

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN'S ANGELL TOWN CE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

London SW9

LEA area: Lambeth

Unique reference number: 100615

Headteacher: Mr P Shephard

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner
23160

Dates of inspection: 26th-29th June 2000

Inspection number: 193067

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	85, Angell Road, Brixton London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, St John's Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Rev M Clark
Date of previous inspection:	8 th July 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jan Leaning	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	English Art Music Children aged under five English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John's Primary School educates boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 11. The school has 234 pupils on roll, which is broadly average for schools of the same type and slightly higher than at the time of the school's previous OFSTED inspection. There are 12 full-time and 28 part-time pupils in the Nursery class. The school has 32 more girls than boys on roll. Approximately 63 per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high compared with most schools and represents a 50 per cent increase on the figures at the time of the last inspection. Around 95 per cent of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Fifty per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school has 50 pupils on its register of special educational needs, three of whom have statements of special educational need. This is broadly average. During the last school year, 32 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission, and 34 left it at a time other than that of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This represents a high degree of mobility amongst the pupils in this school. Children generally enter the school at below average standards overall, although, in some years, assessments show children's attainment to be well below average on entry to the school. The school is part of the Lambeth Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, where standards have improved significantly over the past two years in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information technology are low. The quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils receive demanding work in most subjects. The headteacher provides very clear and decisive leadership, which has enabled the school to continue to improve despite difficulties in recruiting and retaining permanent staff. As a result of the high turnover of teachers, there is insufficient delegation of responsibilities for different subjects. Governors are not fulfilling their statutory responsibilities and have a limited influence on shaping the direction of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain high standards in English and science, and very high standards in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and the school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are particularly effective. The best teaching is in the Nursery, Year 2 and Year 6.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction for the work of the school and has developed a good team spirit amongst staff and a very positive ethos for learning.
- Pupils' attitudes towards school and their behaviour are good, and the relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are a strength of the school.
- The school offers a very good range of experiences to enhance the pupils' moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum, at playtimes and through visits and visitors to the school.
- The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are closely linked to teachers' planning and are very effective and straightforward.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology, which are below average because the school does not have adequate resources, expertise or curricular planning to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- The breadth of the curriculum, its planning and management, which have not been developed to a high enough standard because of the high turnover of staff and the intensive focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The effectiveness of the governing body, which has a limited awareness of its role and responsibilities and of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what needs to be done to address them.
- The range of resources to support teaching and learning in science, information technology, design and technology, art, geography and history.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in July 1996. When the present headteacher was appointed in 1998, it is reported that no action plan was in place and that there had been very little progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection. There has been very good improvement in some aspects of the school since 1998. Standards have improved significantly in English and science, where they are now above average by the age of 11, having been judged previously to be below average. Standards in mathematics have also improved from average to well above average. These improvements reflect the higher quality of teaching, which was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and is now good. There has been a high turnover of teachers in the past two years but strong leadership and good support for teachers have ensured that this did not have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. A significant factor in achieving higher standards has been the school's intensive focus on literacy and numeracy and the very effective implementation of the new national strategies. However, this has also resulted in insufficient emphasis on other areas of the curriculum, especially information technology. Overall, the school's capacity to succeed with further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	B	B	A*
mathematics	E*	C	A	A*
science	E*	C	A	A*

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The information shows that the pupils' results have improved dramatically in all three subjects, so that they were in the top five per cent of similar schools in the 1999 national tests. The school has set demanding targets to improve standards in the tests from year to year. The findings of the inspection largely agree with the school's test results and judge standards in English, including literacy, to be above those found in other schools and those in mathematics to be well above. In science, standards are judged to be above those found in other schools. This judgement differs from the 1999 test results because fewer pupils achieved above average standards. In design and technology, standards are above those found in other schools, whilst in information technology they are below. In all other subjects, they are similar to those found in most schools. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are well above those found in other schools in mathematics, above those found in English and science, and below in information technology. They are similar to those found in other schools for all other subjects but are above in design and technology.

Children aged under five reach expected standards in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical

development. Pupils make good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in the Reception class. They make good progress at Key Stages 1 and 2. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are eager to learn and show interest and enjoyment in their work. This helps them to make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, in assemblies, around the school, in the dining hall and outside at playtimes. They are courteous to visitors and are very friendly and welcoming.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well together, share resources and take additional responsibility willingly. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is high.

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.

Seventeen per cent of the teaching observed during the inspection was very good and 95 per cent was at least satisfactory. Sixty-seven per cent of the teaching seen was good or better. Five per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. One teacher was unexpectedly absent through illness during the inspection and the class had a different temporary teacher each day. Throughout the school, the teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good. The quality of the teaching and learning in the Nursery is good. There is particularly strong teaching in Years 2 and 6. Overall, teachers meet the needs of all pupils well and there is a very good emphasis on teaching basic skills and developing pupils' vocabulary. Teachers have high expectations of the standards the pupils can achieve and explain clearly the intention of the lesson. In most cases, teachers manage pupils well, but some weaknesses in controlling exuberant behaviour occasionally lead to unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Pupils of all ages work hard and make good progress. They apply themselves well to their work and sustain concentration for lengthy periods, producing a good amount of work during each lesson.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	As a result of the intensive focus on English, mathematics and science during the past two years, there has been insufficient development in other subjects. Statutory requirements for information technology are not being met. There are very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a number of visits and visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities. There are too few opportunities for children under five in the Reception class to learn through talk, play and enquiry.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and setting targets to help them improve. They receive effective support, are provided with appropriate work and make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' fluency in spoken English and extending their vocabulary. Pupils make good progress in learning English, and this helps them to make good progress in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on spiritual and moral values and beliefs. They are encouraged to work and play together and take responsibility for their own actions. The school teaches pupils to appreciate a variety of cultural traditions through art, music, dance and visits to museums and theatres.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for pupils well. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring their academic performance and personal development are very good. Some administrative aspects of health and safety are not complied with.

The school works very well in partnership with parents and this has a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Parents are well informed about the school's work and support pupils' learning well, but few parents help in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very clear and purposeful leadership and is well supported by his deputy in all aspects of management. This has created an atmosphere in which pupils feel secure, happy and valued and staff work together effectively as a team. Owing to the high turnover of staff in the past two years, very few teachers have been allocated responsibility for managing subjects. There is very effective leadership in English and mathematics, which has contributed to the raising of standards in those subjects, but most other subjects lack clear leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is not fulfilling its statutory obligations for the teaching of information technology. The Chair of Governors is well informed and provides good leadership. Most governors do not have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and rely heavily on the headteacher and Chair when making decisions. Their role in shaping the direction of the school is insufficiently developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and deputy have a thorough knowledge of the school's performance and take effective steps to address identified weaknesses. They have monitored teaching throughout the school and have helped teachers to improve their practice. Pupils' test results are carefully analysed and the information is used to plan future teaching strategies.
The strategic use of resources	The school's resources are used well to promote the pupils' learning and address the priorities for improvement that teachers have identified. The headteacher negotiates contracts to achieve the best value possible and the administrative officer monitors expenditure rigorously. The school development plan covers too short a period and contains insufficient detail to be an effective tool for improvement.

The school has an adequate number of teaching and support staff who are appropriately qualified. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with some very good features, notably the outdoor areas. Resources are good in English and mathematics. There are insufficient resources to support teaching and learning in science, information technology, art, design and technology, geography and history. The library is under-resourced.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership and management of the school. • The quality of teaching. • The high expectations that the school has of their children. • Their children like school and make good progress. • The school is approachable, works closely with them and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive.

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents. They also show that homework is given regularly and is used effectively to consolidate pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The pupils' results in the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds were above the national average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. They were very high in comparison with the average for similar schools in all three subjects. The school set very high targets for the pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in 1999 and was successful in meeting them. Very challenging targets have been set for 2000 and the school is making good progress towards achieving them. There has been a dramatic improvement in the school's results from 1997 to 1999. The overall trend in the school's results from 1996 to 1999 is above the national trend. The attainment of both boys and girls has improved significantly. The findings of the current inspection indicate no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. However, over the past four years at Key Stage 2, girls have outperformed boys in English and boys have outperformed girls in mathematics.

2. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English and science are above those found in other schools, whilst in mathematics, they are well above. These agree with the school's 1999 test results in English and mathematics but are slightly lower in science, as fewer pupils are reaching above average standards. Pupils achieve standards in literacy that are above those found in other schools and well above in numeracy. The improvements that have been brought about result from an intensive focus on teaching all aspects of English and mathematics over the past two years, including the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In science, effective teaching of investigative and experimental methods has resulted in pupils developing a good understanding across all aspects of the subject. Overall, standards in information technology are below those found in other schools. Pupils attain good standards in word processing and use the keyboard and mouse competently to type and correct text and redraft their writing. However, standards in all other aspects of information technology are well below those found in other schools because pupils do not have enough access to computers and the school does not have sufficient resources to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

3. Pupils achieve standards in design and technology that are above those found in other schools as a result of well planned projects and informed teaching. Standards in design are particularly good. In art, pupils attain good standards in drawing and painting, but do not have enough opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in printmaking, collage, sculpture or work with textiles. In music, pupils attain good standards in singing but there was insufficient evidence to judge their attainment in appraising and composing music. In geography and history, standards are similar to those found in most schools. In physical education, swimming is a strength of the school, and most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Pupils attain very high standards in dance, whilst standards in games and gymnastics are similar to those found in most schools. Compared with the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. Standards in singing and some aspects of art are higher than they were. Standards are similar in other aspects of art, geography, history, information technology and physical education. Those subjects which have been a focus for development over the past two years have seen much improvement. The school has identified as its main priority the need to accomplish in all other subjects the same level of improvement and the same high standards of attainment that have been achieved in English, mathematics and science. It is now well placed to achieve this.

4. In English, in Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. They use a wide and varied vocabulary to good effect to interest the listener, and speak confidently and clearly in

small groups and to a wider audience. Standards in reading are also above average. Many pupils read difficult books fluently and confidently and are able to interpret the text well and understand its deeper meaning. Pupils achieve above average standards in writing. They write for a wide range of purposes, often with great originality and creativity in their choice of words and grammatical construction. Pupils attain good standards in spelling and use punctuation accurately. They present their work neatly. Overall, pupils attain standards in literacy that are above average.

5. In mathematics in Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are well above those found in other schools. They use quick mental recall of number facts, including factors and multiples, and add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers. Pupils solve written problems involving sums of money quickly and accurately. They measure and draw angles correctly and use formulae to calculate area, perimeter and volume. Pupils identify the mode and median of a set of data. Overall, pupils achieve standards in numeracy that are above average. In science, pupils achieve standards which are above those found in other schools in all aspects of the subject. They have well developed investigative skills and are able to devise tests, predict the outcomes of an investigation, record their results in various forms and draw conclusions from their observations. Pupils understand the functions of the major internal organs of the human body and know the importance of a balanced diet for good health. They understand the properties of materials and know that some are better insulators than others. Pupils know that friction is a force that affects how some objects move.

6. In art, pupils attain good standards in drawing and painting, but have limited experience in other aspects of the subject. In design and technology, pupils achieve high standards when designing and making a clock case to house an electrical clock mechanism. In geography, they understand how land is used in Angell Town and think of ways to improve the local environment. In history, pupils understand the impact of wartime bombing raids on London and imagine life as an evacuee. In information technology, they demonstrate good word processing skills but have limited experience in other aspects of the subject. In music, pupils sing a wide range of songs and hymns, maintaining a good rhythm and sustaining correct pitch. In physical education, most pupils swim unaided for 25 metres and perform a range of gymnastic movements competently.

7. The pupils' results in the 1999 tests for seven year olds were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They were very high when compared to the average for similar schools. Standards have been above average for three of the past four years. There was a sharp drop in 1998, followed by a return to above average results in 1999. In the 1999 assessments by teachers in science, attainment overall was above average. The findings of the inspection are that pupils attain standards in reading, writing and science that are above those found in other schools and well above in mathematics. The differences between the inspection findings and the 1999 test results in reading and writing are not overly significant and reflect variations between different groups of pupils. In Year 2, standards in drawing and painting are good, but pupils' experience in other aspects of art is limited. Standards are above in design and technology, and similar to those found in most schools in geography, history and physical education. Standards are below those expected for seven year olds in information technology because pupils do not have enough opportunity to use computers and to learn about different aspects of the subject. In music, pupils achieve good standards in singing but have limited opportunities for appraising and composing music.

8. In English in Year 2, pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening. They listen attentively to teachers and to each other and speak clearly and audibly. Pupils talk confidently about stories they have read and about their favourite books. Standards are above average in reading. Pupils read a range of interesting books accurately and fluently. They work out unfamiliar words by splitting them into sounds, and read aloud expressively to convey meaning. Pupils attain above average standards in writing. They express their thoughts and ideas freely, creatively and at length, using a good range of vocabulary. Handwriting is joined and neat, and pupils spell words correctly and use

punctuation accurately. Overall, pupils achieve standards in literacy that above average. Standards in mathematics are well above those in other schools. Pupils confidently use quick mental recall of number facts to 20 and beyond. They use correct mathematical terms and units of measurement. Pupils recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes and identify some of their properties. Standards in numeracy are well above average. In science, pupils achieve standards which are above those in other schools. They put forward ideas for investigation and make simple predictions about the outcome of an experiment. Pupils make careful observations and record their findings clearly. They know that the environment determines which animals and plants are found there. They identify items that are made from a range of materials and describe some of their properties. Pupils know that sound is louder when its source is close and quieter when it is further away.

9. In art, pupils observe carefully and record their ideas in sketchbooks. They use their observational and drawing skills well when sketching a snail and a stick insect. There is little evidence of work in other aspects of the subject. In design and technology, pupils achieve good results when designing an animal glove puppet to use in a storytelling performance. In geography, they understand the concept of a map as a view from above and draw maps of an imaginary island, using simple co-ordinates to locate features on it. In history, pupils have learned how toys have changed through the ages, and in music they sing a variety of songs from memory and accompany their own singing by tapping, stamping and playing percussion instruments to a steady rhythm. In physical education, they perform country dances satisfactorily and throw and catch balls with varying degrees of accuracy.

10. Children who are under the age of five enter the school with mainly below average standards of attainment. The school's assessments of pupils in the Reception class show that, in some years, the distribution of attainment is well below average. Children receive good teaching and make good progress in the Nursery, so that, by the age of five, most are on course to reach the expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. In language and literacy, by the age of five, the children are able to use pictures to tell a story and some are able to read some words. In mathematics, they are able to count to ten and higher achieving children are able to do simple addition and subtraction using practical objects. They are starting to gain an understanding of the properties of simple shapes. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children recognise aspects of different parts of the day, such as break and lunch times. In creative development, they use their imagination in role-play, pretending to be the three bears and Goldilocks in the three bears' cottage. They enjoy painting and drawing. In physical development, the children are developing good control when using small tools and equipment. The outside play area extends the children's progress in balancing and agility, and aspects of their personal and social development. Overall, the children's achievement is good in the Nursery. This does not continue in the Reception class, where children aged under five make satisfactory progress. Their achievement is satisfactory. This is because the range of experiences provided in the Reception class is too narrow and there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills and on learning through play and enquiry.

11. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets that are set for them. They are well supported in lessons and are given work that is appropriate for their stage of development. Some pupils are given individual support outside the classroom which is carefully planned to address their particular needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress through the stages of fluency as a result of the good support that is provided for them. Teachers and specialist staff work together to ensure that pupils have full access to the curriculum and a good grasp of the technical language required to make good progress in their learning.

12. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well overall. Their achievement in English, mathematics and science is very good whereas, in most other subjects, it is satisfactory, and sometimes good. Achievement in information technology is unsatisfactory. In most

subjects, pupils are given demanding work which challenges them and requires them to apply effort and concentration in order to succeed. They respond positively to the challenges and work hard to achieve good results.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and values are good, and reflect the aims and ethos of the school. Pupils enjoy school and are keen and enthusiastic in their learning; most concentrate well and work consistently at a good pace. In most lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and in some, they are very good. However, on the few occasions where teachers' control is ineffective, disruption occurs and attention wavers. Pupils know right from wrong and understand the need for rules. They are friendly, polite and courteous to visitors, teachers and their peers. In the playground, where opportunities for structured play are very good and there are good levels of control, pupils are keen to join in the activities, organise themselves well and take turns to use the equipment. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes towards school and get on well with others. Those whose behaviour is sometimes unacceptable respond well to the help teachers give them in modifying their behaviour.

14. Behaviour overall is good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be "generally sound". Pupils understand what is expected of them, and, in lessons, in the playground and around the school, they behave sensibly. No rough or inappropriate behaviour was seen. In the dining hall and in the playground, behaviour is very good, making lunchtime a valuable social occasion. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they do and its impact on others. Sanctions include loss of privileges and individual discussion about the problems. There are many rewards, including praise, stickers, certificates awarded by the headteacher and letters sent home. Where behaviour problems arise, parents are involved at an early stage if this is found to be necessary. The site is very well kept with very good efforts made to include the pupils in the 'green' areas. There is no evidence of graffiti and no litter. There have been no exclusions during the past year. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when there were a high number of fixed period exclusions. Parents comment that the positive ethos is a strength of the school and feel that behaviour is good because teachers have high expectations of the pupils.

15. The personal development of pupils is good. They are given opportunities as monitors, taking dinner registers, and getting out books and equipment before and during lessons and at lunch times. Pupils are involved in setting targets for themselves and evaluating their own work. Personal and social education occurs across the curriculum and in assemblies. In classes, most pupils listen carefully and wait politely for their turn to answer. They work well, both in groups and independently. Pupils are aware that there are others much less fortunate than themselves and raise funds for national and international charities. They respect the values and beliefs of others and understand that there are many different kinds of faiths and cultures. The high standards in the above areas enhance the opportunities for pupils to achieve their best.

16. Relationships in the school are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a very relaxed and sociable atmosphere in the school: staff and pupils are at ease with each other, make jokes and tell each other stories. A group of pupils was keen to entertain an inspector with a piece of drama at lunchtime, which they did very well. There is a high degree of racial harmony and no instances of bullying occurred during the inspection. Parents and pupils agree that this is usually the case.

17. Children aged under five behave well and attain expected standards for their age in their personal and social development. They settle into school life very well, take turns and share equipment fairly, feel safe and secure and grow in confidence. They are encouraged to be independent, whenever

possible. Children are developing an awareness of others and realise that, although some may behave differently, they have similar feelings to themselves and may be easily hurt by others' thoughtlessness.

18. Attendance is satisfactory overall. The attendance rate at the school in the year 1998/99 was broadly in line with the national average at 94.8 per cent. However, the figures for unauthorised absence at 1.1 per cent are well above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually at school and lessons. Regular attendance has a good effect on standards. Since the previous inspection, attendance, punctuality and time keeping have improved but the incidence of unauthorised absence remains high.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good, overall. It enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and to achieve good standards, especially in English, mathematics and science. During the inspection, 42 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was very good in 17 per cent, good in 50 per cent, satisfactory in 28 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent. The quality of learning reflected these figures very closely. There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the school's previous inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory or poor in 13 per cent of lessons and very good in only two per cent.

20. The quality of teaching and learning for children aged under five is satisfactory, overall. It is consistently good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception class. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's previous inspection, which judged the quality of teaching for children under five to be "always at least satisfactory and sometimes good". During the inspection, 80 per cent of the teaching and learning observed in the Nursery was good, and 20 per cent was satisfactory. The good quality of teaching and learning in the Nursery results in the children making good progress in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Although two lessons were seen in the Reception class, judgements were not made on the basis of these lessons alone, as the class teacher was unexpectedly absent through illness and the children had a different temporary teacher each day. No current planning was left for the temporary teachers to enable them to provide the children with any continuity. This gave rise to unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson. A detailed analysis of the children's work throughout the year showed that sound teaching in language and literacy and mathematics enables children to make satisfactory progress overall. However, analysis of both the children's work and the teacher's planning for the year shows that there are insufficient opportunities for developing pupils' personal and social skills and that the work planned for these children does not always build effectively on the experiences provided in the Nursery. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception class.

21. In the Nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse work closely together to plan a good range of appropriate experiences, which stimulate children's learning. There is a good emphasis on teaching basic skills in language and literacy and mathematics, but also a wide variety of opportunities to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and to further their creative and physical development. These include a recent visit to a farm, visits from police officers and horses and a trip to a local museum. The teacher gives very clear explanations of new concepts and asks appropriate questions to assess how well children have understood. The specialist teacher who works with children who speak English as an additional language engages them in conversations which expand their understanding of the language and increase their fluency. A strong feature of the teaching in the Nursery is the very good development of pupils' personal and social skills, and their relationships with each other and with adults. Children soon learn what is expected of them and know how to behave in school. This enables them to make good progress in their learning.

22. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, taking into account all available evidence, including the pupils' work throughout the year and the lessons observed during the inspection. This is broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection. A detailed analysis of the pupils' work shows that the quality of teaching and learning is good in both Year 1 and Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This has enabled pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and science, and very good progress in mathematics throughout the year. Teachers are implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy very well and are confident in teaching all the required elements. The quality of teaching and learning is also good in design and technology; it is satisfactory in art, geography, history and music. It is unsatisfactory in information technology, as there are insufficient resources to teach the National Curriculum and inadequate planning to incorporate the subject across the curriculum. The Year 1 class has had three teachers during the course of the year, as a result of difficulties in appointing permanent staff. The current teacher has only had the class for six weeks. Despite this potentially unsettling situation, the children have made good progress in their learning throughout the year because the school has provided good support for the teachers and ensured that work is carefully planned and matched to the pupils' needs. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was variable. It ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Of the 12 lessons that were observed, two were very good, six were good and three were satisfactory. There was one unsatisfactory lesson in physical education, which was caused by inadequate management and control of the pupils' behaviour, which marred the lesson and impeded the pupils' progress.

23. In a very well planned English lesson in Year 2, which exemplified some of the best teaching at this key stage, there was very good teaching of basic literacy skills, which ensured that the work given to pupils was appropriately matched to their needs. The effective use of 'wipe-clean' plastic sheets enabled pupils to record spellings and make quick corrections, and the very clear focus on distinguishing separate sounds within words extended the pupils' knowledge and understanding of phonics. The teacher recorded her assessments of individual pupils throughout the lesson and sustained their interest and motivation well through praise and encouragement.

24. At Key Stage 1, the main strengths of the teaching are the teachers' high expectations of what the pupils are able to achieve, especially in English, mathematics and science, and the effective teaching of basic skills in these subjects. In addition, teachers and support staff work well together to meet pupils' specific learning needs and lessons move at a brisk pace, enabling pupils to make good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Teachers also make frequent assessments of pupils' attainment and progress and plan lessons to address any identified needs. The strengths in the pupils' learning are their acquisition of basic skills, the effort they put into their work and the level of concentration and interest they show.

25. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be "mainly satisfactory or better". Sixty seven per cent of the teaching and learning observed during the inspection was at least good. Twenty one per cent of the lessons seen were very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education. They are satisfactory in art, geography, history and music. In information technology, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because the school does not have sufficient resources to teach all elements of the National Curriculum. Teachers do not plan to cover the subject adequately, or to incorporate it into other subjects. The major strengths of the teaching at this key stage are the teachers' high expectations of the pupils and the effective teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Strengths in the quality of the pupils' learning are the interest they show in all activities and the way they apply themselves to each task. At this key stage, the teachers manage pupils well and develop good relationships with them, which leads pupils to respond positively and motivates them to do well.

26. The quality of teaching in Year 6 is very good and makes a significant contribution to the progress pupils make. Challenging tasks and a strong emphasis on developing independent thinking promote productive learning and very good acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. A very good example was a design and technology lesson where the teacher began with a very thorough review of design considerations, which demonstrated a high level of subject expertise. Very high expectations of the finished product inspired pupils to strive for excellence and well chosen open-ended questions challenged pupils to evaluate and improve their work. Above all, the teacher's excellent rapport with the pupils created a calm but industrious atmosphere in the classroom, in which pupils applied considerable creative effort and worked at a very productive pace.

27. Some key issues from the school's last inspection relating to the quality of teaching have been addressed well. Teachers now make clear to pupils what the purpose of the lesson is and check whether this has been achieved at the end of the lesson. There is greater consistency in how teachers apply the rules governing pupils' behaviour, and a better understanding of the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers are more successful in helping pupils to think through problems for themselves and in encouraging independent learning. However, there has been no improvement in the quality of teaching in information technology. Opportunities for pupils to use computers have not increased and there is still insufficient emphasis on control technology.

28. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Teachers work closely with support assistants and specialist teachers to plan work that is appropriate for these pupils and to ensure that they are fully integrated into the class and able to cope with the demands of the curriculum. Specialist teachers sometimes withdraw pupils from the classroom for additional help to meet the targets that have been set for them in their individual education plans and this helps pupils to make good progress in their learning.

29. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. Class teachers and specialist teachers who are employed through the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant work closely together to identify and meet individual pupils' needs. They encourage careful listening skills and develop pupils' spoken language through conversation. All teachers place good emphasis on equipping pupils with the necessary technical language that is required for a full understanding of different subjects.

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

30. The headteacher took a conscious decision, in the light of low standards in English and mathematics when he was appointed just over two years ago, to concentrate teaching heavily on these two subjects. This, together with the school's very effective implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, has resulted in rising standards in English and mathematics, so that pupils now attain standards in these two subjects which are respectively above and well above those found in other schools. The school has been identified as one of the ten most improved schools in England. Last year, the school received a Quality Mark from the Basic Skills Agency for its after-school Family Literacy Project, involving younger pupils. The school's development of the literacy hour has been very impressive and has been used as a model for the Local Education Authority. The negative side of this is that other subjects, such as information technology, history, geography, music and art, have been squeezed to a minimum. As a result, the school does not currently provide a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum. Provision for information technology does not meet statutory requirements. Total weekly teaching time is above the nationally recommended minimum at Key Stage 1 and in line with this at Key Stage 2.

31. The quality of the learning opportunities offered to the pupils is often very good, for example, in using the knowledge and expertise of visiting specialists, such as a dance teacher, through participation in the National Theatre's Primary Shakespeare Project and through many visits to places of interest. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons during the school year. The school recognises the need to broaden the curriculum, in preparation for the full range of learning opportunities which will become obligatory once again in the autumn term 2000.

32. The previous inspection found that information technology was underused in the curriculum and the pupils' research skills were under-emphasised. Very few schemes of work were in place and a key issue of that inspection was to develop these for all subjects. On taking up his appointment two years ago, the headteacher found that subject policies and schemes of work were incomplete and not being implemented. He took the conscious decision to abandon them. The school is preparing to introduce the schemes of work that have been published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in all subjects other than English and mathematics in September 2000. Currently, there is no whole-school system to plan work over the school year. Nevertheless, the teachers plan carefully for the work which their classes will do each half term and the headteacher monitors these plans on a regular basis, in order to ensure that they are being implemented consistently. The format of weekly planning is left up to individual teachers. The previous inspection found that this had some weaknesses, for example, in outlining what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson. This is much improved. The teachers clearly state what they expect their pupils to achieve by the end of lessons and they share these objectives with the pupils. Information technology is still under-emphasised in the curriculum, largely as a result of inadequate resources to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Pupils' research skills are still under-emphasised, and the library is not yet adequately resourced to support this aspect of pupils' learning.

33. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum for children aged under five are good in the Nursery, where children are provided with a broad range of interesting opportunities for learning appropriate to their age. In the Reception class, where children are aged under five for a large part of the year, the curriculum does not provide as stimulating a range of activities across all areas of learning as in the Nursery. There is a good focus on teaching language and literacy and numeracy skills, but insufficient emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills and on learning through talk, enquiry and play.

34. The school has no written policy for equal opportunities. However, in practice, there is equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities for all the pupils. The previous inspection found that some pupils were withdrawn or excluded from lessons for misbehaviour or to do work unrelated to that which the rest of the class was doing. This is generally no longer the case. Withdrawal from classes for extra support in literacy is kept to a minimum or is closely related to work being done by the other pupils.

35. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register, including those with statements of special educational need, is broadly in line with the national average. Provision for these pupils is good throughout the school, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There are good systems in place for identifying pupils who have problems as early as possible. At Stage 1, the class teachers match work well to meet the needs of these pupils. Those whose difficulties need further help are moved on to Stage 2, where the teachers draw up an individual education plan for each pupil, in consultation with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. These plans are of good quality and are used well by the teachers. They include clear targets to help the pupils make progress. The teachers monitor the progress of these pupils closely. The plans are reviewed regularly and parents are fully involved in the process. At Stage 3, pupils who need further support have individual education plans drawn up by the co-ordinator. Most of the pupils on the special educational needs register make good progress and many are moved down a stage or off the register altogether. The co-ordinator

maintains good links with outside agencies and meetings are held once a term with all the relevant specialists. Good support from an outside specialist for a visually impaired pupil in Year 5 was observed during the inspection. There are good resources to support learning for pupils with special educational needs. Although the school has no register of more able children, the teachers generally match work well to meet the needs of these pupils. As a result, the pupils achieve well at the higher National Curriculum levels of attainment in the end of key stage national tests.

36. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, in order to enrich learning, and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. This provision is appreciated by the parents. The school recently received an Extra Education Distinction Award for its after-school activities. During the inspection, over 30 boys and girls were observed participating in a football club and over 20 in the choir, complete with enthusiastic drummers. The school football team competes in the Ferndale Centre League. During the autumn term, the team reached the final stages of a local knock-out competition. Year 6 pupils benefit from a residential visit to Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre, where they participate in a variety of activities, including shelter building, raft making, claywork, orienteering and abseiling. Learning is enriched by many visits to places of interest, including museums, art galleries, theatres, London Zoo and the London Aquarium. The school makes very good use of the local community to enhance the curriculum. Visiting 'black artists of excellence' have included dance and drama workshops and Ghanaian drummers. Other visitors have included the Fat Story Shop workshop, police horses and dogs, staff from the Rescued Animals Hospital and a brass rubbing workshop. The pupils visit Brixton Market, the local police station, the church and local cafes and shops, in order to enhance learning. There are good links with St John's Church next door. The vicar, who is also Chair of the governing body, is a regular visitor to school. The pupils participate in church festivals and the St John's School Sundays are a notable feature of community life.

37. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. There is no teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating this area of the curriculum, nor is there a policy to guide practice. There are no written policies for sex education or drugs education. In practice, however, the pupils learn about healthy living, diet, exercise and the dangers of drug misuse, largely as part of science. Questions about human growth and babies are dealt with openly and honestly as they arise, with regard to the pupils' ages. There is a programme of formal sex education in Years 5 and 6.

38. The English and mathematics co-ordinators regularly meet their counterparts in other local primary schools, but curricular liaison with secondary schools is difficult, as the Year 6 pupils move on to a wide variety of schools. Some secondary teachers have visited St John's to talk to Year 6 pupils and there are opportunities for these pupils to visit secondary schools during the summer term.

39. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good and for their moral, social and cultural development, it is very good. This makes a significant contribution to the high standards which the pupils achieve in some areas. The good provision for the pupils' spiritual development is evident in many aspects of school life and implicit in its Christian ethos, which underpins and enriches all relationships. The school gives pupils good opportunities for reflection across the curriculum. In science, they are given many opportunities to appreciate natural wonders, such as watching butterflies emerge from a chrysalis or tadpoles turn into frogs. In assembly, a candle is lit and pupils are given time for reflection about many important issues. Assemblies take place each day and are of good quality. Pupils pray, sing an appropriate song and reflect upon the story, which, on one occasion, was about the consequences of your own actions. The 'mini-oasis' garden is a beautiful area for pupils to appreciate nature in the midst of an inner city environment. The school tries hard to raise pupils' self-esteem and emphasises the value of each child.

40. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils are polite and well behaved around the school and in lessons and are aware that this is what is expected of them. They are given definite ideas of right and wrong based on a clear code of behaviour. They understand the need for rules. In discussion with pupils, this was obvious from their comments: 'It would be a bad place without rules' and 'Nobody would listen and you wouldn't learn, there would be fights and you could be hurt, especially little ones'. Adults in school are good role models; they treat pupils with respect, fairness and honesty. Pupils value this treatment and achieve good standards of behaviour. Moral issues are well taught and discussed in a range of curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote about respect and what it means to them, and Year 4 pupils considered moral dilemmas in a literacy lesson.

41. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Teachers know and understand pupils and their families and this gives pupils confidence at work and play. At play and at lunch times, pupils are carefully looked after. Adults join in with them in a wide variety of games and activities, which promotes very good co-operation and social interaction. Pupils are confident in discussion, listen carefully and give considered responses. Pupils in Year 6 decided to raise funds for Mozambique and organised a series of activities, and all the pupils were involved in raising funds for the Children's Society. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are working together on a joint project to improve the area around the church. Access to a large number of visits and visitors also enhances pupils' social development. At the beginning of Year 6, pupils take part in a residential visit to a study centre, which is a very good opportunity for them to get to know more about each other and their teachers. Year 6 pupils were also involved in a Shakespeare project at the National Theatre, which involved working with pupils from other schools. Older pupils share activities with younger ones, such as helping with projects and reading. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility in the classroom by taking dinner registers, putting out pencils and collecting in books, and in the playground when they sort and put away games equipment at the end of the session.

42. Provision for cultural development is also very good. The varied cultural mix of the school offers a wide range of opportunities to learn about different cultures. There is a strong emphasis on inclusion in this multicultural environment. In assembly, a pupil played an accompaniment on a Nigerian drum. In the entrance, furnishings from Nigeria reflect the ethnic origins of some of the school community. Other faiths and religions are celebrated. Cultural awareness is developed through music where, for example, pupils enjoyed a workshop run by Ghanaian drummers, and through art, where Van Gogh and Braque are two of the painters being studied. Year 6 pupils enjoyed a dance workshop run by a professional dance group. In the library, there is a good range of books with a cultural and multi-cultural focus, and some dual-language books. Pupils in several year groups visited the Livesey Museum and pupils in Year 2 participated in follow-up activities that involved an African number game called Mancala. Nursery pupils visited Brixton market to look at and buy food from other countries and parents have brought in food of different ethnic origins for pupils to try. The very good provision at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school provides a safe, orderly and caring environment in which the pupils learn well and make good progress. A very high priority is placed on the safety, security and happiness of the children. Members of staff, particularly the headteacher, know pupils and their parents well. External agencies, including the school nurse and doctor, give good support to the school. The school follows the procedures adopted by the local area child protection committee. The headteacher is the designated officer and liaises with the local authority when this is necessary. Although there is no written policy or guidelines, staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

44. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's health and safety policy and the headteacher is the person with designated responsibility. The site manager carries out regular checks but has had little formal training, and relies mainly on a common sense approach. No hazards were seen during the inspection. Procedures for reporting, recording and investigating accidents are in place but there is no formalised system, with regular safety checks on equipment. There is a medical room, staff are trained in first-aid and equipment is kept up-to-date.

45. There are no written policies that deal with bullying, harassment and behaviour but the practice is very effective and consistent, and is understood by all members of the school community. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and this is made clear in the home/school agreement. Behaviour is managed well with few sanctions but many rewards including praise, stickers, certificates and a letter home. Bullying, harassment and racial intolerance are not condoned and none was seen by the inspection team.

46. The procedures for encouraging regular attendance and punctuality are good and these are regularly monitored. Attendance has improved since the last inspection. Parents are aware of the need to inform the school of absences. They are contacted by telephone if they fail to do so and are immediately involved in case of problems. The educational welfare officer visits regularly and is involved when necessary. Although attendance is in line with the national average and the school has very strict guidelines, some parents still take their children out of school for periods longer than the ten days allowed. The school has tried to reduce the levels of unauthorised absence with limited success.

47. The school's personal support and guidance are good, with clear expectations. The code of conduct for pupils is well known and adhered to. As a result of this, in lessons, assemblies and around the school, attitudes are very positive and behaviour is good. Pupils and parents know and appreciate the fact that the very occasional lapses will be dealt with very quickly and constructively. In a physical education lesson, an incident was dealt with very effectively and the two pupils involved were very well looked after. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support. They are given clear targets for improvement which are reviewed regularly, and their progress is monitored closely.

48. There are sound procedures for introducing children to the Nursery, and pupils moving to secondary schools are given effective support, including the passing-on of information. This is difficult as pupils move to a large number of different schools. Parents appreciate these arrangements.

49. There is no teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating the assessment, recording and reporting of the pupils' attainment and progress, nor is there a written policy in place, to offer guidance to teachers. Nevertheless, in practice, very good procedures are in place. The previous inspection found that assessment was built appropriately into teachers' planning and that detailed records of the pupils' progress were being developed. It found, however, that assessment was not being used effectively to inform future planning. This has improved. The teachers keep detailed records of the pupils' progress in all subjects. They use these, together with evaluations of lessons, to plan the next steps in learning. The Year 4 teacher, for example, altered her week's mathematics planning during the inspection as a result of evaluating work done the previous week. The Year 2 teacher had noted the names of pupils who had exceeded, or who had not reached, the previous week's learning objectives in mathematics. Her notes for the inspection week included "Children all need more practice at mental subtraction". The English and mathematics co-ordinators carefully monitor the pupils' performance in national tests, in order to highlight any areas of weakness.

50. A clear marking policy is in place. Teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and positively, although the quality of marking is variable. Where it is best, for example, in Year 6, helpful comments are made to focus the pupils' attention on how they might improve. Such comments include "It's all about reading the questions carefully and applying the right strategy to answer them".

51. Arrangements for end of key stage national tests meet statutory requirements. In addition, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 complete tests towards the end of the year, which show how they are progressing from year to year. Pupils throughout the school are assessed annually in spelling and creative writing and the school intends, as a priority, to extend these procedures to mathematics. The procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of children aged under five are also very good and ensure that useful information about each child is passed on to the next teacher.

52. Procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development are very good. The headteacher and the teachers know their pupils very well and are ably supported in monitoring personal development by non-teaching staff and midday supervisors. The teachers regularly monitor the way in which pupils in their classes behave, show helpfulness and co-operation and display responsibility and initiative.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school works very well in partnership with its parents. There was no clear judgement about this in the previous inspection report. Parents appreciate the dedication and commitment of the staff and the very good relationships within the school, which they say have improved dramatically since the arrival of the new headteacher. They are always made welcome in school, and feel that the staff are very approachable. Few parents help on a regular basis, because they often work or have younger children. The headteacher is determined to strengthen these links to enable parents to play a bigger part in their children's learning which, at present, is often limited. Parents are supportive, praise the school for its high standards and very high expectations and are happy with the quality of the information, which the school provides.

54. The Friends' Association has been discontinued due to lack of support but the headteacher hopes to start a Parent Teacher Group as soon as this is practicable. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The prospectus is clear and informative, but the governors' Annual Report to parents does not contain sufficient information on the progress made since the last inspection. There are regular parents' evenings each term for both consultation and passing on information about different aspects of the curriculum. These are very well attended. The end-of-year reports about pupils' attainment and progress meet statutory requirements and are of very good quality. They include targets and areas for development and parents are given the opportunity to discuss them with their child's teacher. The information they contain about the attainment and progress of pupils is very good. A regular, informative newsletter is sent home.

55. There is a home/school agreement, which indicates the ways in which parents, pupils and the school can work together. It gives good encouragement to parents to support their children and the school. Although there is no written homework policy, parents generally agree that the amount of homework set each Friday for return on Monday was 'about right'. These good links support and encourage pupils' learning. Parents comment that they are well informed but would like advance information about topics for the term.

56. There are close links between teachers and the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers keep parents well informed of any problems and involve them fully in reviewing their children's progress towards meeting the targets that have been set for them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides very clear, decisive leadership, which has been instrumental in bringing about improvement in many aspects of the life and work of the school since his appointment in January 1998. When the

headteacher took up his post, it is reported that there had been little progress towards addressing the key issues from the last inspection and no action plan was in place. His immediate priorities were to raise standards of attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science, and to improve both the pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching. There has been significant improvement in all these areas, which, at that time, were found to have a number of weaknesses. The standards achieved in English, mathematics and science by pupils in Year 6 have risen sharply since the last inspection, and the standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 have also improved. There has been an intensive focus on improving teaching in these subjects over the past two years, which has been enhanced by the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The pupils' behaviour is now good as a result of the consistently applied strategies and expectations throughout the school. There has been a high turnover of teachers in the past two years, and there have been difficulties in recruiting and retaining permanent staff. The school will have a full complement of permanent teachers in September 2000 for the first time since shortly after the last inspection, when the previous headteacher left. Despite the high number of staff changes, standards have continued to rise, as strong leadership and high expectations for the pupils underpin the ethos of the school. Another weakness identified by the previous inspection was that the staff who worked with pupils who speak English as an additional language were not used effectively and that their role was neither clearly defined or understood by the class teachers. This, too, has improved, and specialist staff are now more effective in working in partnership with class teachers to provide support for these pupils.

58. As a result of the intensive focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, and the high turnover of staff, there has been little improvement in other areas of the curriculum. Although the school was recently provided with eight new computers in a refurbished room, the quality of teaching in information technology has not improved. The new computers, which came as part of an Education Action Zone initiative, are intended to assess and improve pupils' skills in English and mathematics and are not equipped to cover the National Curriculum requirements in information technology. Consequently, as setting up the computer room has been the priority for the current year, no further progress in teaching the subject has been made. A key issue from the previous inspection directed the school to develop schemes of work in all subjects. Little progress had been made on this issue when the headteacher arrived and, since that time, all development has been focused on English and mathematics, which now have effective and successfully implemented schemes and guidelines based on the national strategies. In other subjects, the school has purchased the schemes of work published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and is preparing to implement these from September 2000.

59. A further outcome of the high turnover of staff and the necessity of appointing some teachers on temporary contracts during the past two years, is that the delegation of responsibilities for subjects is currently unsatisfactory. The headteacher has temporary oversight of all subjects except English, mathematics and information technology, which all have an appointed co-ordinator. The deputy headteacher, who teaches Year 2, and the Year 6 teacher co-ordinate English and mathematics respectively. They provide good leadership in their subjects and are models of good practice in the classroom. There is also a Key Stage 1 mathematics co-ordinator, who was absent at the time of the inspection. The school development plan identifies as the major priority for the next school year the appointment of co-ordinators for all other subjects, and discussions are already under way to ensure that teachers' individual expertise is used appropriately. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and manages the school's provision efficiently. The co-ordinator for the Early Years has a very good understanding of the needs of children who are under the age of five and is endeavouring to ensure that children in the Nursery and in the Reception class receive an appropriate curriculum. She is enthusiastic about implementing the new nationally approved curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage at the start of the forthcoming autumn term.

60. Overall, the school monitors its performance satisfactorily. The headteacher has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and sets demanding targets for improving the school's end of

key stage test results. He and the deputy headteacher have both carried out classroom observations to monitor the quality of teaching in literacy, sometimes accompanied by an adviser from the Local Education Authority. By providing both written and verbal feedback, they have been able to improve the quality of teaching to its present level. Further observations involving the headteacher and the mathematics co-ordinator are scheduled for the autumn term 2000. In addition, the headteacher often visits or teaches classes and monitors the teachers' planning and the pupils' work. Although appraisal is not formally in place, regular reviews of teachers' performance make an important contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are not adequately involved in monitoring the school's performance and are not fully aware of the role they should play or how they should conduct classroom visits. Most governors do not have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they rely heavily on the headteacher and the Chair of Governors when making important decisions. Consequently, the governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is very limited. The Chair of Governors is experienced and well-informed and works closely with the headteacher to monitor the school's performance. Most other governors are at a very early stage in developing an understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

61. The aims of the school are clearly expressed in its mission statement, which centres on the school's Christian foundation and ethos. It aims to promote the ethos of love, care and respect and to develop the potential of each person in its community. These aims are reflected well in the quality of the relationships that exist between pupils, and between pupils and all adults who work in the school. There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere and a shared commitment to meeting the needs of individual pupils and encouraging them to achieve their best. The school's commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils is implicit in all that it does.

62. In most instances, the school has identified appropriate priorities and targets for improvement based on a thorough analysis of its strengths and weaknesses. This has resulted in significant improvements in standards over the past two years. Information gained from standardised tests is used effectively to predict potential and focus support where it is most needed. The school reviews its own performance against that of other schools and uses comparative information constructively to identify areas for development. The only area where appropriate priorities have not been identified is in relation to information technology, where there has been an emphasis on installing a new computer system to improve pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. This has deflected attention from the most pressing need to equip teachers to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in every aspect of the subject. The current school development plan covers a period of 18 months in outline, but does not contain sufficient detail of how improvements will be carried out in order to be a useful tool. There are more detailed action plans in English and mathematics which provide a sound model for other teachers to follow when planning developments in their subjects throughout the coming year. In view of the wide-ranging priorities identified in the school development plan, it does not cover a long enough period, particularly when taking into account the need to review, evaluate and modify practice in the light of experience.

63. Careful financial planning, administration and monitoring of expenditure ensure that the school's resources are used effectively to promote the pupils' learning. The headteacher, in liaison with the experienced administrative officer, has introduced effective systems for prioritising, controlling and monitoring expenditure, which were not in place before his arrival. As a result, there has been a considerable tightening up of financial procedures. In the past two years, there has been significantly high expenditure on buying books and resources to enable teachers to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. This has clearly contributed to the improvement in standards of achievement in those areas. The school has identified weaknesses in several other curriculum areas, and the library, which it is now planning to address through carefully targeted spending. Resources that are allocated to the school from the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant are used well to support pupils who speak English as an additional language. Specialist teachers provide a good range of

activities and experiences to help pupils become increasingly fluent in English. Monies that are allocated for pupils with special educational needs are also used effectively to provide specialist support for these pupils, which contributes to the good progress that they make. The school makes effective use of both teaching and support staff. The headteacher has reviewed all contracts in order to obtain the best value for money and has created considerable savings across a number of areas. A financial audit was carried out in October 1999. This showed that the school's finances are managed efficiently and recommended a small number of improvements. These included the creation of an asset register and the extension of the school development plan to cover a three-year period. These recommendations have not yet been addressed. Although effective use is made of new technologies for monitoring the budget, this does not extend to other areas of administration.

64. The number, experience and expertise of teachers are adequately matched to the age of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. There is an adequate number of support staff, including nursery and learning support assistants and primary helpers, to ensure that all pupils are enabled to make good progress in their learning. All staff work together well as a team and offer mutual support and encouragement. Building this team has been a considerable achievement in view of the difficulties experienced in recruiting and retaining permanent staff. There is now a shared commitment to improvement and all teachers have high expectations of the pupils, which, underpinned by strong leadership and effective team work, indicate a good capacity for improvement in the future.

65. The accommodation is satisfactory, overall, but has some very good features. Classrooms are relatively small and offer little scope for imaginative layouts. However, they allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. During the past two years, there has been a great deal of internal restructuring and redecoration, which has resulted in a more effective use of classrooms to meet the needs of different age groups. A newly refurbished computer room and a separate music room are not yet used to the full but provide the potential for enhancing the pupils' experiences in music and information technology. Improvements to the shared areas around the school have created a very attractively furnished and welcoming environment. The school is bright and well maintained, cleaned to a high standard and enhanced by attractive displays that celebrate both the pupils' achievements and their different cultural backgrounds. The accommodation in the Nursery is spacious and well planned, offering quiet rooms and a large shared space for group activities, as well as a spacious, secure outdoor area. Situated as it is in the midst of an inner city housing estate, the school works hard to provide pupils with an interesting and stimulating outdoor environment, which is maintained to a very high standard by the premises manager. Overlooked by the imposing tower of St John's Church, and enhanced by a number of mature trees and shrubs, the playgrounds and grassed areas have a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and their enjoyment of school. The premises manager has worked hard to create an enriching environment, with an interesting variety of plants in tubs and small garden areas that add colour and attract birds and insects. The most outstanding feature of the outdoor accommodation is the 'mini-oasis', which incorporates a garden, a pond and a woodland and wildlife area. Under the guidance of the premises manager, groups of pupils help to maintain the garden and grow fruit and vegetables. Labelled pictures of birds and pond creatures help the pupils to identify and become familiar with different species, which has a significant impact on their learning in science.

66. Taking all subjects and aspects of the curriculum into account, the range and number of learning resources are unsatisfactory overall. In those areas where the school has focused its efforts over the past two years, resources are good. In English and mathematics, there is a good range of books and other resources, many of which are new and were bought specifically to enable teachers to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively. Resources in music and physical education are adequate to teach the curriculum, but some physical education equipment is worn or outdated. In all other subjects, there are insufficient resources to enable teachers to cover fully all aspects of the curriculum. Although many old and outdated books were removed and replaced with new stock, the library is still under-resourced. A good feature of the school's resources is the range and

quality of outdoor play equipment, both for children aged under five and those in the infant and junior classes. As a result of this thoughtful and imaginative provision, playtimes are enjoyable and trouble free as pupils play games together and learn to share and take turns. There is plenty for all to do to keep pupils gainfully occupied as well as developing their physical and social skills at these important times of the day. This clearly makes an important contribution to the standards of behaviour and the pupils' attitudes towards school. Another strong feature of the school's provision is the very good range of visits and visitors that are arranged to enrich the curriculum and make learning more interesting for the pupils. During the inspection week, Nursery children visited a museum and received a visit from police officers with horses, pupils in Year 6 visited the Tate Modern and the 'Tomorrow's World' Exhibition at Earl's Court and took part in two dance workshops led by a professional dancer. The school places great emphasis on the importance of this enrichment, which contributes significantly to pupils' achievements and their attitudes towards school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Improve standards in information technology by:

- ensuring that the curriculum fulfils statutory requirements in every aspect of the subject;
- implementing the new scheme of work effectively so that there is progression in teaching knowledge and skills from year to year;
- ensuring that there are enough computers, software and other information technology equipment to enable teachers to fulfil the requirements of the curriculum and that these are adequately maintained;
- providing training for all staff to enable them to teach all aspects of the curriculum successfully;
- planning for greater use of information technology in other subjects so that it supports and enhances learning across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 2, 6, 7, 22, 25, 27, 32, 58, 62, 66, 94, 114, 120-122)

Improve the planning, leadership and management of the curriculum in all other subjects to the same standard as in English and mathematics by:

- implementing the new schemes of work for all subjects;
- ensuring that adequate time is allowed to cover the curriculum in each subject;
- appointing teachers to lead development in each subject, and to monitor the standards achieved by the pupils;
- improving the format of the school development plan and extending it to cover three years, so that detailed action plans show clearly how improvements are to be achieved, what they will cost and how the school is to judge its success.

(Paragraphs 3, 6, 7, 30, 31, 32, 58, 62, 99, 101-102, 106, 110, 115, 119, 122, 126, 130)

Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:

- ensuring that the governing body fulfils its statutory duties and obligations;
- providing further training for governors to develop their understanding of their role and their awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. (Paragraphs 54, 60)

Improve the range of learning resources to support teaching in science, design and technology, art, geography and history.

(Paragraphs 66, 101, 106, 110, 115, 119)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Improve the curriculum for children aged under five in the Reception class, in line with new national recommendations, to include more opportunities for learning through talk, play and enquiry and to provide greater consistency and continuity between the Nursery and Reception classes. (Paragraphs 10, 20, 33, 68, 70)
- Continue to develop the range and quality of resources in the library and make more effective use of it to develop pupils' research skills. (Paragraphs 32, 63, 66, 90)
- Formalise current practice and procedures in written policies in those aspects of the school where none currently exist. (Paragraphs 37, 43, 44, 45, 49)

The school has already identified as priorities in its development plan the appointment of co-ordinators and the implementation of new schemes of work in all subjects that do not have them. It also acknowledges the need to develop the library further.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	50	28	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)	26	208
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	116

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	155

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
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	1999	9	20	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	9
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	26	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (76)	93 (76)	97 (96)
	National	82 [80]	83 [81]	87 [84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	8
	Girls	19	18	18
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (70)	90 (100)	90 (96)
	National	82 [81]	86 [85]	87 [86]

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	13
	Girls	10	9	12
	Total	20	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (78)	72 (67)	86 (78)
	National	70 [65]	69 [59]	78 [69]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	12
	Girls	8	9	10
	Total	16	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (78)	69 (70)	76 (78)
	National	68 [65]	69 [65]	75 [72]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	52
Black – African heritage	95
Black – other	16
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	11
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	610898
Total expenditure	594016
Expenditure per pupil	2485
Balance brought forward from previous year	20000
Balance carried forward to next year	36882

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	72

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	19	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	79	19	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	25	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	33	13	3	0
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	27	1	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	73	26	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	85	15	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	32	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	34	4	4	7

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

68. Children usually enter the Nursery at the beginning of the term after their third birthday on a part-time basis in either September or January, and transfer into the Reception class during the year when they reach their fifth birthday. Evidence from teachers' assessments shows that many children enter the Nursery with limited listening and speaking skills and speaking English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection, children under five years of age were in the Nursery and only five children in the Reception class were under the age of five. Transition arrangements are good and information on each child's development is passed on to the receiving teacher. An external review of the Nursery was undertaken in 1998, when it was deemed to be 'unattractive' with a lack of stimulating activities. The Nursery now has a new full-time teacher and nursery nurse, who provide a stimulating environment which enables the children to make good progress in all areas of their development. However, the good practice established in the Nursery is not maintained in the Reception class and the children's progress slows down. The quality of teaching and learning for children aged under five is satisfactory, overall. In the Nursery, it is good and children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In the Reception class, it is satisfactory. Although two lessons were seen in the Reception class, it is not possible to make judgements about teaching in this class on the basis of these alone, as the class teacher was absent, due to illness, during the inspection and the children had a different temporary teacher each day. No current planning was left for the temporary teachers to enable them to provide the children with any continuity. However, an analysis of the children's work and the planning for the Reception class for the whole of this academic year shows that the range of learning opportunities for children aged under five across all areas of learning is not as broad or stimulating as in the Nursery. There is a good focus on teaching language and literacy and numeracy skills, but insufficient emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills and on learning through talk, enquiry and play. This limits children's progress in some areas of learning and does not build effectively on the good quality of teaching and learning in the Nursery.

Personal and social development

69. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of personal and social skills, and all children make good progress in this area and are on course to reach appropriate standards by the time they are five years old. Children are very well behaved and work and play well, without the direct supervision of an adult, in a wide variety of activities, such as riding the tricycles or 'reading' books. Children are encouraged to select their own activities and happily concentrate on their task for a long time. They know that they are expected to put the equipment away and are eager to help. They have a caring attitude towards each other and children who have special educational needs or English as an additional language are well integrated into the class. The children's independence is well developed in the Nursery, so that when they move into the Reception class, they are able to work well in groups during the literacy and numeracy sessions. They are courteous, very friendly and well behaved, as seen when a child politely said 'Hello, you're welcome. Would you like to sit here?' when an inspector went in while they were having lunch. They develop effective relationships with adults and enjoy being with the staff in the Nursery.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery. The teaching of relationships and interactions is of good quality, and the provision for free play, which supports the development of children's personal and social skills at this age, is very good. There is a calm atmosphere in the classroom, which enables the children to feel safe and secure. The teacher and the nursery nurse form an effective team and provide a wide range of appropriate activities, which encourage the children to

take turns, and share their toys and play. For example, when outside, they willingly take turns being the 'driver' or the 'passenger' on the two-seater tricycle. When they are very well behaved, the teacher encourages them to say 'well done me', which they love saying and which reinforces good behaviour. In the planning for the Reception class, free play is limited in terms of both scope and frequency, which reduces the opportunities for children's co-operation with others and their ability to work and play collaboratively. They have limited opportunities to develop their independence in selecting an activity.

Language and literacy

71. By the time they are five, children's attainment is generally at the expected level for their age. They make good progress in this area of learning and achieve well. The children's listening skills are reinforced well and they enjoy listening to stories, as a class, in groups and individually. They readily respond to questioning about stories they have heard and enjoy retelling well-known stories, such as 'The Three Bears'. They enjoy being in the 'The Three Bears' Cottage' using bear masks or retelling the story using hand puppets. Children enjoy 'reading' and are encouraged to handle books with care and to understand how they are organised. They know that words and pictures carry meaning and some are beginning to acquire early reading skills. A few are starting to recognise a small range of words on sight. Some are beginning to associate sounds with letters, for example, when a child initiated a game of 'I Spy' using the names of letters, such as 'h' and guessing 'house' and 'hands', or 'c' and guessing 'cat'. Some can write their own names, albeit using inaccurately formed letters. In writing, children know that marks and shapes on paper carry meaning and make attempts at writing. In the Nursery, they are encouraged to attempt to write words for themselves, and some can write their own name, often saying the name of each letter as they write.

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery. The teaching and learning of language and literacy receive a high priority and are well structured. All adults speak clearly to encourage good listening skills and to help children who have English as an additional language to acquire a full understanding of English. The Nursery staff provide many opportunities for the children to extend their language skills through imaginative play. Adults often participate in role-play situations to extend the children's vocabulary and their understanding of the conventions of conversations. The teacher seizes every opportunity to develop the children's early reading and writing skills and knowledge of sounds. For example, when the teacher completes taking the register, she asks 'Does anyone know what to-day is?' Several children eagerly call out 'Tuesday'. The teacher replies 'Oh, well done, and what does Tuesday begin with?' Again, several children know and say 'T', using the name of the letter, and a few know the phonic sound. Many activities are provided which encourage the children to attempt to write or read, increase their vocabularies and explore the meanings of words. The teacher uses correct terminology well, using 'author' and 'title', when exploring a new book with the children. They are encouraged to recognise their own names by finding their own name card and placing it on a straw when they choose to have their drink.

Mathematics

73. Attainment in mathematics meets expectations for children of this age. They gain experience of basic activities underlying the development of mathematical concepts, such as capacity and volume, through play with sand and water. They enjoy filling differently sized bottles by pouring water from one container into another. They can match and sort objects, according to colour or shape, such as sorting 'compare bears'. Children can count single numbers and some have an idea what they represent, but many are unable to form written numbers correctly. Higher achieving children can count to 20 or beyond and can add and subtract numbers up to ten by using objects. Some can count out ten bears, then take six from this group and find that four are left. They use number apparatus and games and are gaining a sense of number, quantity and shape. Most can name basic geometric shapes. They enjoy learning number rhymes, especially when they are able to participate actively in re-enacting them.

74. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery. Children often have the advantage of an adult with them to ask appropriate, open-ended questions about the water or sand. This extends their understanding sufficiently to ensure that they make good progress. Incidental teaching occurs within many activities, with an adult asking 'How many are there now?', when the children draw their family or are outside playing in a group with bats and balls.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Most children are on course to reach suitable standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the age of five. They experience a wide range of practical activities, and make good progress, mainly due to the good quality of the teaching. Children are interested in events in the world around them and in features of living things. They enjoy caring for the class hamster and can explain what food the hamster eats. Children know the routines of the day and understand that there are different times for daily events. They bought food from different parts of the world, such as Kalimati from Tanzania, and Ackee and salt fish from Jamaica, and fruit, when they visited the local market and shops in the arcade. They brought these back to school and enjoyed tasting them. Their recent visit to a farm has extended their understanding of farm animals and children now know the size, shape and colours of these animals, which they make a good attempt at drawing.

76. The quality of teaching and learning are good in the Nursery. The good quality planning ensures that the children have access to a wide range of well-planned, stimulating and interesting activities, which greatly enhance their understanding of the world around them. The visits to the local market and arcade of shops give them a good understanding of their local environment. The farm visit has enabled them to gain first hand knowledge of the size and shape of pigs and sheep. They now confidently match baby farm animals to their mothers, naming them and suggesting the correct colours for them.

Physical development

77. The children's physical development meets and is often above expectations for their age. They make good progress in developing a range of physical skills. They are helped to refine their skills by the active participation of an adult in their games, such as when the teacher throws a ball to a child, who attempts to strike it with a bat, sometimes very successfully. Children in the Nursery are free to choose when they wish to play in the outside area, where they can run, jump, climb and learn to share wheeled vehicles, such as tricycles, which helps them to develop good skills in co-ordination and control of their bodies. Children in the Reception class have limited access to an outside area, but have access to the playground at break and lunchtimes. Although many of the children lack good hand control, they are given numerous opportunities to develop this skill through a range of activities, such as using small construction toys, cutting, sticking and picking up pieces of puzzles.

78. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery. The secure, enclosed outside play area is sufficiently large for the Nursery children and, although resources are adequate in the Nursery, the teacher, who is the Early Years co-ordinator, has plans to develop this area further. However, the outside play area for the Reception class children is too small for them to push and pull prams and ride tricycles in order to strengthen and develop their co-ordination.

Creative development

79. Overall, the children's creative development is appropriate for their age and they make good progress in the Nursery, due to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Some make a good attempt to create a recognisable picture, such as 'me' and 'mum'. They enjoy painting and printing with sponges. Children can model malleable materials and explain that they are making cakes and

sandwiches. They know many nursery rhymes, are starting to memorise the words of new songs and enjoy listening to and moving to music. Children clap and tap their feet, and enjoy playing percussion instruments to accompany their singing. They enjoy taking part in role-play activities, and are given many opportunities to do so. The provision for a wide range of appropriate activities and experiences is extending the children's progress in their creative development.

80. The quality of teaching and learning of creative development is good in the Nursery. Lessons are well planned and the curriculum is appropriately challenging to ensure that all children make good progress. The children are encouraged to extend their knowledge and to improve the quality of their activities by the participation of an adult asking open-ended questions, such as 'Do you remember what colour the pigs were? So, what colour are you going to choose?' Or 'Does anyone remember the name of this instrument?' 'Well done, that's right, it's a tambourine'. The children experience a wide range of appropriately stimulating activities to promote their creative development. Role-play is widely used to further their imaginative play and children have some interesting clothes to dress up in.

ENGLISH

81. Throughout the school, standards in English are above those found in other schools. In comparison with all schools, the pupils' results in the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds show that the school is attaining above average standards. Standards are very high in comparison with similar schools. The findings of the inspection team confirm these high standards. Challenging targets for improvement in English have been set throughout the school. A target for 80 per cent of Year 6 pupils to attain national standards in English has been set for 2000 and the school is making consistent progress towards achieving this goal. Although the combined data for the past three years show that girls have achieved higher standards than boys, the findings of the inspection are that they are attaining similar standards, due to good teaching. Since the last inspection, there has been a very good improvement in attainment in English at Key Stage 2 and a good improvement at Key Stage 1, especially over the past two years, as there has been intensive teaching of English.

82. By the age of 11, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. Many pupils enter the school speaking English as an additional language and have insufficiently developed skills in listening and speaking English. They quickly improve their listening skills and the good provision to help them speak English enables them to develop their speaking skills well. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils speak clearly and confidently, both in small groups and to a wider audience. When teaching is good, they listen attentively to their teachers and to other pupils, as in the Year 6 art lesson, when pupils were expressing their ideas about a painting by Rene Magritte. The use of open-ended questioning, such as 'Is anyone noticing anything else about the poem? What is the tone of it?' during a lesson on Haiku poetry, stimulates pupils' own thoughts of enquiry and promotes good listening skills. Pupils use a wide and varied vocabulary, which they use to good effect to interest the listener, and this has a significant impact on their ability to develop good reading and writing skills. During this academic year, Year 6 pupils have taken part in the National Theatre's Primary Shakespeare Project. The experience of working with actors, designers, writers and choreographers and performing at the theatre has greatly enhanced their learning and has enabled them to become confident speakers and listeners.

83. In Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in reading. Many are able to read adult books fluently and confidently. When they read aloud, most are able to interpret the text well and many are able to understand the deeper meaning, using inference well. Lower achieving pupils do not easily look for deeper meaning or implications. All pupils respond well to the shared reading session in the literacy hour, benefiting from the teacher and group support. This exposure to a wide range of high quality literature and poetry is helping to extend pupils' knowledge of classic and modern literature. Pupils are able to name their favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl, James Berry, and J.K. Rowling. Teachers

encourage the enjoyment of reading, when pupils are able to read for pleasure during the 'quiet reading' times. Teachers' plans show that they encourage older pupils to enrich their social development and to develop their confidence by reading with younger children in the school.

84. In Year 6, standards in writing are above average. Pupils are able to write for a wide range of different purposes, such as formal letter writing, imaginative stories, dialogue, persuasive articles and poetry, and produce a good quantity of work. Most pupils present their work very neatly, with accurate spellings and punctuation. Their writing is creative, imaginative and well organised. The Year 6 Haiku and Tanka poetry shows great depth of feeling and creativity. Many pupils use words in the most imaginative way and show that they remember from their reading how authors create atmosphere by choosing words and word order carefully. Teachers ensure that pupils are given many opportunities to develop their competence in writing across the curriculum, such as writing a list of materials for making a paper 'banger', describing a science experiment on the water cycle and recounting the parables told by Jesus in religious education. Formal handwriting lessons help pupils to improve the neatness of their writing throughout the school.

85. The pupils' results in reading and writing in the 1999 tests for seven year olds are well above the national average and very high when compared to those of similar schools. The findings of the inspection are that pupils attain standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing that are above those found in other schools. The variation is due to differences between year groups. By the age of seven, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. They enter the key stage with a satisfactory range of vocabulary and many are confident speakers. They make good progress and many are able to use a wide range of vocabulary. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a pupil read her own version of 'The Tiger who came to tea' to the class, using words such as 'terrified' and 'scared'. Pupils talk confidently about stories they are reading, and are able to describe the roles of authors and illustrators. Most pupils can talk about a favourite book and some know the names of a favourite author or poet, such as Anne Fine and Dick King-Smith. Most of them form their words clearly and speak and read audibly. Teachers encourage pupils to listen attentively and use the plenary sessions at the end of lessons well for pupils to report back about what they have learned during the lesson.

86. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above average. Pupils read a range of interesting books, handle them confidently and have a good understanding of the organisation of fiction and non-fiction. Teachers impart a love of books to pupils, and the emphasis on the enjoyment of reading in the first few years at school is successful in developing positive attitudes towards books. Most pupils read accurately and fluently, many can work out new simple words by splitting them into sounds, and nearly all have a store of memorised words to call upon. Many pupils use the punctuation and the meaning of the text, when they read aloud expressively.

87. Pupils' writing is above average by the end of Year 2. Most pupils can write simple sentences to convey meaning and put them together to form a story or poem, making a good attempt at simple punctuation and spelling. The good teaching, which encourages the use and acceptance of developmental writing, enables pupils to express their thoughts in writing freely, creatively and at length. The range of pupils' vocabulary is mostly good, and they are able to contribute well to sessions in literacy, which focus on building word structures. Pupils know how to use a simple dictionary and understand alphabetical order. Pupils produce neat, joined handwriting, which is used well for their written work in other lessons. Most pupils use a range of simple punctuation and, in the best work, pupils use speech marks and question marks appropriately.

88. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. The effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and an increased emphasis on teaching basic skills in reading, spelling

and writing have largely contributed to this improvement. The features of very good teaching in this school are exemplified by the very good lessons observed in both key stages. Very good features of teaching include teachers setting clear objectives for each lesson and sharing them with the pupils. They start the lesson by explaining what is going to be learnt that day and many have the objectives written on the board. They finish the lesson by discussing whether pupils have achieved the target set. Teachers are knowledgeable about the requirements of the English curriculum and provide stimulating lessons. They set challenging tasks, which extend pupils' learning. They have a very good rapport with pupils, which enables them to feel confident and there is a positive learning atmosphere within the classrooms. They use good, effective questioning, coupled with clear explanations, which enables pupils to acquire and consolidate new learning. Pupils' comments and questions are responded to well. Pupils respond well to the challenges set and concentrate throughout the lessons, producing work of a high quality.

89. In both key stages, teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy very well. Pupils respond well to the work set and make good progress against the objectives set for the lesson. Teachers use assessment well in order to plan appropriate work to enable pupils to attain high standards. There is very good additional help in classes during the literacy hour, which is proving to be invaluable in helping to raise pupils' attainment. Literacy is used well in other areas of the curriculum, for example, when pupils write accounts of how they carried out scientific investigations or poems and letters related to their work in history. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role, has a good knowledge of the subject and manages it very efficiently. She provides clear direction for the subject and monitors the teaching and standards across the school through observation of class teaching, informal discussions with staff, and examination of pupils' work. Targets are set for every pupil and the co-ordinator monitors their progress. As a result of the good quality of teaching and learning, pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment.

90. Resources for English have been much improved during the past two years and each class has a good range of high quality books, which pupils enjoy reading. The school library is easily accessible for all pupils to use for research purposes, but this was not seen during the inspection. Although the library has some high quality books, it is under-resourced and the school has identified this as a priority for development. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

91. By the end of Year 6 and Year 2, standards are well above those found in other schools. This represents a considerable improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Standards have risen sharply over the past two years. In the 1999 national tests at both key stages, the pupils' results were well above the national average and were very high compared with similar schools. At Key Stage 2, boys have significantly outperformed girls over the past three years. There have been no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at Key Stage 1. No significant variations were noted during the inspection. The school has set realistic targets at Key Stage 2 to maintain and improve these very high standards further. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress in their learning.

92. By the age of 11, pupils' standards in mental calculations and in basic numeracy are well above average. They confidently use quick mental recall of number facts, including factors, prime factors and multiples. They understand the equivalence of fractions and can add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers. Pupils solve written problems involving sums of money. They measure and draw angles accurately and are familiar with the language of angles, triangles and quadrilaterals. They use formulae to calculate area, perimeter and volume. Pupils understand the concept of mode and median when looking at a set of data and recognise lines of symmetry in quadrilaterals. Most pupils can

successfully carry out practical investigations into tessellations, patterns and sequences in nature and the number of hexominoes which will fold to make a cube. There is considerable evidence that many pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects. In science, Year 6 pupils construct accurate block graphs of pulse rates after exercise and they record friction rates using a Newton meter. In geography, these pupils measure the length of Angell Road and Wiltshire Road. In design and technology, Year 6 pupils make accurate measurements when designing clock cases, and Year 4 pupils use their knowledge of triangles well in designing board games. In geography, Year 3 pupils look for lines of symmetry in the Taj Mahal.

93. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards in mental calculations and in basic numeracy which are well above average. They use quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 and beyond. They understand place value in two digit numbers and many can subtract two digit numbers from three digit ones. Many find sharing a more difficult concept, although they can work out half of various numbers. When using and applying their mathematical knowledge, most pupils refer to correct mathematical terms and units of measurement. They recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and refer to some of their properties. Most pupils can tell analogue time, including quarter to and past the hour, and higher achievers can convert analogue to digital time. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils used a television guide to investigate which programmes they could watch within one hour. There is some evidence that many pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, in geography, Year 2 pupils use degrees Celsius in recording temperatures.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve very well. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, where teaching ranged from satisfactory to poor. Teachers plan their lessons well and explain clearly to pupils what they are expected to learn. Sharp, focused questioning during initial mental mathematics sessions is having a positive impact on learning. The teachers ask the pupils to explain their strategies and this helps them to understand that there is often more than one way of working something out. Teachers often make mathematics relevant to everyday life, in order to stimulate and motivate the pupils. In a Year 6 investigation into patterns in flowers and rabbit reproduction, the teacher stressed that this was “real maths”. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher had prepared work relevant to that night’s television programmes. They make good links with other subjects, such as science and design and technology. They match work well to differing needs and provide extension work for higher achievers. They expect pupils to use correct mathematical terms. This had a good impact in a Year 5 lesson, where the pupils compared metric with imperial units of measurement. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher clearly displayed the vocabulary which the pupils needed to use in doubling and halving. Teachers monitor progress carefully during lessons, advising and helping as necessary. The quality of plenary sessions at the end of lessons, where the learning is consolidated and reinforced, is variable. Sometimes, teachers failed to keep the pupils focused on the task, so that their concentration waned. Learning is enhanced by the setting of regular homework for the older pupils. In both key stages, information technology is not used sufficiently.

95. There is no policy or scheme of work in place. However, planning is soundly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinators have led training for colleagues and the staff have received useful guidance from the Local Education Authority’s numeracy consultant. A clear action plan includes monitoring teaching of the subject in the autumn, developing mathematical games in the playground and increasing information technology software. There are very good procedures for assessing the pupils’ attainment. There is a wide range of good quality resources to support learning and they are neatly stored and easily accessible. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An example of this is the participation of all the pupils in interactive numeracy activities at the Livesey Museum, followed up by African number games. Year 4 pupils have visited a mathematics musical at the Criterion Theatre.

SCIENCE

96. By the age of 11, pupils attain standards in science that are above those found in other schools. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection when they were found to be “below national expectation”. In the 1999 end of key stage national tests, the pupils’ results were well above average when compared with schools nationally, and very high when compared with similar schools. The last report described the pupils’ performance in the 1995 tests as “poor”. There has been a dramatic improvement in the pupils’ test results since 1997, when they were very low. The slight drop in standards when comparing the findings of this inspection with the 1999 test results is due to differences between the two groups of pupils.

97. In Year 6, pupils conduct a range of experiments and investigations to develop their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in response to the question “If all these objects are dropped from the same height at the same time, which will hit the ground first?” they devise a test, predict the outcomes, carry out the investigation, record the results and draw conclusions from them. Pupils understand how the human body functions and explain what happens when we breathe. They explain that bones provide an ‘internal scaffold’ for the body and know what constitutes a balanced diet. Pupils know and explain the functions of different parts of a plant and understand the concepts of germination and pollination. They explain how different materials act as insulators and know that insulation affects temperature. Pupils predict and test which shoe will provide the best ‘grip’ on different surfaces and test their hypotheses. They use a Newton metre to measure resistance and record their findings in a table, drawing their own conclusions from what they have observed. Pupils in Year 5 know that day and night are created by the rotation of the earth on its axis and understand that feeding relationships exist between plants and animals. Pupils in Year 4 conduct an investigation to test which materials are the best conductors of heat and predict which object which travel furthest down a slope. In Year 3, pupils sort materials into groups according to whether they are transparent, translucent or opaque and investigate the effect of friction by comparing how far a toy car travels on a tiled floor compared with a carpet.

98. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards which are above those found in other schools, as at the time of the last inspection. This judgement also broadly reflects the teachers’ assessments of pupils’ attainment in 1999. In Year 2, pupils know that there are different kinds of animals in their local environment and that the environment affects which animals and plants are found there. They put forward their own ideas and make simple predictions about which foods a snail will choose to eat based on their existing knowledge. For example, one pupil suggests that the snail will prefer cabbage “because they like eating them in the garden”. Pupils observe the snails carefully and record what they have observed. They take part in ‘pond-dipping’ enthusiastically and handle the creatures with great care, making careful observations and drawing very good sketches of each one. They identify items that are made from metal, wood, plastic, paper and textiles and describe their properties. Pupils experiment with sounds and discover that “when the sound is close, it is loud and when the sound is far away, it is quieter”. Pupils test different objects to find out which float and sink and describe what they have observed.

99. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is good at both key stages. As a result, all pupils make good progress and achieve very well. Teachers provide a good range of experiences and opportunities for pupils to acquire scientific knowledge and understanding through investigative and experimental work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and teachers set out clearly the purpose of the lesson and what pupils are expected to learn. They share these objectives with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and revisit them at the end to check how well pupils have met them. A lesson in Year 2 provided a good example of well-planned investigative

work that was also very enjoyable for the pupils. The lesson formed part of a six-week programme on life and living processes, during which pupils had walked around the school and found different plants and creatures in different habitats. The teacher developed the pupils' understanding of how to carry out an experiment through well directed questioning, such as "How could we find out what snails like to eat?" She responded very positively to pupils' suggestions and prompted them to think of ways to make the test fair. There was a good emphasis on scientific method, observation and recording and the nature of the activity captured the pupils' interest and motivated them to learn. The school's premises manager also played an important part in the lesson, putting his considerable expertise to good use in supervising a group in the pond and wildlife area and asking them well chosen questions to develop their observational skills.

100. A particular strength of the teaching throughout the school is the very good assessment of pupils' attainment in relation to the objectives that are set for each lesson. A simple but effective recording system shows those pupils who have understood the work and those who will need further input. Teachers use this information well when planning future work. There is also a good emphasis on developing appropriate scientific vocabulary. The main weakness in teaching is inconsistency in the pupils' recording of their work. At Key Stage 1, Year 1 have recorded more than Year 2 during the year, and at Key Stage 2, there is insufficient emphasis on the quality and presentation of pupils' work in Years 3 and 4. The quality of teachers' marking is also variable. The best practice can be seen in Year 6, where the teacher gives clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils make good progress in their learning because of the clear explanations, focused practical work and interesting activities that teachers devise for them.

101. There is no co-ordinator and the headteacher is overseeing the subject until September 2000 when a new co-ordinator will take over. The headteacher is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, not least the absence of a scheme of work to guide teachers in their planning. Teachers plan lessons well within half-termly or termly units of work, and these cover the whole range of the National Curriculum. However, the absence of an overall scheme of work means that topics are often covered by more than one year group, with insufficient awareness of what has gone before or what is to come after. The school has made preparations to introduce the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's published scheme of work in September 2000 and intends to tailor this during the year to meet the school's specific needs, through ongoing review and evaluation. The headteacher undertakes some monitoring of the pupils' work and teachers' planning and analyses the results of national tests to identify areas for development. There are not enough resources for the subject to ensure that all lessons run smoothly. For example, pupils in Year 3 had to share magnifying glasses when examining plants and this slowed the lesson down unnecessarily. There is insufficient use of information technology to enhance pupils' learning in the subject. Pupils enjoy science and show positive attitudes towards their work. They take good care of plants, animals and resources and co-operate successfully in group work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The teaching of science meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART

102. Pupils at both key stages attain standards that are similar to those found in most schools. When compared with the findings of the previous inspection report, this judgement shows similar standards for the pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is lower than at the time of the last inspection because the range of experiences offered to the pupils is narrower and there is insufficient planning to ensure progression in the teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding. Although some pupils attain above average standards in drawing and painting, the range of art experiences offered to pupils is insufficiently broad, which limits their attainment. Only two lessons in art were observed during the course of this inspection and judgements have been based on the lessons seen, analysis of displays and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils at both key stages,

including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in the subject. Their achievement is satisfactory during their time in school.

103. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and pupils show increasing confidence, when drawing and painting. They are developing their skills well in observational drawing, both in pencil and pastel, and produce sketches with good attention to line, detail, proportion and expression. They use sketchbooks to record observations and to develop ideas. Both the Year 5 colour pencil portraits and the Year 6 Champagne bottles show effective use of shading. Pupils' paintings on crockery show how they have been influenced by the work of Clarice Cliff. Paintings of flowers for their science work show that Year 4 pupils have an appropriate understanding of the range and use of colour, when they blend and mix colours effectively to produce different tones and textures. They create collage silhouettes of a 'night-time air raid' in connection with their history work on World War 2. However, pupils are given too few opportunities to develop their artwork over a sustained period of time and are not provided with a sufficiently wide range of experiences. For example, there are limited opportunities for printing, sculpture and work with textiles. Pupils are developing a sound appreciation of art from a range of different cultures and different artists, such as Kitson, Braque and Archibald Motley.

104. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and pupils are developing satisfactory skills at colour mixing using primary colours, and in their understanding of line, texture and pattern in everyday objects. Most observe carefully and use sketchbooks to record their ideas effectively, both from their own experience and from imagination. Their pencil drawings of the local church and their pastel drawings of trees in the school grounds show awareness of line and a growing attention to detail. In science, they use their art skills well to make close observational drawings of snails and a stick insect. Colour vocabulary is being developed appropriately and pupils show increasing confidence and control in using materials, tools and techniques for painting and drawing. Pupils improve in their ability to use scissors and glue carefully and enjoy cutting and manipulating paper in a variety of ways to produce colourful and effective collages, such as the views of the church by pupils in Year 2. Their visit to the Van Dyke exhibition at the Royal Academy and studying works of art from various cultures, such as Aboriginal and Afro-Caribbean art is helping them to improve their own work. However, opportunities for a wide range of experiences in other aspects of art are limited and this restricts the pupils' overall development and progress in the subject.

105. During the inspection, good teaching was seen in one lesson, which was a follow-up to the pupils' visit to The Tate Modern the previous day. Pupils were encouraged to work in pairs and each pair was provided with a small print of Rene Magritte's 'The Reckless Sleeper'. Before explaining a little about Magritte and surrealism, the teacher asked pupils "What is your first impression of this picture? Do you get a happy feeling from it?" One pupil replied, "Confusion", another thought "He's asleep and I think the objects represent some things in his life". Pupils applied themselves sensibly and the teacher used their responses productively to explain how art can be critically examined, for example, use of colour, attention to detail, and the almost photographic quality of the painting. They responded well to his clear explanation of the quality of work and their positive attitudes made them receptive to this new learning experience. The teacher enabled them to use language efficiently and precisely to give informed opinions using artistic terms. Pupils were very attentive and eager to attempt to sketch and then paint their own 'surrealist' work of art. By the end of the lesson, pupils had gained good skills in expressing their ideas, evaluating work and recognising similarities and differences in approach as a result of direct and lively teaching, which engaged their interest at all times.

106. At the time of the headteacher's appointment just over two years ago, art was underdeveloped in the school. Since then, he has maintained an overview of the subject, in the absence of a co-ordinator, and ensures that all pupils undertake some form of art each week. The school does not have a policy or a scheme of work for art, but plans to adopt the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

guidelines for art in the forthcoming autumn term to ensure progression in the teaching of skills across the school. Teachers create relevant links with other subjects, for example, symmetrical patterns in mathematics, and Tudor houses in history. Resources are satisfactory for drawing and painting, but there is a lack of other media to provide a rich and varied art curriculum. Throughout the school, colourful displays are used effectively to enliven classrooms and enhance communal areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Pupils attain standards above those found in other schools at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were found to be “generally in line with national expectations for seven and eleven year olds”. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning and their achievement is good. At the time of the last inspection, there was insufficient emphasis on design at Key Stage 2. This is now a strength of the curriculum. There are numerous examples of pupils producing detailed designs for products. For example, pupils in Year 6 designed their own bank notes and ice-lollies. In a more complex designing and making project, they designed a clock case, which could be wall-mounted or free standing, to house an electric clock mechanism. The pupils’ detailed and imaginative designs included both front and reverse views, measurements, the materials selected to make the clock and suggested methods of fixing. Having researched the project, pupils produced an initial sketch, which was then modified and improved in the light of further information. They chose from a range of materials to meet the design criteria and proceeded to construct and decorate the clock. Pupils take great care over fixing and joining materials and in finishing their product to a high standard. In Year 5, pupils disassemble and reassemble boxes when constructing Tudor houses.

108. In Year 2, pupils design and make an animal glove puppet to be used in a storytelling performance. They draw detailed designs of the puppet and label them to show what materials they will use. Pupils select materials and use their knowledge to decide how to join them appropriately. Pupils review the progress they have made and their use of materials, and suggest ways to improve the finished product. For example, some discover that using glue to stick on buttons for eyes did not work and realise that they need to sew them on.

109. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good, overall, at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when a key issue included increasing teachers’ expertise in the subject. Teaching in Years 2 and 6 is very good and provides a model of good practice for other staff. In the lessons seen in these classes, the teachers’ own expertise is very good, their explanations are clear and they constantly challenge pupils to evaluate their work and look for ways to improve it. For example, in Year 2, the teacher asks pupils “Why do you think it didn’t work?” and “What do you need to do?” and when they suggest unrealistic solutions she responds with further questions to lead them to a better understanding. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and place great emphasis on the quality of the finished product. They successfully plan designing and making projects over several weeks, allowing time for pupils to explore every aspect of the topic and to evaluate and improve their work without feeling pressured to finish. Lessons have clearly stated intentions and teachers assess how well pupils have met these, recording the assessment information in a simple but effective format. Pupils are managed very well and teachers emphasise the importance of safety considerations when handling tools and equipment. As a result of the high quality of the teaching, pupils are motivated to learn, find the work interesting and apply considerable creative effort. They take a pride in their work and strive to achieve high standards. Pupils work at a good pace and make good progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding.

110. There is no co-ordinator for the subject, but this is identified as a priority in the school development plan for the next school year. Although teachers plan their work well, this not done within the context of a scheme of work for the whole school to ensure adequate progression in the teaching of

knowledge and skills. The school is preparing to introduce the scheme of work that has been published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in September 2000 and has identified the need to improve this aspect of its work. The headteacher, who is overseeing the subject, has not carried out formal monitoring of pupils' work or the quality of teaching in classrooms. However, through informal visits to classrooms and monitoring teachers' planning, he maintains an overview of how the subject is being taught. The range, quality and storage of resources are unsatisfactory. A significant strength of the subject is the way it is planned to arise from, or link with, pupils' work in other subjects. For example, Year 3 designed and made Egyptian jewellery as part of a history topic and Year 4 pupils made bread when learning about the Last Supper in religious education. One of the best examples is the current Year 2 design project, which has involved pupils in writing a story and designing and making puppets to present the story in a puppet theatre, which they are to design and make at a later stage. Another good feature is the extra-curricular provision that the school makes during each half-term holiday, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend a 'Cook School' led by a professional catering team. They visit local shops and markets, purchase food, make bread, biscuits, and pizza, and prepare a complete buffet lunch for invited guests.

GEOGRAPHY

111. It was possible to observe only one lesson in geography. This, together with an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with some pupils, indicates that, by the end of both Years 6 and 2, standards are similar to those found in other schools. The previous inspection found comparable standards at Key Stage 1, but was unable to make a judgement on standards at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress.

112. By the age of 11, through local fieldwork linked to work in science, the pupils understand how land is used in Angell Town. They think about ways in which the environment might be improved. They use their literacy skills well to write letters about a proposed local supermarket. Pupils are beginning to understand the concept of primary, secondary and tertiary industries and the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations. Year 6 pupils contrast the locality of Sayers Croft with Brixton and they refine their mapping skills through orienteering. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 compare life in Brixton with that in a rural village in India.

113. By the age of seven, most pupils are beginning to understand the concept of a map as a view from above. They know that a map must have a key in order to be understood. They draw sound maps of an imaginary island and they are able to use simple co-ordinates to locate features on it. Year 2 pupils work with pupils in Year 6 to investigate local land use. They observe daily weather, record it appropriately in words and symbols and understand changes in seasonal weather. Year 1 pupils are developing their use of locational language, associated with the story of 'The Bear Hunt'. Reception pupils are learning to take note of features on pictures, such as roads, bridges, hills, woods and rivers.

114. Observation of one lesson, together with an analysis of pupils' work and of teachers' planning, indicates that the quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is satisfactory. The previous inspection found that teaching was mainly sound, but that it varied from good to unsatisfactory. The teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing mapping and fieldwork skills and on the use of correct geographical terms. In the Year 5 lesson observed, the teacher made effective links with literacy, so that the pupils learnt the meanings of words such as 'employer', 'employee', 'services' and 'lucrative'. However, teaching was over directed, with insufficient opportunities for the pupils to actively find things out for themselves. In both key stages, the teachers make insufficient use of information technology to enhance learning.

115. There is no policy or scheme of work on which to base whole school, long term planning and to ensure a progression of geographical skills from one year to the next. In the absence of a co-ordinator,

the headteacher is temporarily responsible for overseeing the subject. Although effective use is made of the local environment in order to enhance the curriculum, insufficient geography is taught throughout the school year. There are not enough resources to support learning, with no local street maps or aerial photographs, few globes and insufficient class atlases, library reference books or information technology programs. The subject contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 6 work collaboratively on local study projects and pupils in Year 3 learn about the culture of India.

HISTORY

116. It was not possible to observe any history lessons, but an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with some of them indicate that, by the end of both Years 6 and 2, standards are similar to those found in other schools. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. From first hand experience at the Imperial War Museum, the pupils understand the impact of wartime bombing raids in Britain. During literacy lessons based on the story 'War Boy', pupils learn about life in wartime Britain and the evacuation of children from the cities. They know that Sayers Croft was used by evacuees. Pupils know about some aspects of life in ancient Egypt and Greece. Year 3 pupils have written simple messages, using hieroglyphics. Older pupils know about Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. They are familiar with some Greek legends, such as Jason and the Golden Fleece and Theseus and the Minotaur. Older pupils also know about important events of the twentieth century, such as Captain Scott's death in Antarctica and the first landing on the moon in 1969. Pupils use their literacy skills well in writing about aspects of history; for example, Year 6 pupils have written effective poems about life on the Golden Hinde, following a visit, and Year 5 pupils write letters home in the style of wartime evacuees.

117. Many pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to understand the concept of change over time and the meaning of words such as 'now', 'a long time ago' and 'older'. Year 2 pupils recently visited Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood and learnt how toys, such as teddy bears, have changed over the years. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress.

118. Analysis of pupils' work and of teachers' planning indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is broadly satisfactory in both key stages. Wherever possible, the teachers make effective links with other subjects. In Year 5, for example, work on the Tudors is linked to building houses in design and technology.

119. There is no policy or scheme of work on which to base whole school planning and to ensure a smooth progression in the development of skills from one year to the next. In the absence of a co-ordinator, the headteacher is temporarily responsible for overseeing the subject. Insufficient history is taught throughout the school year, although the school does well to enrich learning through worthwhile visits to the British Museum, Bethnal Green Museum, the Imperial War Museum and the Tower of London. Such visits make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning resources are unsatisfactory. Although there is a reasonable range of historical reference books in the school library, there are insufficient historical artefacts or information technology resources to enhance learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

120. During the inspection, no teaching of information technology was observed, and there were very few instances of pupils using computers in other lessons. An analysis of pupils' work shows that, although pupils achieve good standards in word processing, there is no evidence of other aspects of information technology. An examination of teachers' planning over the past school year reveals that

information technology has not been planned for in a structured way. Pupils are given opportunities to use computers to redraft their writing and there are some good examples of this work in Year 6. Pupils attain good standards in word processing and use the keyboard and mouse competently to type and correct text and redraft their writing. However, standards in all other aspects of information technology are well below those found in other schools because pupils do not have enough access to computers and the school does not have sufficient resources to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning for all pupils is unsatisfactory, overall, as a result of inadequate resources and a lack of curricular planning for the subject. As a result, the pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make unsatisfactory progress overall and their achievement is unsatisfactory.

121. At the time of the previous inspection, although no clear judgement of standards was made, the report stated that information technology was “under-emphasised in the school”. This is still the case. The school had identified the need to develop the subject, “both in terms of acquiring more machines and software, and in terms of developing teachers’ confidence in the use of existing computers”. A key issue for the school was to improve the teaching of information technology by increasing opportunities for pupils to use computers and giving due emphasis to control technology. When the present headteacher took up his post in 1998, it is reported that no progress had been made on the key issue and no action plan was in place to address it. Since that time, a major initiative, brought about through the Education Action Zone, has resulted in the school being chosen to have eight new computers installed in a recently refurbished room. However, these computers are to be used solely for operating a commercial learning system in English and mathematics and not for teaching the broad spectrum of the National Curriculum requirements. When the initiative was first introduced, the school was not fully aware that these computers would not address its most urgent need to meet National Curriculum requirements. Most of the school’s planning and development in the subject have been directed towards getting this system up and running, and this has been hindered by operational problems since its installation. It is still not working because of a suspected fault in the software. As a result of considerable time and effort being spent on this system, there has been no improvement in other aspects of the subject. The rest of the computers in the school are ageing and in need of replacement. Some classes do not have a computer and others have one that functions temperamentally. There is a very limited range of software programs to cover aspects other than word processing. Although the school has programmable floor robots to teach control technology, they are not used systematically as part of a scheme of work to address this aspect of the subject.

122. A co-ordinator for the subject was appointed in September 1999. Since that time, her efforts have been directed towards planning for and setting up the computer room and the new commercial learning system. She is aware of the need to replace classroom computers and to develop a scheme of work to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. To this end, the school has purchased the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority’s published scheme and is to implement this from September 2000. However, the school does not currently have the resources to do this if the new computers cannot be used for this purpose. There has been no training or development for staff in the subject as the focus has been on developing literacy and numeracy during the past two years. However, this has been identified as a priority for the coming year. Currently, the governors are failing to meet their statutory obligations in this subject.

MUSIC

123. Pupils’ standards in music at both key stages are similar to those found in most schools and broadly in line with the findings of the previous inspection. The quality of singing is good throughout the school and pupils enjoy singing a wide range of songs and hymns. Good accompaniment on the piano enables pupils to maintain the correct rhythm and to pitch notes accurately. Many members of the school choir are attaining standards that are above average for their ages. Due to timetabling

arrangements, no music lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, but pupils were heard singing in assemblies and in the school choir, both live and on video. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of pupils' learning and attainment in appraising and composing in both key stages. However, from teachers' planning, it is evident that pupils have opportunities for these activities, although limited, and that they make satisfactory progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Since the previous inspection, the expertise in the school has been enhanced by the appointment of a part-time specialist music teacher, who teaches the subject to all pupils at different times during the year.

124. In Year 2, the qualities of singing are good. Pupils remember well the words of a variety of songs, including a Polynesian song, to which they enjoy 'rowing their boat' while singing. They satisfactorily accompany their singing by tapping their hands, stamping their feet and playing percussion instruments to a steady rhythm. Pupils know the names of the percussion instruments, such as tambourine, castanets, and temple drum.

125. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However, due to the intensive focus on English and mathematics within the school, opportunities for music lessons are limited. Key Stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic and eager to be chosen to take on responsibility, but sometimes, this leads to over exuberance, which limits their learning. Younger ones particularly enjoy singing and joining in with class activities. They applaud the skills of others and recognise the efforts made by those who are not so musical. The music teacher extends pupils' understanding of the correct way to breathe, as preparation for singing. She also reinforces their knowledge of the correct names of the instruments before allowing them to choose which ones they wish to play. Hymn practices are good opportunities for pupils to experience the pleasure of singing together, and many hymns are accompanied well by a pupil playing a Ghanaian drum. The teacher, who plays the piano and leads the hymn practices, has a very positive effect on the quality of singing that is achieved. During assemblies, pupils are given many opportunities to enhance their listening skills by listening attentively to a wide range of music from different eras and cultures. These included 'Beautiful Dreamer' written by an American slave in the early part of the twentieth century, a 1960's Elvis Presley song and rap music.

126. When the present headteacher arrived at the school just over two years ago, music was not being taught in the school. He maintains an overview of the subject and is ensuring that pupils receive some music teaching during each academic year. However, insufficient time is given to music for pupils to attain high standards in all aspects of the music curriculum. The school does not have a policy or a scheme of work for music, but plans to adopt the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines for music in the forthcoming autumn term to ensure progression in the teaching of knowledge and skills across the school. Resources are adequate. Pupils have opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities, such as the choir, listening to visiting musicians, taking part in musical experiences, such as the Ghanaian Drummer workshops, and visiting the theatre. Music plays an important part in the school's celebration of various cultures and festivals.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Pupils of all ages achieve standards that are similar to those found in most schools and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. That inspection found that swimming was a strength of the school. It was not possible to observe any swimming lessons during the current inspection, but there is documentary evidence that, by the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils can swim at least 25 metres unaided. Year 6 pupils achieve very high standards in dance and, in one lesson observed, these pupils performed a dance routine very well. Pupils had to use chairs as part of this routine and obviously found great enjoyment in dance, concentrating very hard and counting quietly to themselves to ensure that they kept to the beat. Standards in gymnastics and games are average in Year 6. Most pupils can perform satisfactory gymnastic sequences, involving balances and rolls, and many display

sound ball control in a variety of activities. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils are able to move around the hall, keeping time to the beat of a drum. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils interpreted Polynesian music soundly, by enacting the rowing of a canoe. They performed a country dance satisfactorily with a partner. Year 1 pupils can throw and catch a beanbag with varying degrees of skill.

128. The previous inspection found that teaching was satisfactory overall, but it ranged from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. The findings of the current inspection indicate that the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is consistently good. All the teachers dress appropriately for physical education and they manage changing sessions well, ensuring that as little time as possible is wasted. Teachers have good subject knowledge and begin lessons with effective warm up sessions. They teach specific skills well. This is an improvement. In a Year 3 athletics lesson, the teacher asked “What can we do to make us run faster?” This made pupils think carefully and reinforced their understanding of the importance of keeping the head steady, knees high and arms pumping. The teacher made the pupils run with a baton behind their backs so that they could appreciate the role of the arms in running. He also emphasised the need to spring up quickly from the starting sprint position and this had a positive impact on learning. In a lesson on racket control, the teacher stressed the importance of the ‘shake hands’ grip on the racket, with “eyes on the ball, wrists locked”, and this led to good progress in learning. Teachers use a wide variety of equipment to enhance learning. In a Year 5 lesson, this included some Nivsta boards, which pupils enjoy using in and outside lessons and which aid their throwing and catching skills. The teacher’s own expertise, together with his use of a visiting dance specialist, is having a very positive impact on standards in dance in Year 6. In a Year 4 gymnastics lesson, the teacher made good links with mathematics, using the pupils’ knowledge of angles to develop L shaped pathways. In Year 3 lessons, the teacher made pupils aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies through measuring pulse rates. In the very best lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to observe others, with a view to improving their own performance.

129. Only one lesson could be observed at Key Stage 1 and this was unsatisfactory. This was due very largely to insecure class control in a situation where many of these younger pupils tended to become over excited and silly. Constant demands for good behaviour and other interruptions caused the lesson to move along far too slowly. As a result, the pupils made insufficient progress. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve satisfactorily over their time in school.

130. No policy or scheme of work is in place, with the result that there is no whole-school, long-term system of planning to ensure a smooth progression of skills’ development from one year to the next. In the absence of a co-ordinator, the headteacher is temporarily overseeing the subject. There are adequate resources to support learning, though some mats are very worn and in need of replacement and fixed apparatus is old and dated. There is an adequately sized hall for dance and gymnastics, but space outside for games is very limited. There is no field. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting dance specialists, participation in the Primary Shakespeare Project, where some pupils have recently learnt about the choreography of conflict, an after-school football club and opportunities for Year 6 pupils to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential visit to Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through encouraging co-operative work with partners or in teams and the need for rules in games. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for putting out and clearing away equipment at the beginning and end of lessons. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.