving extremely well.
108. Pupils have good numeracy skills. Those of the oldest pupils are very good. They are able to use these effectively in other areas of the curriculum, such as for graphical work in science and geography and time-lines in history. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils accurately measured the lengths of shadows whilst studying the movement of the sun and the earth in science. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills receives good attention in mathematics lessons, with pupils being asked to explain their results to the class as a whole. Teachers make sure that pupils can read, write and understand key technical words such as 'multiple' and 'factor'. From Year 1 pupils are expected to record their work in their own mathematics books. This develops good presentation skills from an early age.

109. Throughout the school, there are no significant variations in the performances of girls and boys or those from different ethnic groups. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, but for those at the early stages of learning English, mainly in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, attainment has not yet fully reached the levels that these pupils should be capable of achieving. However, they listen carefully in lessons. Teachers' very good question-and-answer techniques and use of visual resources, such as number fans, help pupils to follow the lesson content and acquire new skills. Such teaching methods also effectively support pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make very good progress. Specific planning and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is less evidence of specific planning for pupils with English as an additional language, particularly for older pupils, to make sure that they make the best possible progress.
110. Pupils enjoy mathematics and, as a consequence, are keen and enthusiastic in lessons, work hard and take full advantage of the very good learning opportunities provided. Year 6 pupils like mathematics because their teachers 'make it easy by showing them the best methods to use'. Year 2 pupils respond enthusiastically when the teacher informs them that it is time for their numeracy lesson.
111. The teaching is very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent. The school has very effectively implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and the strategy has a very positive impact on the teaching of mathematics. The school benefits from having two teachers on the staff who are among the local authority's lead teachers for the strategy. As a result, pupils' learning in lessons is nearly always good, and frequently very good.
112. Teachers have very good questioning skills and most use these with great expertise to make sure that pupils fully understand the work that they are doing. They expect the pupils not only to answer questions, but also to explain how they worked out the answer. Other methods are also discussed, giving the pupils a wide range of strategies to use. For example, in Year 4 the teacher discussed with pupils all of the different ways to find half of an amount of money or of a length. Pupils subsequently used the method with which they were most happy to complete successfully the work that followed. The school is currently focusing on improving pupils' ability to read and understand problems. Analysis of the summer 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds identified this as an area of weakness. In an excellent Year 6 lesson the teacher, through very good systematic questioning, helped pupils to solve quite complex problems on the cost of different activities in a leisure centre. Through structured tasks they gained skills in selecting the information to use and the steps to take to complete the calculations required for the final answer. They worked at a high level for their age.
113. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Nevertheless, teachers demand high standards of work and behaviour. They set work that, although appropriate to pupils' learning needs, is not always easy. Pupils respond very well to the challenges and, hence, make very good gains in learning. Homework is regularly set and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning, especially in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' learning would be improved further in some lessons by a better use of time. Occasionally, teachers spend too long on the mental arithmetic starter sessions and the introduction to the main activity. A few pupils become a little less attentive and slightly restless. Insufficient time is then left for consolidation and practice of the skills that have been taught.
114. The new subject leader has clear and appropriate priorities for future work in mathematics. He is beginning to implement these and has made a good start to his

new responsibilities. The school has supported him with appropriate subject and management training and a very experienced teacher in the infant part of the school works with him. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics needs further development. A suitable range of computer software is progressively being used by pupils on an individual basis and by teachers for work with pupils as a group. Year 6 pupils successfully use the BBC website revision pages. Newly published materials on the use of information and communication technology to support the National Numeracy Strategy will help to improve this aspect of the school's work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

SCIENCE

115. Standards of attainment are average at ages 7 and 11 years. In recent assessments for seven-year-olds, 86 per cent of pupils attained the expected level. This was below average attainment by national standards. However, 43 per cent of pupils attained a higher level. This was well above the national average and raised the level of attainment to average.
116. In national tests for 11-year-olds, 90 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level, which was above average. Thirty-eight per cent attained the higher Level 5, which again was above average. This is good achievement for pupils of all abilities. It is noticeable that boys outscore girls, whilst girls' attainment exceeds the national average. The school has recently analysed its assessment data and is taking action to target specific groups of pupils to bring about an improvement. This is beginning to prove successful. Knowledge and understanding of all areas of the science curriculum are improving. However, there is still scope for improvement in experimental and investigative science.
117. By the age of seven, pupils make suggestions about how to find things out and carry out tests, explaining whether they consider them to be fair. They have developed an understanding of basic life processes and use this understanding to differentiate between living and non-living things. They devise different ways of sorting materials according to their main properties. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, learn that different materials are chosen for specific purposes on the basis of their properties; warm clothes for a cold day for example. They also develop their understanding of forces. Pupils in Year 2 plant seeds, having carefully considered what the seeds will need in order to grow. They begin to study a topic on electricity. They have a good basic knowledge of what electricity can be used for. They identify which appliances use battery power and which generate light, sound or heat and then record their work appropriately. In one lesson, a group of pupils was taught the rudiments of a circuit and individuals were delighted to explain how the bulb lights up.
118. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary and an increasingly secure base of knowledge. They make well-informed predictions when testing materials that conduct electricity, carry out fair tests and base conclusions on a sound understanding of scientific processes. They investigate whether certain substances are soluble or not and make suggestions for experiments to discover which changes in state are irreversible. They test which habitats different creatures favour and learn about how animals adapt to climatic conditions. They learn about the practical difficulties of storing water and of the harmful effects of pollution.
119. Their knowledge of forces is also good. Higher-attaining pupils know that, by changing the voltage of an electric motor, the speed at which loads can be lifted will be affected. Pupils recall many facts about the human body, a healthy lifestyle and the need for a skeleton to support the body's joints. They have a good understanding of the

conditions that can affect plant growth and the relationships between plants and animals. Many explain the effects caused by the movement of the earth and how a solar eclipse occurs. The majority of pupils can construct a basic circuit correctly to light a series of bulbs. Pupils develop their scientific understanding best when they are given opportunities to plan their own investigations, to select resources and to evaluate the validity of their conclusions.

120. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to discuss, record and measure scientific findings in experiments and observations. Listening and speaking skills are good in all lessons and pupils measure with increasing accuracy. The use of information and control technology skills for research is satisfactory. Pupils begin to use information technology increasingly for collecting, recording and displaying information.
121. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have secure and confident subject knowledge, which they use effectively to extend pupils' thinking. They do this particularly well with well-posed questions. This provides motivation and tests pupils' understanding, so that teachers know what pupils understand. In the most successful lessons, planning focuses on practising and improving key skills that are matched correctly to the stages of pupils' learning. Teachers have high, but realistic, expectations of what pupils can achieve and understand. In the best lessons, teachers regularly gather groups of pupils together to clarify points and also to give extension work to stretch the higher attainers. In the excellent lesson, the teacher, by her infectious enthusiasm, conveyed her love and enjoyment in the subject. Pupils were, therefore, highly motivated and the tasks which they were asked to perform matched their needs exactly. Good quality assessments inform teachers about what to teach next to ensure optimum progress. Teachers use the assessments made during a lesson to guide them in what to teach next to ensure progress by all pupils. Marking effectively guides pupils in how to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are fully integrated in science lessons and participate well, especially orally. They make good progress and are sensitively and effectively supported.
122. In several lessons, teachers made very good use of well-briefed non-teaching assistants. They know exactly the best way to help with small group activities and they make a good contribution to pupils' progress. In all lessons, teachers manage time and deploy resources well. This good organisation ensures that pupils are kept appropriately busy and so has a beneficial impact on their learning.
123. The school makes very good use of the information that it gains from regular assessments. Results are analysed very carefully, errors analysed and trends identified. Deficiencies in opportunities for investigative tasks were noted when the subject leader monitored pupils' completed work. The school has taken swift action to modify the teaching emphasis to remedy this and staff training sessions have taken place. Teachers' lesson planning is monitored regularly to ensure consistency.

ART AND DESIGN

124. Standards in art and design throughout the school are above those expected nationally, particularly in drawing and painting. By the age of 11, pupils investigate and use a variety of materials to communicate their ideas and meanings. They use paints and other media to produce pictures and designs of a good standard. Their pictures of multi-coloured garments in the style of the Ghanaian Ashanti tribe showed them to be capable of mixing colour well. They produce vivid pictures that demonstrate a good feel for the subject, good precision in detail, as well as the ability to use the work of others to influence their own work. By 11, pupils have extended their ability to produce detailed drawings and paintings. Year 6 pupils were able to use charcoal extremely well to capture a sense of the grief of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his Passion on the Cross. Four representations of Christ on display in the hall are of very high quality. They have been completed by groups of pupils collaborating extremely well with each other. They show very strong links between learning in art and intense spiritual development.
125. Pupils have studied paintings by famous artists, such as Georgia O'Keefe, Salvador Dali, Monet, and Geerten Tot Sint Jans. Many are able to produce to a remarkable degree pictures that mirror the styles that they have investigated. Pupils have a good knowledge of art from different cultures and continents, such as Africa, and have studied some aspects of art and design from past eras, for example the Elizabethan Age. In Year 2, pupils have created and painted effective Tudor jewellery and costume to support their work in history. They have also learnt how to revise and improve their work to realise their intentions. Work in Year 5 has produced models of the planets in the solar system that show a good sense of shape, proportion and colour. Pastel still life paintings on display in Year 6 show a vivacious sense of colour and considerable skill in representation. Pupils do not have as much experience of working in other materials, for example textiles, or of larger three-dimensional work. Teachers weave teaching about art into history, science and English and this approach helps pupils make stronger links in their learning.
126. The teaching of art and design throughout the school is good. Teachers manage pupils well and give them good chances to engage in a range of practical activities, apart from in Year 6. When art is taught in Year 6, it is taught well, but this has not happened often enough for pupils to develop enough artistic capability. Teachers in many classes effectively use a variety of ways to teach art, including using the work of famous artists, demonstrating techniques and individually assisting pupils. This variety enables the pupils to learn well. Coaching by classroom assistants, for instance in Year 6, is of high quality, and teacher and assistant form a good team. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and critically evaluate work, as it progresses, to help raise standards. Art teaching is occasionally excellent and it is then characterised by attention to the development of specific artistic skills, such as a sense of proportion and perspective. Pupils are highly motivated. They often enjoy art and they like to draw and paint. They concentrate very well on their work and try hard to do their best. This enables them to take advantage of the evaluations given by the teachers and to achieve well.
127. The subject leaders organize the subject very efficiently. This ensures that the pupils attain good standards. However, the subject has not been the focus of recent school improvement. Consequently, they have not had enough time to monitor teaching and to ensure that all aspects of the art and design curriculum are as well developed as drawing and painting. When such time is given, the subject leaders are well placed to ensure that all art teaching is raised to the level of the school's best.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

128. The school's focus at the time of the inspection was art and design. Therefore, there was very limited evidence of design and technology work. During the week of the inspection there was only one lesson timetabled and displays, planning and pupils' work were mostly focused on art. Consequently, it was not possible to make secure judgements on pupils' standards at 7 and 11 years. Indications are that whilst the pupils' designing and making skills are satisfactory, their skills in evaluating their product to improve, or alter, its use to meet a range of different needs is less well developed. Work within the school is still focused on making finished products. Teachers have not yet fully taken on board the need to ensure that what pupils have designed and made then needs to be evaluated against 'fitness for use'. Pupils do not, as a matter of course, test their product and suggest improvements.
129. Teachers plan to teach the skills of using specialist tools. They give pupils opportunities to choose materials and equipment suitable for the task. Pupils learn these skills efficiently and practise them, in subjects such as art and history. They put considerable effort into their work. For example, they think hard about how to join elastic bands to a smooth surface or paint the slippery surface of a margarine tub, to achieve a particular effect. Year 5 pupils said how they had enjoyed designing and producing their own musical instrument. They then played them, to accompany themselves in an assembly. They said that they had concentrated hard and persevered to complete their task, but they thought that the outcome was worthwhile. However, they had not thought about how to overcome any weaknesses in their product nor what they would do another time to make it better.
130. Teachers' knowledge of the analytical requirements of the subject is not well developed. Pupils are encouraged to make a product to fill a particular need, rather than to explore alternative ideas of how to fulfil that need. They are taught the basic skills of assembly and manipulation and are provided with a range of resources. Teachers have good management skills and share learning objectives with pupils. They stress the safety aspects of using tools. Thus, pupils enjoy working together, take turns and are careful with equipment.
131. The school has a good range of resources. These are easily accessible, in spite of the demands on space through the school as a result of the building work. Pupils have the chance to cook as part of the food technology programme. They also work with a range of malleable materials, such as doughs and clays.
132. The newly appointed subject leader gives firm professional leadership to the subject. She is reviewing the scheme of work in light of the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Her action plan includes extending current practice to focus on evaluation and analysis of what pupils make, and how they can adapt and improve their work. Once implemented, and the planned staff training has taken place, standards are likely to rise rapidly.

GEOGRAPHY

133. Pupils' standards at ages 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. However, the subject has had a lower focus in the curriculum and less time has been allocated to it. The school has rightly placed more emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy to raise standards in English and mathematics. This has meant that subjects, such as geography, have received less attention and standards have thus remained static. The school has identified this

and, with the high standards now achieved in English and mathematics, is now ready to raise the status of subjects such as geography.

134. During the inspection, because the topic focus this term is history, no lessons were seen. Judgements are based, therefore, on discussions with pupils and staff and by scrutinising pupils' work. All pupils, including the least able, the most able, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily by the age of 7 and by the age of 11. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
135. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn appropriate information. They have suitable knowledge about maps and globes and know that the globe represents the world. Younger pupils use positional language well to describe movement and place and to describe the maps that they have drawn. In Year 2, pupils learn about Ghana. They know where it is, what is its capital city, and describe accurately its climate. Teachers encourage pupils to take a lively interest in other religions and cultures and use this as a vehicle to teach geographical skills. This makes the subject meaningful to pupils, allowing them to explore the world around them and to understand and respect the way in which other people live.
136. Much of the geography seen during the inspection was an integral part of history or religious education topics. For example, a Year 3 history topic on Ancient Egypt was used as a good basis for learning about Egypt today. Pupils studied landscape features and climate, as well as life in Egyptian cities today to compare with how Egyptians used to live. This approach puts pupils' learning in context and enables them to make good progress. In discussion with pupils, they said they were keen to learn more about their own area and particularly enjoy finding out about how we effect our own environment. They showed good understanding of how people can improve or damage their environment and gave well-reasoned arguments against pollution factors.
137. There is not sufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching, although from teachers' planning and from talking with pupils it is evident that teaching is at least satisfactory and promotes good progress. Teachers' planning shows that they cover well all the required aspects of the subject and build upon previous work effectively. They assess work informally against the key skills identified in the National Curriculum. Pupils use a suitable range of literacy strategies in seeking geographical information and recording. Good links are made to religious education. For example, when talking about world-wide peacemakers, pupils study the environment and background of the person in focus, and thus learn much about other countries; their climates, landscape and the customs of their peoples. Work undertaken in geography has a good impact on pupils' cultural development.
138. Leadership in geography is satisfactory. There is an appropriate scheme of work and the subject leader is reviewing the planning to ensure coverage of Curriculum 2000. She is developing appropriate links to literacy and numeracy and matching assessment procedures to the new curriculum guidelines. Resources are adequate for the current curriculum and used well.

HISTORY

139. Pupils' standards by the ages of 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including the least able and most able, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily throughout the school.

140. Infant pupils learn appropriate information about the past. Pupils successfully identify some of the changes that have taken place in such things as toys and clothes. They study pictures and photographs, as well as handling historical artefacts to understand the changes. Pupils develop a sound understanding of chronology through discussions with their teachers about Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. They use words such as 'now' and 'a long time ago' when talking about their work. Pupils have a sound knowledge of a number of historical figures, for example Queen Boudicca, 'Bloody' Mary and 'Sweet Master Shakespeare', as well as important past events, such as the Roman Invasion of Britain and the improvement of schools since Victorian times. Older pupils know details about a suitable range of historical periods. They successfully study the Ancient Egyptians and the Anglo Saxons, as well as periods of European and British history, such as the Renaissance, the Reformation and the time of Queen Victoria. Pupils are able to discuss aspects of these periods, for example life-styles, living conditions and clothing, and they can explain some of the differences that distinguish those periods. Pupils also show some confidence in using dates and time-lines and in placing the different periods in a proper historical framework. Pupils throughout the key stage can explain some important events that have taken place, such as the original Olympic Games.
141. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good throughout the school. However, over time they are only satisfactory. When history is taught in Year 6, for example, it is taught well, but this has not happened often enough for pupils to develop enough understanding of historical concepts. It is because pupils have been taught more English and mathematics at the expense of other subjects such as history.
142. Teachers plan lessons well, using appropriate resources, such as photographs, videos and household artefacts, and providing opportunities for pupils to undertake simple research to foster their interest. Pupils, in response, enjoy the subject, settle well to the variety of tasks provided, concentrate well and make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of history. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they make appropriate use of dates, events and artefacts to help develop pupils' understanding of the past. Where teaching was excellent, the teacher planned comprehensively to help pupils understand Elizabeth I's character and life more deeply. Teachers provide pupils with good quality help throughout lessons and pupils readily turn to them for assistance where necessary. Pupils take much care with the presentation of their work and teachers, when they are marking books, provide useful comments to help pupils develop their work further. Teachers further encourage pupils by presenting colourful displays of their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

143. Pupils' attainment at the ages of 7 and 11 are in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum. There are no differences in pupils' achievement caused by gender, pupils' ethnic backgrounds nor by pupils' prior attainment. All pupils make good progress in their learning. At the time of the previous inspection, standards achieved by seven-year-olds were high. Those for 11-year-olds were average, with strengths in many areas. Expectations of the subject have changed since the last inspection and demands on pupils are now greater. Thus standards have steadily risen in line with raised expectations.
144. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 load programmes from a floppy disk, a CD-ROM, the computer's hard drive or from the Internet. They control a mouse to move the cursor round the screen, click to enter different parts of programs, save their work onto the hard drive or on to their own floppy disk and exit programs, closing down the machine

correctly. Older pupils use a computerised microscope and digital cameras. They use a wide variety of equipment, such as overhead projectors, tape recorders and compact disks players.

145. Pupils learn new skills eagerly. They remember, practise, use and develop their knowledge and understanding enthusiastically. They use the skills that they learn appropriately in other subjects. For example, they use, confidently, encyclopaedia programs to search for information in history and English. In lessons, pupils concentrate, share their knowledge, work at a good pace and put considerable effort into their work.
146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers understand well the programs that they choose to use. They match these carefully to support work in subjects such as history and mathematics. Teachers directly teach computer skills. They encourage pupils to 'have a go' and experiment to solve problems. Pupils enjoy this and it results in improved understanding of their work. Teachers' planning is comprehensive. They plan in year groups and share their own expertise and knowledge to benefit all the pupils within a year group.
147. Currently, space for computers is cramped. This problem will be resolved once the suite is completed in the new building. Teachers use the classroom computers well, although it often involves moving furniture around to maximise their effectiveness. They encourage pupils to use computers at every opportunity. However, in some classes it is not possible to place the computer where all pupils can see what the teacher demonstrates. This slows the rate of learning for all pupils, but especially for those who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. When teachers' knowledge and skills are less secure, they over-direct pupils and allow too few opportunities for pupils to fully explore and develop skills for themselves. In these lessons, there is a tendency to work at the speed of the slowest learner. Consequently, this slows the learning for all.
148. As well as being taught as a specific subject, information and communication technology is used to support other curriculum areas. Pupils use the Internet, and CD-ROM programs to research different periods in history. They practise mathematical skills in numeracy lessons. However, while a suitable range of computer software is progressively being used by pupils in a number of subjects this is still a developing area.
149. The new subject leader is keen, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She shares her expertise generously with her colleagues. She monitors what is taught in classes and advises and guides colleagues effectively. She understands the subject well, has identified the school's needs and drawn up a good quality development plan that will take the subject forward rapidly.
150. Resources are good. At present, the subject leader is working hard to build on these resources in time for an effective start for the new computer suite, once the building is complete. Once the new suite is in use, there is very good potential for all pupils to make very rapid strides forward in their learning and to reach very high standards.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

151. French is taught to all pupils in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. In other years, French lessons are available to all pupils as an after-school club. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils learn rapidly. All lessons are conducted in a mixture of French and English. Lessons are purely oral, although the teacher uses a series of

cards and pictures to familiarise the pupils with French writing and words. Pupils show a great deal of confidence and enthusiasm in trying out new words and sentences. They enjoy the challenge of speaking in another language and understand well what the teacher says. She makes learning fun and uses a variety of resources to interest the pupils and keep them motivated. Lessons are short in length and concentrate on one theme; for example, how to answer the phone. Thus, pupils learn a good range of vocabulary linked to a specific theme and become confident to use this in other contexts. During their time in the infant department, pupils learn to count to 10 and further, know how to introduce themselves and say how old they are, and can describe objects by size, shape and colour. These lessons add a useful extra dimension to the pupils' education. They learn to value other languages and respect customs other than their own. This stands them in good stead in their day-to-day life in school, where they mix with pupils from a wide range of cultures and hear a number of different languages spoken.

MUSIC

152. Good quality music plays an essential part in the life of the school and makes a major contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils. Well-chosen music is also used particularly well in drama, dance and music and movement lessons as a stimulus for pupils' creative ideas. Pupils perform concerts for parents and use music in celebrations, such as Easter and Christmas. In their final year, pupils usually mount an ambitious musical production, such as *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, just before they leave the school, to the great appreciation of parents and friends.
153. During recent years, music teaching has taken a lower profile in timetable allocation, particularly for pupils in Year 6, as the school has sought to raise standards in English and mathematics. The building programme has placed constraints on the available accommodation. As a result some musical activities, such as recorder groups and choirs, have had to be temporarily suspended. This has, necessarily, had a detrimental impact on standards. The school regrets this and has plans to redress the situation at an early date. Standards across the school, however, are satisfactory overall and in singing they are good. Attainment at the ends of Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations, with a substantial number of pupils exceeding them. Pupils' rate of learning is good. Their playing skills develop through opportunities to use a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In singing, they learn about pitch, tempo and timbre, as well as developing their skills of working with others in a choir or group setting.
154. During an enjoyable lesson, younger children had fun singing a range of action songs such as *Heads and Shoulders*, missing out increasing parts of the song as they progress. Such was their enjoyment, that the children were reluctant to stop singing at the end of the lesson. Behaviour throughout was exemplary. They made good progress in their learning as they sang sweetly and tunefully, with clear diction. Teachers teach pupils a range of enjoyable, developmental songs, with a suitable piano accompaniment. They participate alongside the pupils with enthusiasm. Consequently, pupils enjoy their lessons, gain in knowledge and understanding and make good progress.
155. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, through good quality teaching, combine the skills of listening to music, analysing their and others' music and performing together, using a range of instruments. Pupils in Year 2 use music as part of their topic on Ghana. In one lesson, they listened to music from West Africa and noticed the pulse and rhythms of the music. They identified the sound and look of instruments, such as the drum,

cabasa and marimba, as used in the music. They responded to and learned a Ghanain song. The lesson ended with pupils performing the song with instrumental and ostinato accompaniment. Throughout the lesson the teacher maintained a brisk, but comfortable pace. The lesson was well planned and its good structure ensured that pupils' knowledge and skills developed as the lesson progressed. They were keen and interested, and no time was wasted.

156. The school uses a visiting specialist teacher to teach music to older children. Year 5 pupils use a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments (keyboards, recorders and other instruments) in their music-making to explore different textures, tempo and pitch. They combine sounds to create different effects, building eventually into an imaginative 'Space' story. Years 3 and 4 pupils follow a simple four-beat pulse and clap rhythms on and off the beat. They compose tunes, using the pentatonic scale and a range of percussion instruments, to a four-beat pulse. They listen and respond to a range of music by different composers, in different styles and from different ethnic backgrounds. Teachers encourage pupils to participate fully in lessons. They work with pupils to develop listening and performing skills, encouraging pupils to co-operate, persevere and enjoy their work. Pupils respond well to the good levels of teaching and much enjoyment is evident in every lesson.
157. The subject leader manages the subject well. She has a clear view of how she would like music to develop. She is in the process of reviewing the scheme of work so that once the new building is opened, with its new music room, music can resume its more prominent role in the curriculum of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. By the ages of 7 and 11, most pupils reach the standards expected of them. A significant number achieve good standards in dance, gymnastics, games and swimming. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection, when there was some criticism of the way in which the school planned its physical education curriculum. There is now a comprehensive scheme of work to guide teaching. All pupils dress appropriately. Assessment of pupils' performance is a strong feature of every lesson seen. The school now provides for its pupils in Year 6 to participate in a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities at a residential centre. The subject leader has recently arranged significant amounts of in-service training to develop teacher confidence in various aspects of the subject. The school, therefore, is well placed to bring about further improvement.
159. Young pupils learn about the importance of warm up when taking part in exercise. They have a well-developed understanding of the function of the heart and of the health-related benefits of exercise. Pupils run in different directions, changing direction as instructed, jump with feet together and bend their knees on landing. In school swimming lessons, older pupils develop their water competence via a series of exercises designed to improve their basic swimming strokes. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils achieve the national standard of a swim of 25 metres, unaided. School teams participate in a small number of competitive sporting events against other schools, with some success.
160. There is equal access to all activities and the majority of pupils make good progress as they develop and improve their skills. Progress in dance lessons leads to refinement of movements, improvement in physical control and appreciation of space. In athletics, pupils benefit from a range of well thought out activities, each designed to offer them further challenge. The school provides a small number of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils with talent and dedication to achieve their potential. Both boys

and girls have opportunities to make progress in developing appropriate skills in out-of-school clubs and team activities in soccer, netball, cricket and rounders.

161. Pupils' response in physical education lessons is good. The vast majority of pupils enjoy their lessons. They participate fully and high levels of enjoyment are evident in the activities seen. Pupils work hard to develop their skills and the majority work well co-operatively during group and team activities. They are happy to demonstrate and take pride in their physical prowess. During a Year 5 dance lesson, for instance, pupils compiled a dance to celebrate the opening ceremony for the Olympic Games. They incorporated a whole series of rhythmic movement patterns, which they performed, with great aplomb, to music.
162. The quality of teaching is good. Nearly half of the lessons seen during the inspection were very good. In the most effective lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, plan their lessons effectively and have high expectations of their pupils. They give the pupils every opportunity to practise and to improve. Activities are well planned and ensure the progressive development of skills. They have a high level of challenge, which inspires pupils to work hard. Teachers are determined to achieve high standards and will settle for nothing less. In all lessons, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of safety. Teachers also consistently point out the benefits of regular exercise on the body. Although access is somewhat limited whilst there is a building site in the school grounds, teachers make the most of the school's good facilities for physical education to plan exciting and challenging lessons.