

INSPECTION REPORT

DAYS LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sidcup, Kent

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101428

Headteacher: Mr Noel Lake

Reporting inspector: Mr John Messer
OIN: 15477

Dates of inspection: 14 – 17 January 2002

Inspection number: 194198

Full 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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Days Lane
Sidcup
Kent

Postcode: DA15 8JU

Telephone number: 0208 200 1697

Fax number: 0208 300 2544

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Robin Kelly

Date of previous inspection: 6 May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>a) The school's results and achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
14214	Gill Smith	Lay Inspector		<p>b) How high are standards?</p> <p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p>
9465	Elizabeth Cooke	Lay inspector		<p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
15334	Julie Hooper	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Foundation Stage</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>
27240	Tony Hooper	Team inspector	<p>Design and technology</p> <p>Music</p> <p>English as an additional language</p>	
29695	Gillian Lance	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Religious education</p> <p>Special educational needs</p>	
25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	<p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>Physical education</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>	

20877	David Pink	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community primary school has 607 pupils on roll and is much bigger than most other primary schools. Fifty-two children attend the nursery on a part-time basis, either in morning or afternoon sessions. There are almost equal numbers of boys and girls. Around three per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below average. Twenty one per cent of pupils are entered on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below average. Most pupils are from white English speaking backgrounds. Just under six per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and four per cent of these speak English as an additional language, though all have a good command of English. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. Due to the high costs of living locally, the school is finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain teachers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. As a result, pupils attain standards which are above average in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching is good, although it is less effective for the most able pupils, who could achieve more. The good leadership and management of the school have ensured that pupils achieve standards that are at least sound in all areas of the curriculum. The school receives less funding than most schools, spends it wisely and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average.
- Teaching is mostly good and often it is very good.
- The nursery gives children a very good start to their schooling.
- Pupils are keen to learn, eager to please and have very good attitudes to school.
- Teachers develop very good relationships with pupils and this promotes a productive learning environment.
- Parents hold the school in high esteem and give good support.
- The school uses the limited resources available to provide a good quality of education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

What could be improved

- The consistency of teaching across the school and especially expectations of what the most able pupils are capable of achieving, which are not always high enough.
- The amount of time spent teaching the National Curriculum in Years 3 to 6.
- The further development of research skills and chances for pupils to use their initiative and become independent learners.
- The consistency with which homework is set; there is no common understanding of requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in May 1996 there have been significant improvements. The quality of teaching has improved; there is now a much greater proportion of very good teaching and a much lower proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers still do not always expect enough of pupils, especially of the brightest. Standards in English and mathematics have improved. The school has rightly concentrated on improving standards in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, although this has led to less attention being paid to several of the other subjects. This is partly the reason why standards in history, geography, and physical education are not as high as they were in 1996, though standards are still satisfactory. Provision for the youngest children has improved with the addition of a nursery. The school has addressed all the key issues raised in the last report. Good planning procedures have been developed and these are used well by teachers. Curricular plans are monitored closely to establish what is actually taught. Pupils' progress and attainment are now carefully evaluated and monitored. The

amount of teaching time has been increased but still falls well short of the recommended minimum in Years 3 to 6 and this restricts pupils' achievement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	B	B	C
mathematics	C	B	B	C
science	C	A	B	C

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

Children receive a very good grounding to their education in the nursery and reception classes where they achieve well. Nearly all are well on course to attain the Early Learning Goals, specified in national guidance, and most are likely to surpass this standard by the end of the reception year. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils' performance in the national tests in 2001 was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement continues satisfactorily from Year 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils attain standards in English and mathematics that are above average. In all the other subjects standards are at least average. There are strengths in religious education and art where standards are higher than those usually found. Many examples of good art work are displayed around the school. The trend in the school's performance in national tests is broadly in line with the improvements found nationally. The school set reasonable targets for the performance of pupils in Year 6 in the national tests in English and mathematics; just exceeding them in English, and narrowly missing them in mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to work; they enjoy attending school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' very good behaviour supports the achievement of a productive and orderly learning environment.
Personal development and relationships	Very good, friendly relationships are developed between pupils and adults. Pupils work and play happily together.
Attendance	Good. Pupils attend regularly and are punctual in arriving at school.

Pupils are courteous and sensitive to the feelings of others. There are too few opportunities for them to use their initiative and to learn independently. The establishment of a School Council is a good initiative that promotes citizenship well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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	Reception		
Quality of teaching	good	good	good

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

Overall teaching is good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. A particular strength of the teaching is the very good relationships that are promoted between teachers and pupils because this helps pupils to learn effectively in a supportive and friendly environment. Teachers' planning is good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is mostly good in lessons and generally very good when pupils receive specialist help. The learning needs of the highest-attaining pupils are not always met because teachers' expectations of their performance are not always high enough. Homework is not set consistently or with a commonly held understanding of how it can support learning. Pupils are willing to please and are eager to develop skills, knowledge and understanding but they are not often encouraged to develop independent learning skills or to use their initiative. There is no teaching and learning policy that sets out the criteria for high quality teaching. This contributes to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes and year groups. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress. There are no significant variations in achievement between boys and girls.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for pupils in the nursery and reception classes (the Foundation Stage) is good. A satisfactory balance and range are achieved in the rest of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision helps these pupils to learn effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All pupils with English as an additional language have well developed English speaking skills and they perform as well as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good and for moral development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Sensible procedures ensure the health and safety of pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are sound.

The school has forged good links with parents, who support their children's learning well. A Parents' Association has been established since the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives effective leadership and has a clear vision for future improvements. Key staff give good support.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body offers sound support. Although it has ensured that all legal obligations are met, it has not followed the guidance on recommended teaching time for Years 3 to 6.
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The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance carefully and takes appropriate action as a result.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to support teaching and learning.

Levels of staffing and resources are mostly sufficient to support teaching and learning but the reference library is underdeveloped. Accommodation is adequate but four classes occupy temporary buildings that are less than ideal. The roles of senior managers and subject managers have developed but their job descriptions do not focus sufficiently on raising standards. All spending decisions are considered carefully to ensure that the principles of best value are maintained.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards achieved by their children. • Pupils' behaviour and attitudes. • The way the school is led and managed. • Pupils are helped to become mature, responsible individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for the brightest pupils to make sure that they reach their full potential. • The consistency and quantity of homework. • Information about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team broadly agrees with the positive views of parents. Inspection findings show that the brightest pupils are not always being sufficiently stretched. However, information provided for parents is judged to be good and the range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory and is similar to that offered in most primary schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. Achievement is good in the nursery and reception classes and most pupils are well on course to attain the Early Learning Goals specified in national guidance by the end of the reception year; many children are likely to surpass this standard. As a result of the mostly good teaching in Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is always at least sound. Achievement in English and mathematics is good. By the end of Year 2, most attain standards that are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing; they are well above average in mathematics. Pupils continue to achieve at least satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in English and mathematics that are above average. In all other subjects standards are at least at expected levels. Across the school standards in art and design and in religious education are higher than usual. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are set appropriate targets and make good progress towards meeting them. They achieve well and attain standards that are good in relation to their prior attainment. In most classes pupils with special educational needs are given good support in literacy and numeracy to enable them to achieve success. In several classes there is insufficient support for the highest-attaining pupils, who are not always sufficiently extended.
2. The National Curriculum tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2001 reflect inspection findings; standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average when compared with all schools. When compared with schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds, the school's performance was well above average in writing and above average in reading and mathematics. An analysis of test results over the past three years reveals no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection findings confirm that there are currently no significant gender differences in attainment in any subject.
3. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learned to speak with confidence and most express themselves well. In their reading they have learned to 'put a bit of power' into their expression if the text is written in bold. Most pupils read for pleasure and many have a good knowledge of children's literature. They have an increasingly wide range of favourite books. Most are good at spelling accurately, though many are still at the stage of spelling many words phonetically. They take a pride in their joined up writing and nearly all write legibly. They have a sound command of number and can recall simple number facts rapidly. They calculate with increasing confidence and enjoy mathematics, especially solving simple problems. In science they have a good understanding of life and living processes and a sound understanding of the other strands of the subject. They can accurately name different parts of the body and know that their pulse beat is faster when running in the playground because their hearts are pumping their blood more rapidly around their bodies. They have a particularly good understanding of the functions of the five senses.
4. Pupils' achievement is sound in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, their understanding of English and mathematics is well developed. The National Curriculum tests and assessments for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 reflect these inspection findings; standards in English and mathematics were above average when compared with all schools, although, when compared with schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds, the school's performance was average. The school's performance in the tests in science was above average but inspection findings indicate that the present group of pupils in Year 6 are working at an average level. An analysis of test results over the past three years reveals no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection findings confirm that there are currently no significant gender differences in attainment in any subject. Generally, standards attained by the end of Year 6 in key skills are now better than at the time of the last inspection.

5. By the end of Year 6, many pupils read widely but few are able to use the library well when researching for information. They read a wide range of texts with good expression and understanding. They talk enthusiastically about the books they have read. The speaking and listening skills of most are average but a significant minority are particularly articulate and confident. They write well and understand how to choose words carefully to achieve the best effect. By the end of Year 6, pupils write effectively in many different forms, including letters, poems, instructions and carefully planned stories. Across the school, there is strong emphasis on developing skills in literacy and numeracy and pupils develop good basic skills in these areas. Achievement in science is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6, most pupils attain average standards. They approach scientific investigations eagerly and offer sensible explanations for their findings. They understand how to conduct a fair test by controlling all variables. They do not have enough chances, however, to plan and organise their own experiments and this holds back the progress of the most able pupils.
6. Pupils' attainment in history, geography and physical education is at expected levels but this is not as high as it was at the time of the last inspection, when standards were judged to be above average. This is because the school has been concentrating on developing the key skills of reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology are at expected levels but the school is poised to make further advances. New equipment has just arrived and teachers have received extensive training to enable them to teach effectively.
7. Throughout the school, provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. This enables them to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is a similar finding to that at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are set appropriate targets and make good progress towards meeting them. Class teachers, the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and learning support assistants all work closely to ensure that the pupils are provided with work that is appropriate.
8. Only small numbers of pupils have English as an additional language and none of them is now at an early stage of language acquisition. There are no significant differences between the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language and all the other pupils.
9. Standards in literacy and numeracy have improved significantly since the last inspection. The standards that pupils attain are reflected in the priority given to the teaching of key skills. As pupils' achievement is higher than usual when they start school, the value added by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is good overall, but there are inconsistencies and this prevents standards from being even higher. The achievement of the highest attaining pupils is somewhat restricted by the lack of consistently high expectations of their performance. The time allocated to teaching the National Curriculum in Key Stage 2 is well below the recommended minimum and this further inhibits achievement. However, standards have improved in key areas and the school is in a good position to make further improvements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The last inspection found that pupils had extremely positive attitudes to school and that the majority were polite and very well behaved. Over the intervening five years, this very positive picture has been maintained. The overwhelming majority of the pupils are keen to play a full and active part in the day-to-day life of the school and approach their work with a genuine commitment and desire to learn.
11. Almost every parent who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their child enjoys coming to school and that they feel that the overall standard of behaviour is high. This confidence is well placed. During lessons, the majority of pupils of all ages settle down quickly and persevere with work they find difficult. They do their very best and listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. This reflects the good teaching. Pupils find lessons interesting and learning is fun. Pupils' zest for learning and the very purposeful atmosphere in classrooms help

pupils to make good progress. For example, during a lesson when Year 1 pupils were learning to put numbers up to 20 in ascending order, pupils of all abilities were completely engrossed in their work and thoroughly enjoyed catching their teacher out when she deliberately made a 'mistake'. Teachers are firm in their expectations of behaviour and work and address the pupils with respect and consideration. Pupils understand exactly what it is that they are supposed to be doing and why. Pupils respond warmly to teachers and other adults. Relationships are very good and the school has a strong sense of community. The rapport between teachers and their pupils fosters pupils' maturity and self-confidence. Although pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually very good, occasionally, their response is less positive. For example, there are isolated occasions, if the introduction to a lesson is too long, or if pupils are unsure as to why they are doing something, when a minority tend to become fidgety and inattentive.

12. Pupils behave very well during the school day. They are friendly and out-going and get along well with members of staff and with each other. Pupils of all ages mix freely and they are well mannered and polite. The behaviour of pupils during lunchtime and playtimes is good and, although the playgrounds are very crowded, pupils consider each other and there is a pleasant atmosphere. Although there are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, the school has a very successful policy of social and educational inclusion. Pupils of all ethnic groups get along well together and play a full part in the day-to-day life of the school. Bullying, racism or other anti-social behaviour are very rare and any such incidents are dealt with firmly and very effectively. There have been no exclusions during the last school year.
13. Pupils respond very positively to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal development is very good. As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly mature and perceptive. For example, during a lesson when Year 2 pupils were asked to consider friendship, they made realistic suggestions as to why friends fall out with each other. The level of participation in the various extra-curricular sporting activities is very good and helps pupils to develop the team-working skills. Outdoor activities, such as river walks, bridge building and orienteering, encourage them to use their initiative and to become increasingly independent. Pupils of all ages willingly undertake a wide range of responsibilities, such as acting as class monitors and helping to tidy away equipment. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy taking part in the School Council and Year 6 pupils can also become prefects.
14. Overall attendance is just above the national average and the level of absence for reasons that are not genuine is exceptionally low. Pupils arrive in good time for the start of the school day and lessons get off to a prompt start. Most of the unauthorised absences are the result of pupils being taken on term time holiday for more than the permitted limit. These absences inevitably mean that pupils miss work and this could place them at a disadvantage in the future.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Overall teaching is good; it is very good, and occasionally excellent, in nearly a third of lessons. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson because most pupils learned too little. The teaching of English is good. The teaching of mathematics is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. This difference reflects the progress that pupils make. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and have improved the teaching of basic skills. Teaching in science and all other subjects is at least satisfactory. Art and design and information and communication technology are taught well. Teaching is good in music and in religious education in Years 3 to 6. There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching in religious education in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology in Years 3 to 6. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Overall, the good quality of teaching across the school results in effective learning for most pupils. The quality of teaching is not always consistent between classes and this sometimes leads to inconsistencies in the quality of learning. Expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving, especially those who are particularly able, are not always high enough and this restricts the rate of their learning. The quality of teaching is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection.

16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mostly good in lessons and generally very good when pupils receive specialist help when withdrawn from the classroom. These pupils learn effectively and achieve particularly well when they receive direct adult support. If they are in the classroom, without direct adult help, their achievement depends on how effectively tasks have been modified to meet their specific needs. This varies, but is good overall. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language who need extra assistance with their learning receive this in regular lessons. The support is effectively targeted and appropriate help given with vocabulary needed for specific lessons.
17. Teachers' lesson planning is good. Good long-term planning frameworks form the basis of the daily lesson plans. Clear learning objectives are described in the daily plans and these are usually shared with the pupils. Basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well and help to promote sound achievement across the curriculum. Not enough time is given to teaching research skills, however, and this impedes pupils' progress in this area. Most classrooms are organised well and an appropriate variety of teaching methods is used. Following an introduction by the teacher, pupils often work individually or in groups, often helped effectively by classroom assistants. Pupils are gathered together at the end of the lesson to review their learning. This helps teachers to determine whether pupils have actually learned what was intended and to identify any gaps in learning. This helps to inform planning for subsequent lessons.
18. In most classes teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. These high expectations promote an orderly, productive learning environment. In the nursery and, to a lesser extent, in the reception classes, a strong feature of teaching is the good initiatives used to help children to become independent and make decisions for themselves. Children choose, for example, when they will stop work to have a drink and a biscuit. The promotion of such independence is not as apparent in Years 1 to 6 where lessons are often over-directed by the teacher. As a result, opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and develop independent learning skills are too infrequent. Lessons do not always start promptly, especially when pupils have to move into different classes when taught in ability sets. Time in lessons is generally used well, though some lessons are too long and pupils' concentration lapses as a result. The best lessons contain variety and proceed at a brisk pace. Homework is set but there are inconsistencies in the amount and regularity. In one Year 3 class pupils groaned when homework was announced but cheered when they heard that it was homework in mathematics. In another lower mathematics set for pupils in Year 5, pupils were dismayed when the end of the lesson was announced because they were enjoying their learning so much. Teachers promote very good attitudes to learning. Pupils have particularly positive attitudes to mathematics.
19. Pupils are managed well and relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. They feel sufficiently confident to ask questions and ask for advice on their work. Classroom assistants share planning and have a good understanding of how lessons should proceed. They take groups of pupils for extra help with their learning, especially in literacy work, and support them well. Teachers assess pupils' understanding well by marking work regularly, discussing work with pupils and by asking questions to determine their levels of understanding. These assessments help them to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
20. Basic literacy skills are taught well. A very good handwriting lesson for pupils in Year 2 was highly effective because skills were taught clearly and precisely. Writing was taught exceptionally well in a Year 1 class. The teacher used excellent questioning strategies that challenged pupils' thinking. They were asked to compare two versions of Cinderella. The teacher skilfully intertwined the teaching of spelling, punctuation, grammar and the structure of the story. Pupils enjoyed using technical terms and knew, for example, that a series of dots at the end of a sentence is known as ellipsis. The teacher showed great courtesy towards the pupils. A good balance of praise and challenge, coupled with warm relationships, led to very effective learning.
21. The teaching of mathematics in a class for pupils in Year 3 bore many of the hallmarks of good teaching. The classroom was orderly with neat labelling and clear notices. Routines, such as

writing the learning objectives for each lesson on a white board and sharing them with the pupils, had been firmly established. The teacher's planning was precise, was based on a good assessment of what pupils already knew, and indicated how work would be modified to match the learning needs of each group in the class. A short session of 'mental gymnastics' enlivened the class. Group work was planned meticulously to match pupils' abilities. Skills were taught systematically. The teacher gained the pupils' attention by clapping a short rhythm and the children clapped a reply. The pace of the lesson was brisk. Pupils were allowed plenty of time to sort out their ideas and express their opinions during the review at the end of lesson. Resources are sometimes used very imaginatively to advance pupils' learning, as in a Year 5 lesson where a range of cartons illustrated factor patterns exceptionally well. In many lessons humour is used well to create a comfortable learning atmosphere.

22. In the main, resources are used well to support teaching and learning. The school is still developing the use of information and communication technology to promote learning in different subjects. Pupils are enthusiastic and most learn quickly. The pace of learning is improved where teachers set timed targets for the completion of a task. Pupils have a good understanding of how their learning is progressing. A pupil in Year 3 confirmed that he was a good reader and could probably read any book presented to him. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Homework is effective in supporting learning but it is not always set regularly and there are inconsistencies between classes. There is no clear homework policy to guide teachers.

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

23. The school has made considerable improvement since the last inspection when shortcomings were identified in the range and quality of its curriculum, the quality of policies and the thoroughness of planning schemes in some subjects. Planning was insufficiently detailed and there was a lack of monitoring of curriculum plans and little recording of what was taught. These issues have been addressed and the planned curriculum is now suitably broad and balanced. However, although the school has increased the teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection, it still does not meet the recommended minimum teaching time.
24. The curriculum planning for children at the Foundation Stage is good and enhanced by a very good range of well-planned activities, especially in the nursery class. Planning has been revised to bring it fully in line with the new government recommendations. The teachers plan together closely to ensure there is no unnecessary repetition of work and to ensure that children's developing skills are built on systematically as they move through the Foundation Stage. Teachers also work closely with teachers at the next stage of the children's education to continue to develop the current good practice. This provides the children with a firm foundation for, and smooth transition to, their next stage of work of the National Curriculum.
25. Curricular planning for Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Most subjects have been reviewed in the light of the new National Curriculum regulations introduced in 2000. There is a 'curricular map' in place for Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 that guides the direction of pupils' learning. Learning programmes in most subjects are supported by nationally recommended planning frameworks. These help to ensure that the curriculum meets statutory requirements and pupils' skills are built on systematically as they move through the school. English and mathematics are given appropriate priority and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented well in daily lessons. The programme of religious education is consistent with the locally agreed syllabus. Personal, social and health education is provided satisfactorily. Pupils receive sex education and are made aware of the dangers of drugs. Effective links are made between subjects, such as between mathematics and music where pupils beat out increasing, complex cycles of repeating patterns.

26. The school has responded quickly and thoroughly to the new code of practice that provides guidance on provision for pupils with special educational needs. All key members of staff, including the governor responsible for special educational needs, have received relevant training. Teachers have been given clear guidance on the new procedures to be followed. The special educational needs policy works effectively but is under review in an effort to improve still further the good provision made. The school has clear systems in place so that all pupils needing help are identified and given the help they need to be fully included in all aspects of school life. The quality of Individual Education Plans is good. Targets are drawn from these plans and discussed with the pupils and their parents. Individual Education Plans are compiled jointly by the co-ordinator, the teachers and learning support assistants, whose invaluable contribution to pupils' learning assists in the setting of targets.
27. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for its pupils. All pupils are included in the life of the school, enabling them to benefit from the many learning and social opportunities provided. Boys and girls work co-operatively together and are given equal status. For example, equal numbers of girls and boys from Year 6 are given jobs of responsibility around the school such as helping with younger pupils and acting as prefects. Books and other educational resources are checked for any stereotyping or bias. Pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for additional learning support are carefully monitored to ensure that the benefits they receive from this extra help outweigh any disadvantages. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that whenever possible extra clubs, designed to support learning, are held at lunchtime or after school. This helps to ensure that no lesson time is lost. This is not always the case when pupils are withdrawn from class for music tuition. They regularly miss the same part of a class lesson each week and there are no procedures in place to ensure that they catch up on missed work. The school identifies particularly able pupils but has yet to devise strategies to help them realise their full potential. Staff provide positive role models in their dealings with each other and value the contributions made to the school by all pupils.
28. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. At the last inspection this was judged to be very good and a major strength of the school. However, since then, the expectations for this provision have risen. Opportunities for spiritual development, which were very good at the last inspection, are currently good. The whole-school assemblies build on the weekly theme, provide pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs of their own culture and that of others, and enable them to reflect on their experiences. Visitors who take assemblies and religious education lessons enhance the provision. The 'Grounds for Improvement' scheme has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of energy saving and conservation and many pupils are actively involved in a recycling initiative. Many pupils display a sense of wonder at things around them. Those in Year 4 were amazed when the tuning fork, placed into water, splashed it all around, even though the vibrations were barely visible. Teachers are beginning to recognise opportunities for spiritual development in their lessons, although very few were observed during the inspection.
29. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know right from wrong and understand the rewards and sanctions that are applied in the school. Members of staff, who provide very good role models for the pupils, praise good practice and reward pupils for noteworthy efforts in all aspects of school life. Pupils are taught to reflect on how their actions affect others, especially during 'Circle Time', when pupils have the opportunity to discuss moral and social issues together in a quiet, reflective way. For example, pupils in Year 1 had a useful discussion about the times when they should be quiet and the times when it would be appropriate to be noisy, for instance, as one suggested, 'When there is a fire'. This helped them to understand why they should respond in particular ways and the impact their behaviour has on others.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is good. There are the usual opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons and take responsibility for jobs in class and around the school. Some of the older pupils say they are sometimes given the chance to develop their independent learning, although such opportunities to exercise their own initiative are not common in the school. A good initiative in which older pupils support younger ones with their reading fosters an understanding of the needs of others. Social development is well promoted through the sound range of out of

school clubs, inter-school sporting activities and the residential trips that most of the older pupils experience. These give all pupils the opportunity to socialise outside school and learn how to behave in the wider society. The School Council, whose members change annually, makes an important contribution to the spirit of citizenship. The members consider their responsibilities to the school community and have thought about what they can contribute to the school. It has been influential in promoting issues such as providing a fence round the quiet area in the playground to prevent pupils from running into the area and the provision of drinking fountains. Charitable institutions, including those which support children less fortunate than themselves, are supported through regular fund-raising.

31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to appreciate their own cultural traditions, through stories and poetry in literacy lessons and art and music. It is also enriched through visits to local sites in connection with their historical studies and to the theatre. In addition, an appropriate range of opportunities is provided for pupils to develop an understanding of the diversity of other cultures. Much of this is delivered through the curriculum, for example, through studies of world religions in religious education lessons, stories from other cultures in literacy lessons, studies of contrasting communities in geography and the work of a range of artists and composers. Working with visiting artists from other cultures, for example an Indian dancer and Indian and African drummers, also enhances pupils' awareness of customs and ways in others' lives. Pupils in Year 6 also gained first-hand knowledge of another culture when they visited France.
32. The quality of contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory. Each year 'evacuees', some of whom attended the school, return to talk about their experiences to Year 6 pupils as part of their history studies. Parents and other volunteers from the community have worked on various projects within the school, such as painting attractive murals. Relationships with linked secondary schools are good and these contacts support pupils' overall progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school makes good provision for the health, safety and welfare of all pupils. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The headteacher is the named person responsible for this work. There has been no recent training in this area but all staff are kept up to date with procedures and concerns through the daily staff briefings. The governing body oversees health and safety matters effectively and regular checks and audits ensure the school is a safe place. The school has made sensible improvements to the security of the site since the last inspection. The site manager plays an important role in maintaining safety and security at the school.
34. Procedures for assessment and monitoring of pupils' personal development are satisfactory, though outcomes are only formally recorded if pupils experience particular difficulties, for example over bullying or behaviour. Teachers also comment briefly on pupils' personal and social development on half-termly assessment checklists. Day-to-day issues are shared at the daily staff briefing meetings. These largely informal procedures work satisfactorily because staff meet often and communicate well.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and discipline are very effective. Parents and pupils understand the rules and expectations and regard the systems as fair. Teachers use the procedures consistently and effectively and as a result the school is a busy, orderly place. School rules are displayed around the school and pupils receive stickers and house points to reward good behaviour. Parents recognise that their youngsters are taught right from wrong very effectively. Pupils' learning benefits from the good care and guidance they receive. They feel safe and secure and this enables them to settle down and learn well.
36. Procedures for promoting attendance are very good. Attendance is carefully recorded and monitored. The school has regular contact with the education welfare officer if there are problems with attendance. Most pupils attend regularly and promptly so miss few lessons. Parents report a clear understanding of the rules about attendance, punctuality and reporting absence.

37. A criticism raised at the last inspection was that the school did not have manageable and thorough systems to monitor pupils' progress and attainment using National Curriculum attainment level statements. The school has successfully addressed this and the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school uses an informal entry assessment procedure for children entering the nursery and this information is used well by teachers to plan future work. Teachers in the reception classes use the records passed on from previous nurseries and playgroups, along with the formal assessments made when the children start with them, to plan for the individual needs of children. Appropriate procedures are used to assess pupils' progress in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. A simple but effective recording form has been introduced for most other subjects. These supplement personal records kept by teachers. Results of national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 are analysed carefully and used to review the effectiveness of provision and teaching.
38. Most teachers use assessment information effectively to group pupils according to their ability in literacy and numeracy lessons, especially for the older pupils. However, in other subjects, assessments are not always used effectively to set tasks for pupils that match their learning needs. This often means that higher-attaining pupils, who learn quickly, are not always challenged sufficiently and their learning is restricted. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have individual targets for improvement set for literacy and numeracy and these are shared with parents. Some teachers also set improvement targets for individuals or the class in order to raise standards but this is not consistently applied throughout the school, as there is no whole school policy.
39. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is regularly assessed and their work monitored on a daily basis. Teaching assistants have a support diary in which they record pupils' progress meticulously. The results of this monitoring are used well to plan the next step in each pupil's learning. The record keeping systems and the maintenance of pupils' files are very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents and carers are generally pleased with the work of the school. Parents feel confident that their children are happy, well cared for and are treated with respect. They are satisfied that their youngsters are learning suitable attitudes and values and that they behave well. Parents say that most pupils are encouraged to do their best and that the school is well organised and managed. They feel welcome and comfortable in school. The inspection team broadly agrees with parents on these points. Parents are less pleased with the provision of homework, with the extra-curricular activities offered and with the work provided for the brightest children. Some parents are also concerned that they do not receive enough information on how their children are achieving. The inspection team agrees with parents that the use of homework is inconsistent and does not always support learning effectively; there is no homework policy. Work provided for higher-achieving pupils does not always stretch them sufficiently and teachers' expectations are not always high enough. The team does not agree that extra-curricular activities are insufficient; the provision is satisfactory. Information to parents is judged to be of good quality overall. Annual reports to parents are of good quality overall but they do not always include individual targets to tell pupils what they need to do to improve. The school has successfully maintained the good standards previously reported in this aspect of its work.
41. The school provides a full prospectus, year group notes each term, newsletters and notice boards for parents and carers. These give good information on the school's work. There is a good range of information evenings for parents in addition to open evenings. For example, the parents of children in the Foundation Stage recently had a series of talks on the new curriculum for this age group.
42. Parents are very interested in their children's progress and attend the termly open and consultation evenings at the school. Many attend school events and come in to help in lessons regularly. There is good formal provision to support these parent helpers. The recently formed and very active Parent-Teachers' Association supports the school enthusiastically in fund-raising and

social events. Pupils receive good support from their families in homework, reading and school events. Parents are keen to find out how they can help and want clear information on homework tasks. They use the reading and contact books provided regularly to communicate with teachers. The good involvement of parents in school life and their good opinion of the school have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Parents send their children to school regularly, on time and ready to learn.

43. The quality of information for parents who have a pupil with special educational needs is good. Parents receive a copy of their child's Individual Education Plan together with an explanatory letter. Parents attend annual reviews. The co-ordinator attends parents' consultation evenings and writes progress reports on the pupils who receive additional support. There is regular informal contact with parents and during inspection week, one parent was seen observing the additional support lesson her child received so that the practice could be reinforced better at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are good. In the four years since he took up the post, the headteacher has succeeded in fostering a commitment in the school to improve standards in all areas. Overall, the quality of educational provision and the standards pupils attain are better than at the time of the last inspection. One of the main difficulties that the school has faced recently is recruiting and retaining teaching staff. This has been managed effectively and a sufficient supply of teachers has been maintained. Accommodation has improved since the last inspection and the addition of a nursery unit has significantly enhanced provision.
45. The senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators, including the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, share responsibilities with the headteacher for managing the curriculum. In a drive to improve standards further, one of the deputy headteachers has been relieved of a permanent class teaching commitment. This allows him to teach across the school and release curriculum co-ordinators for periods of time so that they can fulfil their roles in terms of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. This is a new initiative and its impact on raising standards has yet to be evaluated. Delegated responsibilities are well defined and most co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their accountability for standards in their subjects. They take their responsibilities seriously; they monitor and evaluate lesson planning and scrutinise pupils' work to judge whether standards are high enough and identify areas for improvement. Detailed reports are written by co-ordinators on the results of the classroom visits they make to observe teaching and reports on analyses of samples of work. The monitoring exercises do not always pay sufficient attention to how successfully tasks are matched to pupils' varying learning needs. Teaching has been monitored and evaluated regularly though there is scope for extending this by developing a clear set of criteria against which teachers and those who support them can evaluate the quality of teaching more systematically. There is no teaching and learning policy to promote a shared understanding of what constitutes high quality teaching. Good performance management systems have been introduced and the work of all teaching staff is appraised each year and targets for improvement identified. Job descriptions are not always explicit in requiring senior managers and subject co-ordinators to enhance teaching and learning and to improve standards.
46. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and typifies the school's commitment to educational inclusion. The special needs co-ordinator has a clear understanding of accountability for standards. The teaching of the learning support assistants is regularly monitored. Courses to improve professional skills are readily available. Time and care are taken to ensure that learning support is focused where it is most needed. For example, a recently identified group of reluctant readers in Year 4 is receiving extra help. The special educational needs team, which includes the headteacher and an educational psychologist, meets every term to review the needs of pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.
47. The management of the learning of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Appropriate support is given and records are thorough and comprehensive. They are regularly reviewed and there is good liaison between the school and outside agencies whenever needed.
48. A good School Improvement Plan is produced after wide consultation with staff and governors based on a close analysis of the school's performance. The plan follows a good format and is linked firmly to financial planning. The stated aim of the plan is to raise standards. Priorities are appropriate but the co-ordinators' action plans, which underpin developments, do not always state explicitly how initiatives and spending will be evaluated in terms of improvements in standards. For example, the success criteria for improving computer use in mathematics focused on time spent, rather than higher standards. The plan does help the school to concentrate on the most urgent areas for development and ensures that resources and training are sufficient. It also ensures that all subjects and procedures are reviewed regularly. Senior managers check the plan throughout the year to keep it on track.

49. The school analyses its performance well and takes appropriate action as a result. After reading tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 showed, for example, that boys' reading ability lagged behind that of girls, fathers were urged to read with their sons more regularly and greater attention was paid to introducing books into classrooms that were particularly appealing to boys.
50. The governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met, though it has not ensured that the time spent at school by pupils in Years 3 to 6 meets the recommended limits. Governors are encouraged to assist in the monitoring of the curriculum as well as standards, finance, resources and the general welfare of pupils and staff. Money is spent wisely and specific grants, such as those to support pupils with special needs, are always used for their designated purposes. The governing body has ensured that staffing and resources are generally adequate to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, though the supply of information books and the school reference library are areas for development. Accounts are kept carefully and are audited regularly. The school has built into its plans and policies the principles of best value. Governors consider the advantages of leasing laptop computers rather than buying them, for example. Good use is made of nationally produced data that helps the school to consider its performance in relation to other schools. The school reviews the provision of utilities such as electricity, water and oil as well as telephones and waste management. It evaluates the services it purchases, such as the library service and insurances, to ensure best value. Accommodation is adequate but the school office is cramped and is not easy for visitors to find. It is also a through route to the headteacher's office and does not provide a good working environment. Four classes are taught in temporary accommodation outside the main buildings and have no water supply. They do not, therefore, provide a good learning environment. Throughout the school all available space is used well.
51. Day-to-day administrative procedures run smoothly and the school secretary and clerical assistants ensure that the office is run efficiently. Paperwork is controlled effectively. The school does not experience any particular bureaucratic overload but demands for data and other information can take up an undue amount of time because of a perceived lack of co-ordination between local and national initiatives.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governing body should:
- 1) Improve the consistency of teaching, especially for the more able pupils, to bring it up to the very best by:
 - adopting an agreed policy on teaching and learning that includes a clear set of criteria that promotes consistently high quality teaching and learning;
 - monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching against these agreed criteria;
 - raising expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving, especially those who are particularly able. (paragraphs 9,15,18,40, 45,71,72,82,87,89,101)
 - 2) Improve pupils' learning opportunities by increasing the amount of time devoted to teaching the National Curriculum in Years 3 to 6. (paragraphs 9,23,50)
 - 3) Encourage pupils to take greater responsibility for their learning and to use their initiative and improve their research skills so that they are confident in finding information from non-fiction books in the library and from the Internet. (paragraphs 18,66,68,105,106)
 - 4) Develop clear guidelines for setting homework in each year group that are shared with pupils and parents and that are applied consistently. (paragraphs 18,22,82,87)

Other less significant areas for development:

The accountability of senior managers and subject co-ordinators for raising standards is not always explicit in job descriptions and is not always reflected in their action plans. (paragraphs 45, 48)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	109
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	27	48	29	1	0	0
Percentage	4	25	44	27	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	581
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		127

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	44	45	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	44	44
	Girls	43	44	43
	Total	86	88	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	99 (96)	98 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	43	41
	Girls	42	43	41
	Total	84	86	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	97 (90)	92 (69)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	49	45	94

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	41	37	47
	Girls	41	36	43
	Total	82	73	90
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (81)	78 (88)	96 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	39	38	47
	Girls	40	39	43
	Total	79	77	90
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (77)	82 (80)	96 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	1
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	1
White	515
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	23.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	27.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	292

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	1025906
Total expenditure	1025019
Expenditure per pupil	1628
Balance brought forward from previous year	29269
Balance carried forward to next year	30156

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

640

Number of questionnaires returned

210

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	53	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	53	15	4	0
The teaching is good.	47	51	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	58	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	38	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	33	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	53	7	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	48	47	3	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	54	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	53	10	2	7

Other issues raised by parents

A small minority of parents considered that the playground for the older pupils was too small to accommodate all the children safely and accidents occurred as a result. The inspection team found that the playground is adequate, although it is crowded.

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

53. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and it is now very good. As well as the reception classes inspected last time, a very popular nursery class has been opened which is giving children a very good start to their education. Children are admitted to the nursery and reception class in two phases. At the time of the inspection, there were three reception classes, two with the older children and a few January entrants, and another newly created class for the rest of the January entrants. Overall, the attainment of children when they enter the nursery is above that expected for children of their age.
54. Nearly all of the children who have been in the reception class since September and a significant number of the January intake are likely to surpass the standards expected for children of their age at the end of the year in all areas of development.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Staff in the nursery and reception classes put a great emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is good and often very good. Most children make good progress in their learning so by the time they leave the reception class they are likely to attain standards beyond those expected nationally. Children come happily into the nursery and the reception classes. The children in the nursery are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They settle quickly into the well-established routines and soon learn to adhere to the rules, for example, that only four children are allowed to take part in certain activities at any one time. They thrive in the stimulating, caring and secure environment and relate well to adults and each other. Most children are self-possessed and confident when moving around the nursery and make considered choices when selecting activities. They share and take turns amicably, for example, when looking at books, doing puzzles and using the outside equipment. The children concentrate well on their tasks, especially when working at the computer, and often sustain concentration for good lengths of time.
56. Children clearly enjoy their work in the nursery. They co-operate happily with each other and adults. Most respond immediately to their teachers' signals, for example, to stop and listen. Children take care of classroom equipment and quickly learn to tidy up after themselves. This good level of interest, enthusiasm and co-operation continues as children move into the reception year. Their concentration spans and ability to co-operate increase. They help each other to put on aprons for messy activities, and fasten up one another's coats before going outside. Most children work well independently or in groups, even when they are not directly supervised. Most persevere until they have finished their tasks and take pride in their work. The reception teachers encourage children to develop independence. For example, children take the register to the office on a rota basis. Children move sensibly and confidently around the school. Staff constantly reinforce good habits, such as requiring children to put up their hands to answer questions or to make comments, and to help with tidying up. Most children change their clothes for physical education lessons independently.

Communication, language and literacy

57. The development of communication, language and literacy is good in both the nursery and reception classes. Due to the good and often very good teaching, most children are likely to surpass the expected levels of attainment by the time they leave the reception classes. In the nursery most children quickly understand that pictures and print convey meaning as they look at books in the book corner and listen to stories and rhymes that are read very well. The few

children who have limited vocabulary receive a good level of individual help and support to improve their speaking skills. Children learn to hold and use pencils correctly. The members of the nursery staff give all children a wide range of activities, such as tracing, which improves their hand and eye control and increases their early writing skills. This good rate of learning and progress continues as children move into their reception year. Children who learn more slowly continue to receive effective support. The reception class teachers use and adapt the National Literacy Strategy well to meet the developing needs of these young children. Teaching develops children's listening, speaking and reading skills and especially their knowledge of letter sounds. Some of the more able children are building up words from letter sounds and reading simple words in books. The teachers choose books and stories carefully to increase children's interest in reading. All adults in the reception class and nursery class use precise and clear diction to assist children's speech. They encourage the children to speak clearly in sentences. Most children consolidate and develop their early writing skills well. They hold and use pencils properly and most make very good attempts at writing their own names, forming their letters correctly. A few of the older, more able children are beginning to write words in simple sentences.

Mathematical development

58. The provision for children's mathematical development is very good. By the time they leave the reception classes, most children are on course to surpass the standards expected nationally. Most make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. Nursery staff develop these skills very effectively through a carefully planned range of activities. They use everyday toys and occurrences to make number work real for the children. For example, children know they only have to give the goldfish five pinches of food when feeding it. They sing songs and rhymes to develop their counting skills and most use the correct number of fingers to represent the numbers. Through rhymes such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs', they develop the idea of subtraction. They use and name different shapes, such as square, circle, triangle and rectangle, when cutting out shapes in play dough and making colourful pictures in their creative activities. Children enter the reception year with a developing range of mathematical concepts. The reception teachers build on these early skills well. For example, the children were using and extending their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes through counting the number of sides of regular shapes. They identified them around the classroom and were beginning to recognise their properties, saying, for example, 'The rectangle has two sides longer than the other two'. Some of the more able children know names of some three-dimensional shapes. Most children count and order objects to ten and many beyond. They recognise numerals up to ten and match objects to them correctly. They develop correct mathematical language such as 'taller than' and 'shorter than' when matching blocks to the height of toys, and 'next to' and 'beside' when positioning pets in a class picture. The teaching is good across the Foundation Stage and it is always very good in the nursery. Teachers and assistants take every opportunity to advance learning. For example, children are frequently encouraged, during registration, to work out how many children are present by subtracting the number of absentees.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. The school provides very well for children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are on course to exceed the expected standards by the end of their reception year. Teaching is good, overall, and teachers provide many interesting activities to develop this area of learning. The children have many opportunities in the nursery and the reception classes to explore the natural and man-made world in the development of their scientific skills. For example, in the reception classes children named parts of the body during physical activities. They know the needs of humans, such as food, water and shelter, and relate these to their pets. Most understand the importance of special people in their lives, such as family members, the milkman, postman and the fireman. They develop a sense of chronology by moving their names along the labelled compartments of the train according to their ages. They understand the terms 'older than' and 'younger than' and have a keen sense of who in the class is the eldest and youngest. Through their observations of the weather they develop their geographical skills, and most know where they live and talk about where they have been on holiday. They develop their design and

making skills well through, for instance, selecting materials to make fire engines and when one type of glue does not stick the wheels on, they select another. Most children use computers as a matter of routine and develop a good understanding of how to use the keyboard and mouse for accurate control. Children in the reception class recognise the different symbols on the tape recorder and operate it independently.

Physical development

60. The school makes good provision for children's physical development. By the time they leave the reception classes, most are likely to meet and, in many cases, surpass the expected standards. Children in the nursery develop their climbing and balancing skills effectively. They make considered choices as to whether they crawl over or through apparatus. They manoeuvre large wheeled vehicles, sensibly avoiding collisions. They have access to a suitably wide range of tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery. By the time they leave, most children control these tools well. Children in the reception class continue to develop their physical skills well. They travel around, over and through large apparatus with growing confidence, good control and co-ordination. Teaching is good and teachers frequently give children the opportunity to explore, experiment and refine their actions in a safe and calm environment.

Creative development

61. The school's provision for children's creative development is good and most children are likely to meet the level of skill necessary to reach and, in most cases, surpass the standards expected by the time they leave the reception classes. Children learn basic techniques in the nursery and make very good progress due to the good and often very good teaching. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. They hold brushes correctly and apply paint to paper with much confidence. Children mix paint to achieve different colours. They experiment confidently with paint, printing with different objects such as bubbles and sponges to make colourful patterns. In the reception classes, children continue to develop confidence in using a suitably wide range of media and equipment. Most children show a good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. Opportunities are made for the children in both the nursery and reception classes to express their ideas and feelings through imaginative play. Most are happy to be imaginative and express themselves well. They sing a variety of songs from memory and use appropriate actions.
62. Overall, the quality of the teaching is good. In the nursery the quality of teaching is always very good. This consistently high quality of teaching is reflected in the good rate of progress that the children make. The teachers, nursery nurses and support staff have a clear understanding of the educational and social needs of young children. All members of staff have realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. There is a significant increase in the level of challenging and interesting tasks as the children move from the nursery to the reception classes. This has a positive impact on developing the children's knowledge and understanding. All members of staff speak precisely and clearly. This helps the children to make good progress in developing their speaking skills. Children with special educational needs make good progress and are totally included in all activities. All members of staff emphasise the teaching of basic skills of reading, counting and number recognition. Other specific skills, for example, how to use pencils, paint and musical instruments, are taught carefully. They encourage pupils to work independently and make choices.
63. The nursery makes very good provision for the children's all round development and education. The planning identifies what the children are to learn from each activity clearly. Each area of development has clear and systematic steps of progression. The teachers in the reception classes build effectively on the work of the nursery. Teachers plan carefully to meet individual needs and effectively challenge children of differing abilities.
64. Staffing levels in the foundation classes are good. All children have full and equal access to all areas of development. All staff provide a very effective level of support for children who have learning difficulties, so they are fully integrated into school life. Many parents use the opportunity they have to liaise regularly with teachers through a 'Contact Book'. This is a reading record of books children have read at school and shared with their parents or carers.
65. Assessments of children's attainment and progress are very good. The nursery teacher and support staff complete an initial assessment with parents on the home visits they make before the

children start school. This gives them useful knowledge of what to expect from the children when they enter the nursery. They use this knowledge to plan future work on the basis of what the children know, understand and can do. The reception teachers continue to use the nursery records and also formally assess the children when they start in the reception classes.

ENGLISH

66. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average. These findings are largely reflected in the National Curriculum test results where pupils in Year 2 attained standards that were well above average in reading and writing and pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were above average in English. The school exceeded its target of 80 per cent of pupils expected to attain the national target of Level 4. The work produced by the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils indicates that they have experienced consistently good teaching over the last few years. There are, however, underdeveloped skills, both in the Year 6 pupils' ability to gather information from factual sources and in the standard of their reading. Since the last inspection standards across the school have improved. There are examples of very good writing by a significant number of pupils. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good and in Year 3 to Year 6 it is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
67. Many pupils enter the school with well developed speaking and listening skills. These are evident throughout the school and by Year 6 the majority of pupils speak grammatically and have the confidence to express their feelings and ideas. For example, three pupils discussing religious education explained clearly how learning about faiths can help with daily life. Speaking and listening skills are developed well in the Literacy Hour and through drama.
68. Standards of reading at the end of Year 2 are good and by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Younger pupils read regularly with their teachers in groups during the Literacy Hour and individually, mostly with learning support assistants and parent helpers. Pupils take books home four times a week so that parents can hear them read. These routines support pupils' learning well. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are increasingly responsible for keeping a record of the books they have read. They continue to take books home for parental support but read less regularly with teachers and other adults in school. This slows down their learning. Positive steps have been taken to encourage pupils' interest in reading, which have had some impact. These include providing carefully selected books designed to challenge and appeal to boys and girls in each age group. Additionally, pupils in Years 4 and 6 who have been identified as underachieving are specially targeted and given extra support and reading books that will particularly appeal to them. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have 'reading buddies' in Year 2, with whom they meet at lunchtime twice a week. Both parties benefit from this positive development. Pupils' research and library skills are not sufficiently well developed, however, partly because the library has had to be used temporarily as a classroom and partly because priority has been given to extending the range of fiction books. Some older pupils could explain how they would use a home computer to access information; for instance, a pupil in Year 5 uses 'Encarta', rather than the Internet, but this facility is not available in school. Selected pupils with special educational needs use computers satisfactorily during lunchtime or after school to improve their basic reading skills. Word processing is used to support learning, but has not been developed systematically across the school.
69. Standards of writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Many Year 1 pupils write independently. One pupil of average ability wrote 'The ugly sisters wear horrible to Cinderella they wear selfish', using capital letters correctly and spelling most words accurately. In Year 2, pupils are able to use synonyms for 'big' to describe the Big Bad Wolf, substituting words like enormous, huge and gigantic. .
70. The quality of work produced by some of the oldest pupils is high. They write in a wide variety of ways, including instructions, as journalists and in the style of historical novels they are reading. There is evidence of drafting and standards of presentation are good across the ability range.

Pupils in Year 5 are able to use similes to describe animals. Pupils in Year 6 have written poems using personification to describe the Christmas scene. One higher-attaining pupil wrote:

'Christmas has run closer to me
Happiness is stretching across the family
Reindeer are flying high in the sky
Ice is building up the houses
Sleigh bells are clapping in joy
Toys are kicking in the bag.'

71. There is, however, scope for improvements in the quantity and quality of extended pieces of writing produced by the most able pupils, especially as many pupils attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 2.
72. Good links are made with other subjects. Pupils in Year 6, for example, read an extract from 'Blitz' by Robert Westall that linked well with their work on the second world war. Lower attaining pupils visited an air raid shelter in the playground and reflected on the conditions endured in order to continue the story. As part of their work in religious education, pupils in Year 6 looked at little books with wise and helpful sayings and moved on to write their own. Every pupil contributed and lower attaining pupils could explain the meaning behind the sayings. Pupils use their literacy skills to describe the results of science experiments but research skills to gather information in geography and history, for example, are underdeveloped.
73. The work on display is well presented but the presentation of work in pupils' books varies. The work of many of the pupils in Year 6 is well presented. There is a growing use of computers to prepare final drafts and pupils are aware of the influence of the background as well as the words. Throughout the school there are examples of poems written by pupils, to a high standard, on display. In Year 4 pupils have written poems in different styles, understanding that it is 'a picture of words'. The whole school has been fund-raising for a baby and some pupils in this year group, having heard a Gaelic blessing, wrote their own blessing for this special baby.
74. Teaching for almost all year groups is good and there are examples of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. One lesson was unsatisfactory. Teaching is mostly very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. One very good handwriting lesson was seen in Year 2 where the teacher had prepared 'tram tracks' in red and blue in advance and, through open questioning, drew on pupils' prior knowledge to demonstrate, with both left and right hand, the letter 'f'. One pupil was comfortable enough to say 'I find it difficult to do that "f"'. The teacher had high expectations of performance and behaviour and had followed up similar lessons with very helpful marking, which showed the pupils where they had gone wrong.
75. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance, learning objectives are made clear to the pupils and lively, imaginative ways are used to catch and sustain the interest of the pupils. An excellent example of this was seen in Year 5 when pupils were reading a myth. The teacher's excellent understanding of grammar helped pupils to construct complex sentences containing clauses. As a result, the whole class was able to identify clauses in the myth they were reading. Pupils read the text, with encouragement and praise from the teacher. Following on, the considerable skills of the teacher as a storyteller ensured pupils' concentration and learning continued as they began to study the text about the stars. The timing was precise and work was well matched to the differing abilities of the pupils. As a result of this very good teaching, all groups made good progress in their learning. Homework was set, asking pupils to make preparation for the myths they would be writing the next day. Homework is used inconsistently, however, throughout the school. Teachers in Year 6 have high expectations, expecting pupils to remember to use spelling rules, for example, and to write in different tenses. Where teaching is less effective, it is because time is not always used well, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently extended or homework is not used productively to consolidate and enhance learning.

76. The subject is well managed and well organised by two co-ordinators, who make the best use of time, staff and accommodation. Each term they sample pupils' work and observe colleagues teach. Each class is taught separately for the daily Literacy Hour, except in Year 6, where the lower-attaining pupils from each class form a group which can focus on their particular needs. This class is relatively small and has the added support of two learning support assistants, so that each small group has an adult to guide it. A clear planning framework has been devised and is used well. Resources are mostly satisfactory and are generally used well, although the use of computers is still developing and some of the books in the present non-fiction library are nearing the end of their useful life. The use of this library has declined since the last inspection, when it was described as an asset. Recent investment means that the supply of fiction books is good. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good, including assessment of lower-attaining pupils. There is some evidence of assessment being used to inform further planning but sometimes opportunities are lost, for example, when a pupil makes repeated mistakes in reading or handwriting. Test results are identified carefully to assess achievement or to identify areas for development. Teachers generally mark pupils' work thoroughly and a recently established, clear marking policy, for use with the work of older age groups, helps pupils to understand how they might improve their work.

MATHEMATICS

77. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average. They are above average by the end of Year 6. These standards are reflected in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. The school's performance at the end of Year 6 fell just short of the target set by the school. A more challenging target has been set for 2002. Teaching is not always closely matched to the needs of higher-attaining pupils, especially in the Years 3 to 6, and therefore pupils' achievement is not always as high as it could be, particularly for the older pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those with English as an additional language attain standards comparable with their peers.
78. There has been a steady improvement in standards at the end of Year 6 over the past three years, which has been in line with the national trend. The improvement in standards at the end of Year 2 has been more dramatic and exceeded the national trend.
79. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. This is a consequence of improved teaching, better use of assessment to guide pupils' learning, and improved organisation of teaching groups. The organisation of teaching and learning now allows the needs of pupils to be addressed more closely, although there is still room for further improvement, especially for a number of higher-attaining pupils. Pupils use their mathematical skills in Year 5 in geography to assess and analysis the results of their surveys; also in science where pupils measure accurately using scales. Information technology is used in Year 6 where higher-attaining pupils estimate and measure degrees in given angles. However, with more careful planning more could be done to enhance the use of mathematical skills across the curriculum.
80. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 make good advances in their learning. In Year 1 pupils order numbers to 20. They begin to read written numbers to ten. In Year 2 they write simple number sentences using numbers to 20. The more able pupils can decide upon different ways in which to solve addition problems. In Year 3, pupils solve problems involving distances on maps. They use their knowledge of kilometres and number to calculate the answers. The more able pupils compute longer distances involving more calculations. In Year 4 pupils identify nets of cuboids and draw these to make three-dimensional shapes. In Year 5 pupils calculate sums of numbers involving pounds and pence. They are able to multiply by ten to change their calculation. In Year 6 pupils begin to measure angles with some accuracy, using a protractor. Pupils calculate the sum of a given angle having been given the sum of another. The more able pupils measure and calculate the sums of reflex angles. Over three-quarters of the pupils in any given class are working at, or above, nationally expected levels and those pupils with special educational needs are well

supported in the classroom. The attitudes of pupils to their work are very good, as is their behaviour.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. A fifth of lessons are very good and occasionally excellent and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The 'very good' and 'better' teaching is across the whole age range. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils and these help to make pupils confident and secure in their learning. When pupils make mistakes in their work, teachers use this as an opportunity to encourage them to become more confident. They use the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their lessons well. This helps to give the lessons pace and activities are changed to keep the pupils interested in their learning. Learning intentions are usually clear and are shared with the pupils so that they can begin to take some responsibility for what they are learning. Mental maths activities are often brisk and challenging and so pupils are encouraged to improve on their numerical abilities. Good use is made of ongoing assessments of pupils' attainment so that appropriate challenges can be set to match the needs of the pupils.
82. In lessons there is sometimes a lack of sufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils because teachers do not expect enough of them. Regular assessments are used to allocate pupils to appropriate classes so that their learning needs can be broadly met. Assessments are not used to set individual targets for pupils, which allow them to evaluate their own learning. Different work is set to meet the needs of individual pupils, and this is appropriate for lower-attaining pupils but not always so for those of higher ability. Whilst pupils work confidently with numbers and work involving shape and space and data handling, they are less confident when using maths in everyday situations to solve practical problems. Homework is usually set but its purpose is unclear and its use is inconsistent across classes. The use of the final part of the maths lessons is not always fully developed. Opportunities are lost for pupils to talk about their mathematical learning and to develop independence in their learning.
83. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is supportive and the monitoring of teaching is effective in improving standards of teaching.

SCIENCE

84. Standards of work seen during the inspection are average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This represents a similar judgement to that at the last inspection. However, the results of the national assessment tests in 2001 showed that pupils in Year 6 attained above average standards. Although, by the end of the year, most of the current Year 6 group are on course to attain the expected Level 4, a smaller proportion than last year are likely to achieve the higher Level 5. This explains the difference in judgements. Pupils throughout the school gain a satisfactory and often good knowledge and understanding of science facts but their scientific enquiry skills, although satisfactory, are not so well developed. Currently, there is insufficient use of the computer for pupils to enter their own data from investigations and of data handling programs to look for patterns.
85. By the end of Year 2, most pupils know the differences between living and non-living things, name facial and body features, know what plants need for healthy growth and have an understanding of simple facts about electricity and materials. Pupils in Year 1 were exploring the senses. In one lesson, the pupils were identifying different objects, such as fruits and vegetables, by their smell. The activity created great interest and the pupils had clear opinions about whether they liked the smell or not and some used imaginative and thoughtful words to describe them. The pupils recorded their work appropriately using symbols and words. The quality of teaching in this lesson was very good. The teacher raised the pupils' enthusiasm with a very good initial question and answer session, revising and consolidating previous learning. She gave very clear instructions for the well-prepared activity and followed this up with a game and discussion about the contents of the cups, which reinforced and extended their learning. Pupils in Year 2 were developing their knowledge of electricity. Most had a good understanding of the dangers it presents and that a

battery in a circuit can be used to light a bulb. Although the quality of teaching in both lessons was satisfactory, both teachers missed opportunities to extend pupils' learning. In one lesson the teacher failed to find out through questioning that pupils had an understanding of a circuit and, in the other, there was no emphasis on the correct spelling of the scientific words.

86. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn through a good range of practical investigations and achieve appropriately. Year 4 pupils were investigating vibrations and, in particular, those relating to sound. By the end of both lessons observed, most pupils had a reasonable grasp of the concept of vibrations, sound waves and how we hear them. Pupils in Year 5 were developing a good understanding of how forces act against each other and were using forcemeters to measure the weight of various objects. They were selecting appropriate scales to measure the objects depending on their weights, and were using their mathematical skills effectively to read them. In Year 6, pupils were investigating and developing an understanding of evaporation and conditions which affect the process best, and what happens to materials in a solution or mixture when water evaporates. Most pupils had a clear awareness of having to make the test fair when comparing the conditions for evaporation and were making considered predictions about the results.
87. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. Although the teaching was good in two-thirds of the lessons observed, the inspection of past work did not confirm this, but showed that teaching and learning were generally satisfactory. In the lessons observed, nearly all teachers made it clear in their planning what they wanted the pupils to learn and, in the best lessons, teachers shared this with their pupils. Most teachers gave clear explanations and instructions for activities and developed and reinforced pupils' scientific vocabulary well. Although most teachers have good subject knowledge, there are weaknesses, as some teachers gave pupils incorrect scientific information. Teachers often use skilful questioning to make pupils think, especially at the beginning and end of lessons for recap and consolidation. However, teachers rarely plan a range of activities that challenges all pupils, especially those who learn more quickly. In the work inspected, the only clear difference was the way in which pupils recorded their work, and this mainly depended on the quality of their writing skills and did not often reveal the depth of their scientific knowledge. Although pupils take part in a good range of investigative work, it is generally prescribed by teachers. Older pupils are not given enough opportunities to devise their own investigations to extend their scientific enquiry skills. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well and take a full part in lessons, often achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. There is no clearly defined programme of homework to support learning.
88. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are currently being developed. Teachers record the levels pupils are achieving against National Curriculum criteria at the end of each term. However, teachers do not always use these and day-to-day assessments to plan work that matches the full ability range in their classes. When marking pupils' books, most teachers write supportive comments and correct spelling mistakes. Sometimes they include developmental points to promote pupils' thinking and learning.
89. The well-qualified co-ordinator only took over the post last September, and is keen to raise standards as indicated in the development plan. A good start has been made by improving assessment procedures. The policy has been updated recently. Strategies to improve curricular planning are in hand to ensure that pupils' learning is more systematic as they move through the school. The co-ordinator also recognises the need to challenge the more able pupils and is to undertake a training course for this purpose in the near future. Resources are being improved. Although some classrooms are rather cramped for practical work, the very good behaviour and sensible attitudes of the pupils prevent this from inhibiting their learning.

ART AND DESIGN

90. This is a strength of the school. Standards are above average for pupils of all ages. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection. All the work displayed round the school is

of a high quality and serves to raise the profile of the subject and inspire the pupils. A good example of this is the excellent display of art by pupils in Year 2 based on their studies of the works of famous artists, including Mondrian, Pollock, Kandinsky and Klee. This display, in a general area, values the pupils' efforts. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well as they move through the school. A display in one of the school halls of portraits by pupils from all years clearly showed this good progress.

91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of media and techniques successfully in their work. From an early age, they are introduced to colour matching and mixing and produce attractive artwork showing care and sensitivity. Pupils in Year 2 use colour washes most effectively as a background to their pictures illustrating the Great Fire of London and for their glass bottle compositions. Their work in the style of famous artists is extremely effective and some are produced using computer graphics to add a new dimension to their learning. Pupils also use metallic materials to make eye-catching collage pictures of robots and have well-developed close observational skills that they use to make detailed drawings in pencil. Higher-attaining pupils are able to employ shading techniques correctly to show texture, shape and depth in their sketches. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on these skills. By the end of Year 6, they have mastered a wide range of techniques that they use to good effect in their work. Pupils in Year 4 design and make wrapping paper using press printing, marbling and computer graphics. A paint computer program is also used effectively in their study of pointillism. The use of pencils of differing degrees of hardness by pupils throughout the school enables them to produce realistic sketches of good quality. This was clearly seen in two Year 6 lessons where pupils produced detailed and accurate still life sketches of a variety of artefacts representing different themes after studying and analysing 'The Ambassadors' painting by Hans Holbein. The high quality 'people in action' drawings and collages by Year 6 pupils demonstrate how well they have mastered art and design skills over their years in the school.
92. The quality of teaching is always good and often it is even better. Teachers plan their lessons carefully in year groups and this enables them to share ideas and expertise so that all pupils learn effectively. The work provided for pupils is often imaginative and stimulating. For example, in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 5, the pupils were shown an aerial photograph of a rural area and chose their own media to reproduce it on paper. They were fascinated by the photograph and eager to produce their own designs, using a wide range of materials and techniques. Teachers manage their pupils well and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere that helps pupils to concentrate and produce their best efforts. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work, discuss it in depth and behave well in all lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to teach new skills with confidence and give pupils useful tips to improve the standard of their work.
93. The subject leader is knowledgeable and gives much useful advice to colleagues. Good quality resources are used fully by teachers in their lessons. Planning and completed work are looked at to monitor coverage and assess standards throughout the school. This monitoring gives the co-ordinator an overview of the provision and highlights areas requiring further development. Although teachers note which pupils exceed or fail to meet the learning objectives of each unit of work, there are no formal procedures in place to record levels of attainment linked to national expectations.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Design and technology was not taught during the period of the inspection. Evidence gleaned from the pupils' work, records, teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils indicates that standards across the school are around expected levels. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use technical words and labelled sketches to communicate the details of their designs. They can evaluate their designs by identifying what is working well and what needs to be improved. However, by the end of Year 6, they are unable to generate alternative designs for their projects or

to choose the best one from a range of possibilities. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls of similar attainment and they respond equally well to the subject.

95. Teaching in years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to form judgements about the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers had planned interesting activities for the children that helped them to develop their designing and making skills. The work seen in Years 1 and 2 showed that pupils are able to generate ideas and plan what to do next, based on their experience of working with materials and components. They use pictures and words to describe their designs. A project on making purses and wallets gave pupils the opportunity to practise skills such as sewing, gluing, measuring and cutting out. Pupils were able to evaluate various methods of joining materials and make preliminary sketches for their own money containers. They have also designed fruit salads in a project linked to work on health and diet in science.
96. Older pupils have made fairground rides using recycled materials as well as medium density fibre board and wood. These models incorporate simple drive mechanisms and switched motors. The standard of the models on display is appropriate for the age group but the limited range of materials and techniques mentioned in the previous report is still evident in this work. Secure links are made between the designing and making processes. For example, pupils in Year 6 have completed a good project on biscuits, which involved them in listing the materials needed, in evaluating and comparing ready made biscuits with their own home made variety and using their literacy skills in writing the text for the packaging. Pupils in this age group are enthusiastic about the subject and talk about it in positive terms.
97. Planning has improved since the last inspection because the national scheme of work has been adopted and topics are allocated to each year group. The inadequate time allowance for the subject mentioned in the last report is no longer an issue. Some of these projects need to be analysed, however, to see how they could be used more effectively to deliver all the elements that the National Curriculum requires. Monitoring of pupils' progress is not fully in place and, as a result, pupils' work is not judged against the National Curriculum levels. Currently, the co-ordinator is not familiar enough with the standards associated with these levels. There are sufficient resources.
98. Attractive displays of pupils' work celebrate their efforts. A photographic record of work has started and needs further development. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning is underdeveloped, although there are plans to use laptops to run control programs linked to construction kits. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language generally have full access to this subject. Pupils co-operate well in design and technology lessons and it makes a satisfactory contribution to their social development.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Throughout the school, standards are at expected levels. This indicates that standards are not as high as at the time of the last inspection. This is mainly due to the school focusing strongly on improvements in other areas of the curriculum.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils can locate their home and school in the local area. They are aware of some features of environment different to their own. They can recognise physical features in their study of an island. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the impact man is having on the Brazilian Rainforest. They begin to understand the impact of building a dam and roads on the forest. They understand the different stages in the life of a river. In Year 4, pupils begin to understand how noise can affect individual concentration and so be regarded as a pollutant. In Year 5, pupils compare aerial photographs with maps of an area to locate specific features. Pupils are well behaved and enjoy their learning.
101. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan to ensure that pupils follow a structured course, which allows them to build upon their skills. Relationships between teachers

and their pupils are good and this helps pupils to learn. Pupils are encouraged to learn the vocabulary specific to the subject. Lower-attaining pupils receive good support for their learning. However, there is insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.

102. The co-ordination is satisfactory. A new and enthusiastic co-ordinator has just been appointed and a review of the provision is being undertaken. An environmental scheme for collecting waste paper has been introduced and this has enhanced pupils' understanding of waste management. The assessment of what pupils know and can do is insufficient and is not used to raise the expectations of teachers to improve the standards of their pupils. Good use is made of visits to support learning.

HISTORY

103. Throughout the school standards are at expected levels. This indicates that standards are not as high as at the time of the last inspection. This is mainly due to the school focusing strongly on improvements in other areas of the curriculum.
104. By the end of Year 2, pupils can recognise the difference between events in the past and present. They can recount the events over time of the Great Fire of London in 1666. They locate these events on the time scale and understand that Samuel Pepys wrote an account of the events in a diary. They know that the diary can be used as evidence to find out about the event. By the end of Year 6, pupils can use dates to measure the passage of time over a short period. They understand that evidence of what happened in history can be found in texts, photographs and from personal reminiscence. They know the reasons why children and others were evacuated from London in World War Two. They understand that people who took part in this programme had different experiences. In Year 3, pupils understand that the Romans built towns and roads in Britain and that in Roman times London was an important city. In Year 4 pupils used their visit to a local stately home to write detailed leaflets explaining why it was important during Tudor times. They understand some of the reasons why Anne Bolyn was beheaded and know about early maritime explorers. They recognise the contribution made by Victorians like William Morris in design. They take part in re-enactments of Victorian days to understand how schools and daily life have changed.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good use is made of visits to places of interest, and of visiting speakers, to interest the pupils in the subject. The content of lessons is well planned but there are insufficient opportunities for the higher-attaining pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. Links are well made between fictional and actual events. The language skills learnt by pupils are not effectively developed through history. There are limited opportunities for the pupils to write in a range of formats and the research skills of pupils are insufficiently developed. Consequently, pupils find it hard to learn independently of the teacher.
106. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. A new and enthusiastic co-ordinator has just been appointed but has yet to make an impact on standards. Planning is satisfactory and ensures pupils follow a consistent course, although the content does not always match the abilities of all the pupils. Assessments of what pupils can and should achieve are not sufficiently developed so that teachers' expectations of the more able pupils are not always high enough. Whilst resources are sufficient, there is a shortage of good and interesting texts from which pupils can develop their skills of research.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Across the school standards are at expected levels. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection. However, national expectations have risen considerably since then and the school has made a good improvement to the provision for its pupils to enable them to keep pace with those in other schools. This has been achieved through the development of the computer

suite. This has allowed pupils more regular access to good quality computers, enabling them to make much faster progress in many aspects of the subject. Also, the quality of teaching has improved as teachers have undergone worthwhile training that has increased their own personal skills and made them more confident in teaching lessons. Training is continuing, with teachers regularly attending after school sessions organised by the co-ordinator to familiarise themselves with new developments. All aspects of the subject are taught over time, although some are covered in much greater depth than others. For example, skills in word processing, data handling and graphics are particularly strong, whereas work in control technology and the use of sensors to monitor external events are still at an early stage of development. The school has Internet access for pupils to use for research work but no e-mail facility so that they can learn to communicate with others across the world. There are firm plans to improve the provision even further by the use of laptop computers in lessons and more desktop computers permanently based in classrooms. These initiatives will help the school realise its aim to use computers to enhance learning in other subjects. This is currently underdeveloped.

108. Pupils in Year 2 successfully use a computer for word processing and know how to change the size, style and colour of the text. They use a graphics program to produce their own very attractive pictures in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian, Pollock and Klee. Pupils write instructions to move a cursor to make the shape of letters. They use a good range of instructions, including forward, backward, pen up and turn through a 90 degree angle. They thoroughly enjoy programming a robotic toy to follow a route on the floor and are most excited and pleased when it does so successfully. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the various options available for creating text and confidently merge text with graphics to produce good quality work that is prominently displayed around the school. Much of their work is appropriately linked to their English studies. For instance, their newspaper reports about the murder of Duncan, as part of their work on Shakespeare's play Macbeth, are of a high standard and very eye-catching. However, their typing skills are not as well developed as their skills in using the mouse. Many can only enter text at a slow rate, which frustrates them and limits their output in the allocated time. Pupils know how to construct a spreadsheet using formulae correctly. If required, they can change the size of the cells to hold the text and have a good understanding of the toolbar icons and the use of highlighting to make further changes. There have been limited opportunities for them to learn how to use control technology to operate other devices, such as working models, and to monitor events using suitable sensors. Pupils in all year groups have an appropriate understanding of the use and impact of information and communication technology on their lives and the wider world. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make the same good progress as their classmates as they are well supported and have equal access to the available equipment.
109. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and their own skills are well developed. This enables them to teach the subject confidently and demonstrate to pupils the correct procedures. The overhead screen in the computer suite is used very effectively in lessons to show pupils exactly what to do and introduce new skills to the class. This means that time is used very efficiently as all pupils learn simultaneously and do not have to wait for individual help. Pupils are well managed and respond positively to the opportunities offered to them. They handle equipment with care and share it sensibly when working with a partner. A learning support assistant, who is based in the computer suite, is very knowledgeable and gives invaluable help to teachers and pupils. This has a very positive impact on the learning made by pupils of all abilities and ages. Teachers plan work carefully to help pupils develop their skills in a systematic way. Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive and are extremely eager to learn more. This was clearly seen in a very good Year 5 lesson where all pupils worked with great enthusiasm and intense concentration to complete their pictures created by manipulating shapes. They were extremely proud of their efforts and most reluctant to stop work at the end of the session.
110. Teachers keep a termly record of the approximate National Curriculum level attained by each pupil, although more formal and accurate assessments of attainment in the different aspects of the subject have yet to be developed. The computer club for pupils in Year 6 gives pupils further opportunities to improve their skills. They were seen confidently and enthusiastically using the

Internet to find pictures to add to their individual web sites. The computer suite is fully timetabled for individual classes and for special educational needs groups, who also use it during the lunch break. With such a large school this means that pupils in Year 1 can only use the suite once in every three weeks, which is too limited. The anticipated introduction of the laptops and more class computers is designed to ease some of the pressure and allow pupils more access.

MUSIC

111. Across the school standards are at expected levels. Pupils can sing in tune and have an evident sense of enjoyment in music making. Many pupils learn to play instruments such as trumpets, flutes, violins and drums. These lessons are taught by visiting music teachers from the local authority's music service. The choir and orchestra enrich the musical life of the school. Pupils who play instruments sometimes perform at assemblies and there is often an instrumental accompaniment to the regular hymn practices. There are also opportunities for public performances and this fosters links with the community.
112. Younger pupils respond well to music lessons. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils were able to read simple notation of rhythms, to beat a repeated pattern during the performance of a song and appraise how well this had worked. In this year group pupils learn about pitch and duration and about how sounds can be made in different ways. They also know about the various purposes of music, such as dance, lullabies and background music. In Years 1 and 2 all the lessons seen were satisfactory or better, although some teachers were not entirely confident about teaching music.
113. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Lessons are well planned and interesting. Older pupils grasp the difference between pulse and rhythm well and are able to demonstrate various rhythms using percussion instruments. Pupils can express their likes and dislikes of various types of music and many can recognise different instruments and use appropriate vocabulary to describe the sounds they make. Some of the work done by pupils has been recorded on cassette. A particularly striking piece depicts the journey of a river. This was a group composition and showed that pupils are able to improvise simple parts with an awareness of the contribution to the texture of the piece that each performer makes. Music is used as a stimulus for other artistic areas: for example, pupils have painted pictures in response to a piece of music. Pupils also listen to examples of music from other cultures and appraise them. There have been visits by Indian drummers, who demonstrated Bhangra music and the rhythmic patterns known as 'tals'. This ties in well with the work that Year 5 pupils are doing on creating and notating cyclical rhythmic patterns. Pupils co-operate well in small groups in the classroom and in larger ones such as the choir and orchestra and the subject makes a good contribution to their social development.
114. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection but there are still areas that need to be developed. The co-ordinator is a music specialist and recognises that not all areas of the curriculum, particularly composition, are fully developed. She is aware of the difficulties experienced by some teachers and supports colleagues by ensuring that the planning framework is suitable for non-specialist teachers to use with confidence. Planning is clear and is based on a commercial scheme and national guidance. The co-ordinator makes it clear to all teachers what pupils should achieve in each unit of the scheme of work. However, procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are not yet fully in place. The resources are adequate and are readily available. Pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language are supported appropriately and have full access to music. The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped in this subject, although there is some use of the 'Music Maker' program in Year 3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Across the school standards are at expected levels. At the last inspection standards were judged to be above average. Since then emphasis on improving standards in national initiatives such as

literacy and numeracy has led to physical education being given less attention. The school continues to teach all aspects of the subject, including outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming for older pupils. The school has also maintained the good provision of extra-curricular activities and competitive games. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

116. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand the need for a correct warm up at the start of each lesson. They join in warm up activities, such as a game of traffic lights, with enthusiasm and show a good awareness of space and the need to use it sensibly to avoid collisions. In Year 1 pupils are able to make stretched and curled shapes and have many imaginative ideas that they incorporate into a sequence. Pupils in Year 2 can control a small ball with a hockey stick successfully and move it through a series of cones with reasonable accuracy. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on the skills they have learned in games lessons and by the time they leave the school are able to take part successfully in a range of team games. Dance lessons introduce pupils to dances from around the world, such as Bhangra dancing and dances with an Australian aboriginal theme. The majority of pupils, both boys and girls, enjoy dance. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 5 jump from different heights showing interesting body positions and can put these together with balances to make a short sequence. All pupils in Year 5 go swimming and virtually all of them are able to swim 25 metres and are confident in water by the end of the year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to go on residential visits to activity centres and take part in a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities including raft building, orienteering and abseiling.

117. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory, with some good teaching. One lesson seen was very good. In this particular Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher kept pupils active and structured the learning to help pupils develop and refine their skills in clear steps giving them confidence. Their final performances, showing sequences of stretched and curled shapes, were of very high quality. They were clearly proud of their efforts. Teachers manage their pupils well, resulting in time being used effectively for learning new skills. Where teaching is less successful, teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to pitch the work at an appropriate level or to give pupils advice on how to improve their skills. For example, in one gymnastics lesson the activities were too advanced for the pupils and very few were able to make satisfactory progress. Pupils always dress correctly for lessons and teachers fully address all health and safety issues.
118. The school holds three annual sports events, which are well supported by parents and enjoyed by all. The school participates in competitive games, swimming and athletics against other local schools and has had a number of successes. The planning framework currently being used is not giving teachers sufficient guidance in planning lessons. The co-ordinator is actively looking at other planning schemes to supplement it and ensure that all aspects are successfully taught in a consistent and structured fashion. Assessment and recording procedures to monitor standards and help with planning have yet to be developed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are higher than those described in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The achievement of both boys and girls is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have a good understanding of the factual aspects of their studies. Older pupils can confidently give a personal response to religion and human experience. For example, a group of pupils in Year 6 were able to express that they think it is important to learn about faiths, because it helps with daily life, especially if they are feeling angry.
120. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to see any lessons in Year 1 and only one was seen in Year 2. Pupils learned effectively in this lesson and achieved well. They answered questions about the story of the Lost Sheep clearly and had a good understanding of the facts. Examination of the pupils' work shows that pupils are reasonably knowledgeable about the stories and symbols associated with other religions and show an understanding of customs and how they affect family life. They know that people worship in different places according to their religion. Pupils learn about a range of celebrations such as Christmas, the Festival of Light and the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. They learn that different groups of people believe different things.
121. It was not possible to see any lessons in Year 6. Examination of pupils' work and a discussion with pupils indicated that they have a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of the major world faiths they have studied. They understand the significance of artefacts used by different faiths. Pupils were particularly keen to talk about a recent visit when a Mullah, a leader from the Muslim faith, visited the school. They had seen a copy of the Qu'ran and knew it was written in Arabic, from right to left. The importance of this book was compared to the Bible for Christians. Pupils had written Sikh morning prayers and the Lord's Prayer in their own words.
122. In two good lessons Year 3 were learning about Jesus and what he means to Christians. A visiting speaker led the pupils through parables of Jesus and what they mean. Pupils could recall some events of his life, learned in previous lessons. They knew that he was born in Bethlehem, lived in Israel and died on a cross. Good use of visual aids and narrative skills brought these lessons alive. Another very good lesson in Year 5 introduced Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion. Almost all pupils know that something amazing happening is called a miracle. They understood the story and, whilst above average pupils retold the story independently, lower-attaining pupils were able to sequence the story accurately. Once again, skilled narrative and questioning skills lifted this lesson and helped the pupils to learn.

123. Pupils are very attentive during discussions in class and are keen to offer answers or share their ideas and thoughts. They are very good at listening to their teacher or to stories and reflecting on what they hear or feel. They respect each other's views. They work collaboratively on tasks they are set.
124. During the inspection it was not possible to see class teachers leading this subject with younger pupils because a regular visitor from a local group of churches took the lessons. There was insufficient evidence available to form judgements about the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because the school is following a new syllabus, which gives plenty of advice, guidance and examples so that the right things can be taught more easily. The subject is ably led by the co-ordinator, who supports colleagues by looking at termly plans, sampling pupils' work and observing lessons. As a result of the last inspection, resources have increased, including an appropriate range of artefacts, and the scheme of work has been rewritten to include more faiths. Further investment is planned to increase resources: for instance, Year 6 do not have ready access to a suitable set of class Bibles and some text books are rather dated. In-service provision is planned further to improve staff confidence to teach this subject. In the meantime the school pays for regular specialist visitors to teach lessons on particular areas of the syllabus. Visits to places of worship, other than Christian churches, are difficult because there are none close at hand. The school has taken appropriate steps to compensate by arranging for visitors to talk about different faiths. The programme of assemblies supports the religious education syllabus because it deals with common themes.