

INSPECTION REPORT

FERNHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Farnborough, Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116240

Headteacher: Mrs C Card

Reporting inspector: Mr D Clegg
4341

Dates of inspection: 21st May – 24th May 2001

Inspection number: 193786

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Neville Duke Road
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Hampshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs D Rogers

Date of previous inspection: 28th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4341	Mr D Clegg	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22967	Ms M Griffiths	Team inspector	The foundation stage English Design and technology Physical education Religious education Equality of opportunity	
27720	Mr P Way	Team inspector	Science Art and design Geography Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fernhill Primary School is an average sized school with 240 pupils on roll. There are about the same number of boys and girls although in some year groups, particularly Years 1 and 6, there is a significant gender imbalance. Pupils are organised into eight classes with an average of 30 pupils in each. Two out of the eight classes contain pupils from more than one age group.

The great majority of pupils are white, with a UK background and only one pupil speaks English as an additional language. About 18 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. There are approximately 18 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, although no pupils have a specific statement of needs, a below average figure. The main difficulties that pupils have are emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.

Most pupils live locally and walk to school. When children enter school they are achieving broadly average standards.

In the two years before this inspection the school underwent significant changes with an almost complete changeover of teachers. The school has encountered significant difficulties in recruiting a sufficient number of appropriately experienced, permanently employed teachers. The great majority of the current teaching staff has been at the school for less than one year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Fernhill Primary School provides a broadly satisfactory standard of education for the majority of pupils although some of the oldest pupils have not achieved as much as they should. Standards for eleven-year-olds are too low but there are improvements in the standards achieved by pupils in other year groups. The quality of teaching is good overall. The school is well managed and the leadership is making every effort to improve standards but has been hampered by the temporary nature of many teaching appointments. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Very good teaching makes sure that under fives get off to a good start
- The school is well led and managed with good systems to evaluate its performance
- Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school
- The school takes good care of pupils

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT)
- The management of the provision for special educational needs
- The provision for cultural development

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997 since when it has undergone significant changes. A new head teacher was appointed in 1999. At that time the Local Education Authority judged the school to have a number of weaknesses. The rate of improvement since that time has been hindered by the acute staffing difficulties faced by the school in the last two years. Changes in teaching staff, some of them key post holders, and the temporary nature of many appointments has resulted in a lack of continuity in the education of a significant minority of pupils. Nevertheless, there are some improvements in aspects of the school. The implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is beginning to make a contribution to raising standards and the overall quality of teaching is good. Arrangements for assessment have improved and these are being increasingly used to guide teaching. Given the acute staffing difficulties, the school has made satisfactory progress overall.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	C	D	D
mathematics	C	D	E	E
science	E	D	E	E

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

The overall results of National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds are either below or well below the national average and those of similar schools. The standards being attained by the current eleven-year-olds are also below the average and a significant minority of these pupils has not achieved the standards that they should have. In English tests a very low proportion of pupils attain higher levels in writing; in reading the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is broadly average. In mathematics tests also only a few pupils attain higher levels.

The trend in results over the past three years has been erratic. In English the results have been at or below the national average, in mathematics there has been a steady decline in standards while in science standards have been consistently below or well below the national average. Boys have generally performed better than girls.

The inspection found that the standards attained by pupils in year groups lower down the school are improving and are more in line with the national average than the above results would indicate. In English, mathematics and science standards are broadly average for seven to ten-year-olds, although in mathematics and science some pupils could achieve more if the work they were given was more challenging.

The results of national tests for seven-year-olds are also below the national average. The current standards being attained are broadly average and inspection findings indicate that the standards for five to seven-year-olds are improving and most pupils are achieving the standards of which they are capable. The very youngest children are achieving well and the great majority reach the expected levels for children starting Year 1.

The standards attained throughout the school in ICT are below expected levels. In other subjects, standards are broadly in line with expectations, although the standards attained by the current oldest pupils in history and geography are below expectations.

The school has set challenging targets for eleven-year-olds in 2002 where they expect the standards to be well up to the national average in English and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in most lessons but there are isolated incidences of too aggressive play during the break times.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good for most pupils but the older pupils occasionally struggle to maintain concentration and are sometimes immature.
Attendance	Attendance levels are above the national average. A small number of

	pupils regularly arrive late.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. About 93 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, just over 52 per cent of teaching is good or very good and seven per cent is unsatisfactory. The good quality teaching is making an impact on the learning of all pupils although the impact in some year groups has only been felt very recently. Very good teaching is enabling the youngest children to make a very good start that is built on by the good teaching of the five to seven-year-olds. The teaching of the eight and nine-year-olds is ensuring that they achieve as much as they can in most lessons. The teaching of the oldest pupils has been significantly disrupted over the current academic year and this has resulted in some pupils not achieving as much as they could have.

English is well taught; good use is made of the national literacy strategy and this is beginning to raise standards. Mathematics teaching is overall satisfactory and often good. Most teaching makes effective use of the national numeracy strategy although not all teachers are sufficiently aware of some aspects of the teaching guidance.

Teachers use resources well, plan lessons carefully and manage pupils effectively. Good questioning helps all pupils to join in lessons and extend their learning. High expectations, especially of what children might achieve, is also helping to raise standards. Teachers generally know what pupils can already do and plan work that meets their needs. Occasionally, learning is hindered by the slow pace of lessons due to teachers' over elaborate explanations or lack of subject knowledge. Some pupils do not achieve as much as they could because the work they are given is too easy.

Overall, the school meets the needs of most pupils; some pupils could have achieved more if they had had less disruption to their teaching in the last twelve months.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balance and overall meets the needs of the majority of pupils. There are gaps in some aspects of the ICT curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides satisfactorily for most pupils with special needs and they make satisfactory progress. There are weaknesses in the learning targets set for individual pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is satisfactory provision for social, moral and spiritual development but there is not enough provision to support pupils' cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a strong sense of care and welfare. Pupils are well cared for and feel well supported. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress.

The curriculum for the early years is well planned and contributes to the good start children make. Generally effective use is made of the national frameworks for literacy and numeracy. The school has made progress in implementing the new National Curriculum and is aware of the need to make more use of the national guidance available for some subjects. The number of staff changes has resulted in some inconsistencies in the manner in which assessment procedure have been applied

and their impact has not been as great as they could have been. Individual education plans are not maintained on a regular basis and the lack of precise targets makes it difficult to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The school makes appropriate efforts to work in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very clear sense of direction and purpose. Recently appointed key members of staff are beginning to make a positive impact.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Overall, the governing body is good at fulfilling its role. Governors are very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but there are some statutory responsibilities that are unfulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems in place to monitor the work of the school. Good use is made of performance data to guide the work of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Effective use is made of the schools' resources.

The resources and accommodation are broadly adequate although resources for aspects of music and art are limited. The school has been impeded in its work by the difficulties it has had in recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers.

The headteacher works closely with the governing body and together they have provided steady leadership during a very turbulent period. The implementation of improvement strategies has been hindered by the lack of continuity in teaching staff.

The governing body have not yet agreed a clear policy on how they will achieve the best value from their budget but they do take steps to try to secure good value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school • The good quality of teaching • They feel the school is approachable • Their children are expected to work hard • The way the school helps their children to grow up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards of behaviour • The way in which the school works with parents • The leadership and management of the school • The range of activities

The above views are based on a limited amount of information; only seven parents attended the pre-inspection parents' evening and only 15 per cent of parents' questionnaires were returned.

The inspection broadly confirms the parents' positive views of the school; children enjoy coming to school, the teaching is good and pupils generally work hard. The school does help pupils to mature although they are not given enough responsibilities. Parents' concerns about behaviour are justified in respect to behaviour in the playground. The school makes reasonable efforts to involve parents and there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The concerns about the leadership and management of the school are not justified, as this is a good feature of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The most recent results of National Curriculum tests in 2000 show a significant degree of under-achievement. The results for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics are below, or well below the national average. The results are also below those of similar schools. Similarly, the results for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science are either below or well below both the national average and the results of similar schools. The results over the past three years, for both seven and eleven-year-olds, have been below, or well below, average. The standards attained by the current group of eleven-year-olds are also below average and a significant number of these pupils have not achieved as much as they should.
2. There are differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. At the age of seven, girls do better in reading and writing but the boys do better in mathematics. At the age of eleven, boys do much better than girls in English, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they should, particularly in mathematics where the proportion of eleven-year-olds attaining the higher levels is in the bottom five per cent of all schools.
3. In all year groups the low attainment is beginning to be addressed and the standards being achieved by most pupils (outside of Year 6), are broadly in line with the average. Most pupils are achieving as well as they should although continuing disruption to teaching in Year 5 is resulting in some slowing down of pupils' progress. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards.
4. The majority of seven-year-olds read simple texts well and they generally understand what they have read. Written work is well presented, spellings of common words are usually accurate and basic punctuation is used appropriately. Pupils have a grasp of early numbers, they are familiar with simple number patterns and are developing mental strategies for working things out.
5. By the time eleven-year-olds leave the school too few of them are fully equipped to take advantage of the next stage of education. Standards in reading are better than those in writing, with an average proportion of pupils achieving high standards. The majority of pupils are enthusiastic readers who enjoy a reasonable range of books including classic and modern fiction. They talk sensibly about what they have read and explain why they like particular stories; one girl, for instance, enjoys reading Jacqueline Wilson stories because 'you can relate to them, they're down to earth'. Pupils understand what they have read, although they cannot confidently describe the characters they have met in books. Written work is varied. The higher attaining pupils write well for a range of purposes. Grammar and punctuation are used accurately and words are used well to create drama and atmosphere. Most pupils however, only write in simple sentences and their accounts are limited
6. In mathematics eleven-year-olds have a sound recall of tables but only the higher attaining pupils have fast recall. Pupils' mental strategies for calculating are limited; again the higher attaining pupils use fast methods, but most pupils are limited to using pencil and paper methods and this slows the pace at which they can work.

Most pupils have an average understanding of how numbers work, they work with high numbers and grasp the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.

7. In science, eleven-year-olds have not achieved as much as they should. They have some basic understanding of the aspects of science they have studied, for instance the nature of some scientific changes such as solutions and solvents and electrical circuits, but they have a very limited grasp of how to conduct and record scientific investigations. This is in marked contrast to some of the work done by pupils in other year groups which is generally up to the average for their age group, although there is still scope for further improvement in their investigative skills.
8. Standards achieved in ICT are also below expectations due to insufficient opportunities to work with computers. Standards in religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, physical education and aspects of art and music are broadly average and overall most pupils are achieving the standards that are expected for their ages. However, the current eleven-year-olds are not achieving as well as they should in history and geography.
9. The very youngest children get off to a very good start and achieve well. In all aspects of their learning, the great majority of children will meet the expected levels for pupils starting the National Curriculum in Year 1.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. They are enthusiastic about learning, listen to their teachers carefully and are eager to take part in tasks and activities. Parents report that their children are keen to come to school and they rarely have problems with attendance. Pupils respond very well to the good lessons; in a very successful Year 2 literacy lesson confident teaching immediately grabbed pupils' attention so that they used their time very productively. In a Year 4 art lesson the pupils were motivated and inspired to succeed because they wanted to copy the very useful demonstration of how to work with charcoal given by the teacher. Because of the very good guidance they are given in swimming lessons, pupils are similarly enthused to work hard on their technique and confidence in the water. They do however become easily distracted when the pace of a lesson slows, or tasks are not well matched to their ability. Year 6 pupils find tackling ambitious tasks particularly challenging and as a result sometimes lose concentration and do not learn enough.
11. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good but at times in the playground, particularly at lunchtimes, it is unsatisfactory. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and this makes a significant contribution to how well they achieve. They are sensible in the dining hall, polite when given their meals or assistance with their lunchboxes and friendly to visitors. Parents report that behaviour on trips is very good and that many positive comments have been received from the places pupils have visited. However, there has been some decline in standards of behaviour since the time of the last inspection due to the many staff changes. Pupils have not found it easy to cope with the inevitable change to routines and different expectations. On the playground many behave appropriately, but there is too much rough play and too many misunderstandings which lead to fights. Pupils are not skilled at sorting out these disagreements amicably. Strategies put in place by the school to help them, such as '*fight sheets*', which ask pupils to consider alternative ways to resolve conflicts, have not yet had enough impact. There are also some

isolated incidents of inappropriate behaviour in lessons. A small group of Year 6 boys gained little from their work with a visiting teacher, who came to help them prepare for transition to Year 7 because of their unsatisfactory behaviour. Some of the pupils with special educational needs make little progress in their lessons because their behaviour is not addressed adequately by their individual education programmes. There have been three fixed term exclusions in this school year, all for inappropriate behaviour outside of lessons.

12. Parents rightly feel that relationships are generally good and pupils work together well. Year 2 pupils practising sequenced movements on the apparatus in physical education for example, worked extremely well in pairs and small groups. They successfully evaluated their work and negotiated how to combine a group of sequences into one cohesive movement. '*Swimming buddies*' has recently been introduced because the pool can only hold about half of a class at one time. The observers show that they can make fair and meaningful evaluations and are therefore able to learn from their own and each other's mistakes. Personal development is good for most pupils. They all take their jobs around the school seriously, taking registers to the office, holding doors and setting up for assemblies. They also carry out class-based jobs and Year 5 pupils have been trained, but do not yet act, as library monitors. The younger pupils show that these activities are helping them to learn about responsibility, but there are few additional strategies to help the oldest to develop initiative and self-discipline. As a consequence their behaviour is often immature.
13. Attendance is good and above the national average as it was at the time of the last inspection. There is little unauthorised absence, however there is some persistent lateness. Despite ongoing efforts by the school a small number of children still find it difficult to get in on time and therefore make a poor start to their day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching is good. About 93 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, just over 52 per cent of teaching is good or very good and seven per cent is unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently very good in the foundation stage, good for the five to seven-year-olds and satisfactory for the eight to eleven-year-olds. Very good teaching is enabling the youngest children to make a very good start and this is being built on by the good teaching of the five to seven-year-olds. The teaching of the eight and nine-year-olds is ensuring that they achieve as much as they can in most lessons but the teaching of the oldest pupils has been significantly disrupted over the current academic year and this is reflected in their current achievements and standards. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
15. Lively, well-paced teaching is helping to make lessons productive and purposeful and to maintain pupils' interest. This is evident in all the teaching of the very youngest children where the teaching is challenging and demanding.
16. Throughout the school, lessons start well; the teachers know what is to be taught and the children are told what they are going to learn. Teachers skilfully involve all pupils, they ask sharp questions and pupils are eager to respond. A key feature of many lessons is the good use of resources. For instance, during several mathematics lessons, teachers used individual white boards or gave each child a set of digit cards so that all pupils could answer the questions. This kept pupils on their toes and gave the teacher a good idea about who had understood the lesson. The

learning assistants are also well used. They support individual pupils during particular parts of the lessons, work with groups to ensure that children make the most of the activities and make a valuable contribution to classroom management. This is particularly the case when the behaviour of some pupils is very challenging and has the potential to disrupt the learning of other pupils.

17. High expectations are very evident in many lessons including those with the very youngest children. In one lesson, in the library, the teacher used sophisticated vocabulary, referring for instance to 'illustrations' rather than pictures when looking at books and to the 'contents page' when trying to find out information from books. In a mathematics lesson children are challenged by questions such as 'what number is immediately before.....'. Constant reinforcement ensures that pupils pick up on the key words and begin to use them when, for instance, they refer to zero rather than nought or nothing. Similarly high expectations are evident with the older pupils. In an English lesson with nine-year-olds about designing an advertisement, the teacher provided pupils with a good example that ensured they aspired to high levels of achievement. She very skilfully encouraged pupils to evaluate the example against the checklist that the pupils had devised for 'testing' a good advertisement.
18. Teachers' own subject knowledge is secure in most subjects, although occasionally in mathematics, it lets them down and this results in lessons that are hesitant and rather sluggish. It is on these occasions that pupils are distracted and sometimes become restless. In the great majority of lessons the teachers are very aware of the range of levels of attainment within the class and plan work that meets pupils' needs. However, on some occasions the work for the higher attaining pupils is not hard enough and does not enable them to learn as fast as they could. This sometimes is evident in mathematics and science lessons where pupils do not work at levels that would help them to achieve more.

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

19. The quality of learning opportunities for pupils is generally satisfactory although the range of experiences is not sufficiently broad to promote pupils' cultural development. Not all aspects of ICT are taught but all other statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education are met. There is an effective policy and plan for personal, social and health education including drugs awareness and sex education. The foundation stage curriculum has been successfully introduced and makes a strong contribution to the good start which children make. The school is following the national literacy and numeracy strategies but staff changes have made consistent implementation difficult. There has recently been extensive concentration on literacy and this is having a positive impact on the range of curriculum opportunities and pupils' achievements. All pupils have equality of access to learning opportunities throughout the school.
20. The school has carried out a considerable amount of work on curriculum planning since the last inspection and is starting to make appropriate use of the new national guidance for each subject area. However not all subjects have sufficiently detailed programmes of work that ensure that as pupils move through the school what they have learned earlier is built upon. This is particularly the case in science and geography and results in duplication and repetition of work and hinders the progress that some pupils make.

21. Overall the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met. The provision for these pupils has been extensively revised to ensure that they receive adequate support in lessons. However, their individual education plans are not always sufficiently detailed to guide teaching. There is satisfactory direction and deployment of learning support assistants who often give effective support to pupils in lessons but sometimes lack enough guidance about the strategies to use, especially with pupils who struggle to maintain concentration.
22. The curriculum is enhanced by a reasonable range of lunchtime and after school activities which take place at different times during the year. This has included clubs for French, choir, recorders, swimming, art, journalism, aerobics and instruction in cycling proficiency. Years 5 and Year 6 are provided with residential experiences at Marchants Hill and Stubbington study centres. However, there are few visits to places of interest and very little curriculum enrichment through musical, artistic, theatrical or other cultural opportunities.
23. A member of staff has recently been appointed to a post with responsibility for developing links with the community and there are plans to establish closer co-operation with pre-school settings, the secondary school and other local businesses and community groups. These links are currently under-developed. Links with the secondary school on the adjacent site are not well developed as staffing difficulties in both schools hinder plans for greater co-operation. Good links exist with colleges involved in initial teacher training and graduate teacher programmes. There are also useful links with the local college and the school currently mentors two adult students on a learning support assistant course.
24. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is variable but overall is satisfactory. Opportunities for reflection and spiritual awareness are used well in collective acts of worship but there are few other opportunities taken in the curriculum for pupils' to reflect on moments of special meaning. Similarly there are no regular and familiar occasions when pupils are encouraged to think about moral or social issues such as friendships, dealing with difficult situations or reflecting on their own behaviour. There is a good quality daily collective act of worship. Pupils listen well, are involved and enjoy singing. Prayers are written and read by the children and there is reference to a deity.
25. Pupils recognise right from wrong and the school promotes their self-discipline. Social development is promoted through fund raising for charities such as Children in Need and the pupils have sponsored a governor to walk the Great Wall of China for charity. Classroom rules are displayed prominently in every classroom and the children are reminded of these from time to time. Some lessons actively promote social development by encouraging pupils to work together and co-operate in pairs or in groups. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility or to be involved in the general affairs of the school.
26. Provision for cultural development is weak and the resources to promote this aspect of the curriculum are inadequate. In subjects such as art, music, or dance, there are very few opportunities to promote cultural awareness of a range of cultures, multi-cultural traditions or the world's rich heritage of cultural diversity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27. There is a strong sense of care and pupils feel well supported. Parents endorse this view, and also feel that they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. They feel that teachers are very approachable and happy to discuss any problems. Good systems are in place to ensure there is a safe and caring environment where pupils are well supervised at all times. The staff and governing body are very aware of their obligations in relation to health and safety and ensures that checks to recognise and rectify any hazards are regularly carried out.
28. Behaviour is managed well in most lessons. The '*Children's Charter*' clearly sets out whole school expectations and many classes have supplemented these by negotiating their own class rules, which they take seriously. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour is used successfully with rewards such as marbles in the jar, badges, stickers and certificates which are much sought after. Liberal use of praise encourages both good behaviour and achievement and makes a significant contribution to most pupils' self-esteem and the effort they put into their work. Lunchtime supervisors have lovely relationships with the pupils, but although they have high expectations, pupils' behaviour on the playground is not always satisfactory. There is little with which the children can occupy themselves and their own games too often get out of hand and become aggressive. Bullying is dealt with seriously and children are clear about what to do if they feel threatened. There are few documented incidents.
29. Management of some pupils with special educational needs does not always ensure that they behave well enough during lessons to make progress in their learning. This is because targets are sometimes not realistic in view of the child's needs and records are not maintained regularly enough to ensure that the support is having the desired effect. In Year 6 the school's inability to secure a strong, competent teacher until recently has resulted in inconsistent application of the assertive discipline needed to manage these pupils. However, the present teacher has recently introduced initiatives such as 'privilege time', where pupils have to behave to earn a reward, and these are already having a positive effect.
30. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Permanent teachers know their pupils very well and are therefore clear about what they need to do to improve their attainment. Teachers use what they know and generally plan work that meets pupils' needs. However, initiatives such as the recently revised marking policy have not made the impact they could have due to the changes in teaching personnel. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored through regular assessments and these are beginning to be used to set realistic learning targets for all pupils. The use of baseline assessments, together with annual non-statutory tests is starting to give the school a much better idea of what pupils are achieving.
31. Records are kept on all pupils with special needs but these are not sufficiently detailed, nor regularly maintained and often have targets unrelated to their specific learning needs. The behaviour tracking plans are more effective and provide teachers and the special needs co-ordinator with useful information but too often the behaviour problems do not feature on the pupils individual education plan.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. Parents receive good quality, regular information about organisational matters and social activities. They are, however, not given enough information about what their children are going to learn in order to familiarise themselves with the school's curriculum. Annual reports are generally satisfactory but do have some weaknesses. They give a clear idea of children's strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also in ICT. Many of the reports are, however, very similar in content, far too impersonal in all other subjects and do not give a clear idea of how well children are achieving in relation to what might be expected for their ages. Parents feel that reports are accurate, that feedback is honest and fair and they are aware of their children's targets for improvement so that they can help to support them at home. The brochure and governors' annual report are informative but do not contain all of the required information. Both are, for example, missing full attendance statistics. The induction programme for children entering reception class and their parents is good. Home visits are offered so that teachers can get to know families in their own environment and take account of parents' knowledge about their own children.
33. Parents have been invited to literacy and numeracy meetings in order to increase their confidence in supporting their children's work at home and given information about how to help with reading. Despite variable attendance at meetings every effort is made to keep these lines of communication open and reading diaries continue to provide an effective link. Teacher consultations are held twice yearly and in addition there is an open evening during which parents can see the work their children have been doing. Annual reports are issued well in advance of the end of term so that parents can meet with teachers to discuss them if they wish. There is variable support for homework from parents but children are able to complete their tasks at the lunchtime club where a member of staff is on hand to assist them. A number of dedicated parents help regularly in school, listening to children read, helping with cookery, swimming or with classroom activities; their assistance is highly valued. Parents appreciate being invited to Friday afternoon assemblies, festival celebrations and the annual sports day and picnic. Weekly coffee and chat sessions, which provide a valuable forum for the headteacher and parents to exchange ideas, have been stopped recently to cope with staff shortages.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The school is well led and benefits from good management. Throughout the last two difficult years the headteacher, working closely with the governing body, has provided the school with a sense of direction and purpose. The commitment to improving standards is shared by the headteacher, governors and teachers and all are working hard to make sure that standards are raised and all pupils achieve as much as possible.
35. The school improvement plan is a well thought out document that identifies the right priorities needed to raise standards and includes most of the issues identified in this inspection report. Regular monitoring of teaching ensures that lessons are generally effective and there are ambitious targets for pupils' performance that, if met, would represent good improvement. New policies have been put in place, including performance management. Information about pupil performance is used extensively to set targets for groups and individual pupils. Subject managers understand the part they must play in raising and maintaining the standards in their subjects and are

increasingly involved in evaluating standards and quality across the school. The difficulties in recruiting sufficient and experienced teachers have dissipated the impact of many of the initiatives. For instance, the new marking policy is not as effective as it might be and the implementation of performance management is hampered because of the constant change in teaching personnel.

36. The frequent changes of teaching staff have had an impact on the work of senior, long serving members of staff. Much of their time has been taken up with introducing new members of staff to school routines and ensuring that the day-to-day running of the school is maintained. This has resulted occasionally in other responsibilities not being fulfilled as assiduously as they should be. This is the case with the records for pupils with special educational needs which have not been maintained in sufficient detail and are not helpful in tracking the progress of pupils against clear unambiguous learning targets.
37. The governing body is well organised and governors take their work very seriously. They are supportive of the school and are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil most of their key responsibilities although there are some statutory items missing from their annual report to parents. The financial procedures in the school are secure but the governors have been slow in responding to recommendations from the last auditor's report regarding, for instance, the need to make a clear statement about how they intend to follow the principles of best value. Accommodation and resources are adequate overall and in some subjects, such as English, mathematics and physical education, the resources are good and contribute to the success of many lessons. Music and art resources are not adequate to teach all aspects of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38. In order to continue the drive to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and to raise standards further, the headteacher, working closely with the senior management team and the governing body should:

Raise standards in ICT by:

- ensuring that all aspects of the subject are taught;
- making the most effective use of the recently acquired equipment.

Improve the management of SEN by:

- ensuring that all records are regularly maintained;
- ensuring that learning targets are carefully focused on pupils' specific learning needs including behavioural difficulties where appropriate.

Improve the provision for cultural development by:

- increase the opportunities for cultural development in subjects such as music and art.

MINOR IMPROVEMENTS

Make sure that all aspects of the geography curriculum are taught.

Give more opportunities for personal development with a view to increasing pupils' self-discipline.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	36	40	7	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	240
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	14	19
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	33	30	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (82)	83 (72)	97 (77)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	19
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	33	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (77)	86 (82)	100 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	17	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	10	14
	Girls	12	9	11
	Total	25	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (77)	56 (57)	74 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	12	10	11
	Total	26	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (51)	71 (49)	76 (46)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	201
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.7
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	459,061
Total expenditure	453,152
Expenditure per pupil	1,717
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,540
Balance carried forward to next year	29,449

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	240
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	31	60	6	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	34	51	6	6	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	14	46	14	9	17
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	60	14	3	0
The teaching is good.	51	43	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	34	17	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	29	9	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	34	51	6	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	26	51	20	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	37	37	20	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	49	6	3	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	46	14	6	17

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

39. When children enter school, baseline assessments show that their scores are generally average, except in speaking skills. By the time that move into Year 1, most children will have attained the **Early Learning Goals¹** in all areas, which shows that good progress has been made during their first year in school.
40. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas. Lessons are very well planned and lively which helps the children's concentration. Children are challenged and they are keen to learn and persevere with their tasks. The teacher and learning support staff know the children well and priority is given to promoting their confidence and helping them to progress in their learning. Classes are well organised and detailed records are kept, especially in literacy and numeracy. The teachers are knowledgeable about the needs of children of this age group and plan activities that meet the needs of the children. Children with special needs are well supported and make good progress.
41. The teacher who is responsible for the early years has only recently come to the school and has rewritten the medium-term planning to take account of the Early Learning Goals. She has a clear vision for how she would like to move the foundation stage forward. Reception pupils are accommodated in two classes, with the older reception children in a class with Year 1 children. These slightly older reception children still follow the same programme and also spend time during structured play and swimming activities with the whole reception group.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

42. The children are well used to the routines of the day in school. They know the rules for working and playing together and understand that they must take turns for example, when playing a board game or using the tricycles. Careful teaching helps children to understand what is expected of them in school. They learn how to work together co-operatively in small groups, for example, when putting together parts of a cut out paper plant. The teacher has high expectations of how children should behave in school and uses praise and gentle reminders to make sure that they behave well. They have a growing awareness of being independent and doing things for themselves, such as clearing up after themselves and wiping their hands after their fruit and milk each morning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

43. Children listen well to their teachers and to each other. The teacher encourages them to listen carefully to each other in lessons; they listened well to the story 'There's No Such Thing as a Dragon' and made sensible comments, such as 'they weren't paying much attention', about the characters. They talk to one another in the 'café' ordering meals and chatting to one another and thoroughly enjoying this rôle play although their skills are limited and below expectations for their age. Daily literacy lessons are planned in detail. The teachers explain to the children what they will learn during the lesson and group activities are well matched to the abilities of

¹ Early Learning Goals are the targets that the majority of children are expected to attain at the start of Year 1.

the children and therefore help them to make good progress in lessons. The majority of children can recognise initial and final sounds in words. The teacher made a lesson fun when she brought 'Sweep', a puppet who cannot sound the ends of his words; the children found great enjoyment helping him with the final sounds. Some children write sentences independently using the sounds that they know to build up words or by using a stock of words they recognise from the 'Humpty Wall' in the classroom. Looking at books, on a visit to the library, they can read simple texts and enjoy talking enthusiastically about the different books that they find. They turn the pages sensibly and know that the name for a book is 'title' and that an 'illustrator' is the person who draws the pictures. Children take words home to practise their reading and enjoy colouring in their 'wall-words' as they learn them. Handwriting is beginning to develop well and letter formation is good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

44. The numeracy strategy is used well, particularly to teach counting and calculation skills. Many incidental opportunities are also used to count, such as counting the number of petals on a flower on the computer screen. Children are encouraged to use mathematical language such as 'tessellating' when talking about shapes. Most children know the names of simple shapes, such as triangle, rectangle and circle. The teacher offers challenge to the children as they count forwards and backwards to and from 15. They use different coloured 'teddies' for counting; the colours help them to count accurately. Good use is made of practical activities that are well matched to the children's abilities and ensure that progress is made. Number skills are developed well and higher attaining children are confidently using numbers to 20 in simple sums.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

45. Children are making a sound start in learning about the world. They are helped to understand about the past when they look at a collection of toys from many years ago. When growing beans, children talk about their growth and know that the roots are under the soil. They know the names of different parts of a plant and confidently label the roots, petals, stem and leaves. When they are playing with sand, they know that wet and dry sand can be used for different things. All children use the computer although some need help from an adult when manipulating the mouse. Some children know how to print their work. They enjoy using the program about dressing teddy and can click with the mouse on the different clothing needed to dress him. Some children know how to drag with the mouse, when they are putting the different parts of a plant together to make a complete sunflower.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

46. Children are taught to use scissors and drawing tools carefully. They successfully use small construction equipment, learning to fix the pieces together firmly. Physical skills are developed well, especially outside, when playing with balls, or at the school's swimming pool. They develop skills in throwing, kicking and catching balls. They enjoy activities with the tricycles and scooters and are aware of safety and not bumping into other children as they become more confident. They are aware of space around them when sitting in a circle in the classroom or walking in a line, when they go to the school library or to the hall. Overall physical development is strong.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

47. All children make a good start in developing their creative skills. They enjoy singing and copying rhythms when their teacher claps a rhythm for them. Painting and drawing skills are taught systematically and children learn how to print when they make patterns on to a teddy bear shape. They draw teddy bears and some of them show the texture of the bear's fur in their drawings. They observe and draw daffodils and carefully colour them with paints and make three-dimensional models of houses for an attractive display of a street. During a structured play session, some children chose to make collage pictures with coloured paper. They used the glue sensibly and select the colours for their patterns with care.

ENGLISH

48. Following the last inspection, the subject went into a decline because of a lack of direction caused by staffing changes, but this is now improving. Pupils are achieving the standards that they should in year groups other than Year 6, where there have been significant difficulties in regard to staffing. Overall, pupils make generally good progress in their literacy lessons. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also appropriate taking into account their difficulties.
49. Some children enter the school with poor speaking and listening skills. Teachers focus on speaking clearly when reading texts, for instance, Year 2 pupils reading 'Bertha the Nurse' together know that it is important to emphasis the word 'awful' to make it more effective. Listening skills are developed effectively with the younger pupils and they listen attentively when the teacher reads the story of 'The Jolly Postman' and later enjoy rôle playing scenes from the story. These activities give the pupils good experiences to improve their speaking and listening skills and enable them to achieve average standards for their age. Older pupils in Year 6 gain more experience of speaking and listening, for example, in class discussions when they talk about why rules are needed in school and in society. Some pupils put their views clearly and others listen carefully to their points of view, however some pupils struggle to articulate their ideas clearly and are not confident speakers.
50. Pupils achieve well in reading and standards are broadly in line with national averages. Pupils make good progress in learning to read through group reading, which, since the last inspection, has been allocated more curriculum time. Resources are gradually being improved in classrooms following the removal of old, outdated reading books and new core reading material has been purchased. Reading at home is now well established for pupils aged five to seven. Most pupils read daily at home as part of their homework and they also read twice a week to an adult in school. Home reading has still to be developed for older pupils but they read a suitable range of books independently and most of them enjoy reading. They read a variety of texts and talk enthusiastically about what kind of books they like to read. Most pupils in Year 6 enjoy books about Harry Potter, books by Terry Pratchett and also classical stories such as 'Treasure Island'. However, some are less enthusiastic about reading and do not have well established reading habits. Throughout the school pupils enjoy using the recently improved school library. A computerised system of loans is in place so that the pupils can change their books each week to take home. Each class uses the library once each week and these sessions are much appreciated by the pupils and enhance their enjoyment of reading.

51. Standards in writing are broadly average by the age of seven. Pupils successfully begin to use their knowledge of sounds in their spellings and some higher attaining pupils are using simple punctuation correctly. Letters are well formed and are usually of a consistent size following the recent introduction of a new cursive style of handwriting. Teachers model this style on the board and this helps pupils to improve their handwriting. Pupils write for a range of purposes. For example, after reading a book called 'Meet the Whales', pupils in Year 1 enjoyed writing a contents page for a factfile about whales. Some pupils use a word processing program on the computer to write their contents page. Year 2 pupils enjoyed writing their own versions of the traditional tale of Jack and Jill instead of 'going up the hill' they go 'to the beach'. They have written book reviews about 'Where the Forest Meets the Sea', which again gave them the opportunity to write for a different purpose and so helps them, to understand that writing is used for different reasons.
52. Apart from pupils in Year 6, standards in writing for the older pupils are broadly in line with expectations. Most pupils are writing imaginatively, joining their handwriting and using correct punctuation and spellings in their writing. Pupils write in a range of styles and for different purposes. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote to the school's caretaker, asking him to find out how fish arrived in the school's swimming pool and showed that they understand that a different style of writing is needed for a formal letter. The teacher had chosen an amusing theme for the letter and this helped pupils to really persevere with their task. Pupils in Year 4 enjoyed writing newspaper reports about a fruit lorry that has shed its load and also playscripts for the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Year 5 pupils wrote leaflets about 'Sea World' giving the information needed for a visit there. Older pupils in Year 6 enjoy writing for a variety of purposes, such as a diary entry or letters to the headteacher persuading her that playtimes should be longer. However there are weaknesses in the way writing is structured and, for too many Year 6 pupils, common words are not consistently spelt accurately.
53. The quality of teaching is generally good across the school. Lessons are never less than satisfactory and sometimes very good. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that pupils have tasks that challenge them appropriately. Most teachers keep their lessons moving briskly with a variety of activities to ensure that pupils maintain high levels of interest. Teachers make clear what the pupils can expect to learn and this helps the pupils to be well involved in lessons. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher explained to the pupils at the beginning of the lesson that they were to learn how to write an advertisement and consider what features are needed for an advertisement to be effective. They understood that it should contain 'premier words', 'a slogan', 'alliteration' and that it should be persuasive. They use alliteration appropriately themselves; for example when designing an advertisement for a drink, they use such words in the slogan as 'fruity' and 'fizzy'.
54. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils behave well and are fully involved in their lessons. At the start of lessons, the majority of teachers remind pupils well what they have learned in the previous lesson and at the end there is a useful time of 'recap' over the main points. An issue from the previous inspection about pupils lack of opportunity to write poetry has been successfully addressed and there are examples in several year groups of some interesting and imaginative poems. During the inspection period, Year 6 pupils enjoyed writing about fairground rides and for example, writing about the 'Dodgems', used words such as 'they charge at each other like raging bulls.' Pupils in Year 5 had some imaginative ideas, after listening to a poem that the teacher read to them about the sea. They write

about various subjects; two pupils writing about a cat, describe it as 'a mouse catcher, a night creeper, an excellent prowler'.

55. Skilled teaching ensures that literacy is being used well in other subjects of the curriculum. In history, Year 2 pupils write descriptions of Tutankhamun's mask. In science, Year 3 pupils, write about materials and their properties. In religious education, Year 6 pupils write in the style of a newspaper article when describing the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.
56. The introduction of the literacy hour is having an impact on standards and pupils enjoy the variety of texts and topics provided by the scheme. Assessment in English is thorough. The results of tests are used for grouping pupils appropriately. Records of pupils' reading are kept throughout the school. Teachers' careful questioning helps them to find out what pupils have remembered and what they know, which further helps assessment. The good leadership provided by the recently appointed subject manager is beginning to improve the quality of the subject but impact is limited because of the short time that she has been in post. She has a clear vision for the improvement of the subject and knows what needs to be done.

MATHEMATICS

57. The standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in mathematics are below the national average and a significant proportion of pupils have not achieved as much as they should. This is largely due to the severe disruption to the way in which they have been taught in the last year. They have experienced too many teachers and have not had enough opportunity to make sustained progress. However, the standards in other year groups are improving with most pupils achieving the standards they should, although some higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they could in lessons. Overall, the standards attained by the majority of pupils are better than the results of National Curriculum tests would indicate.
58. Five to seven-year-olds make sound progress and are achieving broadly average standards. Teachers use the national framework for numeracy to plan lessons that make sure pupils build on what they have done earlier. By the time they are seven pupils are more confident about using numbers and have a growing understanding of how numbers work. They are familiar with simple patterns such as odd and even numbers and are working with numbers above 100. They also get better at using mental strategies such as doubling and halving to solve simple problems. Good teaching with the five and six-year-olds maintains their enthusiasm for mathematics. The teaching is brisk, well planned and involves all the pupils. All pupils, for instance, have to answer questions because the teachers give each a set of digit cards that they use to respond to the problem. This is helpful in enabling the teacher to assess who is making progress and who may be struggling. Occasionally the teaching of the seven-year-olds leads to some confusions although they generally continue to make satisfactory progress. Most pupils are working at average levels but very few higher attaining pupils are working at higher levels because the work they are given is sometimes not hard enough to challenge them.
59. Eight and nine-year-olds make satisfactory progress and successfully extend and widen the experiences they have had. Again some disruption to the teaching has not helped the eight-year-olds to make sustained progress but the nine-year-olds are moving on at a good pace due to more sustained and consistently good teaching. These pupils are using much higher numbers, often in excess of 1000, and have a

greater understanding of key ideas such as place value that enables them to make good progress. Good quality teaching gives pupils opportunities to explore numbers so that they understand what they are doing and can explain how they have worked things out. A major benefit of the consistent teaching is the teacher knowing what pupils can and cannot do and planning lessons that are well matched to their abilities.

60. Teaching of both the ten and eleven-year-olds has been disrupted during the year. The changes in teaching has resulted in some variation in the rate of progress. Difficulties in recruiting teachers and the extended absence of a key member of staff, who is also the teacher responsible for mathematics throughout the school, has resulted in inconsistent teaching. Until recently, the ten-year-olds were making satisfactory progress and achieving standards that are broadly in line with the expectations for their age group, but their progress has been hampered by the long term absence of their regular teacher. The eleven-year-olds have had several teachers in the last year and it is only in the last term that they have had consistent and sustained teaching. As a result some of the pupils have not achieved the standards they should have. Only the higher attaining pupils have well developed strategies for working things out mentally and are very secure in their understanding of how numbers work and recalling their tables rapidly. Too many pupils struggle to use fast calculating methods and are not fully confident about using the four operations accurately.
61. The school is beginning to make good use of the national framework for numeracy but is behind many schools in the full implementation of the strategy; this is again due to the staffing problems. Not all the temporary teachers have been trained in using the strategy and the subject has not had the benefit of sustained and consistent management. Where teachers are implementing the ideas within the strategy, it is starting to make a positive contribution to raising standards. Pupils' progress is starting to be monitored carefully through the use of regular tests that are informing the targets set for individual pupils.

SCIENCE

62. Whilst standards in science for eleven-year-olds are below the national average, there are indications in the achievements of other year groups that standards are beginning to improve and are close to the national average. Seven-year-olds achieve standards that are broadly average. There are particularly promising signs of much improved skills development in Years 3, 4 and 5.
63. Pupils generally enjoy the subject and attitudes towards learning are good. Pupils work well in groups and co-operate with each other sharing thoughts and ideas. They discuss the work they are doing and are enthusiastic about experiments and direct observation. When given the opportunity, they are keen to explain changes that they have noticed and begin to offer explanations, building on knowledge they have acquired previously. Written work is often recorded accurately and generally shows an interest in the subject.
64. Five to seven-year-olds begin to grasp the need for controlled circumstances when carrying out investigations into plant growth. In Year 4, good evidence of learning in science books show that many pupils are successfully introduced to investigative ideas about fair testing including, constants and variables. However, many pupils do not have enough opportunities to work scientifically because the investigations they

undertake are too directed by the teacher. Pupils do not learn to develop investigative skills and devise their own methods for data gathering and recording to the extent that they could.

65. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The organisation of the pupils and the methods used in lessons are generally meeting the needs of most pupils although in some lessons the work given to lower attaining pupils is too difficult and they struggle to finish what they are asked to do, this hinders their progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is occasionally too limited to allow appropriate challenges for the higher attaining pupils and this restricts opportunities for extending their scientific understanding and therefore hinders their progress. Resources are generally adequate and are well used. Pupils are able to measure with a variety of instruments including scales, thermometers and rulers.
66. The subject management action plan shows that science is to be the focus for development during the current term. The school has benefited from advice about the subject. For instance the more recent work done by pupils indicates that teachers' expectations are now much higher. Work from the five to seven-year-olds is becoming more broadly based. Work of seven to eleven-year-olds on sound, exercise, diet, solids, liquids and gases shows that the pupils are covering the different areas of the science curriculum but there is still too much repetition in some aspects. Marking and assessment are beginning to identify strengths and weaknesses both in pupils' work and in curriculum coverage and is helping pupils to understand how to improve their work.
67. Curriculum planning makes appropriate use of the National Curriculum guidance but it is not clear how pupils learning will be built upon as they move through the school, and there is some repetition of work. The focus for some of the work is too broad as was noted in the previous inspection report. As a result of this, pupils investigate rolling toy cars in Years 2, 4 and 6 and the work on plants needing light and water appears throughout the school but does not get progressively more difficult or demanding. Electrical circuit work with eleven-year-olds shows very little difference from the simple circuits in studied by younger pupils.
68. Coverage of the programme of study is more secure in Years 4 and 5 where the work in pupils' books indicates good teaching and learning. Standards of work in the Year 6 books show a decline in attitudes and learning with very little evidence of science teaching during the spring term.

ART

69. Standards for seven and eleven-year-olds in some aspects of art are good and the children work with enjoyment and interest. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and so no overall judgement of the quality of teaching can be made. Several displays of artwork around the school and in classrooms show that the pupils have well-developed skills in observational drawing and colour mixing. In particular some wonderful pencil drawings of a teddy bear by foundation stage pupils and carefully observed portraits in pastels by Year 6 pupils demonstrated observational skill. Watercolour paintings of plants by younger pupils are detailed and delicately executed. However, the range of artistic experience seen around the school and in the pupils' sketchbooks is too limited to demonstrate attainment in the full range of experiences required by the National Curriculum.

70. Pupils rarely use pictures or any other works by famous artists as a starting point for their own work. Few examples of cross-curricular links were seen in children's books or the displays in the school and this restricts pupils' understanding of the contribution of art to other subjects.
71. During an art lesson on signboards and typeface for display, pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to evaluate the impact of various fonts on the mood and impression created by an advertisement. In discussing each other's designs they demonstrated a mature approach to critical evaluation mindful of other pupils' efforts and feelings. Their own work on designing typeface was carefully accomplished and met the high expectations set by the teacher.
72. The quality of artwork seen in the displays and the children's sketchbooks is of a good standard but too limited in its use of media. Most of the work used pencil, charcoal, pastel or 'watercolour' paint. A very small amount of printing was seen but there was no evidence of experimentation and innovation. Mixed media work, three-dimensional work and textiles are under-represented. There is very little evidence of work on a large scale and most of the artwork uses a very restricted range of papers on which the pupils draw and paint.
73. There is a temporary subject co-ordinator and a comprehensive plan exists for improvements in the subject. The current scheme of work is too broad to help teachers to plan for progression in skills and ensure that the children meet a wide variety of techniques and media. More time needs to be planned for studying the work of other artists and other cultures to allow pupils to develop a wider understanding of art and its place in cultural tradition. There not enough opportunities for extending pupils' contact with the world's artistic heritage and with practising artists and the subject does not contribute as much as it could to pupils' cultural development. The range of work has declined since the last inspection although the quality of pupils' work in the areas of art still covered are being maintained.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. Only one lesson was observed and there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Evidence from talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that standards are in line with expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
75. Progress is evident through the school. By the age of seven pupils have experience of working with a variety of materials and tools. They make wheeled vehicles and know that they need to plan their model first. They draw their plans carefully, labelling the body, wheel, axis and chassis and consider how they will make these parts so that the wheels will move the vehicle easily. Using the Bible story, pupils in Year 2 designed and made a 'coat of many colours' for Joseph. They designed the coat and planned how they would make it, trying it first in paper and evaluating what they have done, before using material. Older pupils in Year 4 designed a container for money and consider how they make a strong join so that the money will not fall out. They thought of different ways to decorate the purse in an attractive way. Year 5 pupils enjoyed making bread and have considered all the different types of bread and the ingredients needed before they made bread themselves.

76. At the time of the inspection, Year 6 pupils were at an early stage of designing models of fairground rides. There were indications that this would be a successful topic. They began sensibly by considering how things can be made to rotate and look at horizontal and vertical rotation in models made from construction kits. They then began planning what they would make and thought carefully about what materials will be needed. In a later lesson, they began making the first models and then evaluated their designs. They discovered that improvements were needed to the design of a 'spinner' for an elastic band attached to a motor to successfully rotate their model. Another group makes a model of a 'chair ride' and discovers, when making the first model from the plan, that something stronger than an artstraw is needed to rotate the chairs at high speed.

GEOGRAPHY

77. The standards achieved by seven-year-olds are broadly in line with the national expectation. As geography is taught only in the second half of the summer term in Year 6 and the work seen in the Year 5 exercise books was very limited, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the standards attained by eleven-year-olds. However, there are indications that geography is not taught systematically to seven to eleven-year-olds. Some work is repetitive and pupils have too limited opportunities to work at higher levels. The range of geography is currently very limited with few opportunities for demonstrating attainment at the higher levels. There is very little evidence of work at different scales and map work is very restricted. Overall the current curriculum barely meets the required range of study.
78. Seven-year-olds draw simple maps and plans and enjoy this aspect of geography. Knowledge of different places in the world is successfully built up through, for instance, the travels of 'Barnaby Bear', but there is insufficient attention given to the specific geographical characteristics of the location. Year 1 pupils are able to talk about weather and temperature charts; they find information from travel brochures and show some understanding of aspects of the tourist industry. They are aware of the impact of man's disregard for the environment and can discuss local environmental issues. In a good example of cross-curricular work in Year 1 the pupils were using a literacy based lesson on the 'Jolly Postman' to follow a plan of the postman's route.
79. Some good work was seen in Year 3, although this was heavily reliant on travel brochures. A good wall display assists the pupils' identification of countries, continents and oceans and the children talked sensibly about the enlarged world map, accurately locating India, South America and Australia and describing some geographical features of the environment. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are given some good opportunities for orienteering, mapwork and environmental geography in the residential visits to Marchants Hill and Stubbington study centre.
80. The subject improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities and actions and there is an allocation for further improvement in resources linked to modules of study. Staffing changes have meant that geography has not received the detailed revision that is needed to ensure that the range of geographical work undertaken by the pupils builds on previous experiences rather than replicating them.

HISTORY

81. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching of history but standards attained by seven-year-olds are in line with the expectations for their age group. The standards achieved by current eleven-year-olds are lower than those usually achieved but the standards of the eight to ten-year-olds are broadly in line with expectations.
82. Younger pupils have a good level of knowledge about some famous past events, such as the Gun Powder Plot. Teachers use stories to extend children's literacy skills through, for instance, sequencing the key events of the plot. Pupils also gain a sense of history from comparing how common everyday occurrences, such as washing clothes, have changed since the Victorian era. This sense of chronology is extended by pupils placing different models of cars on a time line. Using their own lives, they begin to compare aspects of childhood and focus on how some of the more unfortunate children were made to work in factories and mines in Victorian Britain. Children are also starting to successfully get to grips with the idea of using historical evidence. They have used the diaries of Samuel Pepys to learn about the Great Fire of London and have tried to write their own diaries detailing the raising of the alarm and the rapid spread of the fire.
83. Older pupils are building on the early experience of using historical evidence. Ten-year-olds have studied the Aztec civilisation and use the evidence of historical artefacts such as jewellery to make sensible deductions about what life was like. For instance, they have concluded that the Aztecs were clearly bothered about their appearance because of the intricacies of their jewellery and the practice of ear piercing. They have studied the transport systems and begun to appreciate how highly organised the society was. Some work, especially the study of the Aztecs gods, is well illustrated. Eight and nine-year-olds are learning about historical causes and effects by looking at the reasons for the Roman invasion of England. Some of this work is also well written and contributing to the development of their literacy skills. Pupils are also using research skills to discover the story of Boudicea and some of the gender issues about Roman education being almost exclusively for boys.
84. The new subject co-ordinator has a clear idea of how the subject should be developed in the next year. The school currently uses the national guidance for history but is aware that the scheme needs some refining to give more detail to teachers about exactly what they need to teach.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

85. The standards attained by seven-year-olds are broadly in line with expectations but eleven-year-olds attain well below the expected levels for pupils of their age. Until very recently, the school has not been sufficiently equipped to teach all the requirements of the subject and the oldest pupils have not had enough opportunity to work in a sustained manner with computers. Too limited opportunities to see lessons means that no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching.
86. Seven-year-olds are confident and enthusiastic about working with computers. They understand how to use simple word processing programs, for instance entering text and editing it using the space bar and the backspace. Pupils have some experience of working with simple control technology although they have not had the opportunity to use control programs on the computer. The very youngest children are

comfortable using simple art programs to create pictures and, with help, can print them.

87. The older pupils are confident in using computers for word processing; they type in their stories and combine text and pictures to illustrate them. They are familiar with entering data onto computers and creating graphs. They also have some experience of using simple computers to control movement by entering a range of instructions. They have not used computers to monitor aspects of the environment and only recently have begun to use the Internet. This is proving to be successful with some good use of the Internet to support learning. For instance, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson the pupils had a problem to solve that required them finding information from a web site.
88. There is a new subject co-ordinator who is an experienced ICT teacher. The manager has a good view of how the weaknesses in the subject will be addressed and how standards can be raised. All teachers will be given training to make sure they can teach all aspects of the curriculum and ensure that all pupils gain the maximum benefit from the new equipment.

MUSIC

89. Some aspects of music are well taught and the majority of pupils are reaching the required standard in singing. Instrumental playing and listening and appreciating skills are not given sufficient time or resources for seven or eleven-year-olds pupils to reach the national expectations and do not make a sufficient contribution to pupils' cultural development.
90. Five to seven-year-olds understand rhythm and pulse and they follow and maintain a steady beat. They are beginning to overlay a rhythm onto a beat and perform actions in time to music. They sing with enjoyment and keep together when singing in unison.
91. Older pupils also sing very well together and understand terms such as unison and ostinato. They devise their own short songs and improvise with some confidence. Year 3 pupils very much enjoy action songs and are able to maintain complex movements while remembering words and matching the actions. In Year 4 pupils demonstrated that they had acquired the ability to keep pulse and rhythm going along together. In Year 6 pupils were able to respond to poetry by using their voices to create moods and emotions, but were less successful when adding pitched and percussion instruments to the composition.
92. There are few opportunities for pupils to use pitched instruments and the variety and range of both pitched and percussion instruments is too limited to cover the range of experiences in composing and performing music required by the National Curriculum. There is also a limited range of recorded music and opportunities for listening to and appreciating music are too few to allow proper development of this part of the curriculum. Pupils are introduced to some recorded music in assembly, but there is little contact with live performance by musicians.
93. The teaching is satisfactory or better and non-specialist teachers give the pupils good encouragement, but the lack of focus in the curriculum plan and the inadequacy of resources is narrowing pupils' experiences and hindering their progress.

94. The curriculum leader is a non-specialist but can play some instruments and support is given to other members of staff. There is an appropriate curriculum development plan for the improvement of music in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

95. During the inspection only three lessons were seen in swimming and gymnastics. Analysis of planning and discussion with staff indicate that the school is providing an appropriate range of activities in this subject.
96. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are achieving the standards expected for their ages. These findings are similar to the last inspection. In lessons, pupils perform safely either working on their own or in a group. Evaluative skills are being developed; for example, in swimming lessons, a 'buddy system' is a good way of involving those who are waiting for their turn to swim. 'Buddies' watch a partner and evaluate their swimming and at the same time, make sure that their partner is aware of safety.
97. As only three lessons were observed during the inspection period, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. In the lessons seen, planning was good and lessons well organised so that pupils made good progress. Safety procedures are well explained. Clear learning objectives for lessons are fully explained to the pupils so that they can focus on what they are learning to do. For example, in a swimming lesson when the learning objective was to improve their arm movements in front crawl, the teacher gave a good demonstration of how this should be done and gave the pupils a clear focus. Pupils made good progress in lessons because activities are planned for different levels of ability. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and they have positive attitudes and put a lot of enthusiastic physical effort into their work. They listen to instructions and respond appropriately. They are interested and maintain good levels of concentration. They co-operate readily, for example, younger pupils in Year 2 handled apparatus sensibly and worked well together.
98. The school hall is used for gymnastics, indoor games and dance. The school has its own swimming pool and this means that all pupils can benefit from regular swimming lessons. A range of extra-curricular activities supports the PE programme, which includes aerobics and swimming clubs during the school year. During the inspection, a visit from the 'Brazilian Schools Soccer Programme' gave older pupils in Year 6 the opportunity to practise various skills needed for football.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. Very few lessons were observed and there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Evidence obtained from talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that standards of work throughout the school match the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
100. Pupils in Year 2 talked enthusiastically about their recent visit to the local church and the photographs taken by their teacher during the visit. These help them to remember the names of the different church furniture, such as font and altar and they know the significance of the font at a christening. They know that a church is a special place for Christians and that it is where they go to pray and worship God. In a lesson where younger pupils were learning about the Jewish faith, they enjoyed talking about how 'Shabbat' is spent by Jewish families. Their teacher helped them to understand this by asking them about their own weekends and how they spend their leisure time. They learned about the 'Shabbat meal' and how important it is to Jewish families. Their teacher brought a 'Havdalah candle' for them to see and they

were excited to see the lighting of the brightly coloured, plaited candle. This experience helps to make the lesson more interesting and so helps pupils' learning.

101. Progress is evident through the school. Pupils in Year 3 learn about symbols and their importance in different religions. Pupils in Year 4 write about their vision of Jesus; one pupil wrote that she thinks that 'he always had a smile'. They write a statement by a witness, such as one of the disciples and think about the way that Jesus described himself, as 'a light' or 'a shepherd' by looking at appropriate Bible verses. Older pupils learn about other major world faiths and research for themselves what Moslems believe. They found out about the five pillars of Islam and describe the journey of a pilgrim. Year 6 pupils write in the style of a newspaper article, when describing the birth of Jesus using the headline 'Sensational Son of God is born!'
102. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and she is keeping examples of work from all year groups in order to keep a record of what has been covered in lessons.