

INSPECTION REPORT

CROWNFIELD INFANT SCHOOL

Collier Row, Romford, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102295

Acting Headteacher: Miss C Dalton

Reporting inspector: Kath Beck
10090

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th April 2002

Inspection number: 194911

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: White Hart Lane
Collier Row
Romford
Essex

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Vry

Date of previous inspection: 9th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10090	Kath Beck	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Curriculum for the Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9619	Bob Miller	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?
6436	Alan Andrews	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language	
1359	Lyne Lavender	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

23674	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector	Music Physical education Religious education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Crownfield is an average sized infant school. It is situated in the northwest corner of the London Borough of Havering. It shares the same site as its partner junior school. There are 226 full-time children on roll aged four to seven years. They are organised by age and year group into nine classes. There are 26 more boys than girls and this is most noticeable in reception and Year 2. A few children come from ethnic minorities but none of them speak English as an additional language. The percentage of children identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, but includes four children with specific statements of special educational need and that is more than is usually found. The percentage of children known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national picture. Children's attainment on entry to the reception year is similar to that expected nationally. All children start school in the September of the academic year in which they become five. The younger children attend part-time for two weeks to help them to settle into school routines. At the time of the inspection there was an acting headteacher, one member of staff had been in post for one term and another had been in post for only two weeks.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Crownfield is a good school. Children's attainments are good in English, science, history, design and technology and art and design. A high level of good teaching, especially in Year 2, enables children to make good progress. Teachers assess the children's progress thoroughly so that they are clear about what children know and can do to take them forward in their learning. There is work to do to improve some of the teaching and curriculum in the Foundation Stage. Leadership and management of the governors and acting headteacher are very good and are having a positive impact on standards. Despite the high costs, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good attainment in English, science, history, design and technology and art and design at the end of Year 2.
- Leadership and management of acting headteacher and governing body.
- Good teaching and teamwork.
- Contribution of the teaching assistants to the general life of the school and to the raising of standards.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Provision for children's personal and social development.
- Assessment procedures to track children's progress.
- Induction of new teachers.
- Extra curricular activities.
- Partnership with parents and the community.

What could be improved

- Implementation of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and some of the teaching of the younger children.
- The resources in information and communication technology and music.
- The inclusion of all the required information in the annual governors' report to parents and school prospectus.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school is going through a period of transition. It has made many significant and important improvements since the last inspection in 1997 that have led to higher attainment. In particular, key issues in the previous report have been dealt with thoroughly. Curriculum planning, especially in Years 1 and 2, assessment of children's attainment and progress and the quality of teaching ensure that children receive a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs. Annual reports to parents on their child's progress now provide clear information on all the National Curriculum subjects. Provision for multicultural education includes consideration of the faiths, artwork and stories from a range of different cultures. The role of the subject coordinator has been developed successfully, although changes of staff

mean some teachers have only just taken up their responsibilities. In addition, the school has received the Investors in People Award.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			*similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	B	B	B	B
writing	C	A	B	B
mathematics	D	C	D	D

Key

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

* Schools with similar numbers of free school meals. In 2001, this was 18.8% that is very close to the next benchmark figure of 20%. Therefore the school is very close to doing better than other schools with children from similar backgrounds.

This table shows that the schools results in national tests for children aged seven in reading have been better than in most schools for the past three years. Results in writing rose dramatically between 1999 and 2000 and were better than in all schools nationally. National test results in 2001 show that the school's performance is better than schools with children from similar backgrounds in reading and writing. It is not as good in mathematics in all or similar schools. In science, children's attainments are typical of the national picture and similar schools. However, these results should be treated with caution. In 2001, 90% of children reached expected levels of achievement in reading, 93% in writing and 90% in mathematics. While these are pleasing results, the school has identified that too many children only just reach the nationally expected level¹ of attainment and is working hard to improve this. It has set challenging targets for the number of children to reach the expected and higher level of attainment and is on course to meet them.

Lesson observations of Year 2 indicate that children's attainments, currently, in speaking and listening, reading, science, history, design and technology and art and design are better than in most schools. They are similar to those found nationally in mathematics, writing, geography, music, information and communication technology and physical education. There are examples of good attainment in physical education when there is also good teaching. Children's attainments in religious education are in line with the Havering Agreed Syllabus. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. They are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of learning except mathematical development². All children in Years 1 and 2, including higher attainers, children from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs, make good progress in most subjects. This is because teaching is better in these year groups. Also teachers use assessment very well to build effectively on what children know and can do.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children in all year groups are enthusiastic and do their best to present their work well.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good, with very good behaviour in Year 2. Children listen attentively to

¹ Nationally expected level is level 2. This is divided into 2C (the lowest) 2B (the expected level) 2A and level 3 are higher than expected levels.

² Areas of learning are personal, social and cultural development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.

classrooms	their teacher and work well together in small groups.
Personal development and relationships	Very good in the infant stage. Children make important decisions about their work. They take on responsibilities for organising and tidying resources in the classroom or around school sensibly.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Children are enthusiastic to come to school and arrive punctually. The school has worked hard and successfully in recent months to raise the levels of attendance from unsatisfactory in 2001 to satisfactory in 2002. Children's good behaviour and very good attitudes in lessons have a significant impact on raising attainment. The calm and happy atmosphere in the school enables children to learn well. Children are polite and helpful to staff and visitors. They show respect and care for each other. They carry out their responsibilities sensibly, with enthusiasm.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good

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

Overall, there is a high level of good teaching in the school. Over half the lessons observed were good or very good with one being excellent. High quality teaching was observed in some classes in all year groups. This enables children to make good progress, especially in literacy, numeracy, science and physical education, particularly in Year 2. The strengths in teaching stem from teachers':

- good knowledge of the needs of children of this age;
- good use of time, support staff and resources;
- high expectations that children can make important decisions about their work;
- very good use of information gained from assessment to plan work to challenge the higher attaining children;
- strong emphasis on enabling children to acquire basic skills especially in literacy and science;
- provision of imaginative tasks that capture children's interest so that they concentrate and do their best to present their work well.

Teaching observed in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory in most lessons. There was a small amount of very good teaching for the youngest children in reception. This accounts for the school's evaluation that the youngest children make faster progress in learning to read than other children in reception. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching that held back progress especially in numeracy. The school's own evaluation has identified that some teachers' knowledge and expertise is insufficient for them to plan and implement the curriculum for this age group effectively. Inspection evidence confirms this. There are few opportunities for children to engage in a wide variety of activities, some of which are led by teachers or those they can initiate for themselves.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage covers all subjects, but recent national guidance for this age group has not yet been fully implemented.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Most of the provision for the children is within class. Teaching assistants support children effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	There are no children with English as an additional language in school at the present time. The school tracks the progress of children from the

language	ethnic minorities very carefully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for children's social development is very good. Tasks in Years 1 and 2, promote many opportunities for children to work together. Provision for moral and cultural development is good, while that for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good educational support and guidance for the children, monitoring their progress very well.

Parents hold the school in very high regard. In their view, and inspection evidence confirms that the school continues to flourish and develop during a period of transition. Procedures to track children's progress are thorough and used very well to plan work that meets their needs. Provision for children's personal, social and health education is very good and there is good provision for out of school clubs. The curriculum is richer in Years 1 and 2 where children are involved in a wide range of practical and written tasks.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a good clear educational direction and the school is continuing the drive to raise standards. A really positive climate for learning encourages children to do well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They have detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take determined action to raise children's attainments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Thorough analysis of the school's results enables the school to take effective action to raise standards and improve the performance of children of all abilities.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Priorities to raise standards are funded well.

The acting headteacher is building very well on the systems and structures implemented by the previous headteacher. There is a strong sense of teamwork among all the staff. This has provided a strong sense of continuity and is sustaining the confidence of the parents. Financial management of the school is very good. The governors and acting headteacher target priorities for expenditure based on reliable information and the needs identified in the school development plan. The principles of best value are applied very well. Accommodation is good. Recent refurbishment has improved the learning environment significantly so that it is an attractive and pleasant place for children to learn. There is still work to do on the outside play area for the reception children and improvements to the 'allsorts' room. Staffing is adequate. New teachers have adopted the school's policies very quickly. Learning resources are satisfactory, although there are not enough computers or musical instruments for children to have frequent access to them in lessons to consolidate and enhance their skills.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards children achieve. • Leadership and management. • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • The way the school deals with questions or problems. 	No issues.

The inspection team supports fully the parents' positive comments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainments at the end of Year 2 are good and better than at the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be similar to those found in most schools nationally.
2. The number of children reaching the nationally expected level of attainment, especially in reading, writing and mathematics rose much faster than in other schools in 1999 and 2000. The school's success has been recognised by two School Achievement Awards presented by the Department for Education and Skills. National test results for children aged seven, in 2001, indicate that the school did better than most schools nationally in reading and writing. It did not do as well in mathematics. The picture is the same when the school's performance is compared to schools with children from similar backgrounds. This represents a slight dip in attainment from the previous year. The school tracks children's progress very carefully and had predicted this. There was a significant number of children with special educational needs in the year group.
3. These results should be viewed with care. In 2001, 90% of children reached expected levels of achievement in reading, 93% in writing and 90% in mathematics. This is very pleasing but too many children only just reached the nationally expected level³ of attainment and the school is working hard to improve this. Challenging targets for the number of children to reach the expected and higher level of attainment have been set and the school is on course to meet them.
4. The school's success in raising children's attainments is linked to the:
 - determination of all staff to raise standards;
 - introduction of a wide range of teaching strategies and procedures for teachers to follow consistently;
 - implementation of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy;
 - creation of a classroom environment that promotes children's confidence and raises their self-esteem so that they make good decisions about their work and present it well;
 - emphasis teachers place on the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy;
 - detailed assessment of children's progress.

³ Nationally expected level is level 2. This is divided into 2C (the lowest) 2B (the expected level) 2A and level 3 are higher than expected levels.

5. In addition, the school puts considerable effort into analysing data to find reasons for its results and so raise standards. Children's progress, including that of children from ethnic minority groups, is checked carefully and the information gained is used to help plan programmes of work. The school has made very good use of this system to show that the boys do better than girls in reading and writing but generally do not achieve as well as the girls in mathematics. Information from the analysis of test results is used effectively to plan the work of higher attaining children and those with special educational needs. Teachers have introduced strategies to improve standards for brighter children thought to be underachieving. For example, a teacher and a child look at a piece of work together to see how it can be improved. Targets are set, such as the child is advised to include more descriptive words in their writing. Children are also provided with opportunities to reflect on and edit their work. Teachers give practical reminders about how children can write to a higher standard. This has helped the school to overcome previous criticism that the higher attaining children were not challenged enough.
6. Children enter school with a broad range of ability and skills, but generally attainment when children first start school is in line with that normally found for children aged four. It is below that expected in mathematics. In the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress. They are on course to reach the early learning goals in all the areas of learning except mathematics. This is because teachers are less confident in teaching and promoting this area of the curriculum successfully. Children make a positive start in learning to read, but good teaching means progress is faster in the class with the youngest reception children. Much of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is based on the early stages of the subjects of the National Curriculum. This provides challenge but leads to inappropriate teaching methods in some lessons and this holds back progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson many children were involved in simple sorting activities that they could do easily.
7. Children's speaking and listening skills are better than those found in most schools at the age of seven. Children's good listening skills contribute significantly to their progress in all subjects. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to contribute their ideas in class. They place considerable importance on enabling children to broaden their vocabulary across the curriculum.
8. Many children read well at the age of seven. Teachers successfully provide children with different strategies, such as the use of the sounds letters make, to help them read unfamiliar words. The school works closely with parents to enhance children's reading skills. The detailed and useful information in the Home School Link Books gives parents a clear idea of what their children have been learning and how they can help them to improve.
9. The school is working hard to raise attainment in writing, as children do not do as well at writing as they do in other elements of English. Children write for a range of purposes, such as stories and poems. Spelling is usually correct and dictionaries are used to help children to extend their written vocabulary. Handwriting is neat and well formed, but few children write in a joined script. There are examples of creative thinking but children do not always work as productively as they might.
10. In mathematics, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively and has helped to increase the number of children reaching the nationally expected

level of attainment at age seven. Children make good progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, making up a lot of ground from the unsatisfactory attainment at the end of the reception year. Attainment has been raised through staff using the correct vocabulary, paying attention to teaching basic skills and giving time for children to explain different ways of solving problems. Teachers now adapt their lesson plans after assessing children's progress and this ensures that current needs are taken into account. Computer programs are used effectively to reinforce children's knowledge of number patterns and knowledge of shape and measure. There is work to do in some lessons as the mental and oral sessions are not always sharp or challenging enough to develop speed and accuracy.

11. In science, in 2001, the school's performance was similar to that found in most schools, but more children reached the higher level of achievement than in all schools nationally. This is due to increased time being allocated to science in Year 2. Monitoring of the science curriculum and classroom practice is now more developed and is having an impact on standards. The science curriculum is covered thoroughly and children have a breadth of knowledge. Practical investigative science has been a weaker area and so the school is focussing successfully on enabling children to carry out, record and conclude the results of scientific investigations. The expectation that children make decisions about their work is important in science as children are confident about trying out new ideas and predicting what may happen. The school has set the challenge to increase the number of children reaching level 2 and above to 95%. This is a very high number of children and the school is on course to meet this target with a good number of children reaching higher levels of attainment.
12. Children's attainments in history, design and technology and art and design are good as teachers cover the curriculum in detail. In design and technology and art and design, children are encouraged to use their imagination and initiative so that their work is original. Art is encouraged as a way of recording in some subjects, such as science and history. The children's pictures are detailed and contain significant amounts of information that demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Teachers bring history alive for the children by providing them with real things to handle. When learning about the difference between doing the washing now and in the past, children were able to look at old tongs, a washboard, a tub and an iron. The provision of a *darning mushroom* provoked much discussion because the children had not seen one before. Videos of historical events and characters help children to understand life in the past and to pretend to be *eyewitnesses* to famous incidents, such as *The Great Fire of London*.
13. Children's attainments in physical education are impacted by the quality of teaching in some classes, the provision of professional coaches and after school clubs. Many children have the opportunity to develop new skills in games such as hockey, tennis, football and basketball.
14. In geography, music and information and communication technology children's attainments are similar to those found nationally. Teachers' expertise and confidence in these subjects varies across the year groups. Resources in music and information and communication technology are not sufficient to enable all children to play a full part in lessons to enhance skills at a faster rate.
15. Children's knowledge and understanding of a variety of religions meets that required by the Havering Agreed Syllabus. There is a strong emphasis on discussion in lessons. This allows children to request clarification of difficult concepts and gain greater understanding of how faith is central to the lives of many people.

16. The percentage of children on the school's register for special educational needs is lower than in most other schools. It includes four children with statements of special educational needs. All the support is given within class lessons and relies heavily on the programme of work provided by class teachers. The achievement of children with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The work of the teaching assistants is valuable in helping them to make progress. Children's learning difficulties are identified carefully and there are examples of them making good progress in lessons, particularly those with a statement of special need. In a small number of lessons, however, teachers provide work for children with special needs, but it is not always matched precisely enough to targets set in their individual education plans. When this happens, their progress is slower than it should be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. As at the time of the previous inspection, children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 have very good attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about school. The children are very keen to learn when the work they do is stimulating and captures their interest. Their behaviour is also good. Children play and co-operate well together. They take pride in looking after their classrooms, keeping them tidy and organised well.
18. In most lessons, children listen attentively and undertake written and practical tasks conscientiously. They respond eagerly to their teachers' questions and high expectations that they will present their work well. Most children sustain their interest and concentrate for long periods of time. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson the children's attentiveness, concentration and perseverance when working out sequences of numbers, enabled them to make very good progress. The children enjoy listening to stories and often join in at suitable points. For example, in a reception class, children joined in enthusiastically, making the animal sounds, when listening to the teacher reading a story about a farm. Children respond well to praise and rewards. These motivate the children to do more as they are proud about having their achievements recognised and this raises their self-esteem and confidence.
19. The children show respect for each other during class and group discussions, listening carefully and waiting patiently for their turn. They know the difference between right and wrong and understand how their behaviour may affect others. Behaviour observed in the dining hall, in assemblies and in the playground was always good. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. Children's behaviour in lessons depends on the quality of teaching. Often it is good and sometimes very good in Year 2, but occasionally when children are asked to sit on the carpet for extended periods or lessons lacked interest, children become restless and off task. There have been no exclusions during the past academic year. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively and teachers manage the children well. The majority of parents responding to the parental questionnaire believe behaviour in school is good and inspection evidence confirms this.
20. The children from ethnic minority groups and those with special educational needs are well integrated into the life and work of the school. The school keeps appropriate records of incidents that relate to racism, although they are rare.
21. Relationships are very good and a significant strength of the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Children are very polite to each other and to adults. They find much pleasure in helping others. There are good opportunities for children to show independence and initiative. For example, the school council is

fully involved in suggesting improvements to play equipment. In science lessons, children carry out practical tasks confidently and choose their own way of recording their findings. Children are responsible for ensuring play equipment, available at lunchtime, is taken out on time and put away tidily.

22. The very good relationships in the school result from the school's very good provision for children's social development and good provision for their moral and cultural development. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to work together in small groups and behave in a socially acceptable manner without the constant supervision of an adult. The children respond well to these high expectations. As a result, the school has a calm, happy and positive atmosphere in which children can learn.
23. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Attendance was unsatisfactory in 2001 but the school's efforts have improved the attendance rates of many children significantly. Some children, however, still have unsatisfactory attendance records and the school checks this closely as it is affecting their attainment adversely. Many absences are due to family holidays being taken during term time. This too impacts children's attainment negatively. Punctuality is good for the vast majority of children and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

24. Over half the lessons observed were good or even better and high quality teaching was seen in all year groups. Overall, however, teaching is good in the infant stage and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Almost all the teaching was satisfactory. This good quality of teaching in the infant stage is an improvement since the last inspection when much of the teaching was judged to be satisfactory. During the current inspection, there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, all in the Foundation Stage. This means the quality of teaching is not as good across all the reception classes as it was in 1997.
25. The best teaching was observed in literacy, numeracy and science, especially in Year 2. There were examples of high quality teaching in physical development activities for the under fives, art in Year 1 and information and communication technology in Year 2.
26. In the Foundation and infant stages, the features of the good and very good teaching are:
 - good subject knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age;
 - good use of time, so that not a minute is wasted;
 - support staff kept well informed and deployed effectively. They make a valuable contribution to children's attainment and progress;
 - effective use of resources, especially in science and history, so that difficult ideas are made real for the children and linked to their daily life;
 - high expectations of children's behaviour so that there is a calm, happy atmosphere in which they can work;

- interesting activities that allow children to make important decisions about their work. For example, in science, when sorting materials, children were allowed to choose how they should record their ideas about the properties of different materials;
 - very good use of information gained from assessment to plan work to challenge the higher attaining children;
 - good emphasis on enabling children to acquire basic skills, especially in literacy, numeracy and science;
 - the provision of imaginative tasks that capture children's interest so that they concentrate and do their best to present their work well;
 - activities that promote children's social development and their speaking and listening skills;
 - feedback to children so that they know how to improve;
 - effective questioning that enables children to deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding as well as provision for discussion to clarify ideas;
 - the use of information and communication technology in literacy, numeracy, science and art;
 - a wide range of opportunities for children to record their work in imaginative ways that do not always involve writing.
27. Since the last inspection, there have been significant improvements. At that time, teachers' planning did not always ensure the needs of all children were met. At the infant stage, teachers' plans now contain clear identification of activities for children of varying abilities, especially the higher attaining ones. Teachers use the programmes of work and national guidance effectively to ensure children are challenged to the expected levels of attainment. Lesson objectives are now made clear to the children so that each lesson has a clear purpose that they understand. Teachers follow the programmes of work consistently and this enables them to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding year on year.
28. Assessment information is now used very effectively to set children according to ability in mathematics. Day to day assessment of children's work has improved and enables teachers to plan work more closely to children's needs. Work is marked in a way that recognises children's achievements so that they are confident to learn more.
29. The main weakness in the Foundation Stage relates to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for this age group implemented nationally in September 2000. This lack of knowledge leads to ineffective planning and some ineffective teaching methods. For example, teachers direct all of the activities undertaken by the children so that there are few opportunities for them to undertake activities that they initiate for themselves. In some lessons, all children complete the same tasks, regardless of their ability, changing them when instructed by the teacher. This is particularly true in literacy and numeracy sessions. A lack of expertise in teaching mathematics means some activities are inappropriate. These include colouring in and filling in worksheets that lack challenge and do little to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of number. On other occasions children complete tasks, such as sorting items into colours and shapes that they can do easily.

30. In addition, teachers ask too many closed questions which require one word answers, restricting the time for children to think and learn for themselves. Some teachers are not planning in line with the national guidance sufficiently enough to enable children to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics. Much of the work in one class is planned at too low a level and opportunities to challenge children to work at a higher level are missed. This lack of challenge hinders learning and better overall attainment.
31. The rate of children's progress is faster in Years 1 and 2 than it is in the Foundation Stage. Children in Years 1 and 2 acquire skills, knowledge and understanding well, as teachers give good attention to teaching vocabulary and basic skills. The tasks in the infant stage make greater demands on children's intellectual, physical and creative effort. Teachers set time targets in lessons that encourage children to do work at a faster rate. The activities capture their imagination and interest. They concentrate hard and often work without the need for constant supervision by the teacher. This enables them to make faster progress. Teachers in all year groups use homework well to enhance children's learning, especially in reading.
32. The teaching of children with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is undertaken entirely by class teachers who are sometimes helped by teaching assistants. Most activities are chosen to reflect the needs of the children and to stimulate learning. This is particularly successful for children with a statement of special educational needs. An example of this was seen in an art lesson when a child was given five minutes to work independently making choices about materials to use. This matched precisely the target set in the child's individual education plan and good progress was made. Throughout the school, children with special educational needs are keen to please and to do their best. Their self-esteem is maintained and they take part fully in class activities. However, there are a few occasions when tasks set do not take sufficient account of the needs of the children as identified in their individual education plans and they struggle to complete the work.

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

33. Very good progress has been made in improving the curriculum for Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. At that time, planning was considered unsatisfactory and identified as a key issue for action. Since then, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and guidance for other subjects have been introduced well so that teachers are clear about what is to be taught and when. The curriculum is now good and provides a rich range of practical and written activities.
34. The curriculum is broad and balanced and all subjects of the National Curriculum, including citizenship and personal, social and health education, as well as religious education are taught effectively. Teachers review their plans for the curriculum at the end of each year and amend them in the light of their experience and impact on children's attainment. Changes are then made and this ensures work is relevant to the age group and topics are properly resourced. To make learning even more meaningful, teachers make good, clear links with other subjects. They also show

- children real things, such as old household items in history. Also, computer programs are used effectively in mathematics to give more practice in number work.
35. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is based mostly on the early stages of the National Curriculum and covers all the areas of learning. Children are involved in practical and written activities that enable them to make progress in their learning. However, the curriculum is not planned closely enough to meet the needs of the age group. Much of the planning is based on that developed in previous years. This is now out of date and is not adapted well enough to match current requirements. There are not enough opportunities for children to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves. The organisation of the curriculum into distinctive subject areas limits the time for children to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities to a high standard. It also means, learning in the classroom is not linked closely to activities outside.
 36. The school is keen to ensure that all children benefit fully from what it has to offer. Currently, there are no children learning English as an additional language, but there are several in the school from ethnic minorities or with a dual heritage background. The progress of these children is tracked carefully and the analysis of results shows they do well. A check to ensure they are fully involved in extra-curricular activities would be helpful. The school keeps a racial incidents book, but it seldom needs to be used. Girls and boys are included in all aspects of the curriculum and planning takes close account of all abilities and interests. They do equally well, except in mathematics tests in Year 2, where girls do slightly better and the school is investigating the reasons for this.
 37. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for children with special educational needs. The procedures for identifying such children are sound and comply with national requirements. The school liaises appropriately with outside agencies and the children benefit from this. Children's individual education plans are generally good. They include the precise diagnosis of children's learning difficulties and how they might be addressed. This helps teachers in the planning of programmes of work.
 38. There is a very good personal, social and health education programme. Children are encouraged to be good citizens and this is promoted through links with the community and regular visitors, including the local nurse and policeman. Sex education is not formally taught but staff answer questions that children ask. Good work and behaviour are celebrated and rewarded in class. Children appreciate the stickers and badges they receive. Exceptional efforts are recognised with certificates awarded in special assemblies.
 39. A local business and education partnership scheme provides people to hear children read regularly and to record their views in attractive booklets. This helps to promote enjoyment of reading and boost confidence. Other adults also assist in the school in various ways including computer work and needlecraft. As part of a national initiative, small groups in Year 1 are given intensive teaching in literacy by teaching assistants. This is also enhancing attainment in reading. Some children use resources at home, such as the Internet, to support their learning in lessons.
 40. There were no extra-curricular activities at the time of the last inspection. Since then, several have been introduced and staff decide what is to be offered each term. At present, children take part in netball skills, board and sports games, recorders and art. Girls and boys are invited to attend training offered by the West Ham Football

Club and this is enjoyed and supported by a significant number of children. In the autumn and spring terms, clubs are open to Year 2 children only, but in the summer Year 1 are invited to join in. Visiting speakers, such as a zoologist who brought animals with him, and a science theatre group, enrich the curriculum. At different times during the year, attention is focussed for a week on aspects, such as art, healthy diet and exercise and developing the school grounds. The school makes good and effective use of a nearby nature reserve when studying environmental science. This helps to make learning relevant to children's interests and helps them to gain greater understanding in different subjects. Each year, Grandparents are invited to a special assembly and to stay on and share the children's work with them. This highly regarded event strengthens children's confidence and self-esteem in speaking and listening. It also contributes to children's understanding of life now and in the past as well as strengthening the links between the school and its community.

41. The overall provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection when some weaknesses were found, particularly in the provision for cultural and multicultural education.
42. Spiritual development is satisfactory. It is nurtured in assemblies, in religious education lessons and in opportunities for reflection that form part of the well-planned acts of collective worship. On these occasions children learn about Christian beliefs as well as celebrating the festivals of other religions. The teacher responsible for collective worship ensures there is a good balance between religious and moral themes and for making assemblies meaningful occasions. The school prayer is displayed on classroom walls and many children know it off by heart.
43. The aims of the school, which stress respect for each individual, provide an effective focus for good moral development. Values are fostered effectively through the caring and supportive relationships that exist between the staff and children, and through the very good examples set by all adults who work with them. Children thrive on praise and encouragement and quickly come to understand the difference between right and wrong. Qualities such as fairness and a respect for the truth are fostered, and a proper concern for the environment is taught. School rules and the consequences for breaking them are displayed clearly in classrooms. Children try hard to abide by these and work well towards becoming good citizens in the community.
44. Provision for social development is very good and much improved since the last inspection so that it is now a strength of the school. Teachers plan for children to work together in small groups in science. Children have reading and talking partners and this helps them to develop their reading skills and share their ideas sensibly. There is a high level of co-operation between the children. In class discussions, most are good listeners and, though keen to contribute ideas, wait their turn patiently. The school council meets half-termly and contributes positively to the development of the school. For example, it has recently suggested the need for renewing playground markings. Children are proud to be responsible for setting out play equipment at lunchtime. They get it out and put it away sensibly. The wide range of extra-curricular

activities and fund-raising for national and local charities are also successful in developing children's social skills.

45. Cultural education has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Efforts to develop multicultural education have been particularly significant. African and aboriginal arts workshops enabled children to appreciate artwork from these cultures. Resources have improved and there are books, musical instruments and items from different countries in the world. Displays remind children of the differences between their own and other cultures. Signs written in a variety of languages welcome visitors. There are colourful posters that say, for example, *we are all one family under one sky*. These support the school's ethos to live and work together happily within the community. More generally, cultural development is promoted through reading and re-writing traditional stories, lessons in history, geography and art. During the recent *world book day*, children and staff enjoyed dressing up as characters from their favourite book.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The children are provided with a very caring and supportive environment. Staff know the children very well. Assessment is used consistently to plan work to meet the needs of all children and is very good. Child protection procedures are sound. Parents are right to be very pleased with the care the school offers to their children. Their view that the school is helping the children to become mature individuals is confirmed by inspection evidence.
47. There are satisfactory systems for safeguarding children's health and safety. Regular safety inspections by the acting headteacher and caretaker identify any potential hazards that are dealt with effectively. Formal written risk assessments are now undertaken with assistance from the local education authority. All staff have undergone training in child protection matters recently. There are suitable first aid arrangements for dealing with accidents and illness. Mid-day assistants have regular meetings with staff to discuss matters of concern and learn about school policies on subjects, such as behaviour and child protection.
48. There are very good procedures for monitoring punctuality and promoting attendance. Registration and procedures to follow-up absence are established well. Registers are now completed correctly and meet statutory requirements. Information and

communication technology is used to monitor overall attendance very effectively. A very good link with the educational welfare officer, who is a frequent visitor, is having a significant impact on attendance rates. Meetings take place between the school, educational welfare officer and the families of children who have been identified as needing support to attend school more regularly or more punctually.

49. Good arrangements for promoting high standards of behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying, have been developed recently. Children, staff and parents were consulted. The rules for children to follow are few and easy to understand. Rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour are clearly explained. These rules and the consequences of breaking them are prominently displayed around the school. They are clearly understood by all concerned. The consistent application of these rules by all staff is having a significant impact on improving behaviour.
50. Procedures for monitoring and supporting children's personal development are very good. Teachers keep detailed records of each child's progress and set suitable personal targets for achievement. These targets are closely checked and supported by the teaching assistants in each class.
51. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress are very good and have improved considerably since the last inspection when this was a key issue. Attainment has risen significantly as a result. Staff have collected together portfolios that contain samples of children's work in all subjects. Each piece of work has comments about how and when it was completed and the National Curriculum levels achieved. These provide excellent examples for teachers, particularly those who are new, to judge the standards being expected and reached. The progress of children from the ethnic minorities is checked carefully. Teachers evaluate their lessons and amend their programmes of work where necessary to take account of individual needs and changing circumstances. Work is marked regularly and children are told frequently how well they are doing during lessons. This helps them to be clear about the progress they are making and promotes their confidence and self-esteem.
52. Checks on children's attainment are carried out soon after children start school and those who have special educational needs are identified at this stage. From this information targets for academic and personal development are set and progress towards these is monitored closely. Computer analyses of test results of children in Year 2 are analysed for trends in performance and to compare the results of boys and girls in English, mathematics and science. As a direct result of this, the older brighter children have been identified as not doing as well as they might, especially in mathematics. Children are now taught in groups, based on their prior attainment for mathematics. The school is also focussing on raising the attainment of boys in writing and information and communication technology across the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents hold the school in very high regard. Their confidence in the school is high and has been sustained through a period of uncertainty by the very good leadership of the acting headteacher.
54. Parents are kept very well informed about the school's events and curriculum matters through regular newsletters. The Home School Link Book is used effectively to provide regular dialogue between parents and staff. This enables children to make good progress in reading.
55. The views of parents and staff are sought regularly and their comments taken into account when decisions are made. A representative group of parents meet with the headteacher regularly to discuss issues and these are dealt with quickly and effectively. Consultation meetings with class teachers about the progress of their children are very well attended. Annual written reports of children's progress identify areas in which children do well and those where they could improve. Parents of children in Year 2 are informed about their child's National Curriculum level of attainment. The Governors' Annual Report is informative but lacks detail about the admission arrangements for disabled children. The school prospectus omits the required attendance information.
56. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their children's progress towards the targets set for them. They are invited to meetings and the majority attend, making useful contributions to the discussions. The school actively encourages parents to be involved in the provision to maximise the progress made by their child.
57. Parental involvement in the work of the school is very good. A good number of parents help in classes and organise the issue of library books to children on a daily basis. Although there is no formal parent-school association, there are many volunteers who help organise fund raising events to help buy resources for the school. Many parents contribute to their child's learning at home by listening to them read and a good number attend school assemblies. This has a significant impact on children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. Overall, leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher is building very well on the systems and structures introduced by the previous headteacher. This is providing a very strong sense of continuity and is sustaining the confidence of the parents. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. They play a significant role in shaping the direction of the school and have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Together with the headteacher, they provide a very clear educational direction and this is having a significant impact on raising standards. The role of subject coordinators has been enhanced over time. However, many teachers with responsibilities are new or have taken on different responsibilities and are not yet skilled in leadership and management of their subject. Most have a clear view about how they will influence standards and developments in their subject in the future. In this way, the aims to involve, inform and improve are reflected in all aspects of the school's work.

59. The leadership of the school is in a period of transition but is continuing to identify priorities and develop the school. Parents describe the school as flourishing at a time of uncertainty and inspection evidence proves this to be the case. There are clear procedures to identify and decide the priorities for development and these include consultation between the acting headteacher and senior management team in consultation with the governing body and other colleagues. The process begins with analysis of children's baseline assessments when they first start school, national test results and local authority data as well as the school's own internal tracking system. Some selective targets for improvement are reflected in the staff performance and management targets. Current priorities include work to bring about:
- improvement in handwriting across the whole school;
 - improvement in children's spelling;
 - higher achievement for boys in spelling and mathematics;
 - an increase in the number of children achieving higher levels of attainment;
 - stronger links with the junior school to ensure better continuity and progression across the infant and junior stages;
 - the setting up of an information and communication technology suite so that information and communication technology can be incorporated into all areas of the curriculum;
 - higher standards in mathematics and investigative science.
- There is a very strong, shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed. Staff are very willing to work well together to bring about these improvements and raise standards.
60. Governors are involved closely in the formulation of the school's development plans, so that the action taken to meet the school's targets is supported very effectively through appropriate financial resources. The school analyses its performance in national tests very carefully. Governors make a significant contribution to this analysis and, together with senior staff, reflect on why results are the way they are and how they can enable the children to reach higher standards. Challenging targets for improvement are set and everyone works hard to try and achieve them. Governors are also fully involved in the evaluation and monitoring of standards, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school development plan has sufficient information to enable effective monitoring and evaluation.
61. In the past year, the school's performance has been monitored thoroughly through termly *book looks* that help teachers to identify how well children are doing. They choose the work of three children of differing abilities and check their rate of progress. From these, coordinators identify issues for development and discuss them with colleagues so that changes are made to classroom practice.
62. The quality of teaching is evaluated thoroughly. Some subject coordinators and the acting headteacher observe lessons in classes regularly. Strengths and areas for development are identified. As a result, the quality of teaching in the school is often good or very good. These thorough procedures have led to the clear identification of priorities for improvement, including the need to review the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are proud of their higher expectations of children's abilities and their improved knowledge and understanding of different subjects. They know that their planning and assessment procedures have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

63. The school's arrangements for the management and organisation of the special educational needs provision, including children with statements of special educational needs, is satisfactory overall and national requirements are met. However, three different teachers have held the post of special needs co-ordinator during this academic year, including the acting headteacher. The current co-ordinator is experienced in this area of work, but has just joined the school and is a temporary appointment. It says much for the special needs provision in the school that it has held up satisfactorily during this period of transition. This is because the acting headteacher has monitored the situation closely. The link governor for special educational needs visits the school regularly. She has observed special needs children at work with the purpose of seeing how targets set in their individual education plans informs the tasks in the classroom. This helps to ensure that governors and teachers work closely together.
64. The school has an appropriate complement of teachers, although many of them have not been in post long. The new arrivals include three teachers from abroad who are not qualified in the British system and an experienced teacher who has just been seconded from a local school for a term. Since the previous inspection the number of teaching assistants has increased. They are shared across all classes and make a very valuable contribution to the general life of the school as well as to children's attainment and progress. Administrative staff welcome visitors in a friendly manner and help to ensure that the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. The lunchtime supervisors also make an important contribution to the smooth running of the school during the lunch break.
65. Job descriptions are reviewed annually and a system of performance management has been introduced successfully. A policy statement that gives appropriate importance to improving teaching and raising standards of achievement for all children backs it. Considerable emphasis is rightly given to staff training and there is a coordinator for this area of the school's work. The induction programme for new teachers is very good. It is building their confidence and helping them settle quickly into the school. This is particularly important for the teachers from abroad. Emphasis has also been given to the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy initiatives. As a result, these are having a positive impact on attainment, especially literacy.
66. Accommodation is good and maintained well. It is clean, bright and cared for. Space is used effectively. Since the previous inspection, sink areas in classrooms have been remodelled and this is beneficial to practical work in lessons. Displays contribute to the colourful classrooms and do much to raise children's self-esteem. The grounds are extensive, but the outside area for the Foundation Stage requires further development. Plans have been drawn up to improve this facility but they do not include a covered area that would enable the area to be used in all kinds of weather.
67. Resources are satisfactory overall. The school has invested heavily in literacy and numeracy and resources are good for these areas of the curriculum. Resources are also good for history, art and design, physical education and design and technology. They are satisfactory for religious education, geography, special educational needs and the Foundation Stage. However, there are insufficient resources for music and information and communication technology for all children to use them in lessons. Consequently, provision for these areas of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

68. The school's income and expenditure are higher than in most schools. Specific grants, such as special educational needs, are spent for the correct purpose and for the benefit of the children. The school has saved a good amount of money from previous years and the changes of staff. This sum is being kept to improve accommodation and learning opportunities, particularly the provision of a new computer suite. This is part of an effective development plan in which staff and governors have played an important part. In deciding budget allocations, the school has given careful consideration to the issues for action from the last inspection.
69. Governors work very effectively with the acting headteacher to secure the best value they can from the funds available to them, for example, by seeking competitive tenders for goods and services. They show a strong determination to raise standards further in the way these funds are used and are keenly aware of how their school performs in comparison with others. The school finance officer is also a governor and works closely with the governing body in providing up-to-date reports to monitor the budget on a month-by-month basis.
70. Taking into account the school's context, children's attainment on entry, good teaching and good standards of attainment as well as the wide range of improvements since the last inspection, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The governors, headteacher and staff should build on the schools many strengths in order to:
- (1) Fully implement the curriculum guidance for provision and planning in the Foundation Stage and so raise attainment and quality of teaching in all the areas of learning, but especially mathematics, by the end of the reception year;
Paragraphs: 6, 29, 30, 31, 35, 72 – 91
 - (2) Improve the number of resources for information and communication technology and music so that more children can use them in lessons.
Paragraphs: 14, 67, 127 – 131, 132 - 138
- Minor issues
Ensure the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus contains all the information that is required.
Paragraph: 55

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

62

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

17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	21	24	3	0	0
Percentage	2%	21%	33%	38%	5%	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

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	226
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	28

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4*
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

**During the week of the inspection the school data indicated authorised absence as 3.1%*

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	49	39	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	44	42
	Girls	36	38	37
	Total	79	82	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (88)	93 (88)	90 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	45	43	43
	Girls	38	38	37
	Total	83	81	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (87)	92 (93)	91 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	143
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
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	2000-2001
	£
Total income	536,459
Total expenditure	512,775
Expenditure per pupil	2,229
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,197
Balance carried forward to next year	85,881

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	226
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	75	23	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	38	5	2	2
The teaching is good.	78	20	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	38	7	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	2	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	30	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	47	45	5	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	58	38	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	45	13	0	15

Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding

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

72. All children are admitted to the reception classes in the September of the academic year in which they become five. They are organised in three classes according to age. Children whose birthday occurs between September and December attend full-time immediately. Other children attend part-time for the first two weeks of term.
73. Children make a satisfactory start to their education. Their progress varies depending on the quality of teaching in each of the classes. The youngest children make better progress, as teaching is better in that class. Children's attainment when they first start school is broad, but is generally similar to that expected for children aged four, although there are weaknesses in their mathematics skills. Many children are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of learning except mathematical development, which is unsatisfactory. Children with special education needs are catered for appropriately so that they play a full part in all the areas of learning. Close links with parents help the children to settle into the school and to make good progress in reading. The Home School Link Book provides much useful information to parents and staff so that children's needs are met.
74. Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is unsatisfactory and this hinders children's progress. Teachers are using plans written and used in previous years. As a result the planning is not as up to date as it should be or in line with the Foundation Stage curriculum required since September 2000. Much of the curriculum planning is based on individual subjects that limit the opportunities for children to enjoy a broad and varied range of learning experiences. Children's progress is assessed regularly and some teachers use this information well to plan work that meets children's needs, but this is not consistent across all reception classes. The school has rightly identified the outside area as a priority for development so that it is used for more than just children's physical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area of the curriculum at the end of the reception year. All staff place appropriate emphasis on teaching this aspect of the curriculum. They have appropriate expectations that children will learn and play together happily and try to apply their newly acquired literacy skills in role-play activities such as the *vet's surgery*. This develops their confidence and self-esteem.
76. Children are encouraged to take care of each other and the world around them. For example, in the current topic about animals, children were able to ask a parent questions about how he looked after his goldfish. These questions were thoughtful and children also reflected on what would happen if the fish were not cared for well. One child asked, *How do the fish die?* Another child responded *They close their eyes and wait for the fairies to come*. This was managed very sensitively by the teacher, who made the most of the opportunity to allow children to think about the impact of the loss of a pet on their feelings.

77. They have a good sense of right and wrong. Routines enable children to know and understand that they need to be patient to take their turn to use different pieces of equipment or play in the role-play area. They take responsibility for keeping the classroom tidy and are proud to take messages to the school office. Children use good manners and say *please* and *thank you* and respect the views of other children in the class. They wait patiently and take their turn to respond to teachers' questions. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to explore, experiment, plan and make important decisions about the work they do. This is because the range of activities presented in each teaching session is limited. This makes it difficult for children to move between different activities and initiate their own ideas. Children respect the different needs and beliefs of others. This is taught appropriately through the celebration of special occasions such as birthdays, weddings, and baptisms and through learning about the stories in the Bible, such as *Noah's Ark* or from other faiths. Children also play a full part in fundraising activities, such as *Red Nose Day*, to help them understand the life of children who are not as fortunate.

Communication, language and literacy

78. Teaching in this area of learning is mostly good and children generally make good progress, especially in reading. In one unsatisfactory lesson, knowledge of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, appropriate at this stage of the reception year, was insufficient to take children's progress forward at a good rate.
79. Emphasis is rightly placed on the teaching of reading and this is taught very well in the youngest class. All the children in the reception classes follow the Literacy Strategy in the last term of their reception year. Children in the youngest class make a good start with reading and they are already reading simple stories. They enjoy listening to tape recorded stories following them carefully in a book. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and make a valuable contribution to the development of children's reading skills. Teachers place strong emphasis on enabling children to recognise the letters and the sounds they make. As a result, they use this skill to try and read new words. Children take books home to share with their parents and this practice significantly enhances the rate of progress in reading. However, there are few reading corners in classes for children to browse through a range of fiction and non-fiction books.
80. In role-play situations, such as the *vet's surgery*, children learn to communicate clearly for a particular purpose. Some prefer to listen and play individually. Children are enabled to think of interesting questions to find out information about pets. Most speak clearly and audibly in full sentences to visitors and adults. In whole group sessions, children listen attentively to their teachers so that they know what they have to do.
81. Children are encouraged to write, but this is mostly related to simple words that illustrate their knowledge of the sounds letters make. There are opportunities for children to write in the *vet's surgery* to record appointments in a diary or write prescriptions. There are fewer opportunities for children to try and apply their developing skills in simple sentences.

Mathematical development

82. Teaching observed during the inspection varied from very good, especially in the youngest class, to unsatisfactory. The scrutiny of work indicates that teaching over recent times has not always been as successful and, as a result, a significant number of children are not on course to meet the early learning goals. This is because teachers generally do not give enough attention to teaching specific mathematical skills in which all children can participate. In lessons, children spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher so that opportunities to explore or apply mathematical skills are missed. Mathematical development is not usually included in other areas of learning or extended into activities in the outside area. Longer-term plans, used by the teachers to prepare their lessons over the week, do not recognise the different abilities of children who can count confidently up to one hundred or recognise various coins. Where the plans are adapted to take into account the children's abilities, the quality of teaching and children's progress is much better. Higher attaining children are then involved in games that help them to practise adding numbers to 10 or 20. Other tasks, such as *shopping* or domino games, assist children's recognition of numbers and coins. A three-dimensional graph to show children's favourite pets made learning realistic and relevant to their daily life.
83. On other occasions, confirmed by the scrutiny of work, the activities the children undertake do not challenge them enough. Often higher attaining children make patterns using bricks and draw pictures identifying shapes such as circles, triangles, rectangles and squares. These are activities they can complete easily and quickly. The work of the older children is similar to that of the youngest children. Tasks that involve colouring in pictures or filling in the missing number do little to take children's learning forward in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and children are on course to meet the early learning goals appropriate for their age. Children enjoy many practical activities, such as, finding out how to make a torch light up. Observational skills are developed through walks in the nearby nature reserve. Children hypothesise about the creatures they may find there and afterwards they discuss what actually happened. Children find out about the main features of their local environment on walks to nearby shops. They learn about life now and in the past by comparing old and new toys and drawing up their family trees. The annual visit by their grandparents helps them to learn about school life now and in the past.
85. Children learn to use computers appropriately. They use the mouse to move items around the screen to *dress the teddy* or match *The Three Bears* to the correct sized *bed, chair or bowl*. Some children use the computer to enhance their mathematical and literacy skills. They know where to find the correct keys on the keyboard to type simple words. A programme of work in information and communication technology to develop and broaden children's skills more effectively is being developed. Children enjoy listening to stories and operate the tape recorders independently. They have also taken some high quality pictures of the homes of small creatures with a digital camera.
86. There are occasions when children are challenged to think very hard. For example, they had to design a way to rescue a teddy bear that had fallen into a hole in the ground. Some children used very imaginative ideas, selected appropriate materials and then recorded their work successfully on a digital camera or in a drawing.

Physical development

87. Teaching in this area of learning is mostly satisfactory. Children have the opportunity, when the weather is good enough, to play on tricycles and scooters, climb through tunnels and develop their throwing and catching or football skills. This helps them to develop their co-ordination skills successfully so that they are on course to meet, and in some cases, to exceed the early learning goals. They have a good sense of space and move with confidence. On other occasions, children enjoy physical education lessons in the school hall. They run and jump but do not find it easy to land softly on both feet. The teacher used a poem about jumping out of a box to enthuse the children successfully. However, some opportunities to involve children in imaginative role-play were missed.
88. Children have opportunities to improve their manipulative skills by cutting, sticking, threading beads, shaping malleable materials or fitting jigsaws together. Attention to health and safety issues is appropriate, including the careful use of scissors and other tools, to help children use these tools correctly.

Creative development

89. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year as teaching is satisfactory. Children can make more decisions about their work in this area of learning, although their choice is limited. For example, children designed a shoe for *Cinderella*. The basic design of the shoe was the same for all children, although they could choose the materials and the appearance of the shoe. Some of the children show imaginative use of the materials and good choice of colour. In other lessons, children designed and made sock puppets. There are examples of high quality artwork, such as when children completed portraits of their grandparents, using a range of media. Observational drawings of a scooter show some children have a keen eye for detail.
90. On some occasions, teachers provide opportunities for children to combine their mathematical development with art, for example, making pictures from two-dimensional shapes. Large collage pictures of famous traditional stories, such as *The Three Little Pigs* or *Jack and the Beanstalk*, enable children to explore different materials. Generally however, there are few opportunities for children to really explore different media and use their initiative in their artwork.
91. When the weather is good, the outside area is used effectively for children to paint very large pictures. They use ribbons to weave different patterns through the railings of the fence. This looks really attractive. In music, children learn about the sounds of different instruments and the difference between high and low notes. However, this area of the curriculum is not taught as well as others. In addition, there are not enough instruments for all children to take a full part in lessons to compose and perform their ideas.

ENGLISH

92. Attainments in English have risen significantly since the last inspection when they were judged to be in line with most other schools. Currently, at age seven, attainments in speaking and listening and in reading are good. Attainments in writing

are not quite as high, but are satisfactory. The school monitors its performance carefully and this is paying dividends in terms of identifying areas for development. As predicted by the school, the 2001 national test results showed a slight dip on the previous year, but were still above average for reading and writing compared with all schools nationally and with schools in similar contexts. The school is aware of the need to raise standards in writing for the present Year 2 children and is working hard to do so.

93. Scrutiny of work and lesson observations together shows most children make good progress after leaving the Foundation Stage. Brighter children are challenged and extended well. Children with special educational needs make mainly satisfactory progress. Their self-esteem is maintained effectively, but occasionally teachers do not provide work that is closely enough linked to their individual needs. This means that these children could sometimes make more progress than they do.
94. The national initiative on literacy has been introduced successfully and is helping to raise standards. Class texts are chosen well and appeal to the children's interests. Teachers ensure that literacy skills are reinforced in other lessons. For example, a Year 1 art and design lesson included a word list that children were encouraged to use when describing their work. This helped their language development.
95. Most children speak confidently and communicate meaning clearly. They are polite and respectful, listen attentively and answer questions sensibly. Their good listening skills do much to enhance their learning in all subjects. They listen carefully to the introduction of lessons and know what they have to do. This means time is used productively and work often moves forward at a good pace. Children are pleased to talk to visitors about what they are doing. They talk enthusiastically about their interests and show pride in their achievements. Many use a wide range of vocabulary well. For example, when describing characters from stories they have read, they use appropriate adjectives such as, *horrible, mean, nasty* and *important*. A minority of children use increasingly complex vocabulary successfully, such as the Year 1 child who used the word *tricky* instead of *hard* and another child who used the phrase *in a long while* in place of *in a long time*. Some children are keen to use more difficult words that they have met in other areas of the curriculum, like the Year 1 child who asked if she could use words like *hexagon* and *kangaroo*.
96. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories. Many read regularly at home, although a significant minority do not. The school's system of Home School Link Books is used very effectively as a means of dialogue between parent, child and teacher. The Link Books include appropriate information for parents regarding the main teaching objectives for each book and they are clearly colour coded in terms of reading ages and ability. The system encourages children to read and helps them to know how to

improve. Children like reading aloud together in lessons and teachers set a good example in the way in which they read to the class. The older children undertake a good range of reading. Teachers emphasise the use of letter sounds to tackle unusual, new or difficult words and this is clearly paying dividends because many children make good progress. This also impacts positively upon their spelling. By the age of seven, most children read confidently and with increasing emphasis on expression. Many have favourite stories and show good understanding of main characters and story lines. More able children predict story outcomes and can sometimes suggest alternatives. However, few children have a good knowledge of authors and of the books they have written. Children's research skills are developing satisfactorily and many know about the use of an index, glossary and contents page to help them find information.

97. The school has worked hard successfully to raise standards in writing, particularly among the boys. However, a significant number of children have difficulty with this area of work and progress is sometimes slow. Currently, children's achievements in writing at age seven are not as high as in reading and in speaking and listening, although there are examples of good work. Children write for a satisfactory range of purposes and know how to sequence events in the right order. They show a growing understanding of basic sentence structure, including the use of capital letters and full stops. Spelling is usually correct and children use simple dictionaries and word lists to help them. Most children hold their pencils using the appropriate grip so that handwriting is usually well formed. They print in both upper and lower case letters correctly, but do not write in cursive script. There are examples of creative thinking and imaginative use of vocabulary in some written work. For example, a Year 2 child began a story by writing, *One Wednesday morning, in the deep dark sea, the sea weedy sea, there lived three fish.* However, in class work children are not always as productive as they might be and their writing could be more imaginative.

98. The structure provided by the literacy hour has given teachers clear guidelines about the organisation of lessons and this is proving beneficial. In the lessons observed the teaching was never less than good and in more than half of those seen it was very good. Resources are prepared well and lesson plans are usually clear about what children are to learn and how. All children have very good attitudes towards the subject and behave really well. This helps their progress. The best teaching stems from:

- very good relationships and an expectation that children will work hard and consistently do their best;
 - very good class control and management, including the effective use of praise and encouragement to build children's self-esteem and confidence;
 - reminders about previous work and how it links to what is to be done next;
 - effective questioning that assesses what children understand and challenges them to think hard and to contribute their ideas;
 - an emphasis on basic skills such as the use of letter sounds in reading;
 - good use of support staff to help children who need it most;
 - a sense of purpose and good use of time.
99. An example of very good teaching was seen at the beginning of a Year 1 lesson in which the teacher set up a simple bingo game to develop children's understanding of some commonly used words. The children moved quickly on to using these words in sentences and sharing ideas with a partner. On-going reminders were given about the importance of capital letters and full stops. The teacher also encouraged children to use a phonic approach to spelling, which many did successfully. Children worked hard and enjoyed themselves. The learning built effectively on their previous knowledge and understanding. Time was used really well and the teacher had high expectations of what the children could accomplish.

MATHEMATICS

100. Attainment at age seven is similar to that found in most schools. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. The school has worked successfully to challenge the brighter children so that more are reaching higher levels of attainment. The number of children reaching the nationally expected level at the age of seven rose much faster than in most schools in 1999 and 2000. The school has set itself challenging targets to improve boys' attainment in mathematics, particularly by the end of Year 2 and is on course to meet them.
101. The national initiative on numeracy has been implemented effectively, but has yet to make a significant impact in raising test results at the end of Year 2. Mental and oral sessions at the beginning of lessons are not always either sharp or challenging enough to develop speed and accuracy. Emphasis is rightly put on using the correct vocabulary and time is allowed for children to explain their working out. Weekly lesson plans are thorough and based on the national strategy. Teachers adapt these after assessing children's progress and this ensures that current needs are taken into account. Computer programs are effectively used to reinforce number bonds and knowledge of shape and measure.
102. By the end of the infant stage, the more able can read, count and write numbers beyond 100 and have a sound grasp of place value when working out sums using the four rules. Others work at the same tasks but using smaller numbers and some are less secure in their knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables. Children are expected to use their skills in calculations and in simple problem solving exercises, such as counting different coins in a box to the value of £1.

103. Fraction work is taught through shape and children cut out circles, rectangles, triangles and squares and stick them on to paper. They are expected to estimate the length of lines in centimetres before measuring them and they are at an early stage of using data to draw pictograms and bar charts. Photographs on display show some children using a programmed toy to learn about position, direction and rotation to make angles. This work was reinforced in later lessons when children used these skills to draw routes on squared paper.
104. Teaching is good overall and ranges from excellent to satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers show great flair for the subject and take every opportunity to explore number and shape. Children respond very positively and with enthusiasm, try hard and enjoy the challenges they are given. Often they work together in pairs with a *maths buddy*, bouncing ideas off each other as they try to find quick ways to reach solutions. Good use is made of resources to aid learning, including number lines, hundred squares and structural apparatus. The more able from the three Year 2 classes work together to be given more challenging tasks. Many of their calculations are done on whiteboards rather than in books and once their work has been wiped clean, no record of work is left. It is then difficult for staff or children themselves to see the progress that has been made in lessons or over time and where the misunderstandings occur for those who experience difficulty. Parts of the classroom are designated as mathematics areas and include interesting charts and wall posters. Some are interactive and include large number sums that children can complete in spare moments.
105. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and this has enabled the school to set realistic targets for the end of Year 2. Portfolios of past work are kept to show the National Curriculum levels that children of different abilities can achieve. This then acts as a guide to teachers when making judgements about standards reached by their own classes. The subject leader interviews children regularly about their attitudes to the subject and most say they like it, especially when they can use mathematical equipment and games. A good link has been made with religious education. On display are examples of Joseph's coat of many colours made by Year 2. These show an imaginative use of tessellations such as hexagons and other two-dimensional shapes. Teachers give stickers for good work and certificates are awarded in assembly to those who have worked especially well.

SCIENCE

106. At the time of the last inspection children's attainments were similar to those found in most schools nationally at age seven. However, higher attaining children were not challenged enough. This situation has improved as in 2001, more children reached the higher level of attainment than in other schools nationally. The picture is similar at the present time and attainment is good. The school has set a target for 95% of the

children to reach expected and higher levels of attainment and is on course to meet it. This means that children of all abilities make good progress in the subject.

107. All the criticisms in the previous report have been overcome and improvement in attainment is due to:
- more time being allocated to the teaching of science especially in Year 2;
 - the introduction of a programme of work that supports thorough coverage of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2;
 - monitoring of the science curriculum so that the quality of teaching has improved and is having a significant impact on attainment;
 - analysis of test results that indicated investigative science was a weaker element of the curriculum;
 - determination to identify ways in which attainment can be raised;
 - the provision of activities in which children can make decisions about their work;
 - setting individual targets for children to improve;
 - very good use of assessment to plan work that meets children's needs;
 - the development of a portfolio of work that illustrates different levels of attainment. These are used very effectively to introduce new teachers to the school's high expectations in teaching and the attainment required in each year group.
108. Few lessons were observed in the previous inspection, especially in Year 2. This time all classes in Year 1 and 2 were observed. Of the six lessons seen, four were good, one was very good and one was satisfactory. Teachers use a variety of strategies to promote high attainment. Lessons contain direct teaching; practical tasks where children can make decisions about their work and a short session at the end where children are asked to review what they have learned. Work is planned to challenge the needs of children of different abilities. For example, in a lesson about the properties of different materials, children were asked to decide to choose two, three or four differences between the materials and record them in their own way. Some higher attaining children divided their paper into quarters, others drew around four circles and others divided the paper into four triangles. They then chose different papers, shiny, dull, transparent, patterned, plain and cut up examples to stick into each shape. In discussion, they could justify their decisions.
109. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear to the children so that they know what they have to do. Tasks are relevant and interesting to the age group and often promote children's social development. In Year 2, children were organised into small groups. Each group was given pictures of other children in the year group and was asked to sort them into a *set* according to particular features, such as the colour of their eyes. The children had to work together to make a clear decision. Lessons are planned in detail and teachers work closely in each year group so that all children receive similar lessons. The differences in the quality of teaching depended on the management of the children's behaviour, pace of the lesson and the lack of

interventions to take children's learning forward. All teachers and teaching assistants use appropriate science vocabulary and expect children to do the same.

110. Children clearly enjoy the practical nature of their work that challenges their intellectual effort. They take pride in presenting their work well and mostly respond positively to teachers' high expectations to work together co-operatively. The strong emphasis on enabling children to acquire both scientific knowledge and skills enhances their rate of progress and attainment. Teachers use imaginative ideas to promote children's understanding of forces such as *push* and *pull*. For example, children thought about the forces needed to ride a scooter successfully. They know that batteries help to provide a means to make toys move or to light up bulbs when part of a circuit. Children know about:
- the life cycle of creatures such as chickens;
 - the parts of a flower;
 - electrical items in the home;
 - the impact of exercise on their bodies;
 - characteristics of living and non-living things;
- and how to write a diary to record the progress of an experiment. For example, children kept detailed diaries of plant growth. Seeds were planted in different conditions to show children the conditions needed for plants to grow successfully.
111. Children who find recording their work difficult often tell the teacher or teaching assistant what they want to say and this is written for them. On other occasions they draw their findings. This practice enables children to feel successful and confident about their science work and their attainment.

ART AND DESIGN

112. Six lessons were seen during the period of the inspection, three each in Years 1 and 2. Judgements were also informed by teachers' planning, an interview with the co-ordinator for the subjects and a review of children's previous work. The programme of activities is often lively and interesting and children are building skills systematically as they move up through the school. By the age of seven, they are achieving above the level expected for their age in both subjects. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection that found attainment to be in line with most other schools. Examples of children's work are kept in well-presented class portfolios. The examples illustrate high, middle and low attainment in a range of skills and include

written summaries that explain why. This very good system of recording children's work is clearly paying dividends in helping to raise standards. This is because it enables teachers to share good practice and to have a clear understanding of what children can achieve and how.

113. Children's learning is good in lessons and over time. They generate a range of ideas and successfully plan the design and making of products. For example, Year 1 children have built simple lever mechanisms and have also constructed model playground swings with moving parts. Children's work shows increasing confidence in handling equipment and selecting different materials. An example of this was seen in a link with religious education in which Year 2 children designed Joseph's coat of many colours. The results were pleasing. Children's manipulative and control skills are mostly good, for example when using scissors and glue to cut and join materials together. Many children are beginning to understand the importance of refining what they make in order to bring about improvements. They think carefully about the order of their work and consider the materials and tools needed, making sensible choices. Particular attention is given to safety and children take note of this, as when they are using scissors.
114. Children show good skills in drawing, painting and colouring. This often helps them to illustrate work in other subjects, for example, in geography work on the local environment and science work on the classification of plants and animals. As they move up through the school, children's creative development is good. Appropriate opportunities are provided for them to experiment by mixing colours. Children in Year 1, for example, created a variety of tints by adding white to a range of colours. Records of children's work show they have a growing awareness of pattern, texture, shape and size. Their observational skills are good and their work shows an increasing understanding of proportion. For example, Year 1 children sketched their own portrait using mirrors for detail. They added colour using paint, pastels and crayons. The results were pleasing and often showed a good awareness of the features of the face together with their position in relation to one another.
115. Children's work in art includes weaving, collage, printing, tie dying, sculpture and computerised pictures. Much of it is of good quality, for example, delightful sculptures using a range of natural and man-made materials. Appropriate attention is given to the work of well-known artists. Children copy their styles effectively, such as when Year 2 children designed repeat patterns of good quality based on wallpaper designs by William Morris. These studies help children to begin to appreciate the wide variety of ways different artists represent their feelings and experiences. The importance of the subject was enhanced by the organisation of an art week held earlier this year. In addition, an art club is held weekly and this encourages children's interest.
116. Teaching overall is good. Lessons are prepared thoroughly with appropriate resources easily to hand. This helps to ensure time is used productively because children can get on quickly with their tasks. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and share their enthusiasm with the children really well. This has a good impact on their progress. Lessons begin with reminders about earlier work and teachers ensure that children build up skills systematically. Questions are used effectively to draw out what children know and understand. Good opportunities are provided for them to work together and this helps build their social skills. All children are enabled to make choices and this develops their sense of responsibility. During practical sessions, teachers sometimes stop the whole class in order to share a child's success and give ideas to others. This is good practice because it helps children feel their efforts are valued and enables them to learn from one another. Children have very good

attitudes towards their work and behave really well, though excited at times. They enjoy the tasks and consistently do their best.

117. Displays of work around the school are often of a high standard. They celebrate children's achievements and help develop their visual awareness.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Attainment in geography at age seven is similar to that found in all schools nationally as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school uses its extensive grounds effectively to develop the physical aspects of geography. By raising funds for charities such as *UNICEF* and *Shelter* children come to appreciate how life in other countries is different from their own.
119. Children make comparisons between different places, for example, labelling drawings of the countryside in Spain, the city of London and a town in America with skyscraper buildings. Recent lessons in Year 2 have included the use of different resources to find out information and make comparisons between human and physical features of the environment. For example, a resource pack on *Tocuaro*, in Mexico, was used to promote discussions about the differences between human and physical features of Collier Row and *Tocuaro*. Despite efforts by all children to complete the worksheets they were given, there was not enough challenge in this activity for the higher attaining children and this limited their intellectual effort. Children did their best to draw the differences between the two environments. In discussion, it was evident that the children knew more than they had recorded. Children's attitudes and behaviour are good. They listen attentively and this does much to enhance their learning in geography.
120. Teaching was satisfactory in all lessons observed. Teachers are thorough in their presentation of the lesson content and work hard to ensure all children understand what is being taught. Opportunities for more independent work were lacking in the lessons as children were given prescribed tasks rather than investigating aspects of the topic for themselves. An informative subject profile contains evidence of work completed by children of different abilities and the National Curriculum levels they have reached. This profile is used effectively to help new teachers to see the standards expected in the subject.
121. Attractive displays emphasise other aspects of geography. These include large collage pictures showing interesting differences between the seaside and the town. Year 1 carried out a study on making the local area safer and depicted this in their artwork. Photographs of the area, accompanied by safety posters painted by children, reflect their concerns about the environment. In some classrooms, maps and globes are permanently on display and used well to promote children's learning in geography.

HISTORY

122. Attainment in history by the age of seven is above that found nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of work, displays and teachers' planning as well as lesson observations. Children's good attitudes and behaviour do much to enhance their

attainment. They take pride in presenting their work well and their good speaking and listening skills help them to acquire new knowledge and explore different ideas.

123. Records show that children know about the life of *Florence Nightingale*. Much of the work is recorded in pictures to which the children or teacher has added captions. One particularly interesting sketch shows three small hospital beds and the label, *She helped sick soldiers in the war*, and this is contrasted with, *There are no rats today*. In Year 2, teachers challenge children's intellectual and creative efforts by asking them to be eyewitnesses of historical events such as *The Great Fire of London*. This is reflected in a piece of work that says, *I was in my house and then I smelled burning. I looked out of the window and saw lots of flames and sparks and lots of people running and shouting*. In addition, teachers ask children to suggest possible uses for old objects, such as, *a darning mushroom*. As the children had not seen one before, they offered suggestions that it was for *rolling dough*, *mashing potatoes* or for *banging a drum*.
124. Year 1 children watched a video attentively, keen to find out about seaside holidays during the last century. By using their keen observational skills effectively they noticed many differences between then and now. They pointed out the way ladies used parasols to ward off the sun as compared with the sunscreens, creams and sunglasses used today. They also noticed buckets and spades were made from metal rather than plastic. As a follow-up activity, teachers challenged children to sort sepia and coloured photographs into old ones and new ones and give their reasons for allocating the photographs to a particular group. They use common words and phrases relating to the passage of time with understanding, for example, *a long time ago*, *in the past* and *nowadays* accurately.
125. Teaching observed was satisfactory during the inspection, although the portfolios of past work show that there has been good teaching over time. The curriculum has been covered thoroughly with good attention to knowledge and historical enquiry skills. Children's interest in history is shown in their imaginative and detailed sketches, particularly those events that have captured their imagination such as *The Great Fire of London*. Before watching videos, teachers brief the class well on what to look for, such as, the differences in costumes and beach attire. Lessons begin well by recalling previous learning to which children contribute their original ideas in an articulate way. As well as encouraging children to act as *eyewitnesses* at historical events, teachers use other strategies to make learning meaningful. For instance, children are asked to sequence pictures in order of the time they took place and to speak about everyday objects in the past using simple words. Role-play is another technique used to help them think as young historians, what life used to be like. For example, they find out about *washday* by handling old tongs, a washboard, a tub and an iron and pretend to use them. They treat these items with respect.

126. Samples of past work are kept in a folder for staff to use. This is beneficial because the samples have National Curriculum levels marked on them so that current work can be compared to check individual progress and attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. At the time of the last inspection, attainment for children aged seven was said to be similar to that found in all schools nationally. However, resources were limited, the curriculum did not meet statutory requirements and computers were rarely used in other subjects of the National Curriculum. Children found it hard to work on computers without an adult close on hand to assist with problems using the software. The school has worked hard to overcome these criticisms and has been successful in incorporating information and communication technology into other subjects and enabling children to work independently. The curriculum for the subject now meets statutory requirements. During the current inspection, children were observed using computers in literacy, numeracy and science. The work scrutiny indicates children have used computer programmes to enhance their work in art, working in the style of *Mondrian*. Attainment, including that of children with special educational needs is similar to the national picture.
128. The school had identified information and communication technology as a priority for development at the time of the last inspection. This remains the case. Staff have undergone training as part of a national initiative and are now confident in teaching essential computer skills to the class as a whole. In the lessons observed, this was often done well. However, there are only two computers in each classroom, one of which is a laptop, so that few children have easy access to a computer to apply the new skills and knowledge the teacher is trying to provide them with. The governors are fully aware of this situation and plans to install a computer suite are advanced, with finance set aside to improve the resources.
129. The lack of computers and ease of access to a number of them means attainment remains in line with other schools nationally at age seven. The school offers a breadth of curriculum so that children programme a computer toy so that it follows directions. Some children know how to use the digital camera, understand that information and communication technology is important in everyday life and operate tape recorders independently. The children can use the Internet and the school has given close attention to their safety when using it.
130. At the time of the last inspection there were few opportunities to observe the subject being taught. This time, many teachers were observed. Their knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject is good and they enable children to use computers as part of other lessons. Time is also provided for children to practise and enhance new skills for a few minutes each day. The children help each other and share the expertise they bring with them from home. However, lack of resources impedes the school's ability to build on the skills children bring with them from home. The computer resources in Year 1 are not as up to date as those in Year 2. It is possible to purchase additional software for the computers in Year 1, but the range is more limited than for the *PC computers* and laptops.

131. The children's good behaviour and listening skills do much to enhance their learning in information and communication technology. They have to listen carefully to the instructions of their teacher and watch carefully as their friends demonstrate the use of keys or tools within the different software programmes. There is also a very high expectation on the part of teachers that children will watch, listen and remember so that they can try out new skills on their own at a later time. This challenges their intellectual and creative effort. Observations show that children take pride in using the computers to draft simple sentences in literacy, including the use of a spell checker. They learn new skills quickly.

MUSIC

132. By the age of seven, attainment in knowledge, understanding and experiences in music is similar to that found in all schools nationally. Girls and boys achieve similarly. Children, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress.
133. Since the last inspection, the school has made good overall progress in developing music, although insufficient progress has been made in meeting the needs of the most able. Now, children show much better concentration and overall, have very positive attitudes to this subject. Good progress has been made in developing a common planning format for class lessons, which means that children are usually clear about what they are learning. Attainment has been maintained as similar to that in other schools, despite the loss of a specialist teacher for Years 1 and 2. Training for teachers and the use of a new scheme of work have resulted in the steady development of teachers' skills. Especially good progress has been made in developing learning about multicultural music. Children compose more music for themselves and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
134. The quality of teaching and learning are both satisfactory. Three lessons were observed and all were at least satisfactory. Overall, children are well managed and show very good attitudes to learning. Their good behaviour in lessons allows them to concentrate, listen to each other and respect different ideas. Teachers' knowledge is broadly satisfactory. However, it reflects a very heavy reliance on following the scheme of work to the letter. Teachers often lack the confidence to be flexible, although this is improving, as teachers are beginning to look at ways to link music to dance in physical education. Overall, there is limited understanding of how to further learning to more demanding work. This is a considerable factor in why challenges for the more able are limited. Taped music supports singing adequately, as children learn how to use their voices expressively.
135. The contrasts between satisfactory and good teaching were evident in the lessons seen in Year 2. In these lessons, children listened to several pieces of music and evaluated how they made them feel and how it conveyed the feeling of different kinds of weather. In the satisfactory lesson the pace of work was steady with some opportunities for children to learn and understand new musical terminology. However, in the good lesson, the teacher used effective questioning techniques and promoted a high level of challenge for children to learn about tempo dynamics and timbre. The

teacher said, *Now come on, a really hard question, what makes the sound different between a piano and a trumpet?* The children thought about this and by listening to several pieces by *Lady Blacksmith Mambaso* and *John Michel Jarre*, were able to talk about how timbre in African voices compared with that in electronic sounds.

136. Overall, a strength of teaching is the way in which teachers encourage children to talk about their ideas. This results in growing confidence and skills of appraisal and good spiritual and cultural development. In one lesson, the children sat totally motionless as they were captivated by *Grieg's 'Morning'*. Following this, when invited to comment about their feelings, one pupil said, *It sounded like all the people were quietly chasing butterflies in the sun.*
137. Weaknesses in teaching and learning relate to missing opportunities to experiment with musical instruments to improvise, select and combine percussion instruments so that children learn for themselves. Furthermore, in assemblies, children cannot learn new songs easily as words are not displayed for them to sing along to. Some Year 1 planning shows elements of unsatisfactory teaching and learning as the plans showed work that was pitched well below the expected level of attainment, and little understanding of how to develop a purposeful lesson.
138. The successful recorder club positively contributes to children's personal, social and intellectual learning, while also allowing children to read music at a higher than average standard. The school takes part in a good range of musical festivals and concerts, both of which enhance children's social development. Links with parents are good, as they are invited regularly to enjoy school musical activities and class assemblies, which play a significant part in helping children to feel proud of their work and themselves.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. By the age of seven, children's attainments are good. Girls and boys achieve similarly, except in football skills, where boys demonstrate greater precision and co-ordination. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress because of the variety of learning opportunities that are presented to them. There has been good improvement, since the last inspection, in widening the curriculum for the subject. Teaching has improved as no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and the incidence of very good teaching has increased.
140. Children apply satisfactory physical effort in most lessons, with the best effort occurring in the warm up sessions. Here, the use of lively music makes vigorous activity exciting. Teachers make this fun, which leads to very good concentration and good cardiovascular exercise. For example, In Year 1 when children ran, dodged and changed direction to music by *The Spice Girls* they joined in wholeheartedly. There are good plans to develop the aspect of healthy living as part of children's very good personal and social development.
141. The overall quality of teaching and learning are both good. In the best lessons, basic skills are taught well. Children grasp new ideas quickly due to clear demonstration of skills by the teacher and opportunities for children to evaluate each other's work and

so improve their own performance. The scheme of work is well organised so that teachers, even those with limited specialist knowledge of the subject, can show satisfactory knowledge of how to teach the subject.

142. Lessons are planned well, showing good development of skills. However, some teachers do not push the pace on to the maximum effect, as there is a tendency to repeat activities rather than find new ways of extending skills. For example, in Year 1, children learnt well how to send and receive the football using the side of the foot, but were not pushed on to co-ordinate this skill around obstacles. Children are managed very well, with good use of teaching assistants to allow children with special needs to be integrated fully into lessons.
143. A significant strength of development within the subject includes the very good after school club activities. As a result of this, many children have the opportunity to develop new skills in a wide range of games, including hockey, tennis and basketball. The richness of these activities impacts greatly on learning and leads to good attainment for those children of all abilities that attend these twice-weekly sessions. Links with West Ham Football Club are well established, so that boys and girls have the opportunity to work with very skilled players. As a consequence of this, the higher attaining children are helped to achieve their full potential in football. All of these activities have a very positive impact on children's attitudes. They love sport and are keen to improve.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. By the age of seven, children's attainment is satisfactory and is in line with the expectations of the Havering Agreed syllabus. Girls and boys achieve similarly. Children, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress.
145. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing the subject. Displays of children's work have improved and substantial funds allocated to improving resources. These are now satisfactory. A significant strength of development includes widening provision for children to learn about a variety of religions that reflect the multicultural nature of Britain. Since 1997, the school has introduced *circle time* and increased provision for children's personal and social development, both of which positively contribute to children's learning.
146. The quality of teaching and learning are both satisfactory. During the inspection, four lessons were seen. Three were satisfactory and one was good. Further evidence was gained from looking at children's work, evaluating teachers' planning and from discussions with staff.
147. Overall, teachers' knowledge and competence in teaching the subject are satisfactory; this results in children developing new knowledge at a steady pace. Teachers' planning is clear and effective, with broadly appropriate learning objectives

to help children to widen their understanding about new and sometimes difficult ideas. For example, in Year 2, children talked about why the church is a special place for Christians and what makes a person a Christian? Some children thought that you could only become a Christian as a baby when being baptised. They found the idea of adults becoming Christian very hard to grasp. One boy expressed his amazement saying, *Really Miss, even when you are adult? Miss I don't understand that, what's that then Miss? Tell me in a kid's way.*

148. Questioning is a real strength of teaching because the teachers ask open questions that deepen children's knowledge and understanding. They also encourage children to ask questions to clarify their ideas and this results in an improvement in their understanding. A good example of this occurred as children discussed symbols in churches, including churchyards and gravestones. Some misconceptions were addressed well. A child asked, *How does Jesus make your body go up in the clouds?* The teacher handled this very sensitively; talking about the Christian belief that life is everlasting because it is the person's spirit and personality that goes to be with God and not the body.
149. Children's learning is supported by visits to the local Christian church, but visits to other different places of worship are not yet organised, this is a weaker element of the provision. Wider use of artefacts in lessons is helping children to gain better insights into for example, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu traditions.
150. The best teaching and learning was seen in a good Year 2 lesson in which children discussed the Christian story of *The Prodigal Son*. Here, the teacher skilfully organised the lesson so that there was a good balance between listening, talking and acting. This resulted in interest by the children, sustained concentration and plenty of opportunities for them to think and learn for themselves. Following a lively telling of the story, children talked about jealousy and forgiveness. Learning was reinforced by a good role-play activity. By the end of the lesson, children had made good progress in understanding the meanings behind the stories Jesus told. One answer in particular showed that children listen carefully, think and learn appropriately and show good attitudes to each other. *You shouldn't be jealous, it doesn't matter how poor you look, you can still be loved.*
151. The curriculum has improved satisfactorily since 1997, although it is again in a period of transition because of the use of the Havering Syllabus as well as aspects of the National Qualifications and Curriculum Agency guidance. The school is doing this to give a greater balance between social, personal and multicultural religious education awareness. This is good practice, but is not yet sufficiently organised to ensure consistency between classes. This is most evident in the scrutiny of work. In Year 2, in particular, two out of the three classes, had almost no written recorded work, while one class had several examples.
152. A significant strength of the school's approach to teaching and learning lies in the emphasis on discussion in lessons. Following discussions teachers annotate

children's pictures. This shows good links with literacy. There are also good links with design and technology, as evident in children's designs for *Joseph's multicoloured coat*.