

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SHERWOOD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sidcup

LEA area: London Borough of Bexley

Unique reference number: 101443

Headteacher: Mr S Fletcher

Reporting inspector: Dr M Bradshaw  
6169

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2002

Inspection number: 195225

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sherwood Park Avenue Sidcup Kent
Postcode:	DA15 9JQ
Telephone number:	020 8303 6300
Fax number:	020 8298 7389
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Wood
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6169	M J Bradshaw	Registered inspector	Science Physical education	What sort of school is it?  The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are pupils taught?  What should the school do to improve further?
13526	R Barnard	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?
7465	R Brent	Team inspector	Geography History Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
18706	J Gill	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	
16971	R Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

22199	J Wotherspoon	Team inspector	English Music	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 400 pupils who attend full-time from Reception to Year 6, together with 40 children who attend the Nursery part-time, either morning or afternoon. The school is smaller than at the time of the previous inspection. Almost 53 per cent of pupils are girls. Children usually enter Nursery part-time either in September or January, and transfer full-time to Reception a year later. The school's roll does not change significantly during the school year. Over 93 per cent of pupils are from a white ethnic background. The remainder are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Nineteen pupils are identified as having English as an additional language and, of these, five have additional support. Indications are that this figure is increasing. The background of pupils is about average; 49 full-time pupils (over 12 per cent) claim free school meals, which is about average. The school's evidence shows that its intake is not as strong as at the time of the previous inspection and, in particular, there are increasing numbers of social problems. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is about average; 76 pupils in Reception to Year 6 (19 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs and, of these, four have statements of special educational needs. Inspection evidence indicates that the total figure of pupils with special educational needs is higher than identified. Attainment on entry, indicated by assessments shortly after children start in Nursery and Reception, is a little below average, especially in the area of communication, language and literacy; this is not as high as previously reported. The school was badly affected by a fire about eleven months ago. This destroyed the west wing of the school, which included the computer suite. A significant proportion of the school's records, stock and resources was destroyed or damaged beyond use in the fire. This has greatly affected the school's ability to cover aspects of the curriculum and to maintain aspects of its improvement.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Sherwood Park Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Most children enjoy their time in the school and have good attitudes in lessons. In most respects, the school strives for equality and an inclusive society. Care of pupils and knowledge of individuals are important to the school's culture. Attainment, by the end of Year 6, has fallen recently to below or well below the average in English, mathematics and science. Indications are of an improvement this year in mathematics and science to average or above. This improvement is not so evident in writing, and in speaking and listening. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with significant variation. It is good for children in the Nursery and Reception, and generally very good in Year 6. The headteacher and governors provide sound leadership. Staff are very supportive of the school, but roles and responsibilities of key staff and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently clear. The school has below average income for schools in London boroughs; it makes appropriate use of its resources and provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The organisation, curriculum and teaching for children in the Nursery and Reception are good, and result in children making good progress.
- Teaching is often very good in Year 6.
- The attainment by Year 6 is improving in science, history and aspects of physical education.
- There is a strong partnership with parents.
- The community and partner institutions make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Staff and parents are very supportive of the headteacher.



## What could be improved

- Standards in writing, and speaking and listening, and the use of literacy skills in other subjects, are not developed sufficiently.
- Teaching of music is unsatisfactory and attainment is too low.
- The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs require improvement.
- The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language require improvement.
- The roles and responsibilities of key staff, including subject co-ordinators, require development.
- The use of assessment needs to be extended.
- Accommodation and resources are not good enough to ensure that pupils can make sufficient progress in all classes and in all subjects.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Sherwood Park Primary School was inspected in June 1997 and found to have a number of strengths, although there were areas requiring improvement. Since then, it has made satisfactory progress. All areas of weakness identified in the previous report have been dealt with, most with reasonable success. Since 1997, by Year 6, attainment overall has improved at a similar rate to that nationally, although this has been erratic and varied from subject to subject. Results in English have improved overall, but in writing they have slipped below the national average. In mathematics, results have tended to decline, although indications are of an improvement this year. In science, a strong improvement has matched the rate of progress nationally, thus test results remain just below average overall. Inspection evidence indicates a better picture as pupils' scientific skills are well developed. Most pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although there are variations between classes and subjects. Assessment procedures have improved and the school collects a wide range of data, which demonstrates pupils' progress. This information is not yet used consistently to help pupils to improve further. Schemes of work have been improved, and there is better planning to ensure that skills, as well as knowledge, are satisfactorily developed. Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and to express their ideas are better, and provision for spiritual development is now good. The school management plan has a greater focus on raising attainment and the setting of targets. Work is often matched to help more able pupils improve and this has resulted in more pupils gaining the higher standards in English and science; however, in Years 3 to 6, progress of pupils with special educational needs has not been so strong in aspects of English. There is less unsatisfactory teaching.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	D	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	D	E	E	
science	C	D	D	D	

Over the period from 1997 to 2001, the school's results at the end of Year 6 have varied from year to year. The overall trend has been similar to the national improvement. In English, although fluctuating, results have increased at just below the rate of national improvement. The average for the last three years is just above the national picture. Least progress has been made in writing. Mathematics results have tended to decline. In science, results have improved strongly, matching the national picture but, in the National Curriculum tests, remained just below average. In 2001, compared with schools nationally and similar schools, that is those with between eight and 20 per cent of pupils claiming free school meals, results were below average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. The school is setting suitably challenging targets and is making progress towards achieving them. Results at the end of Year 2 have been mostly close to the national average since 1997 in reading, writing and mathematics. The trend has been up since 1998. In 2001, results in reading were just below the national average, while in writing and mathematics they were similar to the average. This year, attainment in Year 6 is better than last year. This is because of strong progress being made currently. Attainment in mathematics is about average, and that in science higher than this. Writing remains weaker than reading. In Year 2, attainment is about average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In information and communication technology (ICT) and music, attainment is below average. In other subjects, standards are generally average, and better than this in history and games by Year 6. Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress and most will attain the expected standard when they enter Year 1. Overall, most pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time in the school. This is not always the case in every class and affects, in particular, writing.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are good in most lessons throughout the school. They are very good in relation to extra-curricular activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall. There are no serious issues, but, on occasions, some pupils lack self-control.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development and relationships of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils generally lack confidence.
Attendance	Attendance is a little below average. This is mainly because of pupils taking holidays in term time.

Pupils' good attitudes in class, and the enthusiasm of the oldest pupils, are making a positive contribution to learning. There have been no exclusions recently and the school works hard to ensure none is excluded if at all possible. The attendance of pupils with special educational needs is usually well below average.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching was previously described as satisfactory overall, and this remains the case. At the time of the previous inspection, almost one fifth of lessons were less than satisfactory. This figure has been reduced to about one twentieth. A little over half the lessons observed featured good or very good teaching. Teaching is especially good in Year 6, and good in the Nursery and Reception classes. In the lessons observed, the teaching of English and mathematics was satisfactory. In most subjects, teaching is at least satisfactory and this ensures that pupils' learning is sound. Teaching in music is unsatisfactory. Numeracy skills are often used well in other subjects, especially science, but literacy skills are not used sufficiently. Teaching is not consistent from class to class, and in Years 1 to 5, there are occasions when expectations are not consistently high enough. In the best lessons, pupils show interest and concentration.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of most pupils. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is well planned and effectively meets the needs of the youngest children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, and they make sound progress overall. Management of this provision is not strong enough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils make sound progress overall. The identification of their needs, organisation of teaching, monitoring of progress and attainment are not organised sufficiently.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Spiritual development is well promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides satisfactory care for its pupils. There is good awareness of child protection and health and safety issues. A wide range of assessment procedures is used to track pupils' progress. The use of the information to plan strategies for further improvement is less well developed.

Owing to the impact of the fire, the school cannot currently provide the full requirements of the ICT curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented, but has not made as much impact as it should, partly because pupils are given too few opportunities to use their literacy skills across the curriculum. The time available for music is a little below most schools. The procedures by which pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from lessons for additional support are not always effective. The school benefits from strong links with other schools and the local community.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound educational direction. There are issues related to the allocation of responsibilities to members of staff. Co-ordinators have limited opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects. The scale of the changes in recent years demonstrates a good commitment on the part of the staff to improve the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their duties satisfactorily and have a good awareness of the school's strengths. They have played a good part in planning both the school's development in recent years and its response to the fire. However, statutory requirements are not met fully in ICT, and more effective evaluation of the school's performance needs to be undertaken.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance satisfactorily. Teaching is monitored well by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, but subject and team leaders do not always review the work of staff sufficiently.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its resources. The school targets its funds well to educational priority areas.

The management of the school was effective when coping with the effects of the fire. Staffing is satisfactory. Overall, accommodation is unsatisfactory. The planned building works should complement the good facilities outside. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, although there remain weaknesses following the fire. The school applies the principle of best value satisfactorily.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is approachable and works closely with parents.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The information about pupils' progress.</li> </ul>

Inspectors feel that parents have an optimistic view of how good the school is. Homework is set a level similar to most primary schools. Information on progress is good. Activities outside lessons are mainly sport and limited in some areas, especially in relation to music.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Over the period 1997 to 2001, in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' results have improved at a rate similar to the national improvement. The pattern of improvement has varied considerably. In English, results declined in 1998, improved strongly in 1999, and were just below the average after this. In mathematics, apart from an increase in 1999, results have tended to decline. In science, the improvement has been strong and matched the national improvement. As a result, in 2001, results were just below the national average in English and science, and well below the average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, they were just below the average in English and science, and well below the average in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are about average in Year 6 in reading and mathematics. In science, results are above average because of good knowledge and very well-developed scientific skills. Standards in writing remain below average. The targets set for at least Level 4 attainment in English and mathematics are quite challenging, and last year were not met. Over the past few years, on average, there has been no significant difference between the results of boys and girls; this is the case this year.
2. Over the period 1997 to 2001, in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils' results have fluctuated close to the average. Results in reading have tended to be close to the average, while those in writing, apart from in 1999, have been above average. In mathematics, results declined in 1998 and have been close to the average since then. In 2001, overall attainment in reading was just below the average, writing results were above average and in mathematics they were average. In comparison with similar schools, results were above the average in writing, and just below the average in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicated that over the last two years, pupils' results have been about average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are about average. Over the past three years, any differences in attainment between boys and girls are similar to the national picture.
3. The previous report indicated that standards were about average, or better, in most subjects in both key stages. National Curriculum test data indicated that, in 1997, standards were generally average or above, except for science at the end of Year 6 which was below average. Attainment by Year 2 is not as strong as previously reported; this is associated with changes in the characteristics of the school's intake. By Year 6, there have been improvements in science, and in art and design. Standards in music are not as good as previously reported, and the impact of the fire has meant that standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are now below average.
4. Attainment on entry to the Nursery class is below average, with particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. Well-organised teaching and a good curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes help to ensure children's good progress. As a result, most children this year should achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. In communication, language and literacy, children listen carefully and handle books satisfactorily. They know that words have meaning. They write most letters well, although some children form quite a few letters incorrectly. Children have a secure knowledge of numbers and most of the higher attaining children count up to 20. Children use money well in the Reception shop. Children's knowledge of the world increases well, and is likely to be similar to that expected by the time they

enter Year 1. They draw simple maps, understand that changes have occurred in their lives and enjoy observing mini-beasts. In creative development, children's work should be similar to the expected standard by the time they start Year 1. They use colour, pattern and texture well. Almost all children hold their pencils and paint brushes with satisfactory control. Children's physical development is promoted well and they balance well on apparatus. They work with good coordination, control and awareness of space.

5. Pupils in Year 2 are now achieving about average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education. In ICT, pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise and develop their skills, which are therefore below average. Pupils read with satisfactory accuracy, and an understanding of what they have read. Writing skills are about average. They use correct punctuation and spell most common words accurately. Handwriting is mostly neat, with letters well formed. Most pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils are divided largely on the basis of age and the development of English skills is not as strong in the class containing the younger pupils when compared with those in the other class. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is average. The majority accurately add and subtract numbers to 50. Higher attaining pupils are reasonably accurate with simple multiplication or division. They know a range of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing well and are used effectively to support learning in other subjects, especially science. Planned use of literacy skills to consolidate their development is not so strong. In science, pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 2. They have a satisfactory knowledge across all areas of science. Pupils' scientific skills are similarly developed to a satisfactory level. In ICT, pupils' work is below average because they do not have enough opportunity to use computers to reinforce their skills. They input text, select different icons, control the mouse and print their work satisfactorily. In religious education, pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity, and a range of festivals of other faiths.
6. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate attainment that is above average in science, average in mathematics and below average in English, particularly writing, and speaking and listening. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, attainment was below or well below average; pupils in Year 6 this year should achieve higher standards. Pupils read with good understanding and accuracy. Their writing is below average. Pupils use interesting vocabulary and features such as metaphors well, but weaknesses are evident in the consistent use of correct grammar and spelling. Work is not always presented carefully and handwriting is not good enough. Speaking and listening skills are generally below what might be expected. Pupils' literacy skills are not used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is average. They have secure number skills and solve number problems accurately. Virtually all pupils draw and interpret simple block graphs, histograms and line graphs with accuracy. This area of mathematics is aided by extensive data handling in science. In 2001, pupils' knowledge of science was close to the average, with virtually every pupil achieving at least the expected standard. Pupils' scientific skills are well developed, with pupils understanding the need to ensure a test is fair, to repeat observations and to record results accurately. In ICT, attainment is below average. This is because the lack of resources following the fire limits the opportunities currently available. In religious education, pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity and a range of other faiths.
7. Throughout the school, pupils achieve mostly average standards in other subjects. In art and design, in both key stages, pupils now develop a sound range of skills and apply these satisfactorily using a range of two- and three-dimensional media. Achievement in art and design is now good in the junior section as skills that have been lacking are now being developed. The quality of work in design and technology has improved and is now average, with good progress in the development of skills evident in the junior section. In

music, standards are below average. This is because there has been limited, systematic teaching of music in recent years. In history, pupils attain above average standards by Year 6. They have a good understanding of the nature and use of historical evidence. In geography, standards are average by Year 6, with examples of good use of pupils' numeracy skills. In physical education, pupils attain average standards overall, although there are strengths in games in the junior section.

8. Pupils' achievement during their time in school is satisfactory overall, but varies from class to class, and between subjects. Progress in the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good and children achieve well. Owing to the impact of the fire and the resulting lack of resources, achievement in ICT is currently unsatisfactory throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory overall, although there are variations between classes, partly linked with the age differences in the parallel classes. In Year 6, achievement is good and pupils are making significant progress in most subjects. In Years 3 to 6, achievement varies between classes, but is about satisfactory overall. This is not the case in writing, and speaking and listening. Achievement here is not as good as it should be owing to the lack of planned use of literacy skills in other subjects, and because the expectations of some teachers are not always high enough. Achievement in music is unsatisfactory because of the lack of time devoted to the subject and lack of staff expertise. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall during their time in the school, but the rate varies from class to class and between subjects. Progress of these pupils is stronger in Years 1 and 2 than in the junior section, and this is reflected in recent assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. Where teachers plan specifically for their literacy and numeracy needs, for instance as seen in a Year 1 class, achievement is good. However, in other lessons observed, planning failed to take full account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The pattern of withdrawing these pupils from lessons, including literacy sessions, is not effective in ensuring consistently good progress in English. Overall, pupils from minority ethnic groups make sound progress, similar to other school groups. Standards achieved by Year 6 have been similar to their peers in the past with pupils achieving mainly Levels 4 and 5 in English, mathematics and science. However, different ethnic groups are coming to the school and attainment may not be as high. The school has now acknowledged some work is needed to be done on analysis of progress and attainment by ethnicity.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils' good attitudes to school, satisfactory behaviour and the sound levels of personal development give appropriate support to their learning. Standards, in relation to behaviour, attitudes and personal development, are not as high as those reported at the previous inspection. Pupils like coming to school and are keen to take part in activities. Parents are very positive in stating how much their children love coming to school. Interest in extra-curricular activities, especially sports, is very good. During the inspection, a large number of older boys and girls tried hard to improve their skills in cricket, and the girls' football team was delighted when winning 4-0 in a match against a girls' team from another school.
10. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes have settled into school well and have quickly adapted to routines. They pay good attention and are becoming mature and confident learners. Their behaviour is good. In the Nursery, children drive independently when riding bikes and large toys, being careful not to crash into others. They share books sensibly. In almost all sessions observed in the Nursery and Reception classes, the attitudes and behaviour of the children were good. All respond well to the consistent and positive management of behaviour from all staff, with a positive impact on learning.

11. Throughout the school, pupils generally show good attitudes to learning in lessons. However, in a few lessons, pupils' attitudes are unsatisfactory due to their lack of maturity and self-confidence and where they find teaching uninteresting. This tends to happen mostly in music lessons. Attitudes are consistently good or very good in Year 6 with a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils also show very keen interest in science lessons. In Year 6 science lessons, pupils' sensible use of equipment, and interest in what they were to discover when experimenting with parachutes they have made themselves, enhances their knowledge of forces. They concentrate well and follow instructions closely, especially in practical tasks. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils engage very enthusiastically in a range of activities in examining plants which we eat and do not eat, and learning the differences between fruits and vegetables.
12. Behaviour is satisfactory. There have been no permanent or temporary exclusions over the last two years, a figure well below the national average. This reflects the school's desire to be a caring, inclusive community. In the majority of lessons, behaviour is good. Pupils are developing a satisfactory sense of fairness and a sound awareness of the impact of their actions on others, although a number of pupils in the infants are thoughtless and selfish, especially in the playground. No direct bullying was observed during the inspection, but a small number of pupils show aggressive tendencies and pupils talk about rough behaviour in the playground. Records reveal minor problems with some name-calling of a racist nature. A few pupils, mainly boys, cause some disruption to lessons because they lack self-control. In both Years 1 and 2, pupils calling out and not listening to their teacher limits their learning in physical education and music lessons. Pupils are noisy and slightly unruly in the dining area; for example moving seats and carrying food when halfway through eating their lunch. Many do not hear the music playing when entering assembly because of constant chattering.
13. Pupils are developing a satisfactory awareness of citizenship especially with their involvement in local community events and traditional customs, such as Maypole dancing. A number of pupils who are cubs, scouts or brownies proudly wore their uniforms in assembly on St George's day. Pupils undertake a limited range of duties and responsibilities. Some respond well to duties in the classroom but too few opportunities are provided for them to use their initiative. They lack confidence in themselves, especially in relation to speaking aloud. They develop a good awareness of the wonder of nature and science, especially in Year 4 when, for example, the images from a microscope are projected onto a computer screen. The pupils in Reception marvel when observing caterpillars and cocoons. They are starting to examine issues about moral values through the recent introduction of 'circle time' discussions, but lack of confidence results in some children not expressing their views clearly. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, and those with special educational needs, are integrated satisfactorily and have similar attitudes and values as their peers.
14. Relationships are satisfactory throughout the school. Although most pupils are polite, friendly and helpful to others, a number lack self-control and are not as respectful as they could be, including towards their teachers in lessons. Older pupils respond well to the opportunities to develop their relationships through residential visits. Pupils are developing good team spirit through their sport activities. Visits and visitors enhance their appreciation of drama and literature satisfactorily, but limited opportunities restrict their appreciation of music.
15. Overall attendance levels are just below the national average. The main reasons for unsatisfactory attendance are a high level of pupils taking holidays in term time and a small number of families whose attendance is poor. A significant number of these pupils



are on the register of special educational needs. Achievement suffers for these pupils. Two pupils with long-term illness also affect attendance. Punctuality is satisfactory and there are few unauthorised absences.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory overall. In about 19 of every 20 lessons, the teaching was satisfactory or better; the remainder were unsatisfactory; this is an improvement over the previous inspection when the proportion was almost one fifth. In over half of the lessons, teaching was good or better. There are differences in the quality of teaching across the school. In most year groups, teaching is satisfactory overall. For children in the Nursery and Reception it is good, and this is helping to provide children with a good start to their education. In Year 6, it is currently very good overall, which is leading to rapid progress and great enthusiasm for learning in most subjects.
17. The teaching for Nursery and Reception children is good overall, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Despite the unsatisfactory accommodation for Nursery children, the teacher, often working closely with other adults, provides a stimulating learning environment. Careful attention is given to all areas of learning and the children are well prepared for entering Year 1. Children's personal, social and emotional development, including their independence, is given good emphasis and, as a result, children share resources and co-operate well, for instance when clearing away the large toys after use outside. Teachers provide a good range of activities, which effectively promote learning in language and mathematical development. Early reading and number skills are given a high priority. Good day-to-day assessment procedures are in place with detailed observations and annotated notes in recorded work taking place for all areas of learning. Children concentrate well and show increasing confidence and independence. Children enjoy their learning. Resources and learning support staff are used very effectively to help Nursery and Reception children learn.
18. The quality of teaching in the remainder of the school is satisfactory overall, although it is usually good or very good in Year 6. Teaching of English is satisfactory, although there are weaknesses, in particular in the area of writing. In mathematics, it is satisfactory overall, and the use of ability sets in Years 3 to 6 is helping pupils' learning. In other subjects, teaching in both key stages is generally satisfactory. Exceptions are the good teaching in the junior section in science, art and design, design and technology, history and physical education, especially games. Throughout the school, teaching of music is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' learning in the majority of lessons observed was satisfactory or better; scrutiny of pupils' work suggests a similar picture, except for it being less strong in writing. Overall, satisfactory teaching results in pupils making sound progress in most subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually satisfactory or better, but there is a lack of staff expertise in music. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged effectively in their work, but not all teachers encourage pupils to work at pace. Literacy is satisfactorily taught, but pupils' writing skills are not given sufficient attention. Literacy, including the development of speaking and listening, is not used enough in other subjects. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and has been helped by the National Numeracy Strategy and the use of ability sets in Years 3 to 6. Mathematics is used very well in science and geography where pupils collect, display, compare and interpret data.
19. The management of pupils is usually at least satisfactory, and this results in behaviour in lessons being generally good. Lesson planning is satisfactory and, in the best examples, identifies how pupils are to be challenged and extended. In these lessons

also, teachers ensure that pupils know what they are to learn and why. A range of methods is used satisfactorily, and in the best lessons, effective cross-curricular links are made. The pace of lessons is usually sound, but not all teachers use specific targets to encourage pupils to complete a good amount of work. Resources, including the ICT that is available, are used satisfactorily to support learning. Assessment during lessons is mostly satisfactory. Virtually all work is marked. The quality of marking varies, but it is satisfactory overall. In Year 6, in particular, it is used effectively to help pupils understand how they can improve.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are supported satisfactorily in most lessons. Work is usually planned satisfactorily to meet the requirements of these pupils. They achieve particularly well in science, and in mathematics where they are grouped within their year on the basis of their attainment. Progress is less secure in literacy and in some foundation subjects because pupils' targets are not always incorporated into lesson planning and achievement is unsatisfactory in some lessons. There is effective liaison between teachers and learning support assistants. This was seen, for example, when they helped Year 5 pupils to understand the importance of spelling patterns in rhymes. Teaching is satisfactory when groups of these pupils are withdrawn from the main lesson for small group support. However, the work covered does not relate closely enough to what is being done in the main lesson and this can slow learning overall. The net result is that these pupils make satisfactory, although variable, progress. Weaknesses are most evident in writing. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress overall; this is because of the support given by teachers, adults and outside agencies. However, the support is not organised across the whole school in a sufficiently systematic way. The satisfactory teaching in the school is helping to promote sound learning, with examples of good learning for the youngest and oldest children. Overall, most pupils make sound progress by the end of Year 6 and this results in standards that are currently close to the average, except for aspects of English. Acquisition of new skills and knowledge is satisfactory, or better, across the majority of subjects.

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

21. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is a sound range of learning opportunities. Except for ICT, the school's curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education. There is a good curriculum in place for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, which covers all areas of learning. Well-planned activities enable these children to make good progress in both their academic and personal development. In all subjects, except ICT, the curriculum is meeting the needs of most pupils in the infant and junior classes and helps prepare them satisfactorily for secondary school. However, the time given to teaching of music in infant and junior classes is a little below most schools.
22. In May 2001, a fire destroyed the school's ICT suite and many of the school's computers, along with other ICT equipment. The school responded immediately by implementing a well-devised action plan and is working hard to provide pupils with adequate curricular coverage in ICT. As a result, while waiting for the replacement of the suite and equipment, the school is covering most requirements of the National Curriculum in ICT in a modified and acceptable way given the extenuating circumstances. At the moment, pupils have limited opportunities to work on computers and this is presently inhibiting the development of their skills in this area.

23. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, including a scheme for religious education, which meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is successfully using national planning guidance as the basis for its curricular planning. This provides a sound basis for class teachers' planning.
24. There are satisfactory opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to stop and reflect on their feelings and to talk through issues, for example in religious education lessons and in some personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils are also encouraged to display a natural curiosity in their learning, as for example when investigating in science. These are improvements since the last inspection.
25. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and there is a consistency of provision for this throughout the school. There are also effective links between mathematics and other subjects such as science and geography, which reinforce numeracy skills. However, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has not made sufficient impact on the teaching of literacy skills. There are too few opportunities given to pupils across the curriculum to practise literacy skills, for example, pupils are given little opportunity to write at length in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. The school takes advantage of extra support provided for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, for example booster classes are succeeding in raising the mathematical skills of lower attaining pupils in Year 6. ICT provision, although impeded as a result of the recent fire, is used effectively to support work in some subjects, especially mathematics and science.
26. The relevance of the curriculum is satisfactory for most pupils. Pupils generally are given work that matches their learning needs. In the junior part of the school, pupils are taught mathematics in class groups set up according to pupils' levels of mathematical attainment. This makes it easier for teachers to prepare activities to meet the learning needs of pupils as the range of attainment levels of pupils in these classes is reduced by such organisation.
27. The provision for special educational needs is satisfactory overall. However, individual education plans are often insufficiently specific and targets rarely include behavioural or numeracy elements in sufficient detail. There are satisfactory arrangements for using individual education plans to help to ensure that pupils' needs are met. However, more thought needs to be given to arrangements for withdrawal as pupils often miss important literacy and numeracy lessons. The provision in statements of special educational needs is implemented fully and good use is made of the support agencies. However, arrangements for linking the literacy experiences of pupils withdrawn from lessons to the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy are unsatisfactory, particularly where they miss their class English lesson. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory overall. Teachers and learning support staff are effective at helping them to have full access to the curriculum. They are helped by suitable support from the local education authority. Overall, these pupils have satisfactory access to all areas of school life. However, the school programme for teaching and supporting targeted pupils in withdrawal groups is not always satisfactory. These pupils may miss subjects on a regular basis.
28. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities, such as opportunities in sport, music and French, enhances the school curriculum. The majority of these are open to pupils in the junior classes, with infant pupils being able to participate in a recorder and a football club. The boards game club has been introduced to enhance social skills. A sound approach to equality of opportunity by the school means that every pupil of the

appropriate age has the chance to participate in these activities. Girls, for example, are actively encouraged to participate in football.

29. The school is generally effective in developing aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education. During the inspection, some good examples of the effective teaching of social issues were seen in the infant classes. Environmental issues are considered in the science and geography curriculum in the junior classes. The school has a developed environmental area, which is effectively used by pupils to further their environmental awareness. 'Circle time' (an approach that helps foster pupils' respect for each other and improves their self-esteem) is established in some infant and junior classes and is effective in encouraging pupils to develop social skills as they discuss and share opinions and experiences. In Year 5, pupils undertake a school journey to Sayers Croft. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to the Isle of Wight, and the programme and experience are designed to contribute positively to pupils' personal and social development. In science in Year 4, pupils study human growth and development. Sex education is a part of this continuing programme. Pupils build on their understanding of human development in Year 6 when puberty is discussed as part of a health education project. Questions of drug misuse are also considered at this time. Other aspects, such as the promotion of self-confidence and independence, are not given sufficient attention.
30. The school has good links with the community, the local church, local museums and library and a local institute of higher education. These links make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, for example visits to Dansen Park and Blackfen Library effectively broaden the curriculum for some groups of pupils. The local area is used to support pupils' work in subjects such as geography, science and religious education. School contributions to the community include pupils distributing harvest festival parcels to senior citizens in the area.
31. The school has good links with partner institutions, including two schools that enjoy Beacon status. One of the benefits of these links is that the head of the mathematics department of one of these schools lends her expertise to staff in areas such as planning, teaching and learning. The school has good links with Greenwich University, participating in the initial training of teachers and receiving expert help in a range of areas, including advice on the further development of the school's environmental area.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and the school has addressed the issue in relation to spiritual provision well. Spiritual development is promoted well. Assemblies allow time for reflection about moral and spiritual issues. Opportunities are now planned in lessons for pupils to reflect on the wonder of life and the world, and to explore their own feelings and emotions. Questions are used well by teachers to develop this.
33. Moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to think about the implication of their actions on others and about what is right or wrong. The school has an appropriate behaviour policy but it is not always consistently applied. Supervision in the dining hall does not promote good manners.
34. Social provision is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to share resources and help others. There is a good emphasis on the local environment. Racial harmony is promoted well. Through the support of the local education authority, a written racial harmony policy is currently being produced. Older pupils are given good opportunities in

terms of residential visits. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop independence or confidence and self-esteem.

35. Cultural development is satisfactory. There is good encouragement of pupils to be aware of local and British culture. An interest in sport is promoted well through clubs, visitors and visits. Multicultural awareness is developed satisfactorily through the use of stories in assemblies, in religious education and pupils' own experiences. Insufficient opportunities are provided to encourage pupils' appreciation of music. Visits from theatre groups and visits to museums help extend pupils' cultural awareness. Resources need developing, including the range of books on other cultures and lifestyles. In a similar way, greater focus on other than European art and music would help to widen horizons. Many resources were lost in the fire.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. Standards of care in the school are satisfactory. They are at a similar level to those reported at the previous inspection. Good procedures and arrangements are in place in relation to child protection and staff have a good awareness of potential issues. Thorough procedures are in place to monitor health and safety issues, and potential risks are identified and subsequent action monitored well. First aid arrangements are good with sufficient staff suitably trained. At the end of the day, good care is taken to ensure that the youngest children are collected by a responsible adult. As in the rest of the school, staff know the children for whom English is an additional language well, their backgrounds and family circumstances.
37. Pupils' personal development is monitored well. Teachers' records contain good personal information ensuring staff have good knowledge of the pupils and their backgrounds and this allows them to give individual pastoral support well. Personal needs are dealt with effectively. Personal needs in relation to developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem are not sufficiently well established. Social inclusion is good. The school effectively takes measures to avoid exclusions even on a temporary basis. Racial harmony is promoted well. Good behaviour is promoted satisfactorily. The reward system is used well on occasions. Not all staff are sufficiently consistent in applying it. Supervision at lunchtimes and in the playground is sometimes lax. Parents and pupils feel confident that the school handles issues such as potential bullying effectively. The school has no formal system for recording potential racial incidents but any form of oppressive behaviour is dealt with in a sensitive and thoughtful manner. On occasions in lessons, staff are over-protective and limit pupils' use of initiative.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. However, staff do not use the system to its full potential. Regular absentees are followed up well to restrict the level of unauthorised absences.
39. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall; this reflects a mix of strengths and weaknesses in different areas of the school's work. The information is not used consistently to guide planning, and this is unsatisfactory.
40. Assessment arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The information available, such as the entry data and assessments used in the Nursery and Reception classes, is used to ensure children are set appropriate work and identifies those that need extra support.

41. The results of annual tests in reading, writing and mathematics are recorded in a grid format that is beginning to provide a detailed picture of the progress that pupils make over time. There is a similar format for teachers' assessment of the pupils in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school, this assessment information is now being used to set end-of-year levels that pupils are expected to achieve on the basis of their prior attainment. The system has been in place fully for a year but past results have been recorded and show the inconsistent progress that some pupils have made from year to year. A weakness in the system is that the annual target levels are not reset when pupils have not made the expected progress. The information from tests is used well to group pupils by ability in mathematics and to identify which pupils might benefit from attending 'booster' groups and additional literacy support groups.
42. The information from termly tests in spelling and reading is not used rigorously enough to identify those pupils who may need additional educational support. Teachers know their pupils well and support them effectively. The school uses information from baseline assessments, reading and spelling tests to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set targets for them. However, insufficient account is taken of numeracy and behavioural needs and there are a number of pupils, currently not listed as having special educational needs, who would benefit from additional support. Information from various tests is used to target specific pupils, and to inform in-service provision, such as on spelling and reading. The school complies fully with the special educational needs Code of Practice and is taking account of revised arrangements. Statements are up-to-date and annual reviews are managed well; key staff are aware of the requirements of statements. The support teacher from the local education authority assesses five target pupils, for whom English is an additional language, twice a year against stages of language acquisition. Although this information is well documented in the school file, the co-ordinator for these pupils has limited knowledge of the stages of language acquisition, as have the teaching staff. However, as individuals, pupils' progress and attainment are monitored year on year by the headteacher. Although pupils from ethnic minorities and those speaking English as an additional language are not identified specifically.
43. The school has begun to put in place a system of setting written targets for individual pupils but, so far, practice is inconsistent. There is good practice in some classes, notably Year 6, where pupils are encouraged to assess their own writing against a set of criteria, but this is not a consistent feature. As yet, formal assessment procedures have not been set in all subjects so that teachers can check which pupils are not meeting expectations or which are exceeding them.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

44. A good partnership has been established with parents and the links described in the previous report have been consolidated well, especially in relation to consistency in producing annual reports of progress. Parents are very positive in their views of the school. In the pre-inspection meeting, parental questionnaires and in discussions during the inspection they were full of praise for the school and had no significant areas of concern. In particular, they feel their children like school, are making good progress and behave well, and that teaching is good. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem, that the school expects the pupils to work hard and the school is well led and managed. Inspectors feel these views are optimistic. Their children do like school and staff are approachable but, in all other areas, provision is satisfactory. A small number of parents have some concerns over the level of homework, the information they receive about progress and the range of activities provided outside lessons. Inspectors feel that the level of homework is about normal for

a primary school, information on progress is good, and that the range of extra-curricular activities is narrow, with a strong emphasis on sport.

45. The positive relationships between parents and staff have a good impact on pupils' attitudes to school. Parents are involved well in the work of the school by helping in classes and on visits, and in providing good support especially through the 'Friends' group. The school recognises this and makes good efforts to involve parents in the school and their children's education.
46. Annual reports to parents are good. They give good details of pupils' achievements and personal development, and indicate areas for improvement, although these are not always sufficiently specific. Parents feel that consultation evenings are informative and they are very well attended. Newsletters are informative and give parents good information about topics and work to be done at the start of each half term. Good support is given to parents of new pupils and a good induction process helps the youngest pupils settle quickly into the Nursery. The school has an 'open door' policy for parents. The good accessibility of staff contributes well to the strong partnership. The arrangements at the start of the day allow parents to see how well their child has settled and help them get on with their activities promptly and happily. Parents' contribution to encouraging their children's learning is satisfactory. Some take their children on holiday in term time and, where many support homework, others see the teaching and support of learning in areas such as reading or research to be the job of the school and not the parent. The school recognises this issue well and has a range of suitable initiatives, such as curricular evenings and the early involvement in the Nursery, to bridge the gap.
47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved as far as possible in identifying their children's needs and are provided with appropriate support. This aspect of the school's provision is good. Parents co-operate in reviews of progress and are encouraged to help with their children's learning. The co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language reports that parents feel welcome when their children start school. This is evident from discussions with Nursery staff, and one Turkish parent helps in the Nursery and Reception classes each week. She specifically supports two Turkish children. However, the school does not currently send any letters or other documents to parents in community languages.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48. The overall quality of leadership and management at the school is satisfactory, but there are issues related to the allocation of responsibilities to members of staff. There is a sound reflection of the school's aims in the way in which it works. The headteacher has provided satisfactory leadership, particularly in terms of establishing a loyal and committed staff. He also enjoys the full confidence of both governors and parents. At all levels, the effects of the recent fire have slowed the pace of other changes, although there has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Of the key issues from the last inspection, only that relating to assessment has yet to be fully implemented. The governors and headteacher rightly await the completion of the new accommodation before making and implementing detailed plans for the future shape of the curriculum and its delivery.
49. Throughout the past five years, the headteacher has received energetic support from other members of the senior team. However, he has an excessive range of responsibilities for a school of this size and clear delegation is unsatisfactory as a result of a lack of clarity as to the roles and responsibilities of individuals. Additionally, some staff, including the deputy headteacher, are overburdened and have insufficient non-

contact time. As a result, it has not always been possible to give effective expression to the implementation of the school's priorities, including those relating to pupils' attainment. The quality of management amongst subject leaders is satisfactory overall, although there are shortcomings related to excessive workloads. One member of staff is responsible for English, special educational needs and English as an additional language, and another for mathematics, ICT and is team leader for Years 1 and 2. Both of these are excessive loads in a school as large as this one. Until recently, there was no co-ordinator for music. In music, planning and the scheme of work only now reflect the latest requirements. Overall, there is an inadequate response from subjects to whole-school initiatives and policies, such as assessment and literacy across the curriculum.

50. The special educational needs co-ordinator is highly conscientious and cares deeply for the pupils who attend for small group work or individual tuition. The identification of the specific needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language, the organisation of their teaching and the monitoring of their progress and attainment are not organised and managed with sufficient clarity. There is now a need for clearer educational direction for, and clear distinction between, the management and provision for pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. The overall management of English as an additional language is not effective and lacks a clear educational direction. The co-ordinator's role does not have a sufficiently high profile as a specialist area. She also co-ordinates special educational needs and English, and this is an excessive workload in a school of this size. There are training implications as few staff, with the exception of the Nursery teacher, but including the co-ordinator, have had little, if any, training for the identification, provision and assessment of children who speak English as an additional language. With more children entering the school with these needs, it is crucial that this is addressed. The support teacher from the local education authority is prepared to work with the staff on training, attend parents' meetings and arrange interpretation if asked; she has only been at the school for three weeks.
51. The governors and senior staff have found that the destruction of a large part of the building, as well as a range of planning documents and resources, has had an understandably negative effect on their ability to manage the school, in spite of the strenuous efforts of the school community. A major demand on their time has been the negotiation with the local education authority about the proposed accommodation arrangements. Whilst all concerned acknowledge that re-building will bring substantial benefits to the school, the time required has exceeded initial expectations.
52. Governors work as a cohesive team under a committed and capable chair. They have a properly supportive view of the school and are aware of its strengths. They have provided a clear strategy for the future development of the school but in some respects, such as the monitoring of pupils' achievement, they have been insufficiently critical. Overall, therefore, they have a satisfactory picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Most of the key issues for the school identified in this report are priorities in the current school development plan. They acknowledge that, as a result of the fire, statutory National Curriculum requirements are not yet fully met in ICT and thus are unsatisfactory. They intend that provision will match requirements when they have the space and equipment available to do so.
53. The school's arrangements for strategic planning are sound. The whole-school development strategy takes a long-term view, with annual plans being mirrored by overall satisfactory subject plans. These enable the school's realistic targets for improvement in science and mathematics to be met well. However, the planning



processes lack mechanisms for the full evaluation and development of the school's work. Senior managers observe teachers in the classroom and formal reviews are conducted regularly. However, the results are not always used to identify future planning priorities and best practice in the classroom. As a result, improvements in achievement in writing and attainment among lower attaining pupils have been checked. Subject leaders need to spend more time monitoring the work of their teams. Overall, however, the scale of the changes in recent years demonstrates a good commitment on the part of the staff to improve the school.

54. The school holds Investors in People status in recognition of the positive way that it works with its staff. All adults who work for the school are valued. Arrangements for the induction of staff new to the school, including newly qualified teachers, are good, as is the manner in which, in partnership with other institutions, it is involved in the training of new teachers. Staff development needs for teachers are identified clearly, and matched satisfactorily to development priorities. The arrangements for the appraisal and performance management of staff are satisfactory.
55. The strategic use of resources and financial planning are satisfactory. The school has a secure financial base. A good three-year plan takes good account of projected numbers and known costs. Specific grants, for example those for special educational needs or for staff training, are used properly. The school is good at matching spending to educational priorities through its development plans. Governors budget sensibly with a prudent contingency fund. They ensure that a proper balance is struck between providing sufficient suitably qualified staff, and the need to provide proper surroundings and learning resources. Spending relative to income is biased slightly towards special educational needs but the achievement of those pupils is only average. Financial monitoring is very good. The governors and headteacher have a good understanding of the nuances of local and national funding issues and use these to secure resources for the school. They apply the principles of best value and use them effectively in relation to purchasing resources, but less effectively when reviewing and improving school performance. Good practice is being observed in planning the re-building, but insufficient attention has been paid to evaluating the effectiveness of present staffing arrangements. Financial administration is good; the most recent audit report noted only minor points for action. The provision of new technology to support administration is satisfactory.
56. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The comments of the threshold assessor demonstrate that the monitoring of teaching has improved significantly; governors now play a more effective part in the leadership of the school. Success criteria are now expressed in terms of pupils' attainment. Progress has been made in assessment and in evaluating critically the performance of the school, but it is recognised that these are areas which need further development. Provided that roles and responsibilities are defined clearly and equitably, more effective evaluation takes place at all levels and present strengths are maintained, the school has a satisfactory capacity for future improvement.
57. The staffing level is satisfactory. The match of teachers' qualifications to subjects taught is sound, leading to satisfactory learning across the attainment range. However, there is a lack of expertise in music, which impacts on standards. There is a good level of expertise in physical education and in the foundation stage, which benefits pupils' achievements in these areas. The pupil-teacher ratio is above the national average. Teachers also enjoy the support of a good range of support and administrative staff. Learning support staff are committed, well deployed and effective, and they contribute well towards the achievement of pupils. There are good numbers of staff for pupils with

special educational needs and resources are adequate. However, more use could be made of ICT. There is a named governor with responsibility for special educational needs, who is well informed and the governing body attends appropriately to its statutory functions. Currently, however, it has not evaluated the value for money of its high expenditure on staffing; for example the special educational needs co-ordinator spends much of her time teaching small groups at the expense of monitoring lessons and disseminating advice and good practice to a large staff.

58. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. Classrooms are of a sufficient size for the current number of pupils. Outdoor facilities are good which, together with two halls, provide good accommodation for physical education. The location and condition of the Nursery classroom results in unsuitable provision for the children. There is no room for ICT. The fire last year has caused the unsatisfactory elements in relation to the accommodation. The school has done its best to overcome the problems. At present, special educational needs is housed in temporary accommodation pending completion of the building work.
59. The school's spending on learning resources is slightly lower than in most schools but overall resource provision is satisfactory. It is good in relation to physical education. It is unsatisfactory in relation to music and ICT. The number of new computers is below the national average but the number and quality of books in the library are satisfactory. Resources for pupils with English as an additional language are unsatisfactory; there are no bilingual texts in school, few artefacts and limited items for role-play, although, in the Nursery, this has been identified and items are on order.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

60. Pupils' attainment is not high enough in writing, speaking and listening and music. The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language require improvement. In this large school, the headteacher and some staff have an excessive load of responsibilities and the roles of other key staff and subject co-ordinators require development. Assessment has improved but greater use needs to be made of the information gained. Following the fire, accommodation and learning resources remain unsatisfactory and affect learning in some subjects, especially ICT.

61. In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:-

(1) Improve standards of attainment in writing, and speaking and listening by:

- ensuring the co-ordinator has opportunities to monitor and evaluate the teaching of writing, and use of speaking and listening;
- raising teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation and handwriting expected from pupils;
- planning in greater detail the teaching of spelling and grammatical skills;
- ensuring that the use of writing skills, and opportunities for speaking and listening, are planned across the whole curriculum;

(Paragraphs 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27, 49, 53, 63, 68, 69, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 105, 120, 122, 127, 152)

(2) Improve standards of attainment in music by:

- raising the expertise and confidence of staff teaching music;

- increasing the profile of music within the school, including a review of time allocated to the subject.

(Paragraphs 3, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21, 35, 49, 57, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140)

(3) Improve the management, organisation and assessment for pupils with special educational needs by:

- reviewing the pattern of withdrawal of these pupils and the use of the coordinator's time;
- improving the assessment procedures for the identification and tracking of pupils with potential special educational needs;
- monitoring the attendance pattern of these pupils and emphasising the importance of regular attendance to parents.

(Paragraphs 8, 20, 27, 42, 49, 50, 53, 55, 57, 84)

(4) Improve the management, organisation and assessment for pupils for whom English is an additional language by:

- ensuring the co-ordinator has up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language in order to disseminate this information to all staff;
- reviewing school planning to ensure the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language are identified clearly in all subjects, but particularly in the core subjects;
- reviewing the assessment and tracking of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, including those pupils who speak English as an additional language;
- ensuring there are resources available to reflect other cultures and lifestyles illustrating a multicultural Britain.

(Paragraphs 8, 20, 27, 35, 42, 49, 50, 59, 84, 111)

(5) Review the management roles of the headteacher, key staff and subject co-ordinators by:

- reviewing the management and teaching responsibilities of headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the senior management team;
- providing each member of staff with greater detail of their roles and responsibilities;
- extending opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching, learning and standards of attainment within their subject.

(Paragraphs 48, 49, 53, 55, 56, 57, 90, 112, 118, 123)

(6) Continue to develop assessment procedures that are manageable and make greater use of the information gained by:

- developing manageable assessment procedures for those subjects where they do not yet exist;
- systematically reviewing the results of assessments, including National Curriculum tests, to identify in more detail pupils' strengths and weaknesses;

- making greater use of the information gained to match work more closely to each pupil's needs.

(Paragraphs 39, 41, 42, 43, 48, 56, 89, 106, 112, 119, 124, 129, 145)

(7) As time and resources permit, improve the quality of accommodation and learning resources with particular reference to:

- the Foundation Stage, especially the Nursery;
- ICT, so that all areas of the National Curriculum can be taught.

(Paragraphs 17, 58, 59, 64, 75, 123, 130, 133)

In addition, the following minor areas should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.

- Continuing to emphasise to parents the importance of pupils' regular attendance, with particular emphasis on those with special educational needs.

(Paragraph 17)

- Further developing opportunities to promote pupils' personal development.

(Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 29, 33, 34, 37, 66, 79, 86, 87, 105, 120, 121, 140)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	38	35	5	0	0
Percentage	0	16.1	40.9	37.6	5.4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	400
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	77

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	30	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	27
	Girls	28	30	29
	Total	52	55	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (87)	95 (90)	97 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	30	26	29
	Total	55	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	88 (92)	95 (80)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27 (47)	36 (44)	63 (92)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	25
	Girls	31	21	34
	Total	47	37	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (70)	59 (63)	94 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	23
	Girls	30	30	34
	Total	48	51	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (62)	81 (65)	91 (50)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	9
Chinese	4
White	357
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	28.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	238

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.0
Total number of education support staff	1.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33.7
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	822,702
Total expenditure	798,608
Expenditure per pupil	1,637
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,805
Balance carried forward to next year	18,289



*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	440
Number of questionnaires returned	138

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	4	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	49	17	1	6
The teaching is good.	51	49	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	49	15	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	33	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	35	51	10	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	33	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	56	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	30	17	2	17

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

62. The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school because the curriculum and teaching are good, and have a significant impact on the good progress the children make. There have been good improvements in the provision and teaching for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The school admits children into the Nursery and Reception twice a year, in September and January. There are 40 children in the Nursery with 20 children attending part-time for either the morning or afternoon session. Forty-two children are in two Reception classes, 22 in a class with older children that started in September and a further 20 in the class with younger children, who started school in January. Many of the children in Reception have attended the school's Nursery and, with good links between the two classes, children settle into school routines quickly. Positive links have been established with the parents in the Nursery through daily contact and a good induction programme, including home visits, prior to the children coming to school.
63. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is generally below that expected for children of their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. This is below that of the previous inspection and due to an increase in the number of children entering the Nursery with special educational needs or English as an additional language. In addition, there is an increase in numbers of children coming from families where there are difficulties. Children make good progress in the Nursery and, by the time they enter the Reception classes, they are attaining standards in the Early Learning Goals similar to those expected for their age. This is with the exception of communication, language and literacy, where attainment is generally below that expected, and personal, social and emotional development, which is above average. The good progress started in the Nursery is maintained and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In personal, social and emotional and physical development, children achieve above the standard expected.
64. There is a good curriculum in place for children in the Foundation Stage. It is well structured to ensure coverage of each area of learning. This helps all children make good progress. Very good teamwork between the class teachers, the nursery nurse and the classroom assistants helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where effective learning takes place. This is despite poor accommodation in the Nursery and limited access to outside areas for Reception children. It is to the credit of all in the Foundation Stage team that these difficulties are overcome successfully. The arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy are good in Reception; children are taught in small groups following a whole-class introduction.
65. Assessment arrangements are good. The information available, such as the entry data, is used to ensure that children are set appropriate work and to identify those who need extra support. Good day-to-day assessment procedures are established, and detailed observations and annotated notes in recorded work are in place for all areas of learning. The quality of teaching has improved in all areas of learning, with the majority of teaching being at least good and some that is very good. Staff know their children well and, as a result, work is matched well. This is an improvement from the last inspection. The children make good progress whatever their prior attainment or language spoken at home and this is reflected in the confidence and happiness of all the children.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

66. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority and the teaching is often very good in this area. This ensures that most children make good progress and, as a result, most are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, with most exceeding the expectations. Classroom organisation and the management of children are both effective. All staff have high expectations of the children. This has a positive impact and, consequently, behaviour and attitudes to learning are mostly good. Children respond positively to instructions and most listen attentively to adults. However, there is a small minority in the older Reception class who need frequent reminders to ensure that they listen and attend properly. All the children are confident, friendly and form very good relationships with adults and one another. They are encouraged to be independent and to make choices about their activities. They do this well.
67. There are good opportunities for the children in both the Nursery and Reception to play together, particularly in the role-play areas when they take turns being the shopkeeper and the customer. Outside the Nursery, children share the wheeled toys and are careful when driving the vehicles. They are encouraged to tidy up at the end of sessions; and in doing so they learn routines that will help them later. They delight in sharing their observations of the mini-beasts and take turns with the binoculars and magnifiers. Staff give the children very good opportunities to show care and concern for living things and they promote a sense of 'awe and wonder' very effectively, for example children in the Nursery are delighted when they find mini-beasts and, when searching, show consideration for living things. 'Be quiet' says one four-year-old to another 'otherwise they will be scared'. In Reception, children are fascinated as the caterpillars turn into cocoons. There are gasps of joy as the teacher shows the children the changes that happened over night.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

68. On entry to Nursery, children's language and literacy skills are generally below those expected, although there is variation, and some higher attainment. Children make good progress in the Nursery, and, on entry to Reception, they have almost attained the expected goal. This is due to the quality of teaching in Nursery and Reception, which helps children to make good progress and learn effectively. By the end of the Foundation Stage, many are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals, with a few reaching higher levels, particularly in speaking and listening and reading. There is an improved emphasis on books in the Nursery than at the time of the previous inspection. Children are encouraged to share books and talk about them. During 'drinks' time, children look at books together, handling them carefully and turning over the pages in the correct manner. They use books and charts to identify their mini-beasts found in the outside area. The teacher encourages the use of non-fiction books and charts successfully and, with very effective questioning, ensures that the creatures are identified. Talk is effectively encouraged as children describe their activities and comment on their paintings of mini-beasts. The teacher is sensitive when questioning a reluctant 'talker' and enables the child to respond. Many children are beginning to write their name and some know which letters and sounds that are in their name. Higher attaining children write about 'The Easter Story' in a mixture of letters and symbols.
69. In Reception, children enjoy looking at books and understand that print conveys meaning and goes from left to right. The higher attaining children read simple text with good understanding and accuracy. Books, such as Handa's Surprise', are used to

support topic work when children are learning about other cultures and lifestyles. When listening to a story at the listening station, children listen carefully and turn over the pages correctly, including a child for whom English is an additional language. After the story, they could all describe the events and characters in the story. Good teaching of basic skills helps children learn sounds and actions for different letters and groups of letters. They have fun and enjoy this activity and learn very quickly; this helps them when they are reading as they use their knowledge of sounds to sound out the words. When writing, they make good attempts at spelling. Handwriting is satisfactory and, whilst most have reasonable control, some children still form letters incorrectly. Purposeful writing is encouraged, such as writing shopping lists. Children for whom English is an additional language, or those with special educational needs, are supported well in both the Nursery and Reception. A Turkish parent helps in the Nursery and Reception each week; she specifically supports two Turkish children.

### **Mathematical development**

70. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is broadly average in mathematical development. The children make good progress, which continues through the Reception classes, so that, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals, with some exceeding them. This is the result of the good quality of teaching and, in particular, the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language. The teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics to make learning fun. There is a good balance between practical activities and work that is recorded. In the Nursery, children take part in a version of 'Incey, Wincy Spider' and move up and down a 'drainpipe' on the throw of a sunny/rainy dice. Children look carefully, remember what was thrown and move forwards or backwards, they take turns and work out who is the winner. When painting, they are encouraged to count the legs on the spider, and spots on the ladybirds when they observe them in the magnifiers. The higher attaining, older children recognise and count numbers to ten and recognise basic two-dimensional shapes.
71. Role-play in the Reception shops, where children take turns to buy goods, paying for them and recording their 'sum', helps children to learn about money in a practical and interesting way. Younger children record their items pictorially and then add the amounts, for example 3p (for a carrot) and 5p (for milk) make 8p. Teachers encourage children to use correct language such as 'How much?' and they keep the children interested and extend the learning for those that grasp the concept quickly. Older children of average ability have to spend just 7p and not have any change. This they managed, with some children buying three or four items for the 7p by the end of the lesson. From work that is recorded, higher attaining children are working up to 20 and using addition and subtraction to ten. Most children record and understand the concept of long and short, and draw items longer and shorter than their pencil.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

72. Provision and teaching for children to develop some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world around them are good. Work regarding a sense of time and place, cultural and religious beliefs was not observed during the inspection but evidence was gained through previous planning and discussions with staff and children. In the Nursery, children gain a sense of their environment when they walk around the school, which is reinforced as their role-play area becomes a post office. Children in Reception walk around the school ground and create picture maps. A sense of the past is developed with topics about families and children's personal history from being a baby to the present. One of the strengths of the Foundation Stage is the planning which

builds on work already completed and which is familiar to the children; this is clearly illustrated in this area of learning. Considerable attention is paid to the children's diverse cultural backgrounds and the beliefs of others. They learn about religious festivals, such as harvest, Christmas and Diwali. In Reception, they also begin to learn about Bible stories. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

73. Scientific concepts are currently learned through the study of mini-beasts. Teachers organise a wide variety of interesting activities within this area of learning. Children enjoy these activities and make good progress and most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Nursery children are encouraged to look for mini-beasts in the outside area, observe them carefully with magnifiers and try to identify them. This helps children to develop their scientific knowledge and enquiry skills from an early age. In Reception, when they came into the class, children were keen to look at the caterpillars to see if they had changed. Good links with stories, such as 'The very hungry caterpillar', help to reinforce the concept of the life cycle of the butterfly. Teachers encourage correct scientific terminology well; consequently all children in Reception have a good understanding, know the stages of the life cycle and use correct vocabulary. The theme is effectively developed through work on the computer when children successfully draw caterpillars using a graphics program. They use the mouse skilfully and draw features and legs on the caterpillar; older children then print their pictures. In the Nursery, children learn to use textiles and to join material with simple stitching when they make a ladybird. They finish the item by sewing on buttons for spots. In Reception, children are set a challenge to make a shopping bag, which would hold a packet. They work in pairs and try hard to achieve the task using staples and sticky tape. Good intervention and questioning by adults help children think how to improve their bags. They discuss what works and what could be improved.

### **Physical development**

74. Teaching is effective which helps children make good progress and many are likely to meet the expectations for their age at the end of Nursery and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, many are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals. There are good links with other areas of learning, particularly personal, social and emotional development and cultural development. Planning has improved for the use of the Nursery outside area and staff identify what they expect children to learn from various activities. Their intervention is particularly effective and extends children's knowledge and skills. They give Nursery children good opportunities to climb, balance and go up and over climbing apparatus, which they do with increasing control and confidence. They run sensibly, with good co-ordination, to the chairs when it is 'drinks' time and do this with care and consideration for others. When using wheeled vehicles or pushing trucks or prams, they steer the vehicles well and with care. Dexterity is developed through the handling of objects, such as hammers, when children skilfully bang pegs into a block; they pour and fill containers with sand and water and use paintbrushes and pencils with increasing accuracy.
75. The Reception classes do not have easy access to the outside area; this is a weakness. However, they use the area once a week in addition to hall times for physical education, and in so doing, build successfully on the physical skills learnt in the Nursery. They enjoy physical education, work in the hall sensibly, follow instructions well and have good control of their bodies and an awareness of space. Teachers promote health and safety well and apparatus is put out sensibly and safely. The older children are developing good skills in movement; for example they balance well on apparatus and dismount safely. Very good management ensures children behave well, they try hard to improve and appreciate the good efforts of others and learn from their example.

Younger Reception children try hard to develop their dance sequence to African music. The teacher challenges children to link actions together to enhance their performance, this they do with good co-ordination, control and awareness of space. They work together well in groups and the majority pay attention and behave well. All children succeed in both of the lessons and there is no difference in the ability of boys and girls, or those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. Reception children continue to develop their control of small objects through the good use of scissors, pencils and brushes.

### **Creative development**

76. Children in the Nursery and Reception make good progress and many are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and creative development is promoted well. Children learn about colour, pattern and texture in two- and three-dimensional representations. They carefully use pastels to create self-portraits, which include many features. These pictures show good progression of skills. In the Nursery, children enjoy creating a mini-beast in finger paint, they then print the image. Good questioning by the adults helps children refine their pictures, as well as think about the correct number of legs for a spider. In Reception, children make caterpillars. They persevere when making their model, use sticky tape to join parts and decorate their caterpillar choosing the most suitable materials. Good questioning helps to promote creativity, as well as encouraging the development of scientific language. This was illustrated when the teacher asked 'What would make your caterpillar even better?' pointing to where the antennae should be. The child responds appropriately and finishes off his model carefully. Opportunities for role-play are good and valued. Children play in the well-stocked, attractive shops in the Reception classes and Nursery. Good resources encourage them to be imaginative which enhances their play. All adults successfully intervene, which helps to develop children's activities providing some direction to their play. Music is incorporated into many activities, whether it is counting songs in mathematics or dance in physical education. They also have separate lessons to develop skills in using musical instruments and singing, but these were not observed during the inspection.

### **ENGLISH**

77. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged as above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Since then, standards over time, as reflected in test results at the end of Year 2, have remained fairly consistent in reading, but at a level slightly below the national average. Although a good number of pupils reach expected levels, a smaller than average number achieve highly. By comparison, results in writing are consistently average or slightly above. A notable feature is that the boys do well in comparison with boys nationally at this age. Results in English in Year 6 have been more erratic over time with a dip in performance in the last two years to a level below the national average. However, in these results, it is writing that is weaker than reading. The difference between the attainment of boys and girls is similar to that found nationally, with boys achieving less well than girls. The average for the last three years is just above the national average.
78. The standard of work seen during the inspection is not as good as that reported in 1997, reflecting a similar pattern to last year's results. Towards the end of Year 2, pupils are achieving average standards, but by the end of Year 6, standards are below average. These pupils have not achieved as much as expected considering the standards they attained at the end of Year 2. In particular, their skills in speaking and writing have not

developed sufficiently. Throughout the school, handwriting and presentation are very variable in quality, and spelling is a consistent weakness.

79. Standards in speaking are broadly average at the end of Year 2. Most pupils are confident to answer questions appropriately or to tell part of a story to the rest of the class. In one class in Year 1, pupils' responses to questions during literacy were often brief, one-word answers that the teacher did not extend or encourage. In the other Year 1 class, pupils worked together confidently to practise dramatising the familiar story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', but were shy and inhibited when 'performing' a short section to the rest of the class. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are not well developed and, as a result, attainment is below average by Year 6. In several classes, pupils found it difficult to listen to others, and were reluctant to express their views, for example during 'circle time'. By Year 6, although pupils are confident to answer questions within lessons and use appropriate technical vocabulary, such as in science lessons when discussing forces and air resistance, they are more inhibited in a formal setting. Pupils giving a talk about a subject that interests them, using notes they had prepared earlier, needed much prompting from the teacher to develop their skills in presentation.
80. In Years 1 and 2, many pupils read at the levels expected for their age. They practise regularly and all are keen to take home their books. Many, but not all, parents give good support by hearing their child read at home. In Year 2, there is a good focus from teachers on developing pupils' knowledge of letter sounds, which pupils use well to work out words that they do not know. Higher attaining pupils are developing a greater range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words. When reading aloud, they are accurate and use expression. By the age of seven, most pupils are confident to find information from simple non-fiction texts. One girl amazed everyone in the class with the fact that a spider lays 800 eggs! Although the school's own records of test results show that pupils make erratic progress in reading through some year groups, standards are average by the age of eleven. The majority of pupils are confident and well-motivated readers who prefer reading silently and do so with a good level of sustained concentration. Although they do have appropriate strategies to work these out, lower attaining pupils lack expression in their reading and occasionally stumble over more complex words. Their skills are sufficiently developed that they can find key information from a text, although they frequently rely on adult support or work at a much slower pace. By and large, average and more able readers enjoy reading and express some preferences for authors and the subject matter they choose. Higher attaining pupils are expressive readers who demonstrate a good level of comprehension. In a lesson where pupils were comparing the narrative style of two similar novels, they quickly skimmed the text for key phrases to answer questions about a character. They are competent to find information from non-fiction texts and from CD-Roms. Each class uses the school library regularly to develop pupils' skills effectively.
81. Standards in writing are in line with the levels expected at the end of Year 2. Higher attaining pupils use interesting vocabulary and phrases, with good use of punctuation, including speech marks for dialogue. All pupils are attempting to join their letters but with varying degrees of success. Simple words are spelt correctly and pupils attempt to spell more interesting vocabulary. The teachers' marking is helpful. It is both encouraging and tells pupils what needs improving. There are times, though, when there is too little difference in the tasks given to average and higher attaining pupils and this limits the expectations of more able pupils' work.
82. Writing is below expected levels at the end of Year 6. There are weaknesses in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and the quality of handwriting and presentation is variable.



There is a good pace to the work of pupils in Year 6 and they have made good progress since September. Over the year, pupils have developed their skills in writing in a good number of different styles and formats. They are beginning to use a more extended vocabulary. The content has improved, as has the structure of the work, the use of punctuation, and grammar. This is because teachers in Year 6 have placed an increasing emphasis on the quality of the work rather than the length. The best work is engaging, imaginative and well punctuated. Figurative language is used effectively, for example when describing 'the sea's green blanket'. However, the work of average attaining pupils frequently contains repeated errors in grammar that reflect pupils' spoken language, and spelling mistakes. A large group of lower attaining pupils struggle to produce work that is of the standard expected.

83. Throughout the school, pupils are introduced to a wide range of styles of writing as teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy framework closely. However, there is limited evidence of pupils using word-processing to draft and edit their work. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in other subjects, such as history and geography, or to try different approaches to recording work in science. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. In the previous term, writing in all year groups was a focus for display. During the inspection, however, there was little evidence around the school of displays of pupils' writing, except in Year 6, because the focus had shifted to science. Similarly, there is considerable variation in the quality of information around classrooms to help pupils with their writing.
84. Pupils with special educational needs make mostly satisfactory progress during their time in the school, but the rate varies from class to class. The school's results demonstrate better progress in the infants than in the juniors and this is reflected in recent assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. Where teachers plan specifically for their literacy needs, for instance as seen in a Year 1 class, achievement is good. However, in other lessons observed, planning failed to take full account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The pattern of withdrawing these pupils from literacy sessions is not effective in ensuring consistently good progress in English. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress overall, although the support given to them is not always organised with sufficient care.
85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. No lessons were unsatisfactory and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. However, there are weaknesses in teaching that mean pupils do not make enough progress in writing from Years 3 to 5. Scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that the progress they make is uneven between classes in the same year group. The school's assessments of pupils' writing show similar uneven progress over time. This limits pupils' achievement. There is too little emphasis on teaching pupils a range of spelling strategies and the school does not have a coherent, whole-school approach to handwriting and presentation. Handwriting is not consistently joined and fluent, and expectations of the quality of presentation do not instil in pupils a sense of pride in their work. Pupils are not in the habit of proofreading their work as it progresses and regularly miss out vital punctuation. Written work is marked regularly. Examples of very good marking have a good mix of praise that is balanced well with specific guidance on what pupils need to do to improve, but this level of marking is not consistent. In places, the impact of good marking is diluted when pupils do not follow through the comments.
86. There are good features in teaching in Year 2 and considerable strengths in the teaching in Year 6 that are helping pupils to make up the deficit in their previous learning. Lessons are well planned to make good links between reading and writing skills, and a brisk pace keeps pupils engaged in the activities. Pupils' response and participation

levels are consistently good in these lessons but more mixed in other years, reflecting the flatness of some teaching. This is not as good as the last inspection, which reported a very good response from pupils. In Year 2, good strategies for involving all pupils, such as working in pairs to draft a sentence together on little whiteboards, ensure a good level of participation and offer useful opportunities for the teachers to check on pupils' understanding. Although used in the past, such strategies were used rarely in the lessons seen in Years 3 to 5, where teachers often relied on the same pupils to answer questions thus limiting participation levels. Pupils who have too little opportunity to answer sometimes resort to calling out and this disrupts the flow of the lesson as teachers remind them about expectations of behaviour.

87. The lesson planning seen during the inspection was satisfactory with activities pitched at different levels to match broadly the learning abilities of different groups of pupils. However, previous planning and the work in pupils' books show that this is not always the case. Occasionally, teachers' explanations for independent tasks are not clear and pupils are not sure what it is they have to do. Some groups of pupils, notably in Year 5, lack the independent skills to be able to maintain an expected level of concentration when they are working without direct supervision. This results in an unacceptable noise level during which time pupils are off task and achieve too little. At times, lower attaining pupils need more help with the tasks they are given.
88. The direct teaching and modelling of reading and writing are generally good with a clear focus on the skills that pupils will learn. However, there is an imbalance in the timing of the different sections of the lesson. Where this is compounded by a late start following break time, the time available for pupils to complete the independent tasks is squeezed and limits the development of their skills. This lack of time is sometimes reflected in the amount and quality of the work seen in pupils' books. The final section of the lesson is often too brief to provide a meaningful review of what pupils have learned during the lesson.
89. The school spends a good proportion of its time on English. This academic year, additional time is devoted to library skills and to speaking and listening activities. These are positive developments. Assessment procedures are good and the information is used soundly to group pupils. Reading and spelling ages are monitored termly and there is now a clearer focus on setting targets for pupils. However, there has been no detailed monitoring of annual test results to identify common weaknesses that need further development. Some good practice in Year 6 and in a Year 4 class encourages pupils to assess the standard of their own writing.
90. Subject leadership and management have weaknesses. Although she has now begun to observe lessons, the co-ordinator's monitoring role is not well developed, and this limits her knowledge of the quality of education provided and the standards achieved across the school. Sampling of pupils' work is not a regular part of the monitoring process and so there has been little response to the differences in expectation and quality between classes. There is a satisfactory development plan for the current year with further training in teaching spelling and in moderating standards in writing planned for the near future. The development of written targets for pupils has started but is currently implemented inconsistently among teachers. In the best examples, these lead directly from the marking of pupils' work. There is a need for greater rigour in monitoring in order to establish consistency of practice.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. Attainment recorded by pupils in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 has varied considerably on a year-on-year basis since 1997, when results were above the national average. In 1998, results fell back to the national average, but rose again to just above the national average in 1999. Since then, they have shown a steady decline, falling below in 2000 and well below in 2001. The results for 2001 were well below those of similar schools, that is those with between 8 and 20 per cent of pupils claiming free school meals. Over recent years, boys have performed less well than girls. At the end of Year 2, over the period from 1997 to 2001, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests was above average from 1997 to 1999, it then fell below in 2000, returning to close to average in 2001. The results for 2001 were below those of similar schools. The performance of boys and girls has been similar over the past three years. Most pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 attain broadly average standards overall. There are presently no significant differences in attainment of boys and girls.
92. The previous inspection found teaching to be generally satisfactory, with some unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2. Some higher achieving pupils were not making sufficient progress by Year 6. As a result of several improvements, satisfactory progress has been made in the subject since the last report. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and, during the inspection, teaching seen was never less than satisfactory and it was often good. It was consistently good in Year 6. Junior pupils are grouped in classes with pupils of similar mathematical ability. This has been particularly effective with higher attaining junior pupils, who are now making satisfactory, or better, progress. Since the last report, following extensive training of teachers, the school has effectively implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and teachers are confident in teaching mathematics. These developments are now having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and the decline has been reversed.
93. Satisfactory teaching during Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to make sound progress and achieve average standards. There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding. Overall, standards of numeracy by Year 2 are satisfactory. Higher attaining Year 1 pupils are developing strategies for computing numbers. In one observed lesson, these pupils were adding nine to a given number by first adding ten and then taking away one. Most of the pupils were successfully applying the strategy and a number of them could explain it. Pupils with special educational needs receive adequate support in classes, they make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly as do those for whom English is an additional language. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can count up and down in fives to 100. They can count sequentially and order numbers up to 100. They confidently count in twos, fives and tens. Most pupils accurately add and subtract numbers up to 100, with higher attaining pupils going beyond this. They recognise sequences of numbers and work accurately. Higher attaining pupils describe strategies they use when adding two digit numbers together. All pupils have an understanding of how to write down correctly tens and units in small numbers. Average attaining pupils can do this with hundreds, tens and units in larger numbers, and higher attaining pupils can write down numbers involving thousands.
94. Satisfactory teaching during Years 3 to 5, together with better teaching in Year 6, enables pupils to become more numerate. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making overall satisfactory progress and achieving appropriate standards in relation to their prior attainment. In Years 3 and 4, standards of attainment are close to the average. Pupils in Year 3 are developing good confidence in handling money. Below average attaining pupils can identify a number of two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their respective properties. Average attaining pupils can read information from

simple graphs, higher attaining pupils gather data and produce frequency charts and bar graphs. Most pupils are able to work out the change required when involved in a simple money transaction. Higher attaining pupils in Year 5 can round up and down large numbers. They have an understanding of fractions that enables them to identify when two fractions are equivalent. Average attaining pupils can add up quite large amounts of money involving pounds and pence successfully. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are secure in their use of the four number rules, higher attaining pupils working comfortably with thousands and average attaining pupils working accurately with numbers in the hundreds. Higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding that multiplication and division are 'inverse operations' and sometimes use this knowledge to check the accuracy of their working by reversing the process of whatever number operation they are applying.

95. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their mathematics. Their attitudes are often good, sometimes very good. Most pupils apply themselves well to mathematical tasks. Pupils enjoy participating in mental mathematics activities at the start of lessons. They quickly settle to class and group activities after the initial introductions associated with the National Numeracy Strategy. Behaviour is good in both whole-class and group activities. Where appropriate, pupils co-operate well when working. The pace of working is usually satisfactory.
96. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. In the lessons observed during the inspection all were at least satisfactory and often good. All teachers have good knowledge of mathematics. In good lessons, teachers encourage pupils to explain their mathematical thinking and place an appropriate stress on the development of mental mathematics. They use the ends of sessions well to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. Most lessons are appropriately challenging with the pace of learning being satisfactory and sometimes good. However, in some lessons, the pace of learning is unsatisfactory. Pupils are given too much time to complete their work. They are not given precise time targets and, as a result, pupils do not always complete sufficient examples. Scrutiny of pupils' completed work shows them to have covered sufficient ground over time and it reveals the pace of learning to be satisfactory. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there are some inconsistencies across the school, which affect the pace of learning. In Years 3 and 4, some higher attaining pupils have not always made sufficient progress, whereas, in Year 5, the progress of some average attaining pupils has not been quick enough. As a result of consistently good teaching in Year 6, pupils of all levels of attainment are making good progress. Throughout the school, pupils' mathematical vocabulary is being effectively developed.
97. Teachers use assessment, both formal and informal, effectively. They mark pupils' work regularly. In the best practice, teachers make helpful and encouraging comments in pupils' books. This contributes to pupils' learning. All teachers keep satisfactory records in their monitoring of pupils' progress. Planning of lessons is satisfactory with the inclusion of a range of appropriate activities, which meet the learning needs of most pupils, including those with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language. In their planning, teachers are generally adhering to the National Numeracy Strategy. Most lessons have well-defined learning objectives, which are made clear to pupils. In numeracy lessons, not all teachers have a clear focus to their teaching when pupils are engaged in activities. Instead of sitting and working intensively with one or two groups, some teachers flit between all the groups, monitoring and not teaching.
98. Pupils use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum and this contributes effectively towards learning. In science, pupils in Year 3 created a tally chart and then used

spreadsheets to find out which areas of the wild life area are preferred by respective species of birds. All pupils were to do this as part of the science week. Year 5 pupils construct bar graphs from collected data to show how a given liquid evaporates over time under different conditions. In several classes, pupils use time-lines in history to represent events chronologically. Pupils use co-ordinates in geography in their study and use of maps.

99. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator uses assessment data to track pupils' progress throughout the school and she has started to monitor teaching. As a result, she has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Effective analysis of assessment data enables additional focus to be placed on pupils needing extra teaching to raise their levels of attainment. This contributes to the satisfactory progress they make. Resources for teaching mathematics are satisfactory and these are used effectively to promote learning. Effective use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning, particularly in work involving data handling.

## **SCIENCE**

100. From 1997 to 2000, at the end of Year 6, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests was just below the national average. It has improved at a rate similar to the rapid national improvement. In 2001, virtually all pupils achieved at least the expected Level 4, and about a fifth the higher Level 5. Overall, these results were just below the national average and the results of similar schools. Over recent years, there has been little difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In 2001, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was similar to the national average, and above the average for the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence shows attainment this year to be about average by Year 2, but above average by Year 6. This is because of a strong improvement in Year 6, and the good development of pupils' scientific skills throughout the school.
101. The previous inspection suggested that attainment was well above average at the end of Year 2, the apparent decline is, in part, associated with changes in the characteristics of children when they start school. The report suggested that attainment by Year 6 was above average, although results of National Curriculum tests in 1997 were just below average. Teaching was described as satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching. Inspection evidence shows that there has been an improvement, especially by the end of Year 6. Attainment is currently about average by Year 2, and above average by Year 6. Teaching continues to be satisfactory or good, with examples of very good teaching, especially in Year 6.
102. In Years 1 and 2, pupils acquire satisfactory knowledge and skills. In Year 2, they know that materials change. They record that the speed at which ice melts varies according to conditions. They know the parts of a plant and describe changes that occur when seeds germinate. In Year 1, pupils describe different sources of light, and push and pull forces. Pupils' scientific skills develop well so that they know about some of the features of a fair test, record their results carefully and use good observation skills. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills. Pupils with special educational needs are given sound support, which helps to ensure that they extend their knowledge. On occasions, especially in Year 1, the challenge for higher attaining pupils could be raised. Not enough thought is always given to helping pupils to record their work in ways that allow them to demonstrate their scientific understanding. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language perform as well as most others in the classes.

103. During Years 3 to 5, pupils build satisfactorily on the base achieved by Year 2. Pupils' scientific knowledge expands very well, so that by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average. The school gives very careful attention to developing pupils' skills, and most know the elements of a fair test, how to observe and record results and why it is necessary to replicate results. Pupils make effective use of their numeracy skills by recording measurements, drawing graphs and calculating averages. In Year 3, pupils use their skills well to measure the strength of different magnets. By Year 4, they use Newton meters to measure forces and use the terms 'weight' and 'mass' correctly. In Year 5, pupils have a good understanding of the properties of solids, liquids and gases. Good understanding of reflection of light and the use of scientific vocabulary to describe features of the water cycle are evident in Year 6. Teachers' good use of scientific vocabulary, such as, in Year 6, the term 'fluid' to describe the properties of air, results in pupils' improved learning. Results from investigations are recorded and interpreted accurately, but there are too few opportunities for older pupils to carry out investigations that they have designed themselves, although this skill is being developed well in Year 4. Here, the teachers encouraged pupils to convert a statement into a scientific question that could be investigated. This resulted in some interesting observations, such as that the circumference of children's heads is not much less than that of adults. In Years 3 to 6, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they enjoy science and are very interested in the tasks. With the effective support of teachers and classroom assistants, they rise to the challenge. Similarly, the few pupils for whom English is an additional language show enjoyment in science and are fully involved. By the end of Year 6, virtually all pupils have achieved well.
104. Pupils enjoy their science, especially practical activities. In the classes for pupils in Year 4, there was a very busy atmosphere as they set about answering questions they had raised about the human body. In Year 6, pupils sat transfixed as the teacher explained how the shape of aircraft wings and Formula 1 racing cars resulted in up and down forces. Pupils' learning was evident in the sensible questions asked, such as 'How therefore do aircraft land?' They then applied themselves with enthusiasm to their experiments studying the effects of air resistance. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to work in small groups, share resources and talk about what they could see. Their attitudes to science are good, especially in Years 3 to 6. Behaviour is mostly good in both whole-class and group activities.
105. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good throughout the school. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good for older pupils. In Year 6, it is especially good. In the very good lessons in Year 6, the teachers' subject knowledge, enthusiasm, clarity of explanations and effective use of questions enthused pupils to investigate forces and air resistance. In Year 4, careful organisation introduced pupils to developing questions that can be answered using a scientific, practical approach. In a Year 3 lesson, good guidance and effective use of resources enabled pupils to put rocks in to their correct order of hardness. Teachers use initial discussions to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding, which is often aided by the effective use of questions. However, at times, teachers do not extend pupils' speaking and listening skills sufficiently and have a tendency not to ask pupils to explain their ideas. Despite some shortages, teachers provide an appropriate range of equipment, organise groups effectively and encourage pupils to explore the materials provided. The work of pupils with special educational needs reflects the support teachers and learning support staff provide. Very good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills to promote learning in science, but the writing style used tends to be rather stereotyped and reflects 'standard scientific reports' too early in the school. Good guidance is given on the scientific vocabulary to be developed in each year, but pupils have too few opportunities to develop extended writing in science.

Marking is satisfactory, and in Year 6 it is very effective in helping pupils understand how they can improve.

106. The pupils follow a broad curriculum, with a particularly good balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. The school bases its work on national guidance, linked to its own planning, particularly to give a greater focus to developing skills. Special science days and weeks make a positive contribution to learning about the place of science in society. The focus to develop science displays this term has led to many interesting and stimulating displays around the school. Effective links are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example geography in work related to rocks or the water cycle. Assessment is satisfactory, with both pupils' knowledge and skills being recorded. The co-ordinator is to develop assessment further to take account of concepts learnt rather than merely what has been taught. The results of assessments, including National Curriculum test results, are analysed to identify weaknesses. This has led to an awareness of the need for pupils to interpret data that they have not obtained themselves. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In particular, pupils are encouraged to work together, have fun doing investigations and enjoy finding out for themselves. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has been instrumental in raising the profile of science in the school and bringing about improvements, such as the extensive use of numeracy skills.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

107. The attainment in art and design at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with that expected. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when, by Year 6, pupils were attaining standards that were below average.
108. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 to 3 and good progress in Years 4 to 6. They express their ideas through a range of different experiences in art and design, and have regular access to textiles, paint, pencils and pastels and learn how to mix colours, as illustrated when, in Year 3, pupils mixed colours to reflect skin colours of others in the class.
109. Teaching in art and design is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 3 and good from Year 4 to 6. When teaching art and design, teachers are more confident than in the previous inspection. They have better subject knowledge and understanding due to the implementation of national guidance. They give pupils good opportunities to undertake new experiences and experiment with different ideas. In a Year 4 lesson, all pupils worked hard to enlarge sketches of chairs, which many found difficult but nevertheless persevered. This included pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work and make improvements with good attention to the finished work. This was observed in one Year 6 class when pupils evaluated each other's work with clarity and maturity. The teacher skilfully extended pupils' knowledge and understanding of artists' work when she expanded their contributions and drew comparisons and differences between different pictures.
110. The co-ordinator is fairly new in post, but is enthusiastic and has a clear educational direction. She has worked hard to ensure continued improvements in the subject. A satisfactory art and design curriculum is in place which is broad and balanced, as well as now being better planned to give pupils experience of different techniques and media, including working with three-dimensional material, such as clay. A useful portfolio of work has been compiled to illustrate the range of work, which is helpful to new

members of staff. The curriculum builds well on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. Previously there were gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills acquisition, now due to some effective teaching, pupils are making good gains in their learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Sketchbooks are used throughout the school which show a good range of work, however not all teachers in the juniors expect high standards and work is not always well presented by younger pupils.

111. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development through pupils' work based on the work of other artists, for example that of Monet in Year 6 and David Hockney in Year 3, when pupils comment on what they like and dislike about various pictures. However, art and design from non-western cultures is an area that is less well developed and represented in the school. Social development is promoted when teachers encourage co-operative work. This is evident in the Year 5 wall hangings where pupils worked together and used a range of skills including stitching, folding, quilting and printing. They skilfully used these techniques to tell a fable after the work of Faith Ringold, an American artist who made quilts to tell stories.
112. Links between art and design and other subject areas, including literacy and numeracy, are satisfactory. Art and design satisfactorily supports work in geography when landscapes and scenes from St Lucia are depicted in an interesting variety of techniques. Pupils are using their observational skills well, as in the work on houses in the locality. Year 2 pupils look carefully at buildings and draw them with good detail. These are then copied on clay tiles and made into effective displays of streets of houses. The displays of pupils' artwork around the school are valued and enhance areas in the school, such as the range of portraits carefully sketched in pastels by pupils from the Nursery through to Year 6. This display is particularly good at illustrating progression in pupils' skills in art and design and reflects the increasing importance of the subject to pupils and teachers. There is, as yet, little evidence of formal assessment or monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator, who is aware that these are both areas to develop.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. There has been a good improvement from the previous inspection report. All elements of the subject, including the design element in Years 3 to 6, are now securely in place. This is because there is a scheme of work based on national guidance, which ensures that knowledge and skills are taught progressively throughout the school. Assessment procedures are still mainly informal, but the co-ordinator is aware that this is an important area for development.
114. By Years 2 and 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve levels of knowledge and skills in design and technology appropriate for their age. Pupils select from a satisfactory range of materials when designing and making products. Proper consideration is given to the purpose of each item and to the subsequent design and construction, as in the money containers made by Year 4 pupils. Learning is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 3 and sound progress is made. In Years 4 to 6, learning is good and pupils are making better progress. However, standards are still average by the end of Year 6 because pupils are developing skills and knowledge that were not previously acquired.
115. The number of lessons observed was limited but, through discussions with pupils, it is evident that teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in the infants, and in the juniors it is good, with very good teaching observed in one Year 6 class. Basic skills are being taught well. This means pupils use a variety of materials



and techniques to join and decorate their work, as in the slippers produced by Year 6 pupils and vehicles constructed by Year 2.

116. Teachers plan lessons well and match work for pupils of differing ability. This means that all pupils in Year 1 completed the labels on their drawings of fruit satisfactorily. Higher attaining pupils wrote the labels, but lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, had words written for them and, with the support of classroom assistants, selected and stuck in their labels. Pupils are interested in their work and discuss it with enthusiasm. Social development is fostered when pupils cooperate and share equipment. They are aware of safety when using tools, and basic hygiene when working with food. Cultural development is promoted through history of the Ancient Greeks when masks were designed and produced that may have been worn in the theatre.
117. Links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Pupils design and evaluate their work throughout the school in written or pictorial form. In Year 2, pupils set out the procedures and materials required to make puppets, and evaluated their products afterwards using their literacy skills. When making prototypes of pop-ups and levers to make a book, Year 4 pupils discussed how they needed to measure accurately the slits in the paper to ensure the mechanism would work. In Year 3, careful measuring ensured wooden photograph frames were accurately joined. In science, links to design and technology are good, such as in Year 6 when pupils investigated how a vehicle moves. They successfully built on their previous knowledge of powering a carousel with electricity. This helped them to understand where the power came from and how the wheels of a vehicle were driven. Year 5 pupils clearly expressed procedures for designing and making musical instruments and how, by adjusting elastic bands on a frame, their product could be modified to make several musical sounds. Links to ICT are satisfactory, for example a graphics program is used to make pictures for a calendar in Year 4.
118. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject and understands what needs to be done to improve it further. He is enthusiastic and has good subject expertise. He helps teachers to develop their expertise and confidence when working with children in the classroom. Monitoring of teaching and learning is mainly informal, although planning is monitored to ensure coverage of knowledge and development of skills.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

119. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is at that expected nationally. This reflects a similar position to that reported at the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory in relation to pupils' attainment on entry. In work seen during the inspection, attainment was at the expected level at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The school lacks a geography specialist and the geography curriculum has not been developed sufficiently, with the result that in the last few years, pupils have not had a sure grounding in the study of skills, themes and localities. There has been no systematic assessment of pupils' progress to help teachers plan lessons as assessment procedures are poor. Nevertheless, some aspects are well covered with a few being developed extremely well.
120. Pupils' attainment varies across the different teaching groups and sometimes according to topic. Some average attaining pupils reach expected levels orally in geographical skills and knowledge but they often find it difficult to retain and express this understanding. They grasp the principles of river erosion but are not sure of its wider effects on the landscape. Similarly, pupils are quick to see the differences between

Blackfen and both Flatford and St Lucia, but cannot detect easily the similarities. This weakness in the comprehension and communication of geographical ideas is linked to more fundamental difficulties of speaking and listening and writing rather than to specific geographical weaknesses. It results in below average attainment in skills such as developing their own values and attitudes with regard to social and economic issues.

121. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan as best as they can according to a developing scheme of work which is rooted in important concepts, such as mapping and physical geography; this informs teaching at all levels. Thus, for example, pupils learn about local settlement in Year 3 and discover why the area was a good site, before moving on to discover how land use has changed over time, as when they note that fields have become built-up areas. Those pupils with special educational needs make generally satisfactory progress because they receive helpful support from well-organised and motivated learning support assistants who intervene appropriately to ensure that they understand what is being taught without spoon-feeding the pupils. Teachers and other adults also support pupils for whom English is an additional language effectively. Although important teaching resources were destroyed by the fire, more use could be made of relevant videotapes, ICT and supporting maps and materials; this would have made it possible for the mainly enquiry based approaches of the subject to be developed to enable the pupils to work more effectively in groups and thus develop more independence. However, opportunities are provided by teachers for pupils to investigate, collect and process data, as when they conduct traffic surveys and ask local people whether a part of Blackfen should be pedestrianised. Good teaching, a sharp pace with good class control and constructive relationships were particularly evident in a Year 6 class where pupils linked their previous visit to the River Shuttle to an investigation on river erosion using high quality photographs. The teacher questioned them well and encouraged them so that all pupils achieved well.
122. Most pupils have good attitudes to the subject; this is particularly the case when teaching is good and they enjoy the lesson. Good examples were seen when Year 5 pupils studied photographs of Flatford Mill before co-operating well in a discussion. However, overall standards are less high with regard to the presentation of written work; the analysis of exercise books showed that many do not produce either enough detail or work that has a regard for appearance. The subject places an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of some literacy skills, such as vocabulary. Pupils in a good lesson in Year 2 were being introduced to words such as 'mountain', 'hills' and 'weather'. In other respects, however, provision to enhance literacy skills is unsatisfactory and pupils rarely produce extended pieces of writing. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual and cultural development; environmental issues are discussed, as when pupils visited Danson Park and made suggestions as to how it could be improved. Additionally, there is a good emphasis on local work. Geography makes a sound contribution to the development of pupils' numeracy skills; pupils of all ages produce charts and graphs linked to rainfall, travel use and parental places of work.
123. Currently, the subject leader lacks expertise and confidence, and the evaluation and development of teaching have weaknesses. Nevertheless, those who teach the subject work very hard to ensure that the subject is delivered to the best of their ability. A satisfactory range of resources supports the subject, but there is a lack of globes, atlases, maps and software to sharpen pupils' interest and sense of inquiry.
124. The subject has made satisfactory improvement since the earlier inspection; teaching is now of a higher quality but the scheme of work needs to be refined further. In particular,

assessment requires improvement if geography is to enhance its standing across the school.

## HISTORY

125. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is above that expected nationally. This means that there has been an improvement in the standards noted at the time of the last inspection. Improvements are due to the subject being well led. This has resulted in the development of a comprehensive scheme of work, which allows for the systematic development of knowledge, chronology, use of sources and an awareness of change over time. Pupils also enjoy a rich diet of visits, visitors and activities, which have improved the quality of their learning and their subsequent achievement.
126. Standards of work seen in the inspection are at the expected level at the end of Year 2. Since pupils enter the school with average history knowledge and skills, this represents satisfactory achievement. Strengths in Years 1 and 2 are the pupils' knowledge and understanding and their elementary awareness of change over time. This is the result of carefully chosen big books, artefacts and visits linked to Florence Nightingale, the Great Fire and 'Grandma's Washday'. Pupils are attentive and extract information accurately from careful listening and books.
127. The strengths of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 are their good knowledge and understanding, both in range and in depth. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, can go into some detail on aspects of life in Ancient Egypt and the Roman period. The development of pupils' history skills is good overall; they are aware of the importance of using evidence to approach historical questions. Evidence was seen of how visits to the local area, a study of maps and talks from pupils of the school who left in the 1930's and whose names appear in the School Log Book of that decade contribute to a growing awareness of time. Pupils' skills in source work and interpretation are developed well enough to give a good foundation for history work at their secondary schools. Exercise books show detailed work on the Romans, enhanced by a memorable Roman Day and a visit to Reculver Castle. The latter was extremely well organised with much important preliminary work before the visit which enhanced the quality of the pupils' learning. Lessons lead to good achievement because pupils are challenged and they enjoy the learning. However, writing skills are less well developed and a common weakness of many pupils is that they cannot communicate satisfactorily what they know in their writing. As a result, the subject makes an unsatisfactory contribution to addressing the needs of those pupils who enter the school with weak literacy skills. The use of ICT has been limited by lack of equipment, but the subject has CD-Roms and some pupils produce interesting word-processed work at home. The subject contributes well to the school provision for spiritual and cultural development; pupils reflect on how people lived in the past and on Egyptian ideas of the after-life. Additionally, their study of ancient history, including Greek architecture, Roman mosaics and visits to the British Museum, adds greatly to their range of cultural knowledge.
128. The quality of teaching and learning is overall good across the school. It is satisfactory to Year 2 and good later in the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils listen and learn effectively both from their teacher and from each other. Most lessons have clear objectives, which are shared with the pupils. Written assignments begin with the historical aim of the exercise. In some classes, however, there is evidence that teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good because teachers do not always plan to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Some do this well, as seen in a good Year 4 lesson, where the teacher set appropriately demanding tasks and provided assignments which were well designed to stretch some

pupils and support others. Evidence from the scrutiny of work shows some very good learning in Years 4 and 5; pupils are stretched and the teachers' lesson planning and guidance ensured that all pupils gave of their best, producing some good answers. Nearly all teachers focus well on promoting learning skills and use a range of different methods. Some enthuse their pupils through participation; others focus well on texts as when pupils study Egyptian hieroglyphics and make deductions about everyday life. This good focus on pupils' learning is the key to the improved standards seen, particularly among older pupils.

129. The subject leader has spearheaded a great deal of curricular development, including a revised scheme of work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Levels of attainment have been raised and pupils now use evidence and deduce more effectively. There is a good scheme of work and improved assessment procedures. The implementation of these assessment procedures and other school policies means that the subject has a good capacity for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. Standards in ICT are below average overall. Owing to the loss of the computer suite and considerable equipment in a fire in May 2001, the school is unable to provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities in the subject until both the suite and the lost equipment are fully replaced. As a result of this setback, improvement since the last inspection must be considered to be unsatisfactory. At that time, attainment of pupils met national expectations. However, there have been some important improvements. An effective training programme has resulted in teachers having increased confidence in their abilities to teach the subject. Since the fire, the school has purchased a projector so that the image of the computer screen can be more clearly visible to pupils when teachers are demonstrating procedures at computers. An interactive whiteboard has been installed in the library and an Internet link has also been established.
131. By Year 2, standards are below those expected. Pupils have limited word-processing skills as a result of having few opportunities to learn and practise them. They have built up confidence when using computers. They use the mouse and keyboard to operate computer assisted learning programs, for example inputting numbers correctly in response to mathematical problems presented on screen. Pupils draw and paint pictures on screen using an appropriate program. They make selections from a toolbox and use the mouse to manipulate the cursor around the screen.
132. The attainment of pupils by Year 6 is below that expected for their age. This is the result of pupils having too few opportunities to work on computers. Pupils do not have extensive experience of word-processing or desktop publishing and, as a result, skills in these areas are unsatisfactory. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do have satisfactory skills in data handling and using the computer for research purposes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 produce tally charts showing respective areas of the wild life garden preferred by different species of birds. Using spreadsheets they map out precise areas preferred by each of the different types of bird. Pupils in Year 6 used a database to input information gathered in a bird study project. Successfully setting up a range of different fields, they use the computer to find out answers to a number of questions, such as 'Where are most birds observed?' and 'Which types and how many of each type of bird is seen?' Year 5 pupils have some experience of word-processing. They word-process previously written reports they composed in their studies in English. They have limited opportunities for developing word-processing skills and they have little experience of drafting and redrafting writing directly on screen.

133. Teaching is satisfactory. As a result of a recent good training programme presented in the school, teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge necessary to help pupils develop their ICT skills, given the facilities and the necessary equipment. At the present moment, there is at least one computer in each classroom and teachers are maximising opportunities for pupils to use these. Good use is made of computers in mathematics and science lessons. In Years 1 and 2, pupils get a sound understanding of the power of ICT. They learn to give instructions to equipment to make things happen, for example when inputting information into a programmable toy. However, they get limited experience in gathering and retrieving information from a range of sources, such as a CD-Rom. Pupils in the juniors do not have regular opportunities to learn and practise word-processing and publishing skills or search the Internet. Pupils do not have experience using sensors in science to monitor changes in temperature and other conditions. During the inspection, two good lessons were observed in Year 5 classes in which pupils were taught to draw with the computer. Both teachers were confident and gave pupils clear directions as to how to proceed, with the result that pupils succeeded well, drawing and painting on screen. In these lessons, effective support was given to pupils with special educational needs or for whom English was an additional language. The loss of equipment has, however, reduced the opportunities that can be provided for these pupils.
134. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has responded well to the loss of the computer suite. She has produced an effective post-fire action plan, which lists the needs and priorities for moving the subject forward following its sudden setback.

## **MUSIC**

135. The standards seen in music were broadly as expected in Year 2, but below the expected level by the end of Year 6. The school provided a very limited amount of recorded evidence of pupils' past work. Throughout the school, there is an inconsistent picture of the standards pupils achieve in lessons, which reflects the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes to the subject. This is not such a positive picture as at the time of the previous inspection.
136. Singing, as heard in whole-school assemblies, is tuneful and controlled. However, the quality of singing in lessons is variable and depends largely on the competence of the teacher to provide a tuneful lead. Pupils in Year 2 clap rhythms and are learning successfully to follow rhythm charts. They maintain a rhythm pattern while the rest of the class sings a tune.
137. Pupils have not had a consistent experience over time and so have not developed a wide range of musical skills or knowledge. Although pupils in Year 6 listen to contrasting excerpts of music and reflect on the different moods created by each, their knowledge of musical terms and vocabulary is weak. Having had limited previous experience of composition and improvisation, many pupils were unable to complete a task which required them to work together in small groups to improvise a short piece to create the feeling of tension. Despite the teacher's best efforts, the poor behaviour and motivation of some pupils had a negative effect on others in their group and on the class as a whole. This pattern of behaviour was repeated in other music lessons where pupils lacked motivation and their attitudes to learning were unsatisfactory. In one lesson, pupils' behaviour was poor.
138. Teaching is unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory in only four of the seven lessons seen. The main weakness, which was also present to some extent in three of the lessons

where teaching was satisfactory, is teachers' lack of subject knowledge and confidence. Since September, the school has been following a national scheme of work that develops pupils' skills and knowledge in a systematic way over time. It is supported by a set of lesson plans that have satisfactory content and structure. However, teachers are not always able to follow or interpret these plans effectively to provide a satisfactory learning experience for the pupils. Their own lack of knowledge results in expectations that are too low and an inability to explain ideas clearly to pupils. As a result, the pupils do not learn as much as they could. With the exception of one lesson, there was too little emphasis on developing pupils' musical vocabulary. The teachers' ability to settle restless and excitable pupils also has an impact on the rate of pupils' learning. This is especially so when music lessons take place at the end of the afternoon. These sessions were regularly shorter than planned because assembly overran. The use of instruments was limited in six lessons and this, in part, relates to teachers' confidence to manage such resources.

139. The school was without a music co-ordinator for several years and the subject has not been a focus for development or staff training. Since taking the role last year, the co-ordinator has made a satisfactory start to improving provision by introducing the planning, and increasing resources. However, there is much to do to raise the level of staff confidence and to ensure that provision is consistent across the school.
140. Pupils do have opportunities to sing and perform at events such as the Harvest festival, assemblies, and in concerts. Parents remarked on their enjoyment of these events. Groups of pupils learn to play the recorder and individuals have music tuition. Occasional visitors from music groups give concerts to the pupils and this extends their musical experience. However, the co-ordinator recognises that currently music does not make much contribution to pupils' personal development and she is keen to raise the profile of music in the school. She has satisfactory plans to achieve this aim.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was about average and that they made satisfactory progress. There were strengths in games, but weaknesses in dance. Teaching was satisfactory, although some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Attainment and progress have improved as attainment in dance is now average. Teaching is better, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and some very good teaching of games was seen in Years 4 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities. These are supported enthusiastically by pupils, as evident in the girls' football match during the inspection. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum, including swimming for Year 4. During the inspection, lessons in dance, gymnastics and games were observed.
142. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 benefit from very good teaching which enhances learning in games. In Year 4, pupils' progress was aided by dividing the year group according to their attainment. The lower attaining group were very well taught about rolling and throwing a ball with accuracy, and how to stop or catch it. Attainment was close to average in this aspect. The higher attaining group were very well taught about striking a ball using a baseball bat. The teacher's expertise helped pupils to grip their bats correctly and then to develop the movements to strike a ball within a particular arc on either side of the thrower. The teacher helped pupils to become aware of their learning by asking pupils to look at their partner's 'body language' and whether you could tell where they would be hitting the ball. In Year 6, very good subject knowledge enabled the teacher to teach, and then improve, skills associated with the shot putt. Using beanbags and balls, pupils developed a good style when extending the arm so that they did not

throw. Again, learning was enhanced by pupils assessing their partner's work, and by the teacher encouraging pupils to beat their previous attempt. The organisation of these classes, and the very good knowledge of teachers, helped to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, made good progress.

143. In other lessons seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory, and attainment average. In Year 1, pupils catching skills were average, although girls were less confident than boys. In Year 2, pupils develop satisfactory dance skills when responding to different types and tempo of music. On occasions, the amount of noise limited the ability of pupils to hear the music and this slowed learning. In Year 4, satisfactory teaching enabled pupils to explore different ways of travelling around the hall, and to develop sequences that could be used on low apparatus. Attainment was about average, although there was little high attainment.
144. Pupils are mostly enthusiastic in physical education, and they usually display good attitudes and behaviour. Some of the younger pupils do not listen as well, or involve themselves as effectively, as older ones. In games, pupils listened very carefully to their teachers and followed instructions well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and very good in games. A feature of the best teaching was that pupils were challenged to review their performance and to improve it. In teaching that is satisfactory, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to evaluate each other's performance and instructions occasionally lack clarity. In dance, pupils do not always have the chance to listen to the music first, this limits learning as they have not had chance to think about how they will respond.
145. All areas of the National Curriculum, including outdoor and adventurous pursuits, are taught, thus ensuring pupils develop skills across all relevant areas of physical education. Outdoor pursuits also form part of the residential visits. Swimming is taught to pupils in Year 4. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and includes football, netball, cricket, athletics and rounders. Swimming assessment is detailed and leads to the award of certificates. Assessment is developing satisfactorily in other areas, and is used, for instance in Year 4 games, to divide pupils into groups on the basis of their attainment. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal development, such as working as part of a team and co-operating in a range of activities, but teachers do not always manage groups of pupils effectively to encourage boys and girls to work together. Leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has ensured the subject's profile has been maintained while other whole-school developments have taken place. External accommodation is extensive, used well and has a positive impact on standards in games.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

146. In the last report, standards in Year 2 were well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school now works with a locally agreed syllabus, revised in 1999, with different criteria for assessing pupils' standards of attainment. It is therefore not possible to make accurate comparisons with present standards. Standards now both of infant and junior pupils are in line with those expected in the current agreed syllabus.
147. At the time of the last report, concern was expressed that pupils were given insufficient opportunities to develop enquiry skills and to make personal responses in lessons. There has been satisfactory improvement in these two areas. Pupils in Year 6 watched a videotape and made notes about aspects of the Jewish faith. They then supplemented these notes with information they gathered from a range of other resources. In Year 5,

pupils listened to the story of 'The Good Samaritan' then discussed in pairs their responses and reactions to the actions of the main characters. Pupils make little use of computers either for word-processing completed written work or in the search for information.

148. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning over time. As pupils get older, they show an increasing ability to express ideas and feelings and they have greater knowledge and understanding of religious issues to aid their thinking and discussions.
149. Learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is sound as they are conscientiously taught about a range of religions through the study of various celebrations and festivals. They learn something of how people from different faiths worship. Much of this learning is concerned with the study of symbolism. Year 1 pupils relate to the significance of light in celebration and begin to build up an understanding of the significance of light in religious worship. Year 2 pupils study rites and customs associated with Christianity and other religions. They learn about the significance of baptism to Christians and about traditional dress and customs associated with the Jewish faith.
150. Pupils' completed work in books shows pupils in Year 3 effectively extending their knowledge of symbolism. Pupils learn about Sikh beliefs and associated Sikh symbols. Throughout the junior classes, sound learning continues as pupils extend their knowledge of stories from the Old and New Testaments. In their written work, Years 3 and 4 pupils show that they have satisfactory knowledge of characters and stories from the Old Testament, such as the story of King David. They contrast and compare aspects of several religions, including symbols, celebrations and beliefs. They make satisfactory progress in their learning over time.
151. Years 5 and 6 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress building on earlier knowledge. They further extend knowledge of stories and events from both the Old and New Testaments. Year 5 pupils learn about the contributions made by people, such as Doctor Barnardo and Lord Shaftsbury, towards improving the conditions of other people's lives. Year 6 pupils learn about codes of conduct as they relate to several religions. These opportunities allow pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds to make contributions about their own beliefs.
152. Teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, teaching seen was at least satisfactory and often good. Good lessons are interesting and are made relevant to the lives of the pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute their own ideas and suggestions. Teachers skilfully involve pupils directly in lessons and, by the use of astute questions, they encourage pupils to answer by drawing on their existing knowledge. In this way, lessons contribute to the development of speaking skills. Pupils respond to this approach by participating enthusiastically and contributing to discussion. Most lessons make a good contribution to the personal development of the pupils. Pupils learn about codes of conduct, study aspects of other cultures and confront moral dilemmas. Teachers give pupils too few opportunities to write independently and at length.
153. Management of religious education is satisfactory. A sound policy and scheme of work are in place, both of which support teachers' planning, and these are contributing to the satisfactory quality of education pupils receive in this subject. Satisfactory resources are available for teaching and these are used effectively.