

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. ANSELM'S ROMAN CATHOLIC FIRST AND MIDDLE
SCHOOL**

Harrow

LEA area: Harrow

Unique reference number: 102230

Headteacher: Mrs S Kelly

Reporting inspector: Mr T Richardson
16500

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 June 2002

Inspection number: 194706

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Roxborough Park Harrow Middlesex
Postcode:	HA1 3BE
Telephone number:	0208 422 1600
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Knight
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16500	Mr T Richardson	Registered inspector	Music	How high are standards; how well are pupils taught; how well is the school led and managed
9883	Mr B Silvester	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; how well does the school care for its pupils; how well does the school work in partnership with parents
23009	Ms A Hogbin	Team inspector	Mathematics; foundation stage	
22058	Mrs C Richardson	Team inspector	Science; French; special educational needs	
1951	Ms Y Crizzle	Team inspector	English; information and communication technology; English as an additional language; equality of opportunity	
21899	Ms G Lawson	Team inspector	Design and technology; geography; history	
27055	Mr C Muirhead	Team inspector	Art and design; physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large voluntary aided Roman Catholic first and middle school for pupils aged 4 to 12. There are 431 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls. The majority of pupils are of white European heritage with 100 pupils from a mix of other ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has a very small number of refugees. Six pupils have English as an additional language and two of these are at an early stage of English acquisition. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average and the school also has below average numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Seven pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs, mainly for moderate and specific learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder. The socio-economic background of the pupils is above average and the attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. The school is popular and admits pupils from across the Borough of Harrow. At the time of the inspection, the religious nature of the school was being inspected. Confirmation was also received that, from September 2002, it is changing its nature to become a primary school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective in promoting well above average attainment in English, mathematics and science and has a strong Christian ethos that promotes good attitudes and values. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and other factors, such as the good teaching in Years 5, 6 and 7, the very good provision for homework, the strong support for learning given by parents and the revision for national tests, are also contributing to the good achievement of the pupils. The school is soundly led and has identified that more can be done to make sure that pupils receive a consistently good quality of teaching and learning in every class. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Has a strong Christian ethos that promotes good attitudes, values and relationships.
- Provides good quality teaching for children in the foundation stage and for pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 that leads to pupils achieving well in these years in school.
- Makes provision of a consistently good quality in French, music and science that leads to pupils doing well in these subjects.
- Makes very good use of homework, parental support and revision that also helps pupils to attain well above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Makes good use of monitoring and evaluation to determine the priorities for school improvement.

What could be improved

- There are variations in the quality of teaching between classes and some pupils are achieving at different rates each year.
- The areas selected by the school for improvement are not being implemented with sufficient speed to bring about effective change.
- Standards in information and communication technology are still below average.
- In physical education, the quality of teaching is not always sufficiently rigorous to promote good achievement for all pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in June 1997, the school has made satisfactory improvement. Good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are now in place. There are more examples of good quality teaching, and homework is used better to support learning and to raise standards. The information from school data is used well to determine the priorities for improvement, and there is now a good quality school development plan with appropriate training and professional development for staff. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the quality of assessment, and the curriculum is now planned better and of good quality. The positive outcomes of this work are seen in the

steady improvement in test results for English, mathematics and science. However, the school could have done more to reduce the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and to raise standards in information and communication technology.

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	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

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

Year 2 pupils' attainments in the 2001 national assessments for reading, writing and mathematics are well above the average for the nation and for similar schools; with the results in reading and mathematics being in the top five per cent of the country. Over the last five years, the school's results for pupils in Year 6 have been above or well above the national average and show a trend in improvement that is broadly in line with the national trend. The school sets targets that are appropriately challenging, and they are usually met each year. Inspection shows that pupils currently in Year 6 have above average attainment in English; and well above average attainment in mathematics and science. Most of the pupils in Year 7 have attainment that is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Children enter the foundation stage with levels of development that are broadly average for their age. They achieve well and enter Year 1 with above average attainment in most areas of their development. Pupils show satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2. Standards observed in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, are above average, with average standards in writing. In Years 3 to 6, the rate of progress for pupils can depend on which classes they are in over time. In general, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4; achieve well in Year 5; and continue this good achievement in Year 6. The pupils in Year 7 are taught well and achieve very well in response to the rigour and challenge in their lessons. In some classes, the needs of pupils with higher or lower attainment are not always met. Also, achievement throughout the school is not always as high as it could be because of the variations in teaching quality between classes. Inspectors judge that the contribution of homework and the revision programme for national tests are adding value to the overall satisfactory quality of teaching and learning and helping pupils to attain as they do. In science, music and French, pupils do well because they follow a systematic course and the subjects are taught consistently well. Standards in information and communication technology are below average because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to systematically develop their knowledge, understanding and skills with computers.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils concentrate, pay attention and are enthusiastic about their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite, courteous and well behaved. They follow instructions and work productively.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school's Christian ethos promotes positive relationships and encourages fairness, co-operation and politeness.
Attendance	Good. There are fewer absences than the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	good	satisfactory	satisfactory	good

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

Particular strengths in teaching and learning are: the very good specialist teaching of French, the specialist teaching of music, and the support for pupils with special educational needs, is of good quality; English, mathematics and science are usually taught well; good teaching generally takes place in Years 5 and 6 as well as in reception and Year 7; teachers use revision well to help pupils gain success in national tests; and very good use is made of homework to promote higher standards in English and mathematics. Areas for improvement are that: the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent between classes; there is often an emphasis on instruction rather than helping pupils to learn for themselves; some teachers are not providing work that is sufficiently different to meet the needs of the pupils with higher or lower attainment; teachers are not using computers sufficiently often; school policies are inconsistently applied; and some aspects of teaching in physical education could be improved. English and literacy are taught well overall in Years 1 to 6 and particularly well in Year 7. Teachers generally make a point of helping pupils to develop their reading, writing and listening skills in lessons other than English. There is good teaching of the basic skills of numeracy, especially in Year 7 and this is also addressed well in subjects other than mathematics. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and analyse what they find difficult and this leads them to develop a mature attitude to self-improvement. Pupils also learn best when teachers generate enthusiasm as this leads them to become very involved and to have the courage to try new ideas. Where teachers provide interesting practical challenges, the pupils devise increasingly successful solutions and learn a great deal at the same time.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned, especially in the foundation stage, Year 7, music, and French. The strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is good specialist teaching and pupils are supported well through the programmes detailed in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Effective support is generally provided throughout the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual development; good provision for their moral and social development; and satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them sound support and guidance. However, there is unsatisfactory completion of attendance registers and some teachers are using sanctions that are not part of the school's behaviour policy.

The school has a good partnership with its parents. Pupils receive very good benefit from the support given by parents for their homework.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound. School leaders are successful in setting a strong Christian ethos and enabling the school's aims to be met. Work to improve the school is steadily proving successful, but is taking a long time to show effect. The school is now in a position to introduce a more effective management structure.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is effective and carries out its responsibilities well. However, it has yet to challenge the school to bring about faster improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There is good identification of what needs to be done to develop the school. However, the action taken is not yet sufficiently rigorous to bring about lasting improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well through a good quality school development plan. The school operates efficiently and the principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

There are sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff. The school has appropriate learning resources for all subjects. The new buildings for reception and Year 1 are spacious and attractive. However, there is still not enough outdoor play space; children in the foundation stage lack a suitable outdoor area for play and physical development; the music room is too small; several classrooms are hot and stuffy in summer; and children often lack sun-protection when outside at play.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are expected to work hard. • There is good teaching and children make good progress. • Behaviour is good and children are helped to become mature and responsible. • There is a strong Catholic ethos and the school promotes good values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more interesting range of activities outside of lessons. • A closer partnership with parents. • There are some inconsistencies in provision between classes.

Inspectors agree that children like school, behave well, and that there is a strong Christian ethos that promotes good values. Inspectors also agree that the pupils generally make good progress but find that there are some inconsistencies in provision between classes. Inspectors judge that the school has a good partnership with parents and that there is a satisfactory range of activities outside of lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Performance data shows that the school and its pupils are doing well. The results of national tests in 2001 show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainments in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national average; with the results in reading and mathematics being in the top five per cent of the country. These results are also well above the average for similar schools. The pupils in Year 6 in 2001 did just as well. Their national test results are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science; and also well above the average for similar schools. When the Year 6 results are compared against how well those pupils did when they were in Year 2, it shows that pupils have made very good achievement over their time in school. Over the last five years, the school's results have been above or well above the national average and show a trend in improvement that is broadly in line with the national trend.
2. Inspection shows that, overall, pupils are doing well and demonstrating above average attainment in English; and well above average attainment in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Most of the pupils in Year 7 have attainment that is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Children enter the foundation stage with levels of development that are broadly average for their age. They benefit from the good provision made and are ready to enter Year 1 having exceeded the early learning goals in their mathematics, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development. Children are also currently meeting the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in their physical development. This represents a good achievement over their time in the reception class. Currently, pupils are showing satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2, as seen in class and the pupils' work, are average. Standards in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2 are above average. This shows that pupils are achieving as expected in Years 1 and 2 but at a satisfactory and slower rate than when in the reception class. This is because there are variations in the quality of teaching and learning between classes and not all teachers are building consistently on the good start provided in reception.
3. In Years 3 to 6, inspection shows that pupils regain momentum in their learning and the rate of progress improves again. This leads to pupils achieving well by the end of Year 6. However, once again, there are inconsistencies between classes in the quality of teaching and learning and the rate of progress for some pupils can depend on the classes they are in over this time. In general, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4, and do better when they enter Year 5 in response to the consistent good quality of the teaching in this year. Pupils continue to achieve well in Year 6. The pupils in Year 7 are taught well and achieve very well in response to the rigour and challenge in their lessons. However, in Years 3 to 6, there are other factors that also have an impact on pupils' attainment and achievement. In some lessons, teachers are setting the same work for the whole class to do and this does not always guarantee that the pupils with higher attainment are sufficiently challenged, or that the pupils with lower attainment are being supported in their learning. In English and science, teachers often have too great an emphasis on instruction rather than helping pupils to learn for themselves. As a result, a number of pupils are very clear about what to do to answer a written question but are less confident about explaining their reasoning and using their knowledge to solve new problems. In mathematics, there is an emphasis on calculation on paper which leads to some pupils being less secure in applying their mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems. In Year 6 some curriculum time is given to revision and preparation for tests. This is effective and helps pupils feel confident about taking national tests as well as helping them to attain high scores. Some pupils, however, express the opinion that they would like to move on to new knowledge rather than keep going over things they have done before. A key factor in the high attainment of pupils is the quality of homework and the contribution that parents make to pupils' learning at home. The tasks set for homework are well chosen and serve to both extend and consolidate

the learning objectives of lessons. Pupils' homework books show that work at home is completed with care and usually to a good quality. This indicates that parents value what their children do and are providing appropriate opportunities for them to study and discuss their work at home. Teachers usually mark this work well, and demonstrate to pupils that they value the work done at home. Inspectors judge that the contribution of homework and the revision programme for national tests are adding value to the quality of teaching and learning in Years 5, 6 and 7 and helping pupils to attain as they do.

4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. They grow in confidence and develop good self-esteem because of the good quality teaching they receive and the suitability of their individual education plans. Targets on individual education plans are specific and progress is measurable. The school makes good use of assessment information for the early identification of pupils' needs and for the formation of groups. The special needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants monitor the progress and attainment of these pupils carefully. As a result, some pupils with special educational needs frequently attain well for their abilities in national tests. Pupils who have English as an additional language generally demonstrate satisfactory achievement over their time in school.
5. In English and literacy, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average by the end of Year 2 and generally above average by the end of Years 6 and 7. Pupils communicate clearly and are confident in informal speaking situations. In reading, by the end of Year 2 attainment is above average. Pupils recognise many whole words, identify characters and begin to talk about them with developing understanding. By the end of Year 6 and in Year 7, pupils attain standards in reading that are also above average. Pupils' higher order skills, such as skimming and scanning, are well developed and practised through appropriate opportunities to research material in books. Attainment in writing for pupils by the end of Year 2 is average. Pupils develop spelling skills satisfactorily, construct sentences and use simple punctuation appropriately. By the end of Year 6, attainment in writing is above average and well above average in Year 7. There are many examples of grammatically correct work. Pupils produce interesting texts that show good use of punctuation, persuasive language and humour.
6. Teachers effectively include aspects of numeracy in subjects other than mathematics. Year 2 pupils have standards in mathematics that are above average. They use and apply their knowledge very well in solving theoretical written and mental problems. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are well above average and pupils work very confidently within the four rules of number. They know how to read written questions carefully to identify the mathematics they need to use to arrive at a correct answer. In science, pupils demonstrate standards in Year 2 that are above average, and Year 6 pupils attain at well above average. They do well because they follow a systematic programme of work with good emphasis on practical enquiry and experimentation, and topics are systematically re-visited at a higher level as pupils move through the school. Standards in music are well above average by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. This is because the subject is taught consistently well to every class and the high expectations of the teacher inspire the pupils to try hard to improve their knowledge and performance skills. However, the music room is too small and is restricting the achievement of the pupils. Standards in French are above average in Year 7, and the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are also doing well. This is also due to the consistent high quality of the specialist teaching.
7. In other subjects, by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards in art and design, geography, design and technology, history and physical education. By the end of Year 6, standards in design and technology are above average and pupils show skill in their designing, model making and evaluation. This represents good achievement over time between Year 2 and Year 6. In art and design, geography, history and physical education, pupils in Year 6 show satisfactory achievement over their time in Years 3 to 6 and average standards in these subjects. The pupils in Year 7 show good achievement in geography and history as standards have gone up from the end of Year 6 and are now above average. Standards in design and technology in Year 7 continue to be above average. Pupils show

satisfactory achievement in art and design and physical education to reach average standards in these subjects.

8. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology are below average. Pupils make limited progress in lessons, and achievement overall is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to systematically develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Also, there is too great an emphasis on teachers following planned topics rather than taking account of what pupils already know and understand.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils are keen to attend the school and play a full part in its life. They have good attitudes and concentrate, pay attention to their teacher and generally get on well with the work given. They are keen to answer questions and to participate in their lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are keen to make progress.
10. The behaviour of the pupils, in class and around the school, is good overall. Pupils are polite and courteous; they are very articulate and welcoming to visitors. In class they follow instructions and work productively. Parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour achieved and inspectors support their views that behaviour is generally good. Occasional instances were observed, however, where pupils did not listen to their teacher, went off task and disrupted others. There were no exclusions in the year before this inspection or at the time of the previous inspection.
11. Relationships, between pupils and between pupils and adults, are good. Positive relationships are successfully encouraged, along with fairness, co-operation and politeness. Older pupils are always willing to help the younger ones. Pupils readily share resources, take turns and work well together in pairs and in groups. The pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are well integrated into the life of the school and there are very few incidents of a racist nature.
12. The personal development of the pupils is satisfactory. They respond well to the opportunities given to take responsibility but these could be expanded further. The school has already recognised this and further development of independent learning is a whole-school focus for 2002/3. There is a weekly 'well done' assembly and classes take it in turns to lead an assembly to which their parents are invited. There is a School Council in Year 7, but this has not yet been expanded to encompass the whole school. Year 6 pupils participate in a 'junior citizens' project, run by the local emergency services, and the school choir sings for the local community in a festival. They also sing carols to raise funds outside the tube station. Pupils show initiative by originating fund raising for charities, like Comic Relief and Cafod. Some girls have recently taken the initiative and successfully persuaded the school to allow girls to wear trousers. A group of pupils also produce a school magazine.
13. The level of attendance is good. Attendance in 2002/01 was 95 per cent, which is above the national average. Unauthorised absences in the same year were broadly in line with the national average. The level of attendance has increased by 2 per cent since the previous inspection. The main reasons for absence are illness and holidays during term time. Most pupils are punctual with only eight or nine pupils on average arriving late. The good level of attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the pupils' attainment and achievement.
14. In the previous inspection report it stated that attitudes to work, relationships, racial harmony and attendance were all good. This is still the case.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Inspectors observed 83 lessons for a total time of more than 57 hours. Of these observations, half of all lessons seen were good, with an additional quarter of lessons being very good. Two out of ten lessons were judged to contain satisfactory teaching and learning, with less than one out of ten lessons being unsatisfactory. This shows that there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection as there are now more examples of good teaching to be seen than before. Inspectors' judgements are also based on the analysis of pupils' work over time and not just on the lessons observed during the inspection. Full analysis of the quality of teaching and learning highlights some common features that the school does well, as follows:
- There is very good specialist teaching of French;
 - There is consistently good teaching of music;
 - The specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs is of good quality;
 - Good teaching is generally provided for pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7;
 - Children in the foundation stage have good teaching;
 - The quality of teaching and learning is generally good in English, mathematics and science;
 - Teachers use revision well to help pupils gain success in national tests;
 - Very good use is made of homework to promote higher standards in English and mathematics.
16. Analysis of lesson observations and pupils' work over time also highlights some common areas that the school could improve, as follows:
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent between classes and years in school;
 - There is an emphasis on instruction rather than helping pupils to learn for themselves;
 - Some teachers are not providing activities that are sufficiently different to challenge the pupils with higher attainment and support the learning needs of pupils with lower attainment in the class;
 - Teachers are not using computers sufficiently often, or well enough, to aid learning in all subjects;
 - Not all teachers are consistently implementing school policies in their classrooms;
 - A number of the unsatisfactory lessons seen were in physical education.
17. Despite the proportion of good lessons observed, the school still has work to do to improve the consistency of teaching quality throughout the school. Also, insufficient emphasis is given to teachers, including new and temporary staff, on working at a required standard of quality at all times. Teaching is satisfactory in art and design and physical education. The quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and not enough evidence was seen in design and technology to make an overall judgement. Literacy is taught satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6 and taught well in Year 7. Teachers generally make a point of helping pupils to develop their reading, writing and listening skills in lesson other than English. However, in some classes, insufficient attention is given to helping pupils develop their phonic skills and this slows their reading development a little. There is good teaching of the basic skills of numeracy overall, and this is done very well for pupils in Year 7. Teachers make good use of the opportunities to reinforce mathematical concepts in other lessons, for example, by counting jumps in physical education and studying the mathematics of music.
18. Where teaching and learning are very good, the following points were noted:
- Teachers provide challenge and encourage pupils to think for themselves. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 5 pupils the teacher used challenging questions to lead pupils step by step to understand how to change fractions such as one twenty-ninth into decimals. The pupils were also asked to provide clear explanations about their working out and were encouraged to question each other and this successfully raised the level of their understanding. In this same lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to assess and

analyse for themselves what they found difficult and why and this practice was clearly leading pupils to develop a mature attitude to helping themselves improve.

- Teachers are 'creative' and deviate from their plans to strengthen pupils' skills and understanding. For example, in a music lesson for Year 6 pupils, the teacher introduced a new song with the intention of developing this further in the next lesson. However, the pupils responded with enthusiasm and the teacher seized this opportunity to build on their singing skills. She devoted time to teaching the pupils other parts and they quickly responded by extended their skills to give a very good rendition of the song in three part harmony.
 - Teachers generate enthusiasm for learning and let the pupils know what is expected of them. This was seen in a lesson in French for Year 7 pupils where the teacher engaged the pupils immediately at the start of the lesson and kept a brisk pace of conversation in French. This led the pupils to be very involved and to have courage in their pronunciation, as the teacher made it interesting and easy for them to have a try. In addition, the teacher made sure the pupils knew exactly how their learning fitted into the expectations of high schools and this made the pupils work hard so that they would be better prepared to enter Year 8.
 - Teachers encourage pupils to use practical activities to test their predictions. For example, in a design and technology lesson in Year 7, the teacher challenged the pupils to investigate how to raise and lower marbles by using a windmill sail and a hair dryer as wind source. This led the pupils to devise increasingly successful ways of adjusting the angle and dimensions of the sail and through this activity, including discussion and evaluation, they learnt a great deal about wind power and resistance.
 - Teachers plan and organise lessons very well so that pupils know what they are doing, and the activities are designed to challenge higher attaining pupils as well as support lower attaining pupils. This was seen in a reception class where the room was very well organised with a range of interesting activities and a clear timetable of symbols and pictures that all the children could read. As soon as the whole class activity was completed, the children went eagerly to their group tasks where adults intervened skilfully to help higher attaining children identify different materials and use the correct technical vocabulary for their properties. At the same time, lower attaining children were encouraged to have a try at writing and received effective praise for their efforts that led them to try even harder to do more.
19. The special needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants ensure that tasks are matched to pupils' abilities well. There are a considerable number of occasions on which pupils are withdrawn for support in small groups with the special needs co-ordinator. Although the quality of the teaching within the groups is consistently of good quality, these pupils sometimes miss out on what the others are learning in class, and teachers are not always planning how best to support these pupils in all lessons. Staff who work with pupils with special educational needs keep good records and share information well. For pupils with English as an additional language, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but teachers' plans and methods could take more account of the language needs of developing bilingual pupils.
20. In a number of lessons, teachers give instruction rather than helping pupils to learn for themselves. For example, in a science lesson in Year 6, the teacher had prepared experiments for the pupils to carry out by following the written instructions provided. This was effective in that all the experiments were successful and the pupils obtained reliable and accurate results. However, the pupils were not used to reasoning and found it difficult to use their knowledge to consider, for example, why the brightness of a bulb was affected by the introduction of a resistor into the circuit. In the unsatisfactory lessons seen, teachers had low expectations both for what the pupils should know and for their behaviour during the lesson. Where teaching was unsatisfactory in physical education, instructions were insufficiently clear, lessons were at a slow pace, pupils were given insufficient feedback on the quality of their performance and were inactive for too long during the lesson.

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

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in the foundation stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 to 6, and very good in Year 7. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met, with satisfactory breadth and balance in Years 1 and 2 and good balance in the foundation stage, Years 3 to 6 and Year 7. The curriculum promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and is accessible to all of the pupils. The school also has a well-developed programme for promoting emotional and personal relationships. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in the way that the curriculum is planned and suitable schemes of work have been developed in all subjects. In science and music the school follows its own well developed schemes. In music the quality of curriculum provided is very good. As a result, pupils build continuously upon their previous experiences as they move through the school. In addition, the school includes French as a modern language for pupils in Years 5 and 6 as well as for those in Year 7. This subject has a good curriculum that is effective in raising standards. Provision for special educational needs is good because of the good teaching and programmes to support pupils with additional special educational needs. All staff involved in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs contribute effectively to the preparation and review of individual education plans
22. Within this overall good curriculum there are still some areas that could be improved. For example:
- In mathematics, there is too much emphasis on calculation and exercises on paper at the expense of other areas of the subject.
 - Whilst the planned curriculum for information and communication technology is appropriate, standards are still too low, and computers are underused in all other subjects, and particularly in mathematics, music, history and geography.
23. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well and these have a positive impact on pupils' learning and standards. The school has good strategies for teaching numeracy skills. There are appropriate examples of the way different subjects develop pupils' mathematical understanding, for example by the use of timelines in history, and the making of symmetrical body patterns in physical education. Teachers also use other subjects appropriately to help pupils develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening.
24. Inspectors noted in a number of lessons that the needs of pupils with lower attainment are not always met. This is because teachers are planning work that is aimed at the class average and are not routinely including different work that supports the learning needs of these pupils. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory, and there are examples of pupils being helped appropriately with their language acquisition throughout the school.
25. The parental survey shows that a significant number of parents disagree that the school is providing an interesting range of activities outside lessons. However, inspectors find the provision to be satisfactory overall, but with few opportunities for the youngest pupils. Year 7 pupils also feel that they have fewer opportunities to attend clubs. The quality of the activities provided is often good and they contribute effectively to the pupils' social and wider development. Older children are able to join clubs for netball, rounders, football and visiting coaches provide regular tennis sessions before and after school. The games curriculum has been enhanced through visits by cricket coaches from Middlesex County Cricket Club. There are opportunities for instrumental tuition and other activities in music with groups for guitar, violin, recorder, choir and brass. Chess is available for older pupils and there is an art club for Year 3 pupils. In addition, there are opportunities for the pupils to take part in competitive sport activities, for example netball rallies and football tournaments, and the school holds annual sports days. Some pupils, however, find it difficult to take part in after school activities because of the distance they live from the school and the need to travel home on the school bus.

26. The curriculum is further enhanced by an appropriate range of out of school visits. The local environment provides an effective resource for history, science and art topics. Year 6 pupils have sketched a landscape scene in the field and then followed up back in school with good quality pastel pictures. Classes visit Harrow School as part of a history topic and are able to see and handle items used by pupils in the past, as well as view signatures from famous past pupils carved in the classroom! Local buildings are studied for their architectural features. Year 5 pupils can attend a residential trip to Sayers Croft, near Ewhurst in Surrey. The activities here help build self-esteem and make a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development. Other outings take place to the Gunnersbury Museum to look at Victorian artefacts and the Hendon RAF Museum for a World War II topic.
27. Provision for the pupils, personal, social and health education is good. Issues are effectively addressed in all classes, through circle time, as part of assemblies and through discussion in lessons on relationships, the code of behaviour and environmental concerns. Provision is made for older pupils to develop responsibility but pupils could have more opportunities to demonstrate their initiative. Currently only Year 7 pupils are able to serve on the School Council but plans are in hand to extend this throughout the entire school soon. Year 6 pupils attend the Junior Citizen programme that fosters responsibility and teaches pupils how to react appropriately to a number of situations. The school has a strong homework policy. It receives good support from parents and contributes strongly to the pupils' progress and learning. The governing body has approved policies for sex education and drug education; and health education is suitably included within the science curriculum.
28. The school has satisfactory relationships with partner institutions, with links to secondary schools in the Borough ensuring a smooth transition for transferring pupils. Some pupils transfer to other schools outside of Harrow and satisfactory arrangements for this are made. Year 5 pupils are able to attend taster days at the High Schools. There are effective links to centres of further education with post-graduate students from the University of Hertfordshire completing teaching practices at the school and links to Stanmore College which provides students on vocational child care courses.
29. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. The provision for spiritual education is very good and has been inspected separately under the auspices of the Catholic faith. Good examples were seen in lessons of teachers taking opportunities to enhance spirituality. For example, in Reception, children showed awe as the picture of a balloon unfolded in a story read by a learning support assistant and in a Year 6 music lesson when the mythical origins of music were explored. The pupils also considered the emotional effect that the sudden onset of music can have. Praise assemblies enable the school community to recognise, congratulate and share in pupils' achievements and interests outside of school.
30. There is good provision for moral development. All pupils are guided by the school's Christian ethos, code of conduct and Golden Rules that are prominently displayed in classes. This code is promoted consistently throughout all aspects of school life. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded through the house point system in Years 4 to 7, and individual class teachers use a range of positive rewards. There is a 'Well Done' assembly for pupils in Years 4 to 7, and certificates are awarded for merit in all areas of school life. 'Circle time' takes place in most classes and this provides suitable opportunities for pupils to explore moral concepts and values. Also, each classroom has a good quality display dealing with a moral issue and these provide effective daily reminders to pupils of their moral responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and show respect for the school environment. Some visitors from other faiths, for example Islam, also come into school to talk about their faith's moral code.
31. The provision for social development is good. The good working atmosphere of mutual respect in classes develops collaboration and pupils' understanding of the needs of others. The school works well as a community and pupils learn the part they need to play. They co-operate well with their peers and with adults. They respect property and play their part in keeping the school tidy. Opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to work in pairs and in small groups, for

example in physical education lessons and science experiments. Pupils are actively encouraged to think of others and the wider community. A good initiative is the 'Work Lottery' where each week a number is picked out which corresponds to the register number. The pupil with that number from each class brings the piece of work they consider to be their best to show to the headteacher or deputy, and talks through how they produced it and why they like it. This process shows pupils that their work is valued by adults and helps their self-esteem to grow.

32. Cultural development is satisfactory. There are suitable opportunities in the curriculum for cultural values to be developed. For example in historical work, debates on current affairs, and geographical topics where the school actively avoids stereotypes and presents positive images of countries and peoples studied. The school promotes individual gifts and talents in pupils: this is central to the school's mission statement. Pupils take part in the Borough Music Festival, make contributions to the Borough 'Songfest' and have their understanding enhanced by the visit of storytellers from different cultures. Pupils are able to join visits to ballet performances. The music curriculum gives a very good cultural emphasis. Pupils also study other parts of the world as part of geography topics, for example St. Lucia and Chembokoli in India. During a lesson on Chembokoli the pupils showed a genuine appreciation of another culture and different lifestyle. In one Year 3 class a pupil had recently visited relations in Sri Lanka and had created a display showing artefacts. The class enjoyed hearing first hand what life was like in Sri Lanka. The teacher was effective in using one pupil's experiences to promote other pupils' cultural understanding. However, there is a lack of resources, both books and artefacts, for multicultural education which the school should address. As a result, the school's appropriate promotion of inclusion and tolerance is insufficiently obvious for all to see.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The steps taken to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them sound support and guidance. The school aim to have a happy, caring, safe environment is achieved. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy, which is in the course of being updated. The premises committee of the governing body carries out a buildings and grounds check, at least once each term. The local education authority assesses the condition of the school and carries out risk surveys annually. The amount of play space is limited and there is a shortage of shade from the sun; a few pupils do wear protective caps. Parents are informed appropriately of any bangs on the head that occur. Safety procedures are applied in science lessons but not always in physical education lessons, in that jewellery is not always removed before the start of the lesson. The school has a medical room, a full-time welfare assistant and several qualified first aiders. The school nurse carries out health and vision checks and the school doctor completes medicals on request. There is good support from outside agencies and the police involvement officer provides a programme of personal safety and citizenship for the pupils. The 'walking bus' initiative is very successful and ensures the safety of the pupils concerned to and from school.
34. The school has an appropriate child protection policy, which is to be reviewed when new local education authority guidelines are issued in the autumn. The child protection co-ordinator, the deputy headteacher and the full-time welfare assistant are trained in child protection procedures. The members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, are given appropriate awareness sessions in child protection.
35. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are satisfactory overall and very good in the reception classes. The personal development of the pupils is monitored by their class teachers and informal records are kept. Some reference to the pupils' personal development is made in their annual report. Pupils have one educational and personal relationships lesson per week. Their personal development is supported by the satisfactory opportunities they have to take responsibilities in their classes and around the school. The support for children with special needs is good because relationships between pupils and staff are good and learning takes place in a purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are aware of their targets and contribute to the discussion of what they need to learn next or to improve. The school

complies fully with the Code of Practice and is well prepared for the new arrangements to be introduced in the autumn term. The school works well with outside agencies, which enhances pupils' learning effectively.

36. There are good assessment procedures for the pupils on entry to school and at the end of each key stage. The use of the optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 enables the school to assess effectively the pupils' ability in literacy and numeracy. The results of statutory tests are used effectively to identify areas for development and improvement. The headteacher carries out a thorough analysis and makes a presentation to staff and governors. The effectiveness of this is demonstrated by the identification of writing as a weaker area with the result that the school has been able to take steps to address the issue, and bring about some improvements.
37. Most teachers make satisfactory use of assessment data to inform their lesson planning. Teachers make appropriate use of on-going assessment and this is reflected in their future planning. In literacy, pupils have been given individual targets but there is not consistent practice across the school with teachers recording targets and progress in different ways. In some of the classes for older pupils, the pupils have been involved in self-assessment, but this practice is variable. Similarly the school marking policy is being interpreted in different ways across the school with some very good and some less good practice being seen. The school recognises that it needs to move forward in developing a whole school approach to target setting, and the monitoring of progress. There is an assessment policy and subject policies include sections on assessment but in some cases, for example in art and physical education, this needs reviewing to reflect recent changes in the curriculum.
38. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. Attendance is monitored by an administrative assistant, class teachers and the headteacher. However, the attendance registers were examined during the inspection week and almost half of them were found to be not completed properly. There were numerous examples where pupils had no mark by their name, so it was impossible to know whether that pupil was present or not on that day. This is a health and safety risk, should there be an emergency, and does not meet statutory requirements. The school monitors appropriately for patterns of absence or long-term absence. In these cases parents are contacted. The educational social worker visits regularly and makes home visits to those cases that are causing concern. The school does not have a system of rewards to encourage good or improved attendance and punctuality.
39. Currently, there are significant weaknesses in the schools' procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There is an appropriate behaviour management policy, which contains a suitable range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour, and pupils generally behave well in school. However, the policy and sanctions are not always consistently applied and this gives pupils a mixed message. Also, some teachers operate a number of sanctions which are not part of the behaviour management policy. In these cases, if a pupil misbehaves he or she can be sent to another class, usually a class of younger pupils. Also, in some classes, lessons in subjects, like art and physical education, do not take place if the teacher has judged that the class has misbehaved. In addition, not doing homework is sometimes offered as a reward for good behaviour. Some parents expressed concern at these unofficial rewards and sanctions and inspectors agree that the school's policy should be applied consistently in every class. The school's procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. The school has a draft ant-bullying policy. Incidents of bullying or racial incidents are rare, but when they do occur they are investigated thoroughly. Swift action is taken, parents are involved and appropriate records are kept.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The parents' views of the school are satisfactory and the school has the confidence of all the communities represented by the pupils and their families. The school's partnership with parents has improved since the previous inspection and the home/school link book continues to be a useful method of communication. Currently, parents are generally supportive of the school, but a

minority do have some concerns in a few areas. In the parental questionnaire for the inspection, a significant number of parents did not think the school provided an interesting range of activities outside of lessons and the school did not work closely with parents. The inspection evidence does not support these views. Within the limitations of a lack of play space, and many pupils who find it difficult to stay behind for activities because of transport availability, the provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The school does work closely with parents and the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Some parents expressed concern about the inconsistency in provision between classes and this view is confirmed by the inspection evidence.

41. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Regular newsletters are sent out to inform parents of current developments and effective use is made of the school notice board. An induction meeting is held for parents new to the school in the term before their child starts school. There are meetings for parents to help their child prepare for their first sacramental programme. Parental workshops on curriculum matters, like numeracy and literacy, are held and one of the school's areas for improvement is more parental consultation and this has been identified on the school development plan. There are two opportunities per year for parents to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher, in the autumn and spring terms. The attendance at these parents' meetings is very good. The pupils' annual reports are sent out towards the end of the summer term and parents can discuss these with teachers, if they wish. These reports are very good in the reception classes but are less detailed in the other classes and have fewer targets for improvement. The annual governors' report to parents does not contain information about the progress on the action plan following the previous Ofsted inspection.
42. Parental involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. The contribution parents make to children's learning, at school and at home, is very good. The use of homework is very good overall. There is a clear homework policy, which is generally adhered to. There is very good parental support for the completion of homework and this is a contributory factor in the high standards achieved in the school. Parents are encouraged to help in the school and a number, around 8 to 10 per week, take up this opportunity. In September, 40 parental volunteers are due to begin to hear readers in Years 1 to 3, after they have received training. Parents of pupils with special educational needs support the work of the school very well by helping children with their homework, especially through reading and language activities and additional number work. This enables pupils to make better progress. They are fully informed about their child's progress and have good opportunities to discuss targets and reviews of individual education plans with the school. Parents sign Individual education plans and have a copy of them so that they and can see how well their child is progressing towards the targets.
43. The Staff and Parents' Association (SPA) is active and organises a range of events, like an Autumn Fayre, an Irish night and a Christmas dance. Social events are held to help build the school community. The money raised by the SPA is used effectively to obtain resources for the school, like computers. Parents also collect vouchers to obtain resources for the school. Each pupil has a home/school link book and a reading record book. These are a valuable communication link between home and school. The home/school link book was used particularly well in a Year 5 class. There are three 'walking buses' at the school organised and run by parents, and these have been a great success and received a first prize for 'green travel'. Parents are also invited to special events like class assemblies and performances.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The headteacher and key staff provide sound leadership for the work of the school. This is effective in:
 - ensuring the school's aims and values are reflected well throughout the school;
 - establishing a strong Christian ethos;
 - promoting high standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science;
 - setting a clear vision for school improvement;

- monitoring the work of the school and identifying the priorities for improvement;
 - producing a school development plan of good quality;
 - supporting the professional development of staff;
 - improving the buildings and décor of the school;
 - managing the day to day affairs of the school;
 - promoting inclusion and racial harmony.
45. There are, however, areas for improvement in the quality of leadership and these are in:
- taking effective action to ensure a consistent quality of teaching throughout the school;
 - making sure that school policies are implemented by everyone;
 - establishing an effective management structure;
 - ensuring subject co-ordinators are effective in improving the quality of provision in their subject;
 - ensuring that change takes place at a faster pace.
46. Since the last inspection, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to improve and develop the school. When first in post, they identified correctly the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning by helping staff to change from instructing the class to using a variety of teaching methods and styles to match the learning needs of the pupils. This work is steadily proving successful but is taking a long time to show effect throughout the school. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the quality of assessment and school data is now analysed well to identify where development is needed. Also, good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are now in place. The headteacher and deputy use this information well to determine the school's priorities for improvement and support this with a good quality school development plan. From this, appropriate training and professional development is provided for staff. The positive outcomes of this work are seen in the steady improvement in test results for English, mathematics and science. In addition, the school's curriculum has improved and is planned better; there are now more examples of good quality teaching than at the last inspection; and homework is used better to support learning and to raise standards. However, school leaders are insufficiently rigorous in putting right quickly the areas they identify for improvement. They know what the right thing is to do, but are less rigorous in making sure that others do the right thing for the pupils. As a result, there is still an inconsistency in quality between classes and year groups. Also, policies, such as the behaviour policy, are interpreted in different ways with some teachers using sanctions that are not the school's official policy.
47. Much of the development work in school is carried out by the headteacher and deputy. There is a school management team and this is effective in promoting the school's aims and ethos. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked steadily to enable other members of staff to take leadership roles. As a result, the school is now, rightly, considering a formal management structure to ensure, for example: the smooth transition of children from Reception into Year 1; and the leadership of teams of teachers towards working and planning together. However, despite the improvements made, there are still some personnel who find it difficult to respond to changes. Also, there is not an equitable distribution of subject leadership responsibilities and subject co-ordinators are not always taking the initiative to lead development in their subjects. This means that, while co-ordinators monitor appropriately the activities and topics planned they are not sufficiently effective in making sure that their subject is taught equally well in all classes.
48. The governing body is constituted appropriately so that financial operations are carried out well and agenda items in meetings are seen through to completion. Governors provide satisfactory support for the running of the school and are suitably informed and aware of what works well and what should be improved. There is a special needs governor who works in the school and has a very good understanding of the range of provision within the school. The special needs co-ordinator manages the provision well and has produced a good handbook for teaching assistants. The school has a good team of experienced and skilled teaching assistants and their work supports the pupils with special educational needs well. The school uses money from the school budget appropriately to supplement the annual funding for special educational needs and ensures that needs are identified quickly so that early intervention takes place. Where

governors can improve is in challenging the school with increased rigour to set in place an effective leadership structure and bring about faster improvements in providing a consistent quality of teaching.

49. The extent to which the principles of best value are applied is satisfactory. The school ensures it has competitive prices by obtaining quotes from various suppliers. There is also appropriate consultation with parents about, for example, what events should be held to raise money to purchase resources for the school. The other elements of best value, namely 'challenge and compare' are less well developed. For example, the school is investing money in training and development for staff but is only seeing a slight benefit from this in improved classroom practice. The strategic use of resources, including specific grants and other funding is good. Specific grants are used effectively for their designated purposes and contribute to the good standards achieved. The way that educational priorities are supported through the school's financial planning is good. The school development plan contains clear success criteria, with a lead person identified, is costed and a date is set by when the action required should be completed. The school development plan clearly identifies the future priorities of the school and is now appropriately reviewed and approved by the governing body. The school has recently had a financial audit. Eighteen recommendations were made and the school is acting appropriately to address most of these. However, one recommendation was to make sure that the ordering and paying for goods should not be carried out by the same person. The school has decided not to accept this recommendation and governors have not yet rectified this situation. New technology is used satisfactorily for office purposes. It is used for day-to-day and overall budgetary control, personnel matters, pupil database and monitoring pupils' holidays in term time. However, it is not used to monitor attendance and teachers are not making sufficient use of computers to simplify and reduce their work-load.
50. The school has sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff. Whilst recruiting new staff is difficult, many teachers have been at the school for some time and nearly all teaching posts are filled with suitably qualified and experienced personnel. There are appropriate arrangements for performance management and the provision of professional development and these opportunities are open to teaching assistants as well as teachers. A good arrangement is made in providing specialist teachers for music and French. This ensures the subjects are taught with consistent quality and leads directly to higher standards in both subjects. The school is appropriately resourced for all subjects. New buildings have been provided for reception and Year 1 and these are light spacious and attractive. The school is also working systematically to refurbish and renovate older parts of the buildings and this is steadily improving the learning environment for the pupils. There are, however, a number of accommodation issues still outstanding:
- despite best efforts, there is still not enough outdoor play space for the pupils;
 - children in the foundation stage lack a suitable outdoor area for play and physical development;
 - the music room is too small and preventing standards from being even higher;
 - several classrooms become too hot and stuffy in summer; and
 - children lack sun-protection when outside at play.
51. Despite the high standards in test results, the school provides satisfactory value for money as school leaders and governors still have much to do to ensure that all pupils receive a consistent high quality of education in each class as they move through the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. School leaders, governors and staff should now
1. Ensure a consistent quality of teaching in all subjects throughout the school* (paragraphs 2, 3, 16) by:
 - identifying existing best practice and using this to establish the quality standard expected of all teachers in the school;
 - clearly communicate this standard to all teachers, including those employed temporarily;
 - routinely monitor the quality of teaching against this standard;
 - take effective action on the basis of this monitoring to ensure that all lessons are taught to at least the agreed standard.
 2. Increase the speed and rigour of school improvement (paragraphs 39, 45, 46) by:
 - providing a management structure that will ensure appropriate leadership for teams of staff within the school;
 - ensuring that all personnel share a commitment to improving the school;
 - ensuring that all personnel implement all school policies consistently at all times;
 - enabling subject leaders to be more effective in raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
 3. Raise standards in information and communication technology* (paragraphs 8, 22, 116-120) by:
 - making sure that all teachers improve significantly their skills in the subject;
 - making sure that teachers help pupils to build on their existing skills with computers;
 - making sure that pupils have sufficient opportunities each week to practise and improve their skills;
 - making sure that computers are used much more to aid learning in every subject.
 4. Improve the quality of teaching in physical education (paragraphs 20, 137) by:
 - making sure that lessons have a sufficiently fast pace;
 - making sure that teachers give clear instructions and provide appropriate feedback so that pupils know how to improve their performance;
 - making sure that pupils are sufficiently energetic and active throughout all lessons.
53. In addition, the school and governors should also continue to seek to improve the accommodation (paragraphs 33, 50, 55, 133) so that:
- children in the foundation stage have an appropriate outdoor play area;*
 - all pupils have sufficient outdoor play space;*
 - pupils have sufficient protection from the sun in summer time;
 - music lessons take place in a room of sufficient size;

and make sure that the marking of registers meets requirements (paragraph 38).

* already identified by the school as areas for improvement

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	83
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	22	39	16	6	0	0
Percentage	0	27	47	19	7	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	431
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	74

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	31	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	30	30	31
	Total	58	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	98 (95)	100 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	30	31	31
	Total	58	59	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	100 (95)	100 (98)
	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	36	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	22	24
	Girls	32	29	33
	Total	54	51	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (93)	85 (95)	95 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	22	24
	Girls	28	29	31
	Total	49	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (95)	85 (95)	92 (95)
	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	6
Black – African heritage	17
Black – other	11
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	331
Any other minority ethnic group	66

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	259

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	1,019,068
Total expenditure	1,027,270
Expenditure per pupil	2,383
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,564
Balance carried forward to next year	35,362

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	431
Number of questionnaires returned	156

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	38	4	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	46	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	47	15	1	1
The teaching is good.	54	43	2	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	13	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	40	8	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	41	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	33	41	17	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	38	43	10	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	43	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	37	28	9	6

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Additional comments were received on 37 questionnaires. A significant proportion of these were supportive comments about the school's Christian ethos and the quality of provision. A number of parents also commented on some inconsistencies in the school's provision.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Provision in the foundation stage is good. Children start the Reception classes when they are four years old. There is no nursery and children come from a variety of pre-school settings. Children's level of attainment on entry varies but overall, attainment is similar to that found nationally for children with the same age and experience. The school offers a good range of learning opportunities with a strong focus on music and creativity and all learning is underpinned by the principles of the Catholic faith. The new foundation stage curriculum has been successfully introduced, although systems to check how well different groups of children are achieving in relation to the Early Learning Goals have not yet been developed. This provision was not reported on in the last inspection.
55. There is no separate, secure playing space for the Reception classes, and the available play area outside their rooms has no shade or cover. This prevents the space outside classrooms being used as an extension to the learning environment for most of the year. Teachers provide a good mix of structured sessions of whole class or group learning, as well as activities directed by an adult or those initiated by the children. The statutory testing of children when they start school is carried out as required. However, the procedures to check the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of standards attained and rates of learning over a complete year have not been fully developed and teachers therefore have no secure yardstick by which to measure the effectiveness of their teaching.
56. The provision for children with special needs is good. However, the teaching for children who are at an early stage of learning English as a second language is unsatisfactory, as teachers have had insufficient training to know the best ways to help them. Therefore, these children do not make as much progress as they could. The vast majority of children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in mathematics, creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world and to far exceed the goals for their personal, social, and emotional development. They are likely to meet the goals in physical development and communications, language and literacy when they start Year 1. They reach high standards in music.
57. Of the six observations made during the inspection, three displayed good teaching and three were very good. Teachers and assistants plan well together and share ideas and expertise about the best methods and resources to use. They work hard to make their teaching interesting and stimulating for the children and to make the best use of the adult help available to them. Teachers have very good relationships with their children and manage them very well. They give praise and encouragement, making positive suggestion and providing plenty of stimulating activities for them to try. As a result, behaviour in classrooms is very good and children develop very good attitudes towards school and learning. Teachers keep detailed observations about the strengths and weaknesses in children's behaviour and work, especially in reading and writing, which they use to set targets for improvement and write the very detailed end of year reports. They also keep an interesting photographic record of attainment in the more creative aspects of the curriculum. Teachers appreciate the effort children make and rejoice with them in their learning. Children respond very well to this and come to school eager to learn. Also, teachers display children's work well and make their classrooms into stimulating learning environments.
58. There is very close contact with the children's families, which is beneficial to learning. Parents learn about school routines and receive very good quality information through the reading diary, weekly newsletter, reading record and daily contact with teachers about how to help their child at home. This regular contact contributes positively to children settling in happily. Parents support their children's learning very well by hearing reading, or coming to talk to the class. For example mothers bring new babies to talk about how they should be cared for and other parents talk about their jobs in the community, such as being a postman.

59. The Reception teachers manage the day to day running of the foundation stage very well. Teachers use the suggestions contained within the National Numeracy and Literacy strategies very well. The head teacher holds a general overview and already has plans to address some of the weaker areas such as providing a management structure to take strategic decisions about the foundation stage, and planning better outdoor resources.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. The work to promote the development of this area is very good and underpins all foundation stage learning. As a result, children achieve very well indeed. The teaching in religious education lessons, collective worship, and other assemblies make good contributions to this area of learning. Pupils find joy in the creation of music, dance, and when working with paint and interesting materials. Adults manage children very well in a caring and supportive environment praising children's efforts and making them feel valued and special. They speak kindly and politely and expect children to do the same, constantly promoting good manners, taking turns and respect for others. Lunchtime staff encourage good table manners. Relationships within the class are very good. Children understand the class rules, based on the theme of friendship to everybody. The very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour at school enables children to achieve well, face the challenge of new learning and leads to a very purposeful and happy working day. Children conform very well to school routines and dress and undress themselves with minimum help for playtime and physical education lessons. They confidently share the playground with older children at break times and join other classes in assemblies and at collective worship. Children are very polite, helpful, willing, do as they are told and listen carefully to instructions. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own lives such as helping to keep the room tidy. Children also work well independently, confidently trying out new activities, initiating ideas, and collaborate well in a group such as when using percussion to accompany singing. Children are keen to learn and have very good relationships with each other and the adults who work with them. The Reception teachers provide good opportunities for co-operative play and developing social skills in the different practical areas such as the class café or jewellery shop. Very good teaching was seen in this curriculum area during the inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

61. This area of development is given a very good emphasis in the curriculum. Children appropriately follow the Reception Year National Literacy Strategy and their reading and writing skills develop soundly. Children achieve well in developing their speaking skills and satisfactorily in their reading and writing. Teachers are very aware of the importance of developing spoken and expressive vocabulary as a basis for the development of reading and writing. This year, teachers have spent longer developing speaking skills and given less time than usual to developing children's writing and reading. The inspection shows that the children's listening and speaking skills are now above average as a result. Inspectors support the views of some parents who feel that some higher attaining children make less progress than they might because they are given reading books that are too easy. Inspectors also found that children with the lowest prior attainment were becoming confused and frustrated by having books that were too difficult. This is because there are insufficient books of a suitable level available for the foundation stage and the school reading scheme is too narrow for the initial stages of reading. Teachers, however, have a good knowledge of how to teach the basic skills, using methods that stimulate and interest the children. Teachers constantly assess what stage children have reached and plan teaching to keep them learning at an optimum rate or spend more time re-enforcing if that is what is needed. Teachers provide a very wide range of opportunities for speaking and listening to develop children's vocabulary and communication skills such as discussing the properties of different materials and discussing how to sort them into different sets. They have very good questioning skills, which result in children giving extended answers. Most children have a very good knowledge of traditional stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears and enjoy reading books such as The Blue Balloon as part of a whole class group. They distinguish between text and illustrations, notice detail in the pictures, and retell stories in their own words. Children with higher prior attainment suggest different endings and read independently with good expression.

Children learn their sounds well by following the school's phonic programme which links spoken and written work very well allowing spelling to develop naturally alongside reading and gives children the tools to work out unknown text. Children are taught that not all words sound out and these words are learnt separately. Reading books from the graded reading scheme are taken home daily to share with parents and children read regularly and individually to adults at school as well as taking part in guided group reading sessions. Handwriting skills develop soundly by following the school's handwriting scheme. Teachers lead children through the recognised stages needed to become independent writers. They first encourage children to have a go at writing; such as taking down telephone messages in the role play area. Teachers then scribe children's dictation about their news and children copy over letters and write underneath the teacher's words, starting to use recognisable and correctly formed letters. By the end of the year, children with the highest prior attainment write their own stories and factual writing about where their balloon travels using simple word banks and use correct punctuation. Most children attain the expected standard in reading and writing by the end of the year. Good use is made of computer programs to support literacy such as by playing letter/sound recognition games.

Mathematical development

62. Teaching and learning in this area is very good and children achieve well as a result. Children use plastic cubes on squared paper to design a symmetrical quilt for their teddies and work in small groups in the playground thinking how they can combine their bodies to form a group symmetrical shape. The level of understanding is high because teachers introduce concepts very well through looking for symmetrical patterns on multicultural artefacts such as an Indian box or Dutch clogs. Higher attaining children draw symmetrical shapes on paper and use mirrors to check their results. During a construction session, two girls extended their learning by using the coloured wooden bricks to make a symmetrical tabletop pattern. Seizing the opportunity for assessment the teacher quickly photographed their work, thus promoting their self-esteem and rewarding their effort. All aspects of mathematics are introduced through practical activities, which interest children. For example to understand the concept of length and develop the associated vocabulary, they make and paint an enormous beanstalk from papier-mâché which is now entwined around the classroom leading to the giant's castle, but initially was used to measure how many leaves long it was and consider what could be longer and shorter than it. Stories are well used to extend mathematical ideas, for example the story of 'Jolly Tall the Giraffe'. The weakness in mathematics is a lack of resources to teach weight. Although teachers help children to use their hands as balances to understand heavier and lighter, they are unable to extend this knowledge by using scales of different types because there are only two sets of scales which are shared with other classes. Teachers provide many good opportunities for children to count and by the end of the Reception year most children can count past 20 and make their own formal sums and find correct answers. They apply this knowledge well to using money to purchase items in the class shop, show they understand mathematical vocabulary such as pairs by drawing Wellingtons and recognise and name the most common shapes. The teaching makes useful mathematical links with different curriculum areas. For example, children sort materials into sets and use paint to print repeating patterns. In literacy, children read the story of the Three Bears and then apply the vocabulary to practical number work about comparative sizes. Teachers make very good use of classroom assistants to work with small groups and keep detailed observations of children's understanding in order to plan the next stages of their development. There was no opportunity to see computer programs being used to support the different aspects of mathematics during the inspection.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. There was limited opportunity to observe this area during the inspection although teachers' planning and recording and the work in books shows that children have a wide ranging and stimulating curriculum and that teaching and learning is good. As a result, children achieve well. Teaching is very well planned to ensure children gain a rounded development through practical activities that often link with work in literacy. For example, teachers use the story of 'Mrs Wishy Washy to introduce historical awareness, extending this by bringing in artefacts such as a galvanised bathtub, scrubbing board and cake washing soap and scrubbing brush to enable

children to discuss the differences in washdays in their houses and sixty years ago as well as to engage in some enjoyable role play. The Three Bears acts as a starting point for map drawing connected with the story. Teachers take children on walks round the school and drawing the route they take further develops mapwork. These maps were very cleverly linked to mathematical understanding by using square, rectangular, and circular shapes to draw them. The story of the Blue Balloon results in children considering far away places where they might go with their balloon. One boy explained his balloon would go to India and told other children what this would be like from his own experience. This story also led to pupils understanding the scientific properties of materials. Teachers provided a wide variety of materials which children pulled this way and that to compare with the stretch of the rubber balloon material. Most pupils confidently use the mouse in computer programs to navigate around the screen and to click when matching letter sounds to pictures. The inspector from the Catholic diocese reports that religious education is very well taught, that children know many Bible stories and an appropriate amount about the Catholic faith for their age.

Physical development

64. Teaching and learning, from the limited evidence available, is good, but its impact limited through a lack of resources. As a result, children achieve satisfactorily. In the one lesson observed, above average standards were attained as teaching was very good which led to pupils learning very well. Children used their bodies to make a variety of shapes, which re-enforced their mathematical understanding well. For example they became 'as wide as an elephant' or 'as high as a giraffe'. The lesson was very well planned with a sequence of activities that extended children's prior attainment very well. Children responded very well to their teacher's praise and were keen to perform well enough to be chosen to demonstrate their shape to the rest of the class. However, the lesson presented few opportunities for children to explore or investigate for themselves, as it was heavily structured. It also took place on a very hot day on the tarmac playground. Although the teacher ensured they stopped for a drink, children were working without sun hats or cream. Without suitable outside resources including shade, and limited hall access, teachers find it very difficult to provide suitable opportunities for developing this area of learning as well as they would like. This is further hampered by the inability to provide opportunities to develop children's awareness of space and movement through using wheeled vehicles and climbing apparatus in a gated area. In the classroom, children handle tools, objects, construction, and malleable materials safely and with increasing control, developing their smaller muscles and hand/eye co-ordination. For example, they use scissors to cut different types of paper to make collages of insects for a wall display and use paintbrushes with increasing skill and concentration.

Creative development

65. There was limited observation of teaching and learning of this area during the inspection, but photographic evidence and on going classroom activities and displays show that both are good and that children achieve well. Children develop their imagination and imaginative vocabulary well during role-play activities such as acting in the class café and jewellery shop. Creative play to develop children's imagination and social skills is available daily as a choice within the room whilst teachers are working with specific groups. For example, a table is set up where children make bracelets and necklaces for the shop and create different animals from green dough they have helped to produce. They use paint expressively to show a pattern of colours they saw during their walk in the park. Children use recyclable materials and a variety of pulses and rice to make their own musical instruments that they play to accompany their songs as well as regular opportunities to use the schools untuned percussion instruments. Music is particularly well taught because children have a weekly session in the music room with a specialist teacher and also have many enjoyable classroom sessions of singing and dance led by a Reception class teacher playing her fiddle or guitar. This leads to children entering Year 1 with musical skills above the average for their age.

ENGLISH

66. The National Curriculum test results for 2001 show that the pupils then in Year 2 attained results in writing that were well above average; and in reading that were in the top five per cent of the country. These results are also well above the average found in similar schools. The pupils who were in Year 6 in 2001 attained test results in English that were well above the national average and also well above the average for similar schools. When the Year 6 pupils' results are compared against how well they did when aged 7 they show very good achievement. Inspection shows that the pupils currently in Years 6 and 7 are continuing to attain highly. Also, that the achievement of the pupils over the whole of their time in school is very good. However, there are some differences between year groups and the performance of some pupils in national tests is higher than the standards observed in class. Pupils do best in Years 5, 6 and 7 and benefit in these years from good provision of homework that extends well at home the topics they are working on in class. Also, teachers provide effective revision programmes for the national tests.
67. Currently, by the end of Year 2, pupils are demonstrating average standards in their lessons in writing. A significant minority do well but, overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not building sufficiently well on the good start with literacy currently provided in the reception class. Inspection shows no significant differences between the performance of boys, girls and pupils from differing ethnic origins. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and achieve well and those who have English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily overall. However, there are occasions where pupils with higher or lower attainment do not always have their needs fully met. This is because there are variations between some teachers in the way they plan to challenge and support these pupils in lessons.
68. Attainment in speaking and listening is average by the end of Year 2 and generally above average by the end of Years 6 and 7. Pupils develop their skills satisfactorily overall as they move from Years 1 to 4 and this improves significantly in Years 5 to 7. This shows good achievement over time for pupils in the development of their speaking and listening skills. From a young age, pupils show interest in their work and generally listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. This is particularly noticeable when pupils are given the opportunity in lessons to express their ideas and engage in thoughtful discussion. Overall, pupils communicate clearly and are confident in informal and formal speaking situations. Pupils use speech with good accuracy, growing confidence and make and reach decisions agreeably. However, in some classes, there is an emphasis on instruction from the teacher and this reduces the opportunity for the pupils to develop and extend their speaking skills in lessons. Whilst standards in speaking and listening are above average, pupils of all ages and abilities have too few opportunities to reach even higher standards through taking part in a range of interesting and challenging activities in class, such as organised debates and formal presentations.
69. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is above average, and this shows good achievement for the pupils over time. The pupils recognise many whole words, re-tell the story well, identify characters and begin to talk about them with developing understanding. Pupils have effective knowledge of specific terms, for example, context and index, and use the library appropriately for choosing new reading books. Pupils know the function of dictionaries but could have more opportunities to learn to use them more effectively. However, some pupils demonstrate a weaker knowledge, understanding and use of phonics than expected. By the end of Year 6 and in Year 7, pupils attain standards in reading that are above average. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and demonstrate a good knowledge of a wide range of authors. Higher order skills, such as skimming and scanning, are well developed and practised through appropriate opportunities to research material in books.
70. Attainment in writing for pupils by the end of Year 2 is currently average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily over time in Years 1 and 2. However, during the inspection a number of pupils were seen to have some difficulty with letter formation, size and shape, particularly in Year 1. Most pupils develop their spelling skills satisfactorily. Pupils have a broadly satisfactory range of writing opportunities and these become more apparent in Year 2. In general, pupils construct sentences and use simple punctuation correctly. Their written work is often grammatically correct and there is an appropriate emphasis on the technical development of skills.

71. By the end of Year 6, attainment in writing is above average and this shows good achievement in the development of writing skills in Years 3 to 6. Standards are well above average in Year 7, in response to the high expectations set by the teacher. Pupils add to their knowledge, understanding and skills well. There are many examples of grammatically correct work. Pupils produce lengthy stories that show good use of punctuation and effective use of persuasive language. Pupils are often successful in using the well learnt techniques in writing and their sense of humour and use of mood to create interesting texts. Pupils learn well from regular homework in spelling.
72. Since the previous inspection, the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well. Standards have improved and high standards have generally been maintained. Guidance for marking is now in place but is not yet used consistently by all staff to properly support all pupils, particularly those with average and lower attainments. Assessment procedures have also improved. However, the use of information and communication technology is still unsatisfactory and computers are not being used sufficiently often in this subject. Overall, improvement in the subject since 1997 is satisfactory.
73. The overall judgement on the quality of teaching is that the subject is taught well and that, over time, pupils benefit from good teaching that leads them to higher attainment. However, there are variations in the quality of teaching between classes. The teaching in lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 was mainly satisfactory and in Years 3 to 6 and in Year 7 it was good overall. Taking account of all the evidence it can be seen that consistent features in teaching occur in Years 5 to 7 which are effective in helping pupils to learn well. The characteristics of good teaching are seen in the brisk pace in some lessons and the interaction between pupils that leads to lively debate, and takes pupils on to higher levels of understanding. Where teachers give clear explanations that are sufficiently succinct, this helps to keep pupils' attention and keeps them focused on their practical activity. Lessons build well on previous learning particularly in Years 5 to 7. The tasks are well organised and generally appropriate to meet the needs of most pupils throughout all stages of the lesson. Weekly planning takes full account of all sessions within the Literacy Hour. Some pupils currently have weaknesses in their learning that are apparent in Year 1 but these are not always identified by teachers at the time, or corrected later as pupils move through the school. This is because not all staff are consistent in the application of their skills in the teaching of reading and handwriting.
74. Pupils are managed well and routines are generally well established. They respond appropriately to their teachers and to the work in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 7 pupils' response, attitude and behaviour are good. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were encouraged to fully participate in the evaluation of an advertisement. They raised their hands eagerly to respond to the teachers' questions. The work was delivered in an atmosphere where learning was lively and purposeful and the challenge met individual needs most of the time. This improved relationships particularly because it required pupils to listen to each other's contribution. Pupils used each other's ideas from 'thinking time' and developed their own ideas well. The climate for learning in the lesson helped the pupils to take greater responsibility and independence. They showed a good sense of purpose and willingness to develop their skills in this way. Teachers use homework well to extend the activities done in class. Parents are very supportive and make sure that pupils read at home and complete the work set to a good standard. The work in pupils' books shows that this continued parental support, allied to the good quality of activities provided, is helping pupils to do well in the subject. Discussion with pupils and analysis of their work also shows that in Year 6 pupils follow effective revision programmes to prepare them for the national tests. This consolidation work is effective and helps pupils to do well in the tests.
75. However, there is a common area for improvement that was seen to some extent in a number of lessons. Teachers often take too great a lead in lessons, making the decisions, and instructing pupils. This does not support pupils in developing their own speaking and listening skills nor in improving their attitude, behaviour and confidence.

76. The National Literacy Strategy is implemented well overall. Throughout the school, teachers show an awareness of how to include aspects of literacy in other subjects and this is largely seen in writing. Pupils show good interest in books from the 'newly developed First School library.' These books are new, attractive to look at and enticing to read. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have completed some very useful work in analysing test results and in monitoring teaching. These findings are used well to assess pupils' levels of attainment. However, subject leaders are insufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and this leads to inconsistency in the application of school policies and variability in the quality of teaching between classes.

MATHEMATICS

77. At the end of Year 6 and when they leave the school in Year 7, pupils' standards in mathematics are very high and are equally good for both boys and girls. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were around the national average. Pupils in Year 6 score very well in the national tests, placing the school in the top quarter of schools nationally and it is on course to meet the challenging targets for attainment set for the current Year 6. The school is to be congratulated for maintaining these very high standards for the last four years. This is as a result of good teaching, a very strong focus on the number and algebra section of the programme of study, analysis of answers in national tests to see where difficulties lie and ensuring these are overcome, the very good use of homework and time spent on revision of previous learning before the tests. At the end of Year 2, pupils also score very highly in national tests, for example in 2001, all pupils scored at least the expected level and over half scored more highly, putting the school in the top five per cent nationally.
78. Pupils' achievement is good which is an improvement from the last report when it was satisfactory, although the pattern of better achievement in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2 and within different parallel classes remains because of the inconsistency in standards of teaching. Pupils whose prior attainment is below the class average achieve less well than other groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, because in the majority of classes, lessons are not sufficiently designed to meet their needs with sufficient precision, whereas pupils with the highest prior attainment achieve very well because the teaching style suits them. There is particularly high level of achievement for all pupils in Years 5 and 7 because of the very good teaching across these year groups. Years 1 and 3 do not achieve as well as other year groups, as teachers do not build sufficiently on what pupils have learnt previously. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well because of the extra help they are given to do so.
79. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a very good knowledge of the number system. They use and apply their knowledge very well in solving theoretical written and mental problems. Their written work is very neat and they know how to make jottings to show the path of their reasoning to get the final answer. Higher attaining pupils have mastered the idea that division is the reverse of multiplication and understand place value to 1000, using this knowledge to add high numbers correctly. Lower attaining pupils reach the standards that are considered average nationally in this part of the programme of study because it is well taught and homework is well used to consolidate it. Pupil's knowledge and understanding of other areas of the programme of study is less secure because they have insufficient chance to handle equipment to underpin their theoretical knowledge. For example, pupils accurately measure objects drawn on their worksheets, but have minimal opportunities to do this with real objects. They add money following worksheet instructions but rarely handle coins. Whilst recognising different shapes on paper they are uncertain what these shapes represent in the world around them. Few pupils use computers within their mathematics because they do not have the opportunity to do so.
80. At the end of Year 6, pupils work very confidently within the four rules of number because of the very great focus on this area throughout Key Stage 2. They know how to read written questions carefully to identify the mathematics they need to use to arrive at a correct answer and how to work systematically through problems. They use calculators effectively, understanding when their use is most appropriate. However, these older pupils also lack an understanding of how to

use computer programs within mathematics to aid their mathematical thinking and presentation, as they have not been taught how to do so. Most pupils translate decimals to fractions and percentages and understand rotational symmetry. They explain in detail the properties of different shapes and can estimate and measure the size of angles in degrees. They use compasses and protractors to draw different shapes accurately and are starting to understand probability scales. The work in pupils' books suggests that all are attaining at least the nationally expected level, but this is not borne out by classroom observation and national test results showing that there is not a real understanding of mathematical concepts at this level by the lower attaining pupils. However, the higher attaining pupils show they are reaching very high levels of understanding.

81. Pupils' standards of behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good which results in a productive working atmosphere in classrooms, co-operation between pupils during paired work and a willingness to learn. The majority of pupils meet challenges very well, persevere, and are pleased when they get the correct answer. They confidently describe how they arrive at answers and ask for help when they need it. Pupils work well collaboratively, complete their homework assignments on time, and take pride in presenting their work neatly. However there were instances of unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour during lessons caused by unsatisfactory teaching. Very good examples of behaviour and attitudes were seen in Years 4, 5 and 7 where pupils attention and interest was captured by stimulating teaching. Younger pupils say they enjoy doing lots of sums, which is how they view mathematics. Conversations with older pupils reveal that most feel maths is a rather dull subject with too many worksheets and suggest they would welcome learning new things rather than the constant revision of what they already knew at the top of the school.
82. Teaching is good which enables pupils to achieve well. This is an improvement from the previous report when it was satisfactory. However, this is an overall judgement and masks the fact that the same pattern remains of inconsistency between classes and year groups, with the best teaching being for the older pupils, with several instances in other classes of unsatisfactory class control or work insufficiently matched to pupils' prior attainment. In the teaching observed during the inspection over a third was good with the rest equally divided between very good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. The teaching of pupils with mathematical special needs is good and consequently these pupils learn well. Extra adult help is well used to support them. No pupils are identified as gifted or talented by the school. Teachers throughout the school place good emphasis on neat and orderly presentation in pupils' exercise books and use homework well to extend classroom teaching and raise standards. They regularly test what pupils have learnt and mark pupils' books thoroughly. This is done particularly effectively towards the top of the school. However, except in the best teaching, the knowledge gained from these assessments is insufficiently used to plan future lessons so all groups of pupils make maximum possible progress. Teachers make very little use of computers either to prepare their lessons or to instruct pupils in how to incorporate it within their mathematics because they have insufficient knowledge of how to do so.
83. The majority of teachers work to the three-part lesson format identified by the national numeracy framework, but pay little heed to the timings suggested, and, except in the very best teaching, lessons sometimes lose pace and pupils lose interest. Teachers feel confident with the mental starting session so continue it for too long. Most teachers have difficulty in managing to provide correct levels of challenge for pupils within the middle part of the lesson where pupils work independently or in small groups. There is a tendency to give a common task with classroom assistants either helping the lower attaining pupils to carry it out or expecting them to do less and providing extension activities for the most able pupils. Where activities that are more practical are arranged many have difficulties in managing behaviour because pupils are not yet used to working effectively in this way. Few teachers use the plenary session well
84. There is very good teaching in both Year 5 classes and in Year 7. This is evident both from the quality of work in pupils' books and from lesson observations. These teachers have particularly good subject knowledge, which they use effectively to give very clear explanations and pose challenging questions. They have a precision in using correct mathematical terminology and an

insistence on pupils doing likewise. They work in a spirit of co-operation, facilitating pupils learning, as well as giving direct instruction. The tasks they design for the independent work part of the lesson exactly match the prior attainment of the different groups. Consequently, all pupils build very well on what they have previously learnt. Lessons are conducted at a very good pace, which results in very high levels of achievement and rates of progress in understanding aspects of geometry and equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages in Year 5 and in devising of tests of divisibility for high numbers in Year 7. Unsatisfactory teaching occurs in some lessons in Years 1,2 and 3. Here, teaching is aimed to the average attaining pupils, rather than based on what groups of pupils already know. There is insufficient planning and organisation before lessons, for example in preparing resources or telling classroom helpers what the object of the activities they are leading should be. Consequently, the demands made on pupils lack appropriate challenge, pupils lose concentration, the lessons lose pace, and pupils become noisy and disinterested - and do not learn as much as they should. There is generally an imbalance in this teaching between practical work and the use of worksheets and pencil and paper methods, resulting in a lack of understanding of 'real life' mathematics. The reasoning is that pupils need to do well in the national tests where they are required to solve paper-based problems and show their workings. Many teachers are also more comfortable with this style of teaching and experience difficulties in behaviour management when a more 'hands on' approach is tried. However, this method does make a good contribution to pupils' literacy development, especially in reading comprehension.

85. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has a broad overview of its strengths and areas to develop. Answers to test questions and other data are analysed effectively. However, the co-ordinator has insufficient time to get into classrooms to find out what is happening or to recognise where there is inconsistency in standards of teaching and learning between different parallel classes, or to monitor how effectively the numeracy framework has been put into practice. The role of computers within mathematics has not been developed and mathematics has not been written into other subjects' schemes of work as suggested in Curriculum 2000. Individual pupil targets for improvement have not yet been developed in mathematics in a similar way to those for literacy.

SCIENCE

86. Attainment in the 2001 tests is well above the national average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. It is also well above the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 7. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. Since 1997, the results of the national tests for pupils in Year 6 show that standards have been maintained at a level that is well above the national average. They are also well above the average of similar schools. Both boys and girls attain equally high standards. In the 2001 tests, the proportion of pupils (62 per cent) who achieved higher than the nationally expected level was almost double the national average.
87. Inspection evidence confirms these high standards although the current group of pupils in Year 2 attain at an above average, rather than well above average level. This is because there are fewer pupils with higher prior attainment in the group. Factors that contribute to the high standards in science include:
- A programme of work that places a good emphasis on practical scientific enquiry and experimentation throughout the year up to Year 5 and in Year 7.

- Use of assessment of pupils' performance in statutory assessment tests to identify areas of weakness in pupils' learning. For example, the school has identified a need to develop pupils' thinking skills so that they look more deeply into why things happen or did not happen.
- Topics are systematically re-visited at a higher level as pupils move through the school.
- Extensive revision of all topics during Year 6.
- Very good use of homework.

88. Areas for further improvement are:

- Consistency in marking, with more comments to help pupils improve and know the level at which they are working.
- More use of pupils writing "I can ..." and answering questions such as, "How confident are you?" so that they take more responsibility for their own learning. Where this is done, it is used well.
- Consistent planning for pupils of different ability levels so that tasks match pupils' abilities appropriately.

89. Pupils in Year 1 have great fun when they carry out an experiment to see which items float and which sink. They record their predictions in one of two circles and watch carefully to see if their prediction is correct. They are very excited by their experiment but are managed well by the teacher so that they retain a good focus on the scientific elements of their task. Year 2 pupils know that investigations are opportunities to 'find out about something' and 'you do experiments so that you are not told all the time.' They recall the work done previously on living and non-living things and decide that living things grow. Pupils make many relevant comments including, "People grow and change" and "A flower starts as a seed - because of water and sunlight it starts to change." They use their previous learning well and know that when you investigate living things you do this carefully with the correct equipment so that you do not damage the creature or the habitat in which it lives.

90. Pupils in Year 3 use the wall display well to answer questions about the growth of plants in different conditions. Higher attaining pupils are able to explain clearly why the carnations have changed colour after food colouring was added to the water. Pupils read the key words on the board with difficulty, but they persist and work out 'chlorophyll' and 'photosynthesis' to construct sentences about the different parts of a plant. Pupils' written work indicates that they are building up a good foundation of knowledge about each of the topics they study. Year 4 pupils plan their own investigation to see if high-pitched noises travel further than low-pitched ones. They discuss with each other the 'variables' in the experiment and write down all the resources they will need, including the trundle wheel to measure the distance the sounds travel across the playground or corridor. A second group of Year 4 pupils work in groups to plan an investigation to monitor insulation of an ice-cube by different materials. In their reports pupils confuse the 'result' of the experiment and their 'conclusion'. The teacher points this out and how important it is for 'scientists' to be precise. Pupils quickly correct their mistake and report both results and conclusions separately and accurately.

91. Pupils in Year 5 know what a 'habitat' is and that it is important not to describe it as a 'home' because this is not scientific and conjures up the wrong pictures in people's minds. Pupils use their findings about minibeasts at school and at home. They collate their findings to plot graphs and record whether their original predictions are correct. There is a considerable emphasis on the research pupils have done and the inclusion of any work completed for homework is valued. Pupils learn that not all predictions are correct and that scientists also learn much from original predictions being wrong. Pupils' research is very thorough and they know that their practical work is invaluable in providing accurate material for their research. Pupils in Year 6 apply their knowledge and skills successfully when challenged to design and carry out a fair test using magnets, sensors, pendulums and a dimmer switch. They use their knowledge of fair testing to ensure that they try different methods systematically. The teacher's discussion with pupils shows that they are secure in their knowledge of light, electricity and magnetism. Pupils in Year 7 continue to develop their scientific knowledge and skills very successfully and maintain high

standards. They know that light, heat and electricity are all forms of energy and extend their knowledge of energy in action well as they watch the fascinating demonstration of the development of the steam engine.

92. Learning through the school is at least good and pupils achieve well, both in individual lessons and also in the longer term. The pupils build on what they have learned before, recalling terms and equipment used in previous years well. In most lessons there is good support for pupils with special educational needs and teachers or teaching assistants simplify and adapt tasks helpfully. Higher attaining pupils are usually given suitable opportunities to work at a higher level and they present their findings well to the rest of the class. The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes very good. Some very good features of teaching are evident in lessons. In the best lessons teachers use questions very effectively to challenge pupils to apply their scientific knowledge or to extend their initial answers. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and this is used very effectively to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding for example, in their use of specific scientific terms such as 'adaptation' and 'variables.' Teachers plan interesting and well-organised activities that stimulate pupils' interest and scientific thinking. They use the split lessons well by using the short session for the introduction and the longer period for practical work and review. Practical work develops pupils' social skills effectively, for example pupils learn to share and take turns. Teachers make good use of the environment of the school, the playground and the wildlife area. Teachers value the contribution homework makes to pupils' learning and this encourages pupils to do this well. There is some very helpful marking of pupils' work, but this is not used consistently enough to inform all pupils of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve. Most teachers ensure that activities are matched well to pupils' abilities but there are occasions when pupils with lower prior attainment do not complete their work because it is not matched appropriately to their abilities.
93. The management of the subject is good and efficient use is made of the analysis of test results. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. There is some effective use of literacy and mathematical skills. There are some good examples of observational drawing skills but more use could be made of information and communication technology across the school, especially for work with graphs. There are sufficient resources for the range of topics currently being used. The project on the development of thinking skills in science through research at Imperial College is a very good link.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Pupils' attainment in Years 2, 6 and 7 is average. This judgement is based on classroom observation, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with teachers, classroom displays and through talking with pupils. In the small number of lessons observed, in addition to work of the expected standard, there were some examples of good and very good work being produced. Throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily although there are variations between classes. For example, sketch books are used in all classes with varying effectiveness and quality of work. In the best examples in some classes, sketch books are used carefully to record and develop ideas, or to complete detailed sketches, for example of still life or portraits. In some classes however, the quality of presentation is unsatisfactory and the amount of work completed low.
95. Pupils use a good range of materials, and experience an appropriate range of both 2 and 3 dimensional work. In Year 1, pupils use paper and card to create favourite scenes for example: the beach or a football pitch. They show good control in cutting with scissors and are able to copy techniques which have been demonstrated to them to make their paper sculpture. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were shown techniques for making marks on clay and went on to produce broaches as part of their history study on the Vikings. The pupils had designed their decoration using pencil crayons and were able to practise the techniques on spare clay slabs before actually working on the broach. This led to all pupils producing work of at least the average standard for their age. All classes have some artwork on display. This shows that Year 2 pupils have appropriate observation skills and study the detail within a small section of a larger painting, working in the style of Turner. In Year 4, pupils have produced effective designs in the

style of William Morris and Year 5 pupils have used Batik techniques to produce an interesting Victorian street scene that contrasts the clothing of rich and poor children. In one Year 6 class, pupils have produced effective work on perspective and demonstrate appropriate clay-work skills in the thumb pots and moulded heads they have made.

96. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, some very good teaching was seen and there were good features in all the other lessons observed. Teaching was most effective when teachers demonstrated the necessary techniques, showed examples of the intended outcome, and used good questioning techniques to ensure pupils understood the activity. Teachers generally prepare their lessons well and make sure that all the resources the pupils may need are readily available. Topics and activities are planned effectively so that, on most occasions, one activity leads on to the next. For example, the pupils making broaches will, in the next lesson, develop their skill in painting them. In lessons where the activities are well planned, and pupil management is good the pupils can focus and produce their best work. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher challenged the pupils to improve their landscapes using field sketches they had made as a starting point. They also considered the work of renowned landscape artists and had access to photographs taken with a digital camera of the scene they were drawing. This thorough approach led to the pupils enjoying the task and concentrating hard so that they produced some good quality pastel drawings. Learning support assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs, and others, to ensure that they take a full and interested part in all their work. However, teaching is less effective when teacher's explanations are over long and pupils are not grouped so they can see the demonstration clearly.
97. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained. The subject has been a focus of the school development plan and relevant in-service training has been provided. These sessions were based on printing and clay work and teachers are putting into practice the skills they learnt on these courses. Appropriate plans are also in place to continue the development of the subject. There is an appropriate scheme of work and the co-ordinator has plans to adapt it to meet the school's needs and aims more closely. The monitoring of teaching and assessment of pupils' attainment in art are not yet secure and lead to the variations in provision between classes. Satisfactory resources for learning are provided and art makes an effective contribution to pupils' cultural development. However, not enough use is made of computers to help the pupils with their learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Overall, attainment in design technology is above average. At the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected nationally but by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7 they are above national expectations. The school has maintained standards and there has been sound improvement since the last inspection. Good planning skills in designing, model making and evaluation are now developed systematically and there have been satisfactory improvements in planning and resourcing in most areas of the subject. However, the school is aware of the need for improved accommodation and resources in food technology. Present resources limit pupils' choices and this impacts on standards in this area of the subject.
99. It was only possible to see one lesson in design technology during the inspection in which teaching was very good. However, from discussion with pupils and teachers and evaluation of pupils' work, it is clear that most pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress through skilled and sensitive individual support in the classroom.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils use a range of materials to make simple products, such as moving cards and pictures using levers, pivots and sliding mechanisms. Higher attaining pupils prepare good designs, follow them through carefully, and work independently. Year 2 pupils make a small garment, 'Joseph's coat', meticulously following their patterns. They develop good skills in using templates, in cutting, sticking, sewing, and pinning. Most pupils finish their products well and use tools reasonably accurately. In Year 1, pupils learn about healthy eating, prepare, and

arrange fruit for a fresh fruit salad. It was evident from discussion with teachers, their planning notes and pupils' evaluation that ideas were shared well and fruits were selected sensibly. Pupils washed, peeled and chopped the fruit and prepared the juice. They understood the need to handle food safely and hygienically. They took care to arrange their salad appropriately and discussed the result.

101. Skills learned during Years 1 and 2 are systematically developed as pupils move through the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils have gained a good understanding of planning a sequence of actions to achieve a finished product. Examples of the finished work illustrate good attention to detail in finishing and decorating products. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their current work on powering four wheeled vehicles, describing how they designed and made their models, the various methods they had tried, the problems involved, and new ideas they had to modify their designs. They learnt to use increasingly complex mechanisms to make their models move. Pupils used the correct terminology, were confident in using a range of tools, and clearly enjoyed their work in design technology. Two pupils showed an earlier project, a range of finished slippers, and explained the process from beginning to end showing good understanding of the design and construction process. They understood the need to make prototype models to test their designs before using materials that are more expensive. Their choice of materials was highly appropriate and their products were accurately made and well finished. Year 5 pupils design musical instruments producing detailed plans and recognising how the choice of materials and the accuracy of their design and construction would effect the quality of the product and the sound made.
102. Very effective teaching in Year 7 made good links with pupils' science and mathematics work when they made windmills. Pupils experimented, making sure their test was fair, and trialling their different sail designs in order to generate the most power. The task was to lift bags of increasing numbers of marbles and pupils used hairdryers as the source of wind. By the end of the lesson pupils had recorded the angle of the blade and space between them , the fold and size and material of the sail blades together with the number of marbles raised. They were confident in reaching their conclusions and articulate in explaining what improvements were needed to be made to their designs. Pupils were encouraged to work independently and the teacher's incisive questions stimulated pupils into thinking for themselves and coming up with very good solutions. The teacher made very good use of the end of lesson to reinforce and extend pupils learning and capitalised on pupils' innovative ideas by further suggestions for testing and modifying designs. Year 7 pupils also make high quality stringed puppets from medium density fibreboard, working with precision and accuracy, paying great attention to the finish. They also generate ideas for hydraulic models and formalise these into detailed plans. Most work independently and are proud of their work.
103. The subject is well led by an experienced co-ordinator who works hard to encourage and support other teachers by sharing the most effective practice more widely to help less confident teachers. The subject development plan is appropriate and shows clear future direction. The scheme of work covers all the expected topics including aspects of food technology and working with textiles. At present, there is limited use of information and communication technology in controlling mechanisms and in supporting design work. The school is aware of this and it is included in the current subject development planning.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and they are above average in Year 7. The school has effectively maintained standards since the last inspection and has made satisfactory improvement, particularly in developing a broader range of opportunities for pupils through the revised policy and schemes of work and more detailed, rigorous planning. This has had a sound impact on pupils' learning. Pupils in years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. This achievement is built on well and by Year 7, pupils' achievement is good.

105. Year 2 pupils know the difference between human and physical features and describe effectively those which characterise certain localities. This is due to careful teaching, which strongly emphasises practical activities. In one lesson pupils enthusiastically worked in pairs to compare similarities and differences between life in Harrow and St Lucia. They discussed questions to ask a visitor from St Lucia, expected the following week, taking care not to waste questions on facts already known. Teachers encouraged them to relate features in photographs and posters of St Lucia to other urban areas they knew. Most pupils recognised the differences and similarities between their school and a school in St Lucia and higher attainers spoke perceptively about some of the ways that people use, change, and affect their surroundings. In the lessons where the teacher uses pupils' own experiences well to encourage and motivate them they respond enthusiastically and learn effectively. Teachers use walks and mini field trips well to encourage pupils' questions and observations. Pupils notice changes in the shops and streets in their area, and begin to develop enquiry skills. They begin to plan simple routes.
106. Year 6 pupils make good use of their geographical skills in using grid references to estimate area and distances in their study of settlements. During a discussion about causes for differences in developments between Brailles and Solihull pupils talked animatedly about the changes in lifestyle, occupations, transport, and the different results of land use. In a very good Year 5 lesson pupils discussed how population growth caused environmental challenges and were aware of the solutions put forward by cities like Berlin. They recognised the need for careful planning for roads and towns and put forward good ideas. Some pupils have extensive knowledge of other countries which teachers use skilfully and sensitively to stimulate and reinforce learning and provide good opportunities for pupils' cultural development.
107. Pupils in Year 7 achieve well and reach standards, which are above those expected nationally. Consistently good teaching builds on pupils' sound knowledge, understanding, and effective geographical skills and this has a positive impact on standards. For example, Year 7 pupils use 6 figure grid references with Ordnance Survey maps and show relief on maps using colour and contours. Their maps are clear and they use evidence from a wide range of sources in their writing on transport systems and environmental issues. Visits and talks by visitors from the locality make additional contributions to pupils' moral and social development as well as supporting the geography curriculum and widening pupils' experiences
108. The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning is thorough and lessons generally flow smoothly. Teaching objectives are made clear and pupils are aware of them so they learn the right things. Day to day assessment is based on how well pupils have understood and retain these ideas. Most teachers have a sound idea of pupils' progress and generally know what to do to move their learning on. However, there are some inconsistencies in teaching between classes and between years and these slow pupils' learning. For example, in some classes the end of lesson opportunities to assess pupils' learning and deepen their knowledge and understanding are missed or are perfunctory. There are also inconsistencies for practical activities and in the extent of field work provided for each class. This limits learning for some groups.
109. The subject is managed satisfactorily. Revised schemes of work and policy have provided a helpful framework for lesson planning. There is useful subject improvement plan and sound awareness of what to do to move the subject on. However, the co-ordinator has been unable to develop her monitoring and evaluation role because of time restraints. It is therefore difficult to ensure consistency of practice and raise standards. Opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to support learning in the subject. The co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to develop this area in the subject.

HISTORY

110. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average, and above average in Year 7. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection and has made sound improvement in developing a broader range of opportunities for pupils through new schemes of work and a revised policy. The school has adopted the nationally recommended schemes of work which focus on learning concepts and skills as well as factual knowledge, historical interpretation and evidence based inquiry. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily when they receive targeted support in lessons. Pupils in Year 7 achieve well.
111. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. Teaching is carefully structured and well adapted to the range of learning needs in the classes. As part of their topic on water, pupils learned about ships and sailors of the past. They listened carefully to an account of the passage of the Mayflower to America. Most pupils knew that ships of the time were wind powered and that journeys were long and dangerous. Through the teacher's careful questions and prompts they compared the articles early travellers took with them on voyages and the kind of journeys they would have undergone with those taken in present times. Higher attaining pupils show a good sense of chronology, sequencing events accurately and showing some understanding of why famous people acted as they did.
112. Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of some of the main dates and aspects of Britain during the twentieth century. This enables high attaining pupils to write vividly and empathetically about some of the battles of World War 2, particularly the rescue of the British armed forces at Dunkirk. Most pupils understand and can explain some of the consequences of certain events of pre and post war Britain. They write clearly on the depression and life in the 1930s with appropriate terms and dates. Very good teaching enables pupils to use information sources effectively to investigate changes in their local area. For instance, following a local walk, pupils used their field notes, area photographs, and census records to find out more about the inhabitants of Harrow 100 years ago. Teaching was very effective in providing stimulus and then encouraging pupils to follow their ideas and work together to develop them. In the discussion that followed pupils noted the differences in buildings and streets, occupations and lifestyles over the last 100 years and put forward perceptive and logical reasons for the changes. In Year 5, pupils show their sense of time is developing well and are encouraged to use evidence from paintings and documentary sources to understand life in Victorian times. They recognise the great differences between the lives of the rich and poor and some of the causes of poverty. In considering working conditions for children in Victorian times, teachers encourage pupils to consider their sources carefully and understand the reasons for different interpretations of history. Consequently, pupils gain an increasing understanding of the differences in the way in which Victorian life is represented. Younger pupils in Year 3 learn about the Vikings making good use of their mathematical skills in developing accurate time-lines for the Viking raids on Britain. Their work is thorough and they have a good understanding of this period in history.
113. Pupils in Year 7 achieve well and reach standards, which are above those expected nationally. Pupils build on good research skills and use of evidence learned in earlier years, and show increasing factual knowledge and understanding of major events of the Middle Ages. Pupils link the causes and effects of the Crusades and write clearly about the 3^d Crusade and its effects on Britain. Pupils' writing on the French Revolution shows a good understanding of the causes and consequences and thoughtful answers link cause and effect. Higher attaining pupils show a very good understanding of some of the issues of the French Revolution in their explanation of political cartoons of the time. They recognise there are various interpretations of the past and suggest sensible reasons for these.
114. The quality of teaching is generally good. It is very good in Year 5 and 6. Here teachers show an effective command of the subject, use very good questions and prompts to encourage pupils to think for themselves and to distinguish between fact and opinion. In most lessons, teaching is good because lessons are well planned and resources are carefully prepared and used well. Pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in the work. Class teachers make it clear what pupils are

going to learn and the end of each lesson is spent discussing how well the pupils have achieved this. Occasionally, teachers have lower expectations and this limits the work covered, the pace of the lesson is slow, and pupils lose motivation. Day to day assessment is usually based on how well pupils understand and retain ideas taught. Insufficient use is made of computers to support learning in history and this is an area for development.

115. The co-ordinator gives sound leadership in the subject and has clear and appropriate priorities for development. However, she has been unable to develop her monitoring and evaluation role because of time restraints. It is therefore difficult to ensure consistency of practice and raise standards. There is a helpful policy and new scheme of work support teachers' planning satisfactorily in each year group and ensure good coverage of all the attainment targets. Visits, fieldwork, and visitors enhance the curriculum and have a positive impact on pupils' motivation and learning. Through these experiences teachers provide good opportunities for pupils' moral and cultural development. However, not enough use is yet made of computers to help pupils with their learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. By the end of Years 2 and 6, and in Year 7 the majority of pupils attain below average standards in information and communication technology. Pupils make limited progress in lessons, and achievement overall is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills systematically. There is too great an emphasis on teaching pupils what they ought to know for their year group, and not enough on taking account of what pupils already know and understand.
117. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls, boys and pupils from different ethnic groups. Some older pupils who have special educational needs are often supported well by the class teacher or another adult and this helps them to achieve in line with their year group. Pupils who have English as an additional language generally work with their partners satisfactorily and achieve in line with their year group. No gifted and talented pupils have been identified in this subject.
118. Young pupils learn about machines and devices and that they can be controlled. They all know the buttons to press to get a tape cassette player to play and stop. They learn about recording their voice and playing it back. Year 2 pupils learn about the binary tree. They begin to understand about the need to phrase questions carefully so that answers are 'yes' or 'no'. In general, pupils know how to use specific keys to help them use the software. They know how to open and close an application and many use the mouse with reasonable accuracy. Year 4 pupils learn to create a database. They follow the teacher's instructions on a step by step basis reasonably well but without any real understanding of what they are doing. By the end of the lesson, it is clear that the majority of pupils do not have sufficient understanding of what they have done or why they have done it. This practice of giving instructions for pupils to follow is seen throughout the school. This also means that opportunities are missed to help pupils explore and discover features of the applications and be creative in using them.
119. Literacy does not contribute as significantly as it could to this subject. Pupils do not have sufficient quality opportunities in lessons to develop speaking and listening skills, or use the keyboard well to type sentences. Although they know how to use capital letters, full stops and question marks they do not always know the keys to use to show lower and upper case letters or how to type in a question mark. Pupils generally do not check their work and so spelling errors, missing punctuation and other mistakes are not noticed by them or by the teacher. Young pupils do not know how to use the space bar to give one space and not five. They continually put too much pressure on the space bar and are unaware that this is incorrect. Some older pupils begin to know where the letter keys are on the keyboard, and a few show speed and skill as they type information from their handwritten copy but the majority of pupils are at an early stage of learning. It can be seen from pupils' notes in their computer books that these are generally untidy and the information contained is not always particularly useful. This

does not help pupils to develop neat and accurate notes to support them in recalling the work. Numeracy does not contribute to the subject as well as it could.

120. A few aspects have improved since the previous inspection in 1997. The school has a computer suite now and has updated its hardware and software. New computers were delivered during the inspection period. Opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum has improved to some extent. Resources which were underused before, however, are still underused, particularly those machines in the classrooms. Pupils no longer respond well to the work. Standards have not risen and achievement is unsatisfactory. Taking account of all the evidence it is clear that insufficient improvement has occurred since 1997 and this is unsatisfactory.
121. Although the teaching seen in lessons was broadly satisfactory there are significant weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and in the management of pupils. Taking account of the full range of evidence, the overall judgement on the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The school has appropriate plans for staff training. In general, teachers genuinely attempt to prepare lessons well. The practice of preparing a batch of lessons to teach a particular aspect, such as, to produce a multi-media presentation, is good in principle because it aims to build on previous learning. However, it can be seen that this does not take account of what pupils already know and what they need to learn next. The school uses the nationally recognised scheme without making sure the needs of its pupils are met well and plans to move to another scheme. Some use is made of homework but worksheets or prompts are generally provided by the teacher and this restricts pupils from setting up their own survey, or creating their own questions. Behaviour in computer lessons is generally unsatisfactory. Pupils are very noisy and often argumentative or aggressive to each other. This behaviour is seen in whole class work and when they work with a partner. Pupils of all ages display immature behaviour which consistently interrupts the lesson. Teachers' expectations are not high enough and there does not seem to be a clear understanding that the good behaviour generally seen elsewhere ought to be seen during computer suite time. During the inspection, classroom computers were often not switched on, and from speaking to pupils, it seems they are often not used. The computer suite provides a good resource with a sufficient number of machines and space to encourage co-operative and collaborative work. However, the activities delivered as they are and the overlong sessions do not help pupils engage in the work purposefully or help them to sustain their concentration as well as could be expected. In a Year 5 lesson, the majority of pupils began to make good sense of the work on spreadsheets. This was because the teacher had successfully prepared the lesson and had opted for two shorter sessions in the suite. This helped pupils to concentrate well on the whole.
122. The subject leader has been in post for a considerable time and was also the subject leader at the time of the previous inspection. The school and the subject leader have an unsatisfactory understanding of the standards attained and achievement by pupils. There is a lack of monitoring and evaluation by key staff on the quality of teaching and learning and a lack of awareness of how to get the most use of the machines.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES: FRENCH

123. By the time they leave the school at the age of 12, pupils attain above average standards in French. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve a good level of competency in all aspects of the language. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 study French as an additional subject and make good progress in learning a basic vocabulary and acquiring some understanding of the customs and language of France. This helps to prepare pupils well for Year 7 because of the consistency of the high quality teaching and the good curriculum.
124. Pupils in Year 5 show that they understand single words and short phrases. They know the days of the week and months of the year. They translate simple sentences and practise these in the lessons. The majority of pupils know how to give information about themselves in answer to questions. In Year 6 pupils continue to extend their learning in lessons and understand how

to respond to questions such as “What would you like?” with “I would like a double ice-cream.” They translate the teacher’s questions, which are given in French, into English before replying in French. Some are developing a very acceptable accent because they listen well to the teacher’s exciting presentation of vocabulary during the lesson. Their written work is of a high standard and pupils write out vocabulary and conversations accurately and carefully. They read these from cards given by the teacher confidently and with understanding.

125. Higher attaining pupils in Year 7 make good gains because the teacher reinforces new learning very effectively through repeated questions, accompanied well by gestures. Demonstrations of the correct use of new words and pictures illustrating them are very effective because of the enthusiastic and dramatic teaching that encourages pupils to participate. They become more fluent quickly because they are relaxed and enjoying the lesson. Learning becomes fun as they listen carefully to the correct pronunciation of words when the teacher checks their recall. Pupils learn to identify different types of weather and to comment upon it because the teacher gives them good illustrations of snow, rain, wind and other types of weather. Work is carefully adapted so that lower attaining pupils have support from the teacher and a teaching assistant. They join in proudly when they are able to contribute and show their understanding of some of the pictures. In their written work, pupils match pictures and words, insert words into spaces correctly, write simple letters introducing themselves to a new friend, and achieve a sensible dialogue with good use of several questions and answers.
126. Pupils like French and are eager to do well. They listen attentively and concentrate well on their tasks because the teacher makes her expectations clear. Written work is presented carefully and accompanied by some very appropriate and useful illustrations.
127. The quality of teaching is very good because the teacher plans the work for each year so that it builds systematically upon what has gone before. Pupils in Year 6 and 7 have a good understanding of what levels they are achieving because the teacher has made them aware of this. Pupils know when they have improved. Several different activities, planned to include speaking, listening, reading and writing, are involved in all lessons so that pupils have opportunities to develop their skills in each of these areas at the same time. Lessons are conducted mainly in French but the teacher sensitively helps pupils who are less confident by giving them first clues, then the words in English. Resources are used well and the good balance in lessons ensures that all understand and enjoy their learning.
128. The co-ordinator, who teaches all groups each week, has amended the curriculum to use nationally recommended guidelines and the subject is now well established in the school. This means that Year 5 and 6 will continue to have French lessons next year. French makes a good contribution to pupils’ moral, social and cultural development but no evidence was seen of computers being used to help pupils with their learning in the subject.

MUSIC

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate above average skills, knowledge and understanding of music. At the end of Years 6 and 7, pupils’ musical knowledge and skills are well above average. This good achievement from Years 1 to 7 is due to the consistent good quality of teaching provided; the very high expectations of the specialist music teacher; the very good curriculum; and the opportunities provided for pupils to benefit from instrumental tuition and to sing in the choir. In addition, the teacher and pupils work well together to make the best use of the poor quality and very small classroom in which all music lessons are taught.
130. In Year 1, pupils sing well and read graphic notation correctly at first sight to clap out rhythm patterns. They also transfer this skill to un-tuned percussion instruments and play these together well. Pupils in Year 2 sing tunefully with good regard to the dynamics, humour and meaning of the song. In one lesson seen, the pupils used their knowledge of history to make a sequence showing that drumming came before mediaeval music and that contemporary film music came after the classical period. They also clapped and held a steady beat of minims while others clapped a regular pulse of crotchets, keeping their part well and listening to how

others were playing. Pupils continue to build on their skills so that, in Year 5, they compose and orchestrate a short ensemble performance, writing their own graphic score against a time line. They concentrate hard on their performance and analyse the recordings they make to see how it can be improved. In Year 6, pupils analyse the music they listen to and identify its texture, noting correctly the onset and decay of sound as well as periods of silence. All the Year 6 pupils sing well in harmony and know, for example, that by adding the notes E and G to C they create a chord, and that chords can be played as accompaniment to songs. Pupils' work in Year 7 shows that they research varying genre in music and use standard notation confidently to show the notes within chords. They also write detailed critical appraisals of the music they listen to with good reference to the dynamics, duration and emotional impact of work such as the Sinfonietta by Janacek. Observation of a choir rehearsal for older pupils showed that they follow standard notation sufficiently to judge when their part begins and ends and know how their part relates to the whole score. Other observations of instrumental tuition for recorder and violin demonstrated that the pupils involved read music well and worked hard to play the demanding pieces chosen for them.

131. Since the last inspection, good improvement has taken place in the subject. Standards have risen from above average to well above average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now achieving well. The quality of teaching is now consistently at least good and the curriculum has been revised and is now very good. Significant improvements have also been made to assessment procedures. The subject is led very well by the specialist teacher and is being developed effectively as lessons are continually evaluated to see what works well, and why, and this information is used routinely to keep refining and improving the provision for music.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. All lessons are taken by the very skilled and knowledgeable specialist music teacher. Expectations for what the pupils can do are high and challenging work is provided that motivates pupils to try harder to improve their singing and playing. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher quickly helped the pupils to clap the rhythm of the words 'spider' and 'snail' and then introduced the challenge of adding 'caterpillar' to the sequence. As a result, the pupils concentrated harder and became much more precise in their reading of graphic notation. In another lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher chose lively music and allowed pupils to dance in response. This led to pupils understanding more about their emotional response to music as well as recognising its Caribbean origin. The teacher also took the opportunity to demonstrate instruments from St Lucia and this further promoted the pupils' interest and motivation to find out more about music – so much so, that several pupils spontaneously thanked the teacher as they left for the good time they had in the lesson. A feature evident in a number of lessons is the strong links the teacher makes between music and other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils reinforced their history concepts through listening to music from different periods. Pupils' books show that they study the mathematics of music and they also learn about world geography through listening to music from different countries and cultures. The teacher also makes very good use of the opportunities in music to develop the pupils' awareness of spirituality and culture. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6, the pupils were encouraged to reflect upon the mystical origins of the music they listened to and to understand how the sudden onset of sound can have an emotional impact. The teacher is also highly organised and manages pupils well whilst making very good use of resources. This leads to pupils being well behaved during lessons and knowing the routines and procedures expected. As a result, every minute of the lesson is devoted to learning and no time is wasted between activities.
133. However, the music room is much too small for whole classes of pupils and lessons are successful because of the teacher's meticulous organisation and the pupils' good will in doing their best in such cramped conditions. During the lessons observed, there were occasions when only one group of pupils at a time was able to use instruments and the teacher was unable to move between pupils to help them to develop their compositions. On these occasions, the progress of pupils was hindered by the lack of space. Also, there is no space to set up a computer and pupils are unable to learn how to use information and communication technology to aid their composition and performance skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Standards are average at the end of Year 2, at the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. The limited number of lessons observed during the inspection included gymnastics, striking skills, football skills and rounders. In all areas of physical education the pupils show satisfactory achievement over their time in school.
135. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their skills in lessons on the school playground. Pupils know why a warm up is important and can demonstrate some suitable exercises for this. Most pupils can keep a ball in the air using a small bat, but nearly all find that bouncing a ball on the ground using a bat is more difficult. There were no opportunities to observe any gymnastics or dance lessons for this age group.
136. In Years 3 to 6, there was no opportunity to observe dance, but one Year 3 gymnastics lesson was seen. In this lesson, pupils showed that they could go from brisk movement to holding a balanced position by 'freezing' or twisting into the shape. Pupils compensate for the lack of a school field by making use of the nearby games field of Harrow School. Most pupils in Year 5 are able to strike the ball, but only a few are competent bowlers. A Year 6 rounders lesson was organised into small practices for striking, catching, bowling and fielding. The pupils worked hard and showed satisfactory achievement in their throwing, catching and striking skills over the course of the lesson. No Year 7 lessons were observed during the inspection.
137. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, but there is a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the subject. Teaching is good when: the pace of the lesson is fast; the teacher shares clear learning intentions with the pupils; the activities are well matched to the pupils' abilities; pupils expend effort and do not wait unnecessarily between activities; and when there is an opportunity for pupils to learn and practise skills in small groups. Where teaching is unsatisfactory: teachers do not give clear instructions; the pace of the lesson is too slow; pupils are not given appropriate feedback on their performance; and pupils are inactive for much of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in physical education lessons. Teachers lead warm-up sessions effectively with appropriate activities but often tend to be rather regimented and this restricts pupils' opportunities to experiment and develop their own routines. In some lessons, the activities chosen help pupils to develop their skills, for example in dribbling a football, but are often organised so that only one pupil in four is working at any one time. This leads to inactivity and reduces the opportunities for learning. In other lessons, although pupils are praised for their attempts, it is not always explained to them what is good, nor how it could be improved. A Year 3 class practised tennis skills on the playground with appropriate activities designed effectively to improve their hand-eye co-ordination. However, only a part of the available space was used and this restricted the distance that pupils could throw or hit the ball and consequently impeded the learning of the pupils. A difference was also observed between two classes playing rounders. In one session, pupils rehearsed their skills and then played seven a side games so that most pupils were actively involved in either batting or fielding. However, another group of pupils had little opportunity to practise skills and consequently found it difficult to play and wait their turn in a game with larger teams.
138. The planned curriculum is well balanced and the school makes satisfactory use of the hall and playground. The new arrangement for using part of Harrow School's field provides an excellent facility and is likely to contribute to the raising of standards in games activities. The provision of learning resources for physical education is satisfactory.
139. Since the last inspection, there has been insufficient development in the subject. Physical education has been and remains a focus of the school development plan, two staff meetings have been held on the teaching of gymnastics, with further in-service training on dance. The co-ordinator plans continued development of the scheme of work. However, there is too much variability in the quality of teaching and learning and whilst the school is undertaking training for teachers in the subject, the impact of this training is not sufficiently apparent in lessons. Also, the monitoring of teaching and learning is ineffective as good practice is not being appropriately promoted with all staff.

