

INSPECTION REPORT

BEDMOND VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Abbots Langley

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117248

Headteacher: Mrs M Knight

Reporting inspector: Mr M G Carter
20714

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 May 2001

Inspection number: 192195

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior with nursery class

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bedmond Village Primary School
Meadow Way
Bedmond
Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire

Postcode: WD5 0RD

Telephone number: 01923 262825

Fax number: 01923 269397

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Phillips

Date of previous inspection: 24 - 26 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
M G Carter 20714	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
D Haynes 9505	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Finance.
PA Underwood 11419	Team inspector	English History Music Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
R Webber 20654	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated near the centre of Bedmond Village, some four miles south of Hemel Hempstead. It accepts pupils between the ages of three and eleven and is smaller than average, with 112 pupils and a further 16 children attending the nursery class for mornings only. The children join the reception class at one of two points in the year before they become five. Their attainment on entry is generally below average, although for a few it is average. Some 15 pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is within the average range nationally. One pupil speaks English as an additional language and none have ethnic minority backgrounds. Twenty-two pupils are entered on the school's register for special educational needs and one has a statement. These figures are broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. The new headteacher and her staff are introducing a number of measures to improve the school and raise the pupils' standards. A majority of the pupils achieve better than the expectations indicated by their attainment on entry to the school. The majority of pupils achieve standards typical for their age by the time they leave but there are few who achieve higher standards. Although still inconsistent, the quality of teaching and the curriculum have improved since the last inspection and there is a good range of learning opportunities, including out of school clubs. The building has recently been improved and, together with the grounds, now provides a very good environment for learning. The school is strongly led by the headteacher, and other teachers are learning how to manage effectively from her example. The number of pupils in each class is relatively small and the school's costs are well above average for each pupil. Governors are keen to improve the school's effectiveness. Overall, there is satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils' attitudes and their personal development are good and well promoted.
- The provision the school makes for the pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The building and site provide a very good environment for learning.
- The pupils' welfare is provided for well.
- The improvement strategies introduced by the new headteacher are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing need improvement.
- The school's provision for information and communication technology is weak.
- The teachers' expectations of the higher attaining pupils' work are too low and in writing and mathematics, too few pupils achieve high standards.
- There are variations and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, especially in promoting progression in learning skills, marking and the use of assessments.
- Attendance is well below average.

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 inspected last in February 1997. Since then, standards, as compared with the National Curriculum test results for 2000, have risen in English and science but not in mathematics. Overall, the trend in test results has been below the national trend. However, the number of pupils tested in 2000 was too small to be used in comparisons. Standards in history and geography have risen and the provision made for several subjects is quickly improving. There are now schemes of work for all subjects, although teachers lack guidance in promoting progression except in English and mathematics. Improvements have been made to the provision for information and communication technology and many more are planned, although, currently the school does not meet all the requirements for this subject. Subject coordinators now have some time to carry out monitoring but this is only for English and mathematics. The level of high attainment in mathematics has not yet risen. Teachers have considered the marking of pupils' work thoroughly but some teachers do not implement fully the agreed policy. Governors now meet statutory requirements about the reporting of attendance statistics. Not enough has been done to make the improvements indicated in the last report but the new headteacher's strategies have good potential for overcoming the school's weaknesses.

STANDARDS

Fewer than 10 eleven-year-old pupils were assessed by National Curriculum tests in 2000 and consequently any comparisons are unreliable. The results for this age group are not included. However, the table below shows the standards achieved by the seven-year-old pupils based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	C	C	C
Writing	D	B	C	C
Mathematics	B	A	B	B

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

Over the last four years the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds, which are not shown in the table above, have been below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. They have been well below average in comparison to similar schools. Standards for this age range are improving and for the current eleven-year-olds, they are average in science and below average in English and mathematics. This is largely because there are few pupils achieving a high level in English and mathematics. There has not been enough progress made by junior pupils in the past. However, the progress currently made in lessons is satisfactory. The standards of seven-year-olds were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics in 2000. The current pupils' attainment is below average overall in English and mathematics because too few pupils achieve high standards. The current pupils have satisfactory attainment in other subjects except in information and communication technology, and in music in the juniors. The school has set appropriate targets and improved provision to help meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are generally interested and keen to learn. Most like their school and are happy and stimulated by the opportunities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory and improving. The school is generally orderly and free of oppressive behaviour. The children abide by the agreed rules but can be noisy on occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils generally respect the views of others and listen to different points of view. They learn well how to be responsible and to make friends.
Attendance	Below average. There is a high level of unauthorised absence.

A code of conduct is shared well with the pupils who largely abide by its rules. There is a good level of moral discussion about the impact of actions on others and this has led to an awareness of others' interests. There is a low level of exclusions from school. In some classes, the pupils are impatient to answer teachers' questions and interrupt but are quickly obedient when good management techniques are used. The school has an open atmosphere and the pupils are confident, friendly and know how to be polite to adults. Despite efforts by the school, the level of unauthorised absence is high and this reduces attendance figures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall the teaching is satisfactory but varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. Of the 57 lessons seen; 5 per cent were very good or excellent; 44 per cent were good; 46 per cent were satisfactory but 5 per cent were unsatisfactory. The school has kept up with the national rate of improvement in teaching but there is considerable inconsistency between the teaching of different age groups and between different aspects of teaching. For example, teaching in the nursery is often good and in science, history, design and technology, music and physical education it is good in the juniors. However, in many subjects throughout the school, the work set for pupils of high attainment often under-challenges them, although it is intended to be harder. Teachers usually share learning objectives with the pupils to help them know what they will be taught and sometimes they set clear targets for individuals' learning. The teaching of English and mathematics follows the nationally recommended literacy and numeracy strategies and is effective, although some teachers are not fully aware of the learning required for the different National Curriculum levels. The work set for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and effective support is provided. The

overall satisfactory teaching helps the pupils to learn soundly and in the juniors they make good efforts and are generally interested, concentrate well and develop independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection and in the Foundation Stage, it is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The pupils have appropriate individual education plans. The targets in these are sometimes over-general but the pupils are effectively identified and supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good in the provision made for moral and social development and satisfactory in the provision made for spiritual and cultural development. These areas support the school's values and aims well, particularly the provision for moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Good in the monitoring and promotion of good behaviour and in the care for the pupils' welfare. Under-developed in the monitoring and support of pupils' academic progress.

The school provides satisfactory information to parents and the new headteacher's newsletters are informative and regular. Parents find the school open and approachable, but there is not a high level of involvement. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, providing additional time for personal, social and health education. The curriculum meets requirements except that parts of the information and communication technology curriculum are not taught, although there are plans for improvements. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good in quality and quantity and they are well attended. The school is very caring and promotes the pupils' safety and emotional development well. However, assessments and their use are not yet sufficiently consistent to provide a clear view of the pupils' academic progress in all the subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The educational direction is now very clear and new systems to promote improvements are becoming effective. However, some roles are under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Some governors are involved well and are becoming more effective, but most are not yet fully aware of how good the school's performance is.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's monitoring systems are developing satisfactorily. Performance management systems are good and support the improvement in teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Specific grants are used fully for their purpose and governors plan finances to support the development plan, but more could be done to apply the principles of best value when making purchases.

The school has a good number of teachers and generally small classes. Teachers and support staff have had continuing training to help them become more effective. The school's accommodation is very good and provides a good environment for learning. The grounds are a particular asset and include a swimming pool, which is expensive to maintain. The building has been improved and provides good sized classrooms and there are plans for a computer suite. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and have improved, but there are still some weaknesses, particularly in information and communication technology. The new headteacher has provided strong leadership in developing teaching and made a number of improvements. These need monitoring and consolidation to become effective. Subject coordinators are developing management skills but have few means of monitoring the standards in their subjects. Governors are supportive and some are involved in the school well. They are not yet able to analyse the school's effectiveness or provide long-term direction but are keen to raise the school's profile locally. Budgeting provides adequately for the priorities for development for the year, but systems to promote evaluation of financial effectiveness and best value for money are currently rudimentary.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most children like school.• Most children make good progress.• The school is open and approachable.• The children are expected to do their best.• Improvements in the buildings and pupils' behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The way the school works with parents.• The pupils' behaviour.• The range of extra-curricular activities.

Many parents have positive views about the school and think it is improving. Some negative views reflect previous periods. The inspection team agrees that the large majority of the pupils like the school and are happy there. Inspection evidence indicates that on entry the children's attainment is often below average but on leaving at age eleven most achieve the expected standards and consequently make satisfactory and often good progress. The inspection found that the school is open and easily approached by parents who are provided with satisfactory information and regular informative newsletters. The children are expected to work hard and the amount of past work in many subjects indicates that the pupils generally do sufficient work. The buildings and grounds now provide a very good environment for learning. The school has satisfactory links with parents but some parents could be more supportive. The inspection team disagrees with the opinion of some parents that the range and quality of extra-curricular activities is weak.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards, as shown in the National Curriculum tests for 2000, are generally average for seven-year-olds but the trend for the eleven-year-olds in these tests, has been below or well below average over the last four years. The evidence from this inspection shows standards in English, mathematics and information technology are below average in the infants and juniors. In other subjects, the standards of the current pupils are average and generally in line with national expectations apart from music, which are below average in the juniors. The low standards are because there are very few pupils achieving above what is expected for their age. Since the last inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen slightly but less than the national trend. Detailed reporting of the results of the eleven-year-olds in 2000 is omitted because there were less than ten pupils tested and such small numbers make comparisons unreliable.
2. The current eleven-year-olds achieve satisfactory standards in speaking and listening and in reading but in writing, standards are below average. This is mainly because of the weak use of punctuation and vocabulary and because hardly any of the pupils produce writing that is above average for their age. In mathematics, the majority of eleven-year-old pupils have standards close to those expected but very few have high attainment and overall standards are below average. The school has a number of measures in place to improve this situation, such as special lessons for pupils who are nearly achieving the expected standard. In science, a large majority of this age group has achieved standards appropriate for their age and standards are average, although there is still a small number with high attainment. In information and communication technology, the standards in the juniors are below those expected because many lack confident skills, for example, in using a keyboard, and because there are parts of the curriculum that have not been taught fully. In music, standards are below average because they currently have low levels of skills and knowledge from the curriculum. Within this somewhat weak picture of standards, the junior pupils currently are making progress in lessons that is at least satisfactory and in a good number of lessons their learning is good. Although when starting school the current eleven-year-olds often had attainment that was below average in some aspects of the curriculum, by the end of the infant stage, they had generally satisfactory achievement in tests. Their progress through the junior stage has been weak.
3. The seven-year-olds currently have average standards in speaking and listening and in reading but below average standards in writing. This is largely because of the very low proportion of high-attaining pupils, which is smaller than in 2000. There is a similar picture in mathematics, with standards below average, because too few pupils attain higher than the national expectation. In English and mathematics, the standards this year are not quite as high as those in the last inspection although this is only because of the low amount of high attainment. The proportion achieving expected standards has risen well in reading but is similar to that in the last inspection in writing and mathematics. The 2000 National Curriculum test results indicated that in comparison to similar schools standards were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In science, teachers assess attainment and for 2000, these assessments indicated average standards with a good proportion of high attainment. The current standards are also average with most pupils achieving the expected level but with a lower proportion of high attainment than in 2000. In information and communication technology, standards are below average because of some weak skills in operating a keyboard and little knowledge of controlling devices. In all the other subjects of the National Curriculum, the standards of the seven-year-olds are close to those expected for their age nationally and in religious education they are close to those implied by the agreed syllabus.
4. Children in the Foundation Stage, often start in the nursery with average or below average attainment. A large proportion lacks confidence socially and finds it hard to listen with understanding. In some aspects such as communication, language and literacy, their attainment on entry is poor. However, most make good progress in the nursery and by the time they are six, they meet the appropriate Early Learning Goals, except in their personal, social and emotional development, where they are still immature and in their skills of speaking, reading and writing, which are below average. In the infant stage, most pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve the nationally expected standards by the age of seven; overall, achievement in the infants is satisfactory. Progress through the juniors is more varied and overall has been unsatisfactory. However, the progress in lessons and the evidence in the current pupils' past work indicate that, although still varied, the pupils are learning at least satisfactorily and often well. By the end of the juniors, the large majority of pupils reach the expected standards for their age, although too few achieve higher.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately identified at an early age and their needs described in individual education plans. Such procedures comply fully with the relevant code of practice although the targets included often lack sufficient clarity. However, they are well used by teachers and support assistants to help these pupils make satisfactory progress. There is one pupil with English is an additional language who has made good progress in learning spoken English and has access to the full curriculum joining in well with discussions. In over a fifth of the lessons observed those pupils with higher attainment made slower progress than they could have made. This is sometimes because the teacher is not sufficiently aware of what they need to learn to reach the next National Curriculum level. It is also, on occasions, because the work is not challenging enough or the teacher is not aware fully of how much these pupils already know and can do. The

difference between the results of boys and girls has been insignificant for both seven and eleven-year-olds over the last four years. There were differences in 2000 but these are not significant due to the small number of pupils tested.

6. Targets for the number of pupils reaching the expected standards at the ends of the infants and of the juniors in 2001 were included in the school development plan written in the spring of 2000. These were revised upwards in December 2000 and are ambitious and may not be met fully. They were largely based on teacher assessments, which have sometimes been inaccurate. However, the school has now decided to improve the accuracy of target setting with tests at the end of each junior year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Overall the pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and contribute to the positive learning environment that exists within the school. Pupils show an eagerness to enter school and the majority of pupils settle quickly into the daily routine without undue intervention from the class teacher. During lessons pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm when the quality of teaching is good and the lessons interesting. This was particularly evident for the eleven-year-old pupils in a numeracy and science lesson where pupils showed high levels of attention and concentration for long periods. Teachers' expectations of good behaviour are not consistent across the school and in some classes, the behaviour of a minority of pupils can be unsatisfactory. Parents have a mixed view of behaviour in the school. Those parents that attended the pre-inspection meeting had experienced first hand the current standard of behaviour of pupils in school and thought it had improved recently and did not see behaviour as a problem. However, 23 per cent of parents returning the parent's questionnaire thought that behaviour was not good.
8. Parents rate highly the values the school instils in their children. The school's aims and values are reflected in the rules that are clearly displayed in some classrooms and children rarely need reminding of them. No bullying, racial or sexual harassment was observed in the classrooms or when the children were at play. The school is an orderly community. There is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti inside the school and learning resources and property are treated with respect. Pupils demonstrate a natural courtesy to adults without prompt and they relate well to each other and to all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils are at ease expressing their feelings to the class teacher, members of the inspection team and in front of their fellow pupils; the older pupils have well developed communication skills.
9. The school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day to day running of the school. Younger pupils are identified as class helpers and undertake tasks such as taking the register to the office after each registration. For the older pupils there is the opportunity to assist the younger pupils through the newly introduced 'Buddy System'. There is scope for more opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and show initiative. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities and they are well supported by the children. These include running, football and netball, and a 'Monday Club' that offers art, pottery, sewing, dance and cooking.
10. Overall attendance at 93.4 per cent is unsatisfactory and is about one per cent below the national average. Unauthorised absence is very high and three times the national average. The school is aware of this and is working to make improvements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved in line with the national trend since the last inspection. Of the 57 lessons observed, one was excellent and two were very good. Some 44 per cent were good and 46 per cent were satisfactory. However, three lessons were unsatisfactory. These figures indicate some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and this is reflected both between different lessons and the different aspects that contribute to effective teaching.
12. Teaching is best in the junior age range where it is good overall, although there is much inconsistency. In the nursery class, the teaching is good overall and in the reception and the classes for six and seven-year-olds, the teaching is satisfactory. In the infant age range, the teaching of speaking and listening is good because of the opportunities that teachers offer for pupils to explain and to talk to each other. Music is also well taught by a newly appointed part-time specialist teacher. In design and technology and geography, the teaching of the infants could not be judged because too few lessons were observed. In the juniors, the teaching is good for speaking and listening, science, design and technology, history, physical education and music. In religious education and geography, there were too few lessons for a judgement to be made. The teaching of the other subjects in both key stages is satisfactory.
13. Teachers' expectations of the pupils' work are satisfactory overall but inconsistent. There is generally adequate knowledge of the subjects being taught, although a significant minority of teachers are not sufficiently aware of the standards of learning needed for pupils to attain the different National Curriculum levels. This is reflected in some inaccurate assessments of levels and occasionally in the giving of work that is insufficiently challenging for pupils of higher attainment. There has been a good amount of discussion about these issues amongst the teachers and, especially in English, mathematics and science, they invariably set different work for pupils of different abilities. The work set is extended for pupils of higher

attainment but not necessarily to a higher National Curriculum level and consequently there is a degree of under-challenge for higher attaining pupils and this is reflected in the generally low amount of high attainment.

14. Planning is largely effective and consistent between classes. Teachers frequently share the lessons' objectives with the pupils at the beginning and sometimes the end of lessons. There is some very good practice in the setting of targets for the improvement in pupils' work, for example, the nine-year-old pupils are reminded of personal targets for the improvement of their work by regular targets affixed to their past work as part of the marking process. The planned lessons take good account of the guidance offered to teachers through the schemes of work, which have been improved since the last inspection. These help the teachers to plan work that is appropriate for their age although it does not always take sufficient account of what the pupils already know and can do. Assessments, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, are not sufficiently used to help the teachers to plan challenging work for pupils of different abilities. Teachers have discussed marking at length and a new policy has been developed. However, there is still much inconsistency in its quality and often it provides too little help for pupils to improve their work. This is because marking has not yet been monitored systematically.
15. Most teachers have satisfactory techniques to manage the pupils in lessons. The school is orderly and despite the views of a minority of parents, the pupils' behaviour is at least satisfactory. Teachers use a range of ways to maintain good discipline. On occasions, these are not used early enough and pupils can be noisy or interrupt if they want to answer the teachers' questions. However, all the teachers are able to quickly re-establish good order and use the school's behaviour policy and agreed codes of conduct. Group-work is well organised and most pupils know and abide by the school's rules. The junior pupils make good efforts to work hard and in this, meet their teachers' expectations. Their rate of work is satisfactory and they concentrate well and can work independently. There is some inconsistency in the teachers' management of pupils and the school has worked hard to improve this by making demonstration lessons available and through the feedback from lesson observations.
16. Homework is used satisfactorily. Most parents feel that the amount set is reasonable and has improved recently in its regularity. Mostly it enhances the pupils' learning at school, although some pupils do not complete it fully. The pupils have a reading record book that enables some degree of communication with pupils' homes.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are identified appropriately and they are given work that is generally appropriate to their needs and supports the targets in their individual education plans. In a good proportion of lessons, classroom assistants help these pupils to make satisfactory progress. There is one pupil, for whom English is not the home language, who has made quick progress in speaking English and plays a full part in the curriculum.

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

18. The school provides its pupils with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Statutory regulations are met in all areas of the curriculum. The school provides equal access to the curriculum for all pupils including those with special educational needs. The school has successfully introduced both the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies to the benefit of all pupils. The provision for pupils under five is good and the curriculum provides a range of experiences that are based on the nationally recommended early learning goals. Detailed subject documentation using the latest curriculum guidance is being used in English and numeracy but in the other subjects guidance is limited as the schemes of work in the other foundation subjects are still being adapted to best meet the needs of all pupils. The schemes are based on nationally recommended guidelines but, in some subject areas, the lack of a checklist means that teachers are not always planning to ensure appropriate progression in the acquisition of skills. There are long-term plans and many foundation subjects are taught through a two-year cycle of topics. Teachers in each key stage plan together and then evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the lessons, amending their planning for the following session.
19. Literacy skills are insufficiently developed in subjects other than English and there is limited evidence of pupils being encouraged to write for themselves in history, geography, religious education or other subjects. Their writing to record work in other subjects is often slow. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in a variety of situations such as during a history lesson when they were asked to express their thoughts about whether or not it was right to execute King Charles. In a religious education lesson, pupils discussed their ideas about the creation story. However, there are few examples of mathematics being used across the curriculum.
20. Provision for pupils' social and health education is being developed. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning particularly during literacy and numeracy lessons when they are expected to work with little or no direct adult supervision. Time is provided in circle time for discussing moral issues as well as any personal views the pupils wish to share. There are opportunities within other subjects such as science to discuss aspects of the pupils' personal development and sex education. However, to date, there is little teaching about the dangers of drugs or alcohol although the school is aware of the need to include this in the pupils' health education.

21. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and supports the learning targets identified in the pupils' individual learning plans. These plans contain tasks set and review dates. However, the tasks and targets in the plans are often very general and do not set specific criteria for success. Teachers keep these plans in their files and provide work well-matched to the pupils' needs. The national code of practice is followed and parents are effectively involved in their children's learning. The school is aware of the need for equality of access to the curriculum. Good efforts are made to ensure this, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The learning support assistants liaise with the class teachers and are provided with a sheet explaining the pupils' tasks. The class teacher then completes an evaluation of the work done through observation and assessment of the pupils. Support assistants should play a larger role in assessment as they work through the tasks with pupils.
22. The school aims to give equal access to the curriculum for all its pupils. There are, however, instances when pupils are withdrawn from the introduction to the literacy hour for individual or small group tuition. Teachers are aware of this and plan to ensure that any learning missed is explained during the withdrawal session so that pupils do not feel as if they have missed some important class session when they return. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and do not make the progress they should.
23. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities. For example, there are a variety of sports clubs including hockey, football, running, and netball. Other clubs include French, country dancing, cooking, sewing art and craft, clay and drama. Most of these clubs are organised and run by school staff and are good in quality and quantity. Evidence about extra-curricular activities does not support the 23 per cent of parents' questionnaires indicating negative views. The school has had some success in establishing links with the community and is keen to improve these. The vicar leads assembly and the pupils visit the local church as part of their religious education. The local police, school nurse, the rabbi and other members of the community come into school to talk to the pupils.
24. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Provision for moral and social development is good. Spiritual development is promoted through school assemblies. These are carefully planned with appropriate content and allow time for pupils to reflect on their own responses. In religious education pupils learn about their own and others' faiths. Circle time gives pupils the opportunity to discuss and develop feelings of self-worth and to value their experiences. A celebration of pupils' talents, effort, behaviour or good work is a regular feature of the assemblies. Occasionally, the pupils experience awe and wonder in lessons, for example in an art lesson, when they closely observed the faces of animals.
25. Moral education is promoted through stories told in assembly, the production of class rules and golden rules, which are displayed in the classrooms and discussed when necessary. A system of rewards encouraged pupils to behave in an acceptable manner, to be kind and thoughtful to others and to work hard to achieve success. All staff provide good role models and take every opportunity to teach the principles of right and wrong. Circle time helps to reinforce this and an awareness of the impact of their attitudes and behaviour upon others
26. Pupils are expected to look after their school and to take responsibilities. Each class has a system of monitors. Circle time is also used as a time to discuss awareness of others, learning to take turns and respecting the thoughts of others. Special circle time for "buddies" is held regularly. These groups consist of one pupil from each year and when a member of the buddy group is distressed or has a problem, other members are expected to support and comfort them. Pupils are required to act, for example, as librarians, monitors for physical education equipment and helpers in the dining room. Pupils are occasionally expected to research topics in school and at home using the Internet. A variety of visits to places of interest and residential visits, often linked to the topic work, enhance the curriculum. Lessons are so planned that pupils can work together either in pairs or small groups and to share ideas. The implementation of both the numeracy and literacy strategies means that pupils are expected to work independently at times. Pupils can be observed helping each other and sharing resources. Pupils are well known to the adults who are dedicated to promoting confidence in them as individuals.
27. Pupils use the local area to explore their own cultural traditions. Other English traditional events are shared with the pupils, including the Helston Furry Dance. Teachers ensure that pupils' awareness of other cultures is developed and they provide experiences of festivals such as Diwali, Sukkat and the Chinese New Year to help them understand and respect the cultures of other people. History and geography provide an insight into how other people live in different parts of the world. Although there is a small amount of Indian and African music used, overall, not enough use is made of non-western art or music to increase pupils' awareness and there are currently few displays that help to raise the pupils' awareness of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school cares well for its pupils. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and her growing detailed knowledge of the pupils and their backgrounds, together with clear guidance for teaching staff, provide a good level of protection. This provision could be improved if non-teaching staff also received formal awareness training. Contact is maintained with outside specialists but their services are seldom required. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise. The school caretaker is supported by one cleaner, between them they maintain a high level of cleanliness and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources. The school caretaker, a governor and a member of staff perform regular safety tours; records are maintained and passed to the head teacher for action.
29. There is a clear attendance policy, recently written. It is not yet fully implemented and the procedures currently in place for monitoring absence are underdeveloped, particularly the speed of response to absences and the strategies for improving attendance. Analysis of absence patterns has been carried out and the education welfare officer is informed. Registers are maintained correctly using a manual system though there are inconsistencies in their presentation. The school should give the secretary more responsibility for monitoring attendance, especially detailed analysis, as is suggested in the school's policy. A good feature of registration procedures is the return of the registers to the office after each registration, any late comer having to report to the office. The school's policies on all aspects of behaviour, including bullying, include a well-balanced reward and sanction system. Lunchtime supervision is good and the supervisors maintain a safe and relaxed social atmosphere. The supervisors and other non-teaching staff are valued as an essential part of school life and take an active part in furthering the aims and standards of the school.
30. Overall, the procedures for, and the monitoring of, pupils' academic performance are unsatisfactory as there has been an inconsistent approach to assessment in previous years, which has not yet been overcome fully. The monitoring of personal development is satisfactory. This year, the school has introduced a standard assessment system that covers all curriculum subjects but the benefits of this system have yet to be fully realised and its results applied. Information obtained from assessments or the analysis of test results is not yet used effectively to guide curricular planning. The monitoring of and support for the pupils' personal development is satisfactory and entries are made at least termly in a class record.
31. A comprehensive personal, social and health education policy is in place, an aspect of which is to provide encouragement and recognition for academic progress and improvements in personal development, behaviour and attendance. Parents are welcome in school and at the start and end of the school day there is a good informal opportunity for parents to meet with teaching staff. The annual report to parents contains details of what has been covered in all curriculum subjects and general comment on pupils' performance but there is no separate section relating to personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. A number of parents have a poor view of the school as expressed in the parents' questionnaire. Areas of concern centre on standards of behaviour and the extent to which the school works with parents. Inspection evidence does not support the parents' views in these respects. Behaviour is satisfactory, overall, with many examples of good behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The school is an open community and welcomes parents into the school and the small number of parents that do help the school are valued for the assistance they offer. The parents that attended the pre-inspection meeting confirmed this. The perception of the governors and the head teacher is that the view of parents is based on a previous situation and does not reflect the current position. The governors should seek ways to improve the perception that parents have about behaviour and the closeness of their links with the school.
33. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The annual governors' report is clear and comprehensive and meets statutory requirements. The school prospectus requires details on attendance statistics and pupil numbers to meet requirements. The annual report to parents is personal to the pupil and contains details of achievement in all subjects and general comments on that pupil's performance. The school offers a parents' evening each term when parents can discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Parents of children with special educational needs are well supported with individual education plans that are regularly reviewed. A home/school agreement is in place, which is signed by parents, pupils and the school. The homework policy is sound with an increasing amount of homework as pupils reach the end of the junior stage, although teachers express concern about the non-return of homework and the small amount of study undertaken at home by some pupils.
34. Parents' access to the class teacher at the beginning and particularly at the end of the school day is good but few parents take advantage of the opportunity. There is a regular school newsletter but it is mainly concerned with forthcoming events and there is no consistent approach to advising parents about topic work. Only a small number of parents actively help in the classroom or on school trips and the class teachers value their assistance. Parents have assisted with particular projects around the grounds. There is a hard working Parents' Association that organises a number of social events for children and parents, and raises valuable funds that benefit the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The school is well led under the guidance of the new headteacher and much work has been done to improve the building and the teaching. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The roles of coordinators and senior staff are at relatively early stages of development and there are plans to improve their effectiveness through the monitoring of pupils' work, lesson observations and the analysis of assessment data. The headteacher largely carries out these aspects but they lack regularity and rigour. Performance management systems have been adopted well and complement the existing monitoring systems. A system to feedback after lesson observations is well accepted and viewed positively by teachers. Initiatives such as target setting and the sharing of lesson objectives with pupils are also firmly established. There has been much discussion and training about effective teaching but the strategies are not yet adopted consistently. For example, the marking of pupils' work has been discussed in staff meetings and priorities established but it is still of inconsistent quality because it has not been monitored regularly enough.
36. The work that is taking place in booster classes provides a good example of the actions taken by the school to meet its targets. There is a shared commitment to improve standards but the details of delegated responsibilities are not fully understood by some coordinators. For example, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, there is no clear evaluation of the pupils' standards and progress. Nevertheless, the school's aims, values, and priorities are evident in its daily life and the growing commitment to improve is helping teachers to work more as a team.
37. Because there have been changes of headteacher and other staff since the last inspection the key areas identified then have not all made sufficient improvement. For example, the expenditure for providing for pupils with special educational needs is now fully accounted separately from other costs, but the school still does not fully meet the requirements for information and communication technology.
38. The governors are keen to fulfil their responsibilities, to see the school improve, and to raise its profile in the community. Some governors are involved well in the school's daily life and they have good faith in the headteacher's suggested improvements but play little role in shaping the school's educational direction. Each has an aspect of the school's provision to oversee, although those who do not visit have little opportunity to do so. Several are insufficiently aware of the school's comparative academic performance and have had little training in the analysis of strengths and weaknesses. For example, too little has been done to make the improvements identified in the last report and some governors have attended little training about their particular responsibilities. Nevertheless, the school has an appropriate development plan and governors budget soundly to enable the priorities to be met. Not enough is done to evaluate effectiveness of spending decisions and to gain the best value for money.
39. The development plan, written by a previous headteacher is very detailed with a good analysis of the school's areas in need of improvement. There are appropriate action plans for the subjects and other aspects of the school. This plan has been amended by the new headteacher but the means to meet the many targets are not clear. Neither are the relative priorities identified. Nevertheless, new plans to improve teaching and monitor standards are becoming effective and augment the school's policy for performance management.
40. Classes are small and there is a good number of teachers and assistants for the number of pupils. Additional part-time staff augment aspects of the curriculum that are weaker, such as in music. However, staff are not all deployed to best use their areas of expertise and some subjects are not represented in the initial qualifications of teachers. There is a good level of training in the school. Staff development is a priority through which consistency in the quality of teaching has been a priority. An appropriate handbook is helpful to teachers and the induction of new staff is satisfactory providing all the recommended procedures. The school provides opportunities for students in initial teacher training and work-placements.
41. Overall, the school's accommodation is very good and provides an environment of good quality, which is conducive to learning for the age range of the pupils. There has been much recent work to provide sufficient classrooms of good size and quality. The grounds are a particular asset, with spacious field areas, wildlife and other pleasant areas having a range of different flora. The school has an out-door swimming pool, which is very expensive in time and money but provides an additional facility. There is a pleasant outdoor play area for the nursery class and this is soon to be shared by reception pupils.
42. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses, despite the recent enhancement in a number of subjects such as additional large text books for teaching reading and an additional poetry section in the library. However, in art and design there is too small a range of media available and in geography and history the range of photographs, maps and materials about different periods in history are limited. Teachers make good efforts to overcome any deficiencies by sharing and borrowing from a library loan service.

43. In information and communication technology, the range of software is limited for supporting the pupils' learning in other subjects and the school has few facilities to enable learning about control technology. The school has a current priority to improve provision for the subject. A small amount of hardware has recently been purchased and classrooms are now prepared for a networked system throughout the school. The school's resources for the subject have improved since the last inspection but are barely adequate to enable the full programme of study to be taught currently. In other subjects, the quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory and in mathematics, their quality and accessibility are good but in religious education, there are few bibles and in design and technology, the range of construction kits is limited. The outdoor play area for the youngest pupils has been improved since the last inspection, as have the resources for music.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Items marked * have already been considered by the school or are in progress.

In order to raise standards and make the best use of the improvements already instigated the headteacher, teachers and governors should:

- improve standards in writing by:
 - the rigorous teaching of punctuation (paragraphs 58,59);
 - extending the pupils' vocabulary (paragraphs 58,59);
 - improving the pupils' knowledge of grammar especially the lower attainers (paragraph 60);

- improve provision for information and communication technology by:
 - providing access to more computers* (paragraph 98);
 - providing more training for all staff* (paragraph 99);
 - ensuring the teaching of all aspects of the programme of study (paragraph 97);
 - improving consistency and progression in learning skills through increased monitoring* (paragraph 98);

- raise expectations of the higher-attaining pupils, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that work is planned from high enough levels of the National Curriculum (paragraph 13);
 - using assessment information to inform the teachers of the pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills* (paragraph 14);
 - improving the teachers' knowledge of National Curriculum levels (paragraph 13);
 - continued dissemination of the best practice in teaching* (paragraph 11);

- gain greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - providing a regular programme for the monitoring of teaching, pupils' work, and planning, including feedback* (paragraph 37);
 - improving the schemes of work to promote progression in learning (paragraph 18);
 - promoting consistent and effective assessment and marking procedures through regular monitoring* (paragraph 37);

- improve attendance by:
 - implementing the school's policy in full (paragraph 31);
 - rigorously monitoring patterns of absence (paragraph 31).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

57

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

52

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	3	44	46	5	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)	8	112
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	18

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	12	10	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	17	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (79)	82 (79)	91 (100)
	National	84 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (79)	91 (89)	91 (79)
	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

Details of the results of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests for 2000 are not included because the small numbers are unreliable for making comparisons.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	112
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	22.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	12.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	301855
Total expenditure	286736
Expenditure per pupil (based on 130 NOR)	2206
Balance brought forward from previous year	-6079
Balance carried forward to next year	9040

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	37	7	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	46	43	9	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	50	18	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	50	11	2	14
The teaching is good.	52	32	11	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	43	14	2	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	34	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	34	9	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	27	46	25	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	45	41	9	5	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	38	14	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	27	14	9	7

Other issues raised by parents

A number of the parents see the school as improving and that this is largely due to the new headteacher. Some praised particular features such as the improved building, how approachable and friendly the staff are, its grounds and the clubs provided. A small number felt that gifted children are not encouraged enough and some also said that they had been very pleasantly surprised by the school's provision.

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

44. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught either in the school's nursery class or in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. Provision for children in the nursery is good and is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching in the nursery is good and it is satisfactory in the reception class. Nursery curriculum planning is detailed and appropriately identifies clear learning objectives in both the medium and short term planning and this effectively ensures that all areas of learning for children of this age are effectively taught in a suitable way. However, although satisfactory, this level of planning is not sufficiently followed through into the reception class where learning objectives are not so detailed or precise in relation to meeting the early learning goals appropriate for children of this age. Overall, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all the appropriate areas of learning for children of this age and by the time they start Year 1, most children have achieved the early learning goals in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. However, in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy their achievements are below expectations. Assessment procedures to monitor the children's progress are good and these assessments are used well to inform planning, particularly in the nursery. The school's assessments indicate that children's attainment on entry to the school is below average.

Personal, social and emotional development

45. Children enter the nursery with immature personal, social and emotional development. In the nursery, staff effectively establish a caring, friendly and safe learning environment in which children are encouraged to settle happily to daily events and routines. All adults provide good role models and effectively promote personal and social skills through a range of well-planned activities. For example, children are expected to tidy away after group activities and are encouraged to undress and dress themselves before and after physical activity. Adults effectively promote the school's code of conduct, particularly in the nursery and children soon begin to understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. However, the way in which teachers manage the behaviour of children in the reception class is not always consistent, and this confuses the children and makes them unsure about what is acceptable behaviour. Most children throughout the Foundation Stage get on well together and can work effectively in groups. They share equipment appropriately and usually know how to share and take turns when playing games. Well planned daily routines and tasks develop children's social skills effectively. For example, during snack time in the nursery, the children are expected to sit around a table and talk sociably to others and to adults while drinking their juice. Children take part in many group activities both in the nursery and the reception class and this effectively promotes the children's personal and social skills such as working cooperatively with others and learning to share things and take turns.

Communication, language and literacy

46. Children enter the nursery with generally poor speaking and listening skills. They make good progress in acquiring early literacy skills in the nursery and children in the reception class make satisfactory progress. By the end of the reception year, their attainment is below age related expectations in speaking, reading and writing and in line with expectations in listening. Children make slower progress in the mixed reception/Year 1 class because planned activities and tasks are not always well matched to children's abilities or prior attainment and tasks are not sufficiently structured for reception children to develop basic skills such as writing. By the time children are ready to start Year 1, most children are able to listen attentively to the teacher and can respond to instructions well. They show interest and enjoyment in the stories read to them but do not readily respond to questions about the story within a whole class situation. Most children enjoy books and handle them appropriately. High attaining children achieve well and meet the standards in reading expected for their age. Other children can read very simple sentences with support and know some initial letter sounds. In the nursery, the children soon understand that print has meaning and can make comments about illustrations and what is happening in the story. Their early writing skills in making marks on paper show they know that words together make a sentence. Some children are able to write several letters of the alphabet reasonably accurately and attempt to write some very simple words.

Mathematical development

47. Children make good progress in mathematics and their attainment by the end of the reception year is in line with expectations. In the nursery, well planned activities such as counting games and the introduction of measuring equipment, such as a pair of scales, into play activities ensure children are effectively introduced to early numeracy skills. In the reception/Year 1 class, The children are effectively introduced to the more formal structure and organisation of the first part of the daily numeracy lesson and this prepares them well for the start of Year 1. Most children by the end of the reception year can count to 10 and beyond and can calculate and write simple addition sums using appropriate symbols to 6 and know how to take one away from a number up to 6. Most children make good progress in understanding the language of mathematics in both the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year, most can identify things that are taller or shorter, use the terms

heavier and lighter and can recognise numbers that are more or less than five. Children can recognise several two-dimensional shapes such as a circle, square and triangle and can tell the time to the hour.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

48. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of their learning and by the end of the reception year their attainment is broadly in line with expectations. In the nursery, the children effectively explore the world around them through well structured and organised activities. For example, while digging in the outside soil container children observe creatures that live underground such as worms. They begin to appreciate that plants need water and sunlight in order to grow as they plant out their own pea plants grown from a seed. In the reception class, children begin to distinguish between wild and domestic animals as they find and cut out pictures of animals that live in a house and are able to distinguish between night and day and between living and non-living things. In the nursery, teachers provide opportunities for children to use their senses in order to develop language and experience different textures as they handle, spread and manipulate white foam on a table. The children can recognise and name different parts of a plant such as its stem and roots. In both classes, the children have the opportunity to investigate the properties of dry and wet sand. All children have the opportunity to work on the computer and quickly learn how to manipulate a mouse and the keys on a keyboard in order to play simple games and make changes happen on the screen.

Physical development

49. From an early age children are encouraged to develop both their gross and fine motor skills effectively through a range of practical activities such as the use of large outdoor apparatus, construction kits, painting, cutting and writing activities. By the end of the reception year, children's attainment is in line with expectations. Children can pull themselves along a bench and with adult support can balance and walk along an up-turned bench well. Most children can jump off low boxes and land appropriately and can control a forward roll very well for their age. Children make slower progress in developing special awareness because sometimes teachers miss opportunities to develop this aspect of learning during hall based activities. Children show a good sense of balance, control and confidence when riding a range of three and two wheeled bikes. In the nursery, children show good coordination as they hit a nail with a hammer in order to tack a wooden shape onto a board. They manipulate scissors well in order to cut out shapes from paper and they demonstrate reasonable hand to eye coordination as they try to shoot a large ball into a basketball net.

Creative development

50. Overall, children's creative development is satisfactory and by the end of the reception year, they meet the early learning goals for this area of learning. In the reception class, children can cut out shapes from paper and materials carefully and use glue spreaders and glue sticks confidently to create an animal collage. Children show reasonable attention to shape in their observational drawings of a penny-farthing. In the nursery, children learn how things are constructed and made as they reassemble a cardboard box. They know that materials can be joined in different ways as they use both sticky tape and glue to join the sides of the box together. Children in the reception class successfully use a butterfly clip to join arms and legs to card in order to make a moving two-dimensional model of a clown. In the nursery, children use papier-mache techniques to make model hot air balloons and, while making a home for an animal, children decide to attach strands of wool across a box in order to create netting that would stop the animal from escaping. Children make satisfactory progress in painting skills. From the time they start the nursery, the children are encouraged to explore and experience painting techniques and by the time they are five most children can mix and apply paint successfully to create pictures on large and small canvasses. Although children have access to a variety of musical instruments, their musical skills are not so well developed as other aspects of creative development. For example, few children confidently join in singing activities and their attainment in singing and participation in musical activities is below average for their age.

ENGLISH

51. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, attainment in English was above average for the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standards but well below average for the percentage of pupils achieving above these. However, the number of pupils was small and comparisons with other schools are not statistically reliable. The school has improved its performance in English after a steep decline in standards in 1998. Averaging the results over the period from 1998 to 2000 shows that the pupils' performance in English was below the national average for their age group. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that results this year are likely to be below average, particularly in writing but close to average in reading. These standards are lower than those of the eleven-year-old pupils at the time of the last inspection, although the school's provision is improving. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
52. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, attainment in reading was below the national average for pupils achieving at least the expected standard but above the national average for pupils achieving a higher standard. When

compared to similar schools the performance in reading tests was close to the average. In writing, attainment was below the national average for pupils achieving the expected standard, but above the national average for pupils with higher achievement. When compared to similar schools the performance in writing was close to the average. Analysis of the results over the last three years shows that the pupils' performance in reading and writing exceeded the national average for their age group. Both boys and girls exceeded the national average by similar amounts. However, inspection evidence shows that the standards of the current seven-year-olds are below the national average for writing, but in line with the national average for reading. Overall, these results indicate that too many pupils fail to achieve the expected standards in writing.

53. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the implementation of the literacy hour have been successful, with teachers having clearer ideas of the most effective ways of teaching the subject. There is an appropriate balance between reading and writing. The overall improvement in planning has helped to promote progress in both reading and writing, although closer attention is still needed to aspects of writing. Some improvement can be seen in the results, which, after a dip in 1998 are slowly rising.
54. The standards of speaking and listening across the school are average. By the age of eleven, most pupils are confident speakers, the more articulate expressing their views in some detail and using a wide range of vocabulary. The pupils are generally keen to answer teachers' questions and often show a good understanding of concepts as demonstrated in a history lesson about Charles I, where many pupils understood the meaning of the divine right of kings. They enjoy discussions about a chosen text and showed a particular interest in information about the diary of Samuel Pepys. The pupils are given opportunities to participate in both class and group discussions. They are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary and to share their views with their peers. Across the school, teachers value each pupil's contribution and try to ensure every pupil has the opportunity to respond to questions.
55. By the age of seven, the pupils are becoming confident, articulate speakers. When given the opportunity, they readily respond to questions and volunteer information about a chosen text, for example, in offering words to describe the character of the rainbow fish before and after he gave his scales to the small fish or discussing the creation story in a religious education lesson. Pupils listen carefully to teachers giving instructions, which they are able to follow. Some pupils offer detailed answers to teachers' questions and participate in both class and small group discussions. They are willing and often keen to express their opinions and views.
56. By the age of eleven, the pupils' current standard of reading is average. All the pupils are independent readers, enjoying a variety of stories, poetry and reference books. Many are fluent and accurate. However, only a few read with good expression. The pupils are able to discuss the plots, characters and favourite part of their book. All the pupils try to predict the story line of their book, even those who have just started to a book are willing to make some suggestions as to what might happen in the story. All the pupils are beginning to develop research skills and can use a reference book to find information. They are familiar with skimming and scanning for information. Some research opportunities are given to pupils for topic work in history and geography.
57. By the end of the infant age range, the current pupils' standard of reading is average but with a few pupils having a high attainment. Books are handled with care and a variety of texts are read; some fluently and with understanding; others with less confidence. The pupils are developing ways of reading unfamiliar words, either by sounding out the word phonetically or by using other clues such as the pictures. Too few pupils recognise and understand punctuation, such as question marks, and only a few read expressively. They know how books are organised and understand terms such as non-fiction, author, title and illustrator. Many are able to talk about their favourite books and retell the stories, but do not always recall the author. Most pupils are beginning to develop research skills and can use and index and content pages.
58. By the end of the juniors, the standard of attainment in writing is below average, although a very small number perform well in the National Curriculum tests. A variety of writing tasks are set for the pupils. These include aspects of language such as comprehension, considering fact and opinion in writing, story settings and characters. The pupils write for an increasing number of purposes, in different styles and formats. The pupils' vocabulary is of varied quality with the higher attaining pupils producing some interesting and adventurous examples in their work such as: "asked the elephant's child filled with insatiable curiosity", "sun yawning as it slowly disappeared", or "crowds of people walked back into their dreams". However, the majority seldom uses writing to express their ideas clearly in ways to interest the reader. The pupils do not often use punctuation effectively and, particularly in free writing, the lower attaining pupils forget even the most basic punctuation of full stop and capital letters. Accurate spelling is found mostly in the work of the higher attaining pupils, whereas the work of others contains much inaccuracy. All pupils write using a cursive script and much of the work is neatly presented with date and title.
59. Writing in the infants is currently below average and very few pupils have achieved high standards. The pupils do not find writing stories easy. Basic punctuation, particularly in free writing, is often forgotten. Few pupils use speech marks. Spelling is variable but with many pupils struggling to spell common high frequency words correctly. However, the majority of pupils write in sentences, some of which are quite complex. There are however, a very small group of pupils whose writing lacks sense and meaning and fails to communicate their ideas. The use of adjectives in descriptive writing is limited except for the

higher attaining pupils. The pupils are given opportunities to write for different purposes, including retelling traditional stories in a modern vein, diaries, information about a visitor, and note taking. Teachers provide tasks to develop grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting. All pupils are encouraged to use cursive script and, by the end of the key stage, many have developed well-formed, neat handwriting although there are a few whose work is untidy and poorly presented. Planning ensures positive links with other areas of the curriculum and examples of written work can be found in history and science.

60. The pupils' learning in both key stages is satisfactory overall but weak in writing lessons. There are improvements in the quality and quantity of writing and in the presentation. For example, when pupils first enter the infants, most are copying under the teacher's writing but by the end of the year many of these pupils are writing a simple sentence for themselves. By the age of seven, most pupils have progressed to writing simple stories. At the end of the juniors, the higher attainers' writing shows maturity in the use of language and vocabulary whereas for the majority of the group writing is developing more slowly and the use of language and vocabulary is limited. Progress in reading is better particularly in the infants where most pupils are reading close to the average. In the juniors, progress is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress especially where the work is carefully matched to their needs and effective support is given by the classroom assistants.
61. The pupils enjoy literacy sessions and are keen to participate. They listen well, with interest and some excitement to the text and many respond with enthusiasm to the ensuing questions and discussion. An example of this was seen in an junior lesson when the pupils heard the text of a story about "The Shrinking Treehorn", considering words to describe the characters. The majority of pupils are able to work independently with little or no adult supervision. They respond well to group work and share both ideas and resources. The pupils remain on task and interested provided the task is appropriate and well matched to their needs. They are generally well behaved but where the work is not challenging, they become restless or disinterested. Most pupils express enjoyment for reading with many reading regularly at home.
62. The quality of teaching across the school ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Where the teaching is good or better, teachers deliver the curriculum with enthusiasm and this in turn encourages the pupils to succeed and has a positive effect on their learning. The teachers use their skills and knowledge to ensure the pupils respond and become involved in the discussions and tasks they set. Appropriate vocabulary is taught, for example, in a lesson for infants, where the teacher talked about the author, illustrator and title. In these lessons teachers have a good relationship with the class, and some expect a high standard of attainment and set pupils challenging tasks. In lessons that are unsatisfactory, the pace is lacking and lessons tend to drag, work set is insufficiently challenging and pupils become restless and bored. The classroom assistants are generally effectively deployed to support pupils, although more could be made of their monitoring role; observing and assessing the pupils in groups.
63. The coordinator is enthusiastic but has only been in the role since September 2000. She has been able to monitor planning and has been involved in observing lessons. All test results are now analysed and teachers are beginning to set individual targets for pupils to help them improve their standards of work. This is particularly so with writing, which is a weakness already identified by the school. Much of the marking seen is positive and constructive but the standard and effectiveness is not consistent across the school.
64. A reading record book is provided for each pupil and parents are encouraged to write in it. This is filled in regularly by parents of the younger pupils but is not used as effectively with the older pupils. There have been a number of visitors to the school including a theatre company, a poet and a storyteller during book week, when pupils were encouraged to dress up as characters from their favourite books. These activities help to enhance the pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

65. Standards are below average for eleven-year-olds. The results of the National Curriculum tests of 2000 were based on a small number of pupils and consequently were not statistically reliable. However, in most years, there has been a larger number of eleven-year-olds and the trend in results has been below the national trend, often with few pupils achieving highly and a larger than average proportion achieving below the national expectation. In comparison with schools having similar results when the pupils were seven, the progress made by the eleven-year-olds in 2000 was well below average, although some pupils have left or joined the school during the juniors. The standards of the current eleven-year-old pupils are slightly below average. Very few have achieved work of an above average standard, although a good majority is close to the expected level. Their recent work shows a good range of knowledge of different aspects of the programme of study and, in lessons, their progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils achieving high standards is generally low and this is partly because some teachers are insufficiently aware of the detail of the National Curriculum Levels for the subject.
66. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 were above average and the trend in performance for this age group since the last inspection has generally been above average. In comparison to schools having similar pupils, the results of these seven-year-olds were above average and standards have been maintained since the last

inspection. Although in 2000, there was a good proportion of seven-year-olds achieving standards higher than expected, the work of the current pupils of this age, suggests that there are fewer pupils with high attainment. There are also more pupils this year with attainment below that expected for their age and consequently current standards among seven-year-olds are below average overall. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

67. The current eleven-year-olds have completed a good amount of work showing they have a reasonable understanding of all the main areas of the programmes of study. In a revision lesson in preparation for the National Curriculum tests, the pupils showed a sound understanding of Venn diagrams for classifying even numbers and multiples as well as knowledge about different sorts of angles and how to use a protractor. However, this work is not yet highly accurate and even the most able pupils do not measure to the nearest degree. For mental calculation, pupils of all abilities know an appropriate range of strategies and those of average and above average ability quickly find answers to number problems with reasonable accuracy. In a lesson designed to help pupils whose attainment is close to the expected level, the pupils quickly learnt how to use equivalent fractions to find alternative numerators and denominators enabling simple calculations such as simplifying fractions and forming mixed numbers. In another lesson about three-quarters of the eleven-year-olds pupils consolidated their knowledge of how to change simple fractions to decimals and percentages, although none could do this with more complex fractions such as $\frac{5}{8}$. A very small number of ten-year-old pupils are working at the level expected for eleven-year-olds and can, for example, use a calculator to work out percentages. However, the large majority of these pupils have average attainment. The nine-year-old pupils are more articulate about their knowledge and understanding because the teaching uses a good degree of questions to which the pupils need to explain their answers. The eight-year-old pupils have a good knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and generally, their attainment is at least average for their age.
68. At the end of the infants, the current pupils of all abilities know the pairs of numbers that make ten well and are quick to answer questions about this. However, few are able to extend this knowledge to the numbers that make twenty. A small proportion of the pupils know what a decimal point is and how to use it when writing money. Nearly all the pupils use an appropriate number of strategies to calculate simple numbers mentally and the most able pupils can write numbers up to 1000. Otherwise, there is little high attainment but the pupils have completed a good amount of work from all aspects of the subject, much of which has been done on printed worksheets. The school has predicted that some two-fifths of the pupils will achieve below the expected standards and that few will achieve highly. Less pupils than the national average are likely to achieve the expected standards, with few at a high level. The attainment of the six-year-olds is also below average and during the inspection were learning about the numbers from ten to twenty. None knew that ten and three is thirteen although nearly all quickly recognised the number of spots on dice without counting. These pupils were learning to recognise and write the numbers between ten and twenty.
69. The pupils' attitudes to the subject and their learning are varied but good overall. In the juniors, the pupils' response to lessons is usually very good with a high level of interest and many pupils wanting to answer questions with good explanations. When the tasks they are given are interesting the pupils settle and concentrate very well. However, in a minority of lessons the content insufficiently interests the pupils and their concentration lapses. The infant pupils have generally appropriate behaviour but are sometimes so keen to answer questions that they shout out, although they respond quickly to the teachers' instructions. When working, the six and seven-year-olds often chat loudly but this is largely about their work. They are positive about their progress and enjoy their learning in the subject.
70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. In the juniors, the teaching is occasionally good or very good and throughout the school, generally, the pupils learn appropriately and make sound progress in lessons. However, in a significant proportion of lessons there is a degree of under-expectation especially of the higher attaining pupils. This is usually due to insufficient knowledge about the criteria for the attainment of the different National Curriculum levels. Occasionally, the teachers' assessments of the pupils' National Curriculum levels have been insufficiently accurate. In other cases, the work of the higher attaining pupils is made more difficult by the size of the numbers they are given to work with but not by the level of understanding required to complete the work. The teaching methods of the National Numeracy Strategy have been adopted well and this helps the basic skills to be taught satisfactorily. For example, all the lessons observed started with a session in which the pupils' mental skills of calculation were extended. In the best lessons, this session had a good pace and the teacher asked the pupils questions that sometimes encouraged quick responses; sometimes required considered explanations and sometimes enabled the teacher to learn what the pupils already knew. The planning for these lessons is conscientious and follows a consistent pattern. Lessons are planned with the Framework of the strategy as a priority as well as by using a published scheme of work. Lessons are enhanced by the sharing of learning objectives for each lesson and often these are discussed at the end so pupils become aware of what they have learned. Homework is used appropriately to enhance the pupils' learning. However, teachers do not use the information from assessments well or consistently enough to provide appropriately challenging work. For example, worksheets given to the more able eleven-year-old pupils did not allow opportunities to extend their accuracy of measuring angles to the nearest degree. Less able eight-year-olds had difficulty in describing directions and distances in words because they had not understood fully the purpose and nature of the task. Throughout the school, teachers manage the pupils well and this helps them usually to concentrate well. In the juniors they often make good efforts and can work independently and occasionally help each other. Teachers use resources well to help the pupils' understanding. Targets for each pupil are used to help individuals remember what they have to do to improve and, for the eight-year-olds, these are effectively displayed on their

past work. In lessons, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their work is usually appropriate and often supported by additional adult help.

71. The coordinator is new to the role and has already prepared an action plan for improvements in the subject. All the teachers have had appropriate training for the National Numeracy Strategy. A visiting specialist has provided demonstration lessons and visits are planned for teachers to observe other specialist teachers. However, more work is needed to help teachers become more confident in their knowledge of the National Curriculum levels in order that they can set appropriately challenging work and better extend the learning of different ability groups. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the scheme of work and a published scheme has been introduced providing materials to support the National Numeracy Strategy. The coordinator now reviews teachers' planning and has observed lessons. However, the results of tests are not yet analysed fully and consequently there is a lack of detailed knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' achievements. The school has enriched the subject through holding a "maths week" and providing a "maths trail" around the school grounds. There are a few examples of pupils using their learning to support lessons in other subjects. The school's resources are of good quality and the coordinator has listed these and ensured they are easily accessible to classes.

SCIENCE

72. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with national expectations at the age of seven and eleven. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, or above, was average but the percentage of pupils reaching a higher level was well very low. However, the number of pupils taking these tests was too low for statistical reliability. At the age of seven, in 2000, their teachers assessed the attainment of seven-year-olds. These assessments show that the school's performance was close to the national average. The teachers promote a good balance between different aspects of the subject (life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes) and this enables the pupils to make good gains in their learning, particularly in the juniors. The pupils acquire a sound understanding of the work that they cover. Pupils with special educational needs achieve and progress in their learning at a similar rate to other pupils in relation to their prior attainment.
73. Teachers promote scientific enquiry very effectively through well-planned investigations and by the age of eleven the pupils know well the principles of fair testing and understand the need to control variables. Pupils make satisfactory progress in understanding life processes. By the age of seven, pupils know that humans and other animals need food and water to stay alive. By the age of eleven, the pupils are able to name and identify the position of some major organs of the human body and can name and describe the functions of different parts of a plant. Across the school, pupils make good progress in acquiring a good knowledge and understanding about materials and their properties. For example, seven-year-old pupils can recognise and group things made from wood, metals or glass and eight-year-olds begin to identify some of the properties of different materials. By the age of eleven, pupils can classify substances into solids, liquids and gases and know that these materials can be mixed or changed through heating or cooling and know that these changes are sometimes non-reversible. Throughout the school, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of physical processes. For example, seven-year-olds can identify several sources of light and know the difference between night and day. Eight-year-olds investigate magnetic pull as they test which materials are attracted to a magnet. Nine-year-old pupils show a good understanding of friction as a force as they test and measure the effectiveness of different kinds of surfaces to find out which surface allows an object to travel down a ramp the quickest. By the age of eleven, pupils know how to construct circuits and can represent series circuits well through drawings and the use of conventional symbols. They understand air resistance and can use a Newton meter to measure the upward thrust on objects immersed in water.
74. The quality of teaching is good overall, being satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. In the best lessons, teachers have secure subject knowledge and are able to explain key scientific concepts clearly. This enables pupils to make good gains in their learning. Teachers use and promote proper scientific vocabulary and planning ensures all aspects of the subject are taught effectively. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills through well-planned experiments and tasks. Skilful questioning appropriately extends the pupils' thinking, knowledge and understanding and they manage the pupils well. Occasionally there are shortcomings in teaching when the teachers miss opportunities to promote key scientific vocabulary or do not guide and encourage pupils to succeed sufficiently. The planned tasks are not well matched to pupils' different levels of ability in a small number of lessons.
75. Effective guidelines for the subject support teachers' planning well. Resources are adequate and well used by teachers to support pupils' learning. However, the quality of teaching, learning and standards in the subject are not effectively monitored and this has not improved since the last inspection. Although teachers assess the pupils' attainment at the end of topics, methods of assessment are not consistent and this hinders the tracking of pupils' progress over time.

ART and DESIGN

76. Standards are satisfactory in both the infant and junior age ranges and have largely been maintained since the last inspection. One lesson was observed in the infants and one in the juniors and the past work of pupils was reviewed. This work is of variable standards indicating that different teachers have different approaches to teaching the subject and a degree of uncertainty as to the standards to be expected from pupils of different ages. Nevertheless, in the lessons observed, the pupils' work was at least satisfactory and sometimes good, showing careful observations and a good ability to appraise their work and make appropriate choices using a range of media.
77. In a lesson for older infants, the pupils were using pencils, crayons, and paint to represent the faces of animals in connection with learning in other subjects. They observed photographs closely, chose appropriate media and were very keen to represent the animal's face accurately. They were often critical of their work asking for the teacher's help in choosing the best way to represent the key features. They tried different ways to combine the media and mix colours. In a lesson for younger juniors, the pupils used the school grounds well to draw and make rubbings of aspects of their environment, whilst considering their views about parts of the grounds. Most were careful in their observations, for example, of leaves, and learnt how to make effective rubbings using a sketching pencil. The past work of pupils includes some good examples but not a clear progression in gaining skills and understanding.
78. In lessons, the pupils are always interested in the subject and enjoy making pictures. They are generally responsible and careful with materials and share appropriately when necessary. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs work diligently, usually following the teachers' instructions well and making sensible choices. There are several examples of past work indicating very careful observation and the exploration of different textures and colours. Most pupils show a good level of pride in their work and this is promoted by helpful encouragement from the teachers and assistants.
79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In some aspects, such as in the emphasis given to careful observation, it is good. However, progression in gaining skills is not promoted sufficiently. This is partly because of the difference between the teachers' approaches and partly because the curriculum, while planned from a nationally recommended scheme of work is not regularly monitored. There is little advice for teachers about the expected levels of skill for different age groups. Teachers give the pupils a good degree of choices and offer good advice and encouragement. In some instances, the pupils need to be shown the more detailed aspects of skills such as mixing paint colours. Teachers organise lessons appropriately and secure sufficient adult help to enable all the pupils to work in groups. Although some pupils do not listen sufficiently well to instructions, teachers maintain good order and praise good behaviour appropriately. The whole class discussion at the end of the better lesson was well used to emphasise careful observation and celebrate good work.
80. The coordinator is new to the role this year and there has been little training for teachers recently. However, there has been staff discussion and the adoption of a new scheme of work and policy. Although planning has been monitored, this is not regular and the coordinator has few means by which she can learn about the pupils' standards of work throughout the school.

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

81. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with age related expectations by the age of seven and eleven. Across the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress in both aspects of the subject. Teachers effectively encourage pupils to think about design specifications and purposes when designing products and they are able to generate ideas for products effectively. For example, eleven-year-old pupils successfully designed a net for a box to contain Jaffa cakes; and they considered appropriate size, function and finishing techniques that would attract people to buy the product. Eight-year-old pupils have successfully designed and decorated real wooden chairs to suit the needs of particular characters, such as a headteacher, or the fictional character of James Bond. The seven-year-old pupils designed a flag and followed their plans accurately while making it out of felt and other materials. The teachers encourage the pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of their designs and the pupils show they are able to modify their models if necessary, in the light of these evaluations. For example, ten and eleven-year-olds evaluated the effectiveness of their money containers and realised that their stitches were too large to make the edges of the containers sufficiently secure and recognised that if the stitches had been made smaller this would have made the product more suited to its purpose.
82. The eight-year-old pupils make particularly good progress because of some very good teaching and consequently most pupils show above average attainment for their age. For example, they effectively learnt about how different mechanisms work and the appropriateness of different materials for different purposes as they took apart and then reassembled different types of torches. Pupils showed a good working knowledge of electrical circuits and discussed the different component parts of the torches and their functions well. In the same lesson, pupils used this new knowledge and learnt to design and make their own torches using a range of resources such as bulbs, wire and card tubes.

83. The overall quality of teaching in the juniors is good. No infant lessons were observed. When teaching is at its best, the teachers plan appropriately challenging tasks that effectively develop key skills. For example, in one of the lessons observed the teacher had given pupils different kinds of pencil cases, which they had to investigate and evaluate for suitability, effectiveness, function, and design. Good subject knowledge enables the teachers to give the pupils clear explanations and pose appropriate questions that effectively extend their thinking, knowledge and understanding. Resources are well prepared and support the learning. Occasionally there are shortcomings in teaching when teachers do not promote specific subject vocabulary and key skills sufficiently.

GEOGRAPHY

84. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, further evidence was obtained from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and through discussions with both pupils and teachers. Standards have improved since the last inspection in the juniors and are now broadly average. At the time of the last report, they were below national expectations. Standards have been maintained in the infants and remain in line with age-related expectations.
85. Across the school, pupils acquire a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of a range of places. For example, in their study of the local area, seven-year-old pupils can identify and name many human features within the Bedmond area such as the post office, church, village hall and leisure facilities. Eight-year-olds are beginning to recognise that land is used for different purposes as they plot key features such as residential homes and shops on a land-use map of Bedmond. Throughout the school, the pupils make some good progress in learning appropriate geographical vocabulary, which they use well in their work and they begin to use secondary sources effectively to inform their studies. For example, eight-year-olds research about other countries in order to design their own passports and include information about the climate and population of the different countries visited. Older pupils can identify how and why places change. For example, ten and eleven-year-old pupils gather data about the population of Abbots Langley over time in order to plot trends on a graph. They use this information well to give reasons why the population has increased because of employment opportunities in the area. Although teachers provide the pupils with opportunities to study different places around the world, sometimes these studies are not in sufficient depth to identify their similarities and differences, particularly for the oldest pupils.
86. Across the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in interpreting atlases and maps at a range of scales and this enables them to develop a good awareness of the wider world and helps them to recognise the relationships between places. For example, seven-year-old pupils can name and identify the four countries that make up the United Kingdom using a map. Eight-year-olds interpret a local map well and can identify many features such as roads, schools, churches and nearby towns within the local area and nine-year-olds can use an index and key effectively to find out about different places, including what sort of climate different countries have.
87. Although the school uses the school's library service effectively to supplement its resources for geography, overall the resources for the subject are insufficient and need extending to include more globes, photographic packs, maps and atlases. Planning is satisfactory, however, there is insufficient opportunity for the coordinator to monitor the subject effectively across the school.

HISTORY

88. During the inspection only one lesson was observed in the infant stage, so additional evidence of attainment was derived from scrutiny of work and teachers' planning. From this evidence and the lesson observations, pupils throughout the school are achieving in line with expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below national expectations and the subject was an issue for improvement.
89. The six-year-old pupils recognise that houses were different in the Victorian era compared to homes that are more modern. They are able to identify some of the features that are common to both periods, and some that are different. They know that when the Victorian homes were built there was no electricity or television. The seven-year-olds are beginning to appreciate time differences having devised a time line of their lives, from birth until the present, noting any significant events and changes. They have also looked at household appliances from the past and compared them to those of the present day.
90. The younger juniors have enjoyed a topic about the Tudors and, in particular learning about Henry VIII and his six wives. They used evidence from books to determine the range of activities that Henry would have enjoyed. These ranged from composing music to playing tennis and hunting. The pupils have become increasingly aware of the differences between the past and the present. Earlier in the year, nine-year-olds studied life in ancient Egypt. Pupils of ten and eleven completed an interesting topic on Britain since the 1930's, including aspects of the World War II such as rationing, evacuation and the role of Sir Winston Churchill. At present the Civil War, Charles I and Oliver Cromwell are being studied and pupils show an

understanding of these events in depth. They know what the divine right of kings means and have definite opinions as to whether or not Charles I should have been executed.

91. A scrutiny of the pupils' past work shows a wide range of topics covered but in some classes much of the work is copied and pupils have had limited opportunities to express their own opinions or write about the events in their own words. Where they are given this opportunity, they are able to form interesting commentaries about the events. Throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress as they develop appropriate skills of historical research and an understanding of periods in time.
92. The pupils enjoy history and are confident to respond to the teachers' questioning. The oldest pupils demonstrate a good understanding and interest in the subject and willingly participate in the lessons. Where pupils are well motivated, they learn with enthusiasm and remain on task throughout the lesson. They collaborate when required; for example, when the eight-year-olds worked in groups to decide what activities Henry VIII would have enjoyed.
93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the juniors. Where the teaching is good the lessons are well-planned, with interesting tasks for the pupils to complete. The teachers' enthusiasm and knowledge encourages the pupils to learn and to have an interest in the subject. Questioning is used effectively, as is the plenary session, to extend pupils' knowledge and reinforce learning. The teachers have good relationships with their classes.
94. The coordinator is a keen historian and has been able to monitor planning but as yet has had no opportunity to observe lessons. The scheme of work is based largely on one recommended nationally and on the National Curriculum framework. History is either taught in blocks or as an on-going topic, depending on the teachers' choice. The range of the school's resources for this subject is barely adequate but there are facilities to borrow from the schools' library service and a museum service to supplement these. A variety of visits including some to the local area, the Houses of Parliament, Roman remains in a nearby town, and various museums give the pupils first hand experiences and enhance their learning.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards of attainment in the infants and the juniors are unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in some classes where the pupils lack confidence and are slow at using the keyboard. Control technology and the sensing of physical data have not yet been taught. During the inspection little was seen of the work of the ten and eleven-year-old pupils. However, for their age the younger pupils have a sound understanding of many other functions of a computer and, for example, they know that it can be used to store, collect and retrieve information presenting it in different forms as well as to communicate with distant places.
96. The pupils enjoy using computers and are generally careful with the equipment. They often have to wait for some time before they are able to use a computer. Most of the pupils remember what they have been taught during the instruction session and they draft questions or write notes in preparation for their turn. Occasionally, the hardware has faults and here the pupils are patient. They often work in pairs and help each other well taking turns appropriately. There was no observations made of pupils with special educational needs using hardware.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Generally, teachers have sufficient knowledge for what is currently taught but more training is planned to improve teachers' knowledge as the school improves its provision. Developments in the subject have been slow partly due to changes in coordinator. Teachers often use computers to demonstrate the points they are making. In the best of these lessons, the pupils are invited to try new controls and there is a good level of discussion. In others, the pupils have to wait a long time to use a computer. Sometimes the work set for this period is not sufficiently well related to their learning and becomes a writing exercise. Progress in gaining skills is restricted to some extent by the small number of computers. There are sound records of each pupil's access to computers and of their learning. These are becoming regularly used, but are not monitored to promote consistency. A major weakness in the subject is the lack of provision for control technology and external sensing. However, the school has a robust plan for improvements including the provision of an information and communication technology suite, further staff training and a higher level of monitoring.

MUSIC

98. The standard of attainment of the eleven-year-old pupils is below expectations. The pupils have limited knowledge of the names of percussion instruments and as a class do not sing well. They lack enthusiasm, do not sing in tune and words are not clear. As a group, they are able to keep a beat and recognise the number of beats in a bar. However, the younger juniors, demonstrate a better quality of singing, through two-part rounds in which they sustain the tune well and by keeping the pulse in both rhythm patterns and action songs. When the whole school has a hymn practice, the standard of singing is in line with expectations. The pupils sing in tune, are beginning to understand the need for expression and for clarity of words.

During these sessions, the older pupils participate with more enthusiasm and interest. This standard of attainment is similar to that noted in the previous inspection.

99. The standard of attainment in the infants is in line with expectations. The pupils are able to keep a steady beat and the class teacher emphasises the importance of keeping a pulse when performing. They are encouraged to have confidence to sing on their own and some of the pupils do so well. The rest of the class reply and succeed in singing in tune. They are given the opportunity to follow a conductor and to respond to a score using pictures of the instruments to show when they should play. The standard of attainment is very similar to that recorded in the previous inspection.
100. The infant pupils make satisfactory progress whilst the progress of the eleven-year-olds has been unsatisfactory. However, when taught by a specialist, their progress is at least satisfactory because the emphasis is to develop appropriate singing techniques.
101. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy the subject, particularly when taught by the enthusiastic music specialist. The pupils listen carefully, and participate with enthusiasm and interest. They are well behaved and treat the instruments with respect. However, when the lessons are less well planned, classroom management is not good or the teacher misses opportunities to develop the pupils' understanding, the pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory. They do not concentrate, are noisy and do not show respect for the instruments as they tend to hit them too hard and without thought.
102. The quality of teaching is varied but good overall. There is some unsatisfactory teaching where the lack of teacher's knowledge and missed opportunities to teach to the lesson's objectives reduces the pupils' progress. On these occasions, the discipline is not well kept and the pupils are not motivated to perform. However, the recent employment of a specialist music teacher is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning and these lessons are well planned, move at a good pace and develop appropriate techniques of singing and accompaniment. A good relationship is being built with all the classes and the enthusiasm and knowledge of the teacher is encouraging the pupils to sing and play well.
103. The coordinator's role is insufficiently effective. Planning is not monitored, despite being collected, and there is an uncertainty as to what is being taught in lessons, except those provided by the specialist teacher. If the extra lessons with the music specialist are to continue, liaison between the teacher and the school must be such that all of the staff know exactly what has been covered and what they must teach. Occasionally, outside musicians come into school to demonstrate a variety of instruments and to encourage the children to learn. The pupils take part in the Christmas carol service in the church and at other times in the year. However, currently there are few extra-curricular activities for music although the music specialist is hoping to run a choir. The pupils can opt to learn the recorder but as this is provided by an outside agency, the pupils are charged to attend. The resources were criticised in the previous inspection as being in need of refurbishment or replacement, the instruments have improved slightly as new ones have been purchased but are still only just sufficient for the full curriculum to be taught.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Standards are satisfactory and in line with expectations at the end of the infant and the junior age ranges. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Only one lesson was seen in the infants but this and the lessons in the juniors were all taught outside and were largely of team games and athletics. Other elements of the curriculum were not observed and judgements are based only on the aspects seen. No swimming was observed during the inspection.
105. The juniors have an appropriate sense of safety in their activities and they demonstrate reasonable precision and control in skills such as throwing and catching, especially the boys. They understand the value of warming up in preparation for activity and of cooling down afterwards. They can discuss basic tactics in team games and have a sound sense of collaboration and competition. In a good lesson, nine-year-olds discussed effective features of a standing jump and were conscious of improving their performance. In the infant lesson seen, the six-year-olds showed some immature sense of balance and control in running and work with beanbags but the seven-year-olds had overcome this. However, they all understand the value of exercise and are aware of the importance of safe practice. The pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
106. The pupils enjoy the subject and are usually well behaved. Nearly all the pupils are well prepared for lessons with appropriate clothing and the few without do not take part. Although they learn to be suitably competitive in team games, they also learn to collaborate well. In some lessons, they also are appreciative of each other's performance. In the best lessons, the pupils learn well from the instructions given by the teacher and from discussions about how to improve their skills.
107. The quality of teaching in the juniors is good. Lessons are well planned and safety is appropriately emphasised. In the best lessons good quality discussion that helps to raise the pupils' awareness of how to improve their performance. The lessons have a good pace and discipline is usually kept well with teachers having appropriate control of activities and the pupils responding well. Teaching in the infants is satisfactory overall. Occasionally, it fails to appropriate discipline or sufficient

attention to the detail of how pupils can gain skills. However, the attainment of the seven-year-olds indicates that the teaching has helped them to progress satisfactorily from relatively immature levels of coordination.

108. There is an appropriate plan for further developments in the subject. However, teachers have little guidance in the levels of skill to expect from pupils of different age groups. An appropriate policy and scheme of work is used. The school provides a good range of sports and events that enrich the curriculum. Many of these are as extra-curricular activities, which are well attended and often led by specialists. Resources are satisfactory and the grounds provide for additional aspects of the subject such as long-distance running and swimming. The school's hall is of sufficient size for the classes taught and is not used for dining. However, the swimming pool suffers greatly from vandalism and is expensive in time and resources. It was not in use during the inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. During the inspection, there was little opportunity to observe lessons and additional evidence was obtained from work scrutiny, displays, planning and talking to pupils. By the end of the infant stage, pupils are achieving in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They are aware of the main events in Jesus' life and of some of the stories he told such as the good Samaritan and the prodigal son. They have looked at symbolism in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The older infant pupils are looking at the creation story comparing different sources and recognising that these are not always the same. Younger pupils enjoyed the story of Noah's ark and a discussion about making promises. They understand that any promises made must be such that they can be kept.

110. By the end of the juniors, the pupils are developing awareness that there are many faiths practised in this country such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. They know that there are similarities and differences in each faith and are beginning to understand the importance of faith to different groups of people. Religious celebrations are discussed, including, for example, Diwali, Sukkat and Christmas as well as those related immediately to the pupils, such as birthdays. The younger pupils are encouraged to write about their special place and the older one about feelings of rejection.

111. A discussion with some eleven-year-old pupils showed that they enjoy their work in this area of the curriculum and are interested in other faiths. Infant pupils also enjoy the subject and willingly respond to the teachers' questions. They remain on task when set written work and are well motivated to achieve their best. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory as the pupils learn about other religions and begin to develop an understanding of their importance.

112. There was no teaching observed in the juniors so no judgement can be made. However, in the two lessons in the infants, one was satisfactory and the other was good. The teachers use questions effectively to extend pupils' knowledge and have a good relationship with their classes. In the better lesson, the pupils were confident in explaining their pictures and the teacher used these examples to encourage others in their drawings to record what they had learnt.

113. The coordinator monitors teachers' planning but as yet has had no opportunity to observe teaching. The existing scheme of work is to be modified to take account of the revised locally agreed syllabus and this will be implemented next term. The visit of a rabbi and vicar give pupils another dimension to their understanding of other faiths. Visits to the local church have been undertaken with visits to a synagogue and mosque planned for the future. These visits will help the pupils appreciate the impact of other religions and their importance to the people who follow them.