

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BELMONT JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Wood Green, London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 102078

Headteacher: Ms C Durrant

Reporting inspector: Mr B Bowen  
21066

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2001

Inspection number: 195229

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rusper Road Wood Green London
Postcode:	N22 6RA
Telephone number:	020 8888 8261
Fax number:	020 8365 8048
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Woods
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21066	B Bowen	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language-	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9974	D Singh	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?
30717	G Tompsett	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20877	D Pink	Team inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
20003	S Metcalfe	Team inspector	Information technology Art	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Belmont Junior school is situated in Wood Green, an area of mixed housing in North London. It caters for 212 pupils between the ages of seven and 11. The pupils form a very diverse population. Over half are from homes where English is not used as the first language. Among them are 23 different languages and there are children from 27 ethnic groups on the school's roll. A small, but significant, number of children are from refugee families. The school population shows a high degree of transience, with up to a quarter of pupils changing round in any one school year. Over a third of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is well above the national average.

The school shares a site with Belmont Infants School. Pupils who transfer into the school aged seven have a wide range of attainments, but overall it is around the national average. Those who enter the school after the normal age of transfer have attainments that are often well below the expectations for their age. Around one quarter of the pupils in school have been identified as having special educational needs, mainly to assist their progress in literacy or to help with their social and emotional development. This is above the national average.

The school has a long-standing partnership with the local Vale Special School whereby a number of pupils (currently 10) with often severe physical disabilities are taught in the normal mainstream classes. Teachers and educational support staff from The Vale School provide a high degree of assistance for these pupils.

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

The school is a caring community with friendly and well-mannered pupils. Standards of work are rising in English and mathematics, but in some subjects there remains significant room for improvement. The teaching staff are efficient and manage pupils well. They have sufficient knowledge of their subjects and share a determination to ensure that all pupils learn. As a result, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good overall progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are given sufficient support to enable them to settle into school well and play a full part in most lessons. Their overall progress is good, although some pupils face difficulties with the more technical aspects of language. The integration of pupils from the Vale School is successful, bringing benefit to all. The school is well led by the headteacher and governing body, who are determined to see standards improving. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Most teaching is good; there is no unsatisfactory teaching.
- Test results have risen in line with the national trend in English and mathematics.
- The school provides many very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially, morally and culturally.
- The school has a strong tradition in music and many pupils reach a high standard of playing instruments.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards are below expectations in science and design and technology.
- Several subjects cannot be studied in enough depth in the time provided for them.
- Teachers don't always plan well enough to cater for the full range of pupils in their classes.
- Other than in English and mathematics, subject leaders have too little responsibility for monitoring, evaluating and developing the teaching of their subjects.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. It was found to provide a quality of education for its pupils that required some improvement. It had strengths in the standards of behaviour, in its provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, and in music. Since then, the school has maintained most of its areas of strength and improved in a number of key areas, most notably in the quality of teaching. Good systems have been put into place to support teachers new to the school and this helps to eliminate unsatisfactory teaching. The newly-formed governing body works well with the headteacher to provide strong and determined leadership.

The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issues identified in the last report, but the high turnover of staff has meant that the school has yet to develop fully the role of co-ordinators in monitoring the standards of pupils' work and the quality of teaching in their subjects. Good procedures have been put into place to assess the levels of attainment reached by pupils in the main subjects of the curriculum. Teachers are not using this information sufficiently in their day-to-day planning which often does not take account of the known range of abilities shown by pupils in their classes. Improved provision for information and communication technology has enabled pupils to reach higher levels of performance, but their skills are not yet used well enough to support learning in other subjects. The school has responded well to recent national changes to the curriculum. New national guidelines have been adopted to good effect as schemes of work in the relevant subjects. Senior teachers in the school have worked well to produce a development plan for future progress in these areas and the school is well placed to move further ahead.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average   E  
 very low                E\*

*The figures for the Year 2000 have been adjusted to take account of the numbers of pupils entering school in the last two years from abroad who do not have English as their first language.*

- This table shows that there has been ample room for standards to improve in English and mathematics and that pupils are not achieving well enough in science.
- However, the inspection of work by pupils aged 11 currently in school indicates that standards have risen to be in line with the national expectations in both English and mathematics and just below them in science. Over the past four years, there has been a trend towards higher standards in line with that seen nationally.
- Overall achievement is good. The marked improvement in mathematics can be attributed in large measure to recent developments in the teaching of numeracy skills.

Last year the school set targets for improvement in test results that were too high. This year more use has been made of the assessment of pupils' current levels of attainment and the school has set realistic targets which can be raised as more information about the pupils' learning is gathered.



In the other subjects of the curriculum, standards have room to improve in design and technology. They remain high in music. Test results from 1998 and 1999 showed that girls tended to do better than boys. The school recognised this and provided more support where it was needed. In the Year 2000 tests, boys and girls achieved equally well.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are eager to learn. They listen well to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in class and on the playground is good. Incidents of aggression are rare. They are dealt with speedily and efficiently. There have been only two fixed-period exclusions from school in the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils become mature and sensible as they move through the school. Relationships between the pupils and with the teachers are good. There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school community. Pupils relate well with those from The Vale School.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average. Some pupils are often late coming into school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	n/a	n/a	Good

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

In the lessons observed, teaching was very good in 6 per cent, good in 54 per cent and satisfactory in 40 per cent. Teaching is good overall in mathematics, religious education, art and design, physical education and music. It is satisfactory in English and other subject areas. Skills in numeracy are well taught, and the school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils with English as an additional language receive a good level of support from the specialist teaching staff, but often the needs of those pupils who continue to struggle are given insufficient attention in the class teachers' day-to-day planning. However, pupils with special educational needs are supported well through the work of classroom assistants. Pupils who are gifted or talented are given extra provision, particularly in music and mathematics. Teachers have at least satisfactory all-round knowledge of their subjects and new teachers receive an induction process which prepares them well for the school systems and methods of working.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school makes appropriate provision for English, mathematics and science. Insufficient time is allocated to other subjects to cover all aspects of the curriculum in enough depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The good support given to these pupils, especially by the co-ordinator for special needs and classroom assistants, helps them to make good overall progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school's specialist teacher and other support staff provide well for pupils to make a smooth entry into the school. Teachers need to make more provision for ensuring that pupils are prepared for the key words that they will meet in mainstream lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The very good provision for moral, social and cultural development has a positive impact on the pupils' development as rounded and caring individuals. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. However, the curriculum for religious education is not fully implemented. School assemblies do not always include a suitably spiritual dimension.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for all members of its community. The few incidents of bullying that arise are quickly and efficiently dealt with.

The school enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of parents and seeks their views on a regular basis. All complaints are promptly and responsibly acted upon.

The curriculum is enriched by a variety of school clubs, especially in science, drama and music. Football coaching is provided by a member of the Tottenham Hotspur FC coaching staff. There is little provision for playing competitive sports, although the school has plans to increase this in the near future.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides determined leadership with a strong focus on raising standards of attainment. Senior teachers in school have worked well to set out the plans for future development, but more work needs to be done on influencing the standard of teaching in all subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The newly formed governing body is very committed to the school's continuing success and all statutory duties are effectively carried out.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made good strides in the past two years in evaluating the standards of work and training needs of staff in all subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of the services provided by the Local Education Authority in ensuring the best value for money. There are plans to delegate further control over spending directly to the school.

The headteacher and governing body lead and manage the school well. They have ensured that the issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed, but problems with staffing have made it very difficult to achieve the continuity of approach that is needed across the whole school. The range of teaching resources is sufficient and they are well used. The accommodation for work with information and communication technology has been substantially increased.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Pupils are well-behaved.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• There are high expectations of work.</li> <li>• Pupils become mature during their time in school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More content and consistency in homework.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their child's progress could be more clear.</li> <li>• More opportunities for pupils to play sports.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views of the overwhelming majority of parents. The school has sought the views of parents on homework and the majority have supported the school in its present practice. However, homework is not given a high priority by all teachers and it does lack consistency and imagination. The pupils' end of year reports give parents insufficient guidance as to how they can help their children to progress. Most recommendations for improvement are too general. Inspectors agree that the current provision for competitive sports is limited. However, in addition to the after-school football coaching, the school has plans to provide more sports clubs in the near future.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were found to be in line with expectations in most subjects, although subsequent test results showed pupils to be performing well below the national averages in English, mathematics and science. In the intervening period, standards have risen in line with the national trend in English and mathematics, but less markedly in science.
  
- 2 Pupils who enter the school from the infant school with which the school shares a site show a very wide range of attainment, but overall they are generally around the national expectation. Many of the pupils who enter the school later than the normal age of transfer have attainments that are well below average. However, most pupils whose language at home is not English make good and speedy progress to be able to play a full part in lessons. This is mainly as a result of a good programme of support teaching, together with a school ethos which welcomes all pupils and ensures that they are included in all school activities.
  - Pupils leaving school aged eleven in the year 2000 achieved levels of performance that were below the national average in English. Standards were well below the national average in mathematics and science.
  - When compared with pupils from similar schools, attainment was above average in English. In mathematics, it met the average, but remained well below average in science.
  - Results over the past four years show that attainment varies considerably from year to year. Overall, however, there has been a trend towards higher standards in the three tested subjects. In all but science, this trend has matched the national improvement.
  - Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English and mathematics are continuing to improve and meet the national expectations in both subjects. This can be attributed in part measure to the setting arrangements currently organised in each year group, which allow more teaching to be more closely matched to pupils' learning needs. In science, the rate of improvement is not as high, with some pupils struggling to understand and use the technical language.
  
- 3 The school's analysis of test results from 1998 and 1999 showed that boys achieved lower standards than girls. As a result, extra lessons have been established to provide a recovery programme for pupils whose attainment it is felt can be improved. These are successful in boosting the pupils' interest and self-confidence. In last year's tests, boys and girls achieved similarly well.
  
- 4 In the year 2000, the school set targets in English and mathematics that were not met. For this year, the analysis of pupils' current levels of performance has been refined to allow the setting of targets which are challenging, yet more realistic.

- 5 The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been successful throughout the school. These are leading to higher standards for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, who make good overall progress. Classroom assistants provide efficient support for these pupils, helping them towards achieving their individual learning targets. Pupils' competence in literacy and numeracy is effectively supporting their learning in the different subjects of the school curriculum. Most pupils with English as an additional language quickly develop a sufficient grasp of English to cope with all other studies, although some who make slower progress become reticent in class and passive learners. For these pupils, teachers often do not make sufficient provision to ensure that they learn the necessary language, especially in technical subjects like science and design and technology. Pupils who have been identified with particular talents in mathematics and music reach higher than average levels of attainment as a result of the special provision made for them.
- 6 The large majority of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. They listen with increasing understanding. They respond to questions, speaking articulately and clearly, often in sentences to explain things or give instructions. Most pupils read fluently, and many can read out loud with good expression and understanding of character. They learn how to use the library, and they understand how to use an index in order to find information from information books. In the older classes, pupils are taught to be aware of the different styles of writing from telling a story, to writing newspaper articles and setting out the results of science experiments.
- 7 The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has led to a more effective progression in the acquisition of number skills. This, together with a good emphasis on practical investigation, has led pupils to become proficient and confident in solving problems using their knowledge of tables and the four rules of number. In the early years, pupils learn about the structure of numbers, applying their knowledge later on when working out, for example, discounts on goods in sales of 10 and 15 per cent. In science, progress to higher levels is inhibited by some teachers being less than efficient in setting up experiments with the necessary structure and equipment. In the main, however, pupils develop satisfactory knowledge of living things, such as how the human body is made up. In their work on chemical and physical changes, they learn about the conditions necessary for a 'fair test' in experiments on evaporation or dissolving different substances in water. Overall achievement in this subject is not high enough, however, with many pupils struggling to cope with technical aspects of the language. They face difficulties in using their own initiative to set up experiments.
- 8 In the other subjects of the curriculum, standards of attainment generally meet the national expectation in work seen. The exceptions are in music, where standards are high, and in design and technology where they are below expectations. However, progress in all of these subjects is not as good or wide as it should be because insufficient time is given to them in the organisation of the school timetable.
- 9 In religious education, pupils build up a progressive knowledge of the beliefs and practices of the Christian and other world faith communities. The school's provision does not, however, include study of all the religions outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus.

- 10 Since the last inspection, pupils' skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) have increased considerably. They can use a range of programs to arrange text, make charts and designs, and to search for information. These abilities are insufficiently used on a day-to-day basis to support other areas of the curriculum.
- 11 In art and design, pupils show an increasing control over a range of materials and techniques. Older pupils show a good awareness of shape and form. They learn about the work of a number of famous artists, and can talk about different styles. In design and technology, pupils use a variety of materials to make a range of models with increasingly complex construction methods. They are taught to evaluate their work and this helps them to develop strategies for approaching new tasks. However, in a number of classes, pupils fail to complete their work and output over the term is very small. Most of the tasks given are the same for all the class, and little provision is made for pupils with strong talents to design and make their own models without following the teacher's lead.
- 12 In history and geography, pupils learn appropriately about the different regions of the world and of their country. They develop a good awareness of the need to care for the environment and some appreciation of how events in the past have helped to shape the world as it is today. They recognise with increasing awareness how society has changed through the periods of history. However, the way in which the school timetable is organised means that pupils are often faced with a long break between their historical or geographical topics and this does not help, especially those with short term memories, towards a sense of continuity in their studies.
- 13 In music, good progress is made by those pupils (over half of the school roll) who take advantage of the extensive provision for instrumental tuition. Many pupils, especially those playing drums, guitar and other string instruments, reach a very high standard of performance. In class and school assemblies, pupils sing tunefully. They can hold the note successfully even without accompaniment and can sing in two or three parts. In lessons, pupils learn about some elements of music, such as rhythm, and they develop a basic understanding of notation. Again, progress through the classroom curriculum is hampered by the lack of regular practice as music is taught in blocks of lessons that are too far apart.
- 14 In all elements of the physical education curriculum, pupils achieve satisfactorily in lessons. They show the ability to run and leap that is expected for their age. They can control a ball with both hands and feet, and play games with a proper competitive spirit. In Year 6, pupils learn to swim, in addition to their weekly lesson in the hall. Other year groups do not make sufficient progress as the current provision of only one lesson of physical activity each week is not enough.
- 15 The high degree of support given to pupils from The Vale School ensures that their presence is in no way detrimental to the standards reached by others, and on a number of occasions, pupils directly benefit from the extra help that the school partnership brings.

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

- 16 Attitudes, behaviour, relationships and the manner in which pupils conduct themselves in the classroom and serve the school and community are all good. These good standards have been sustained since the previous inspection. Inspection evidence clearly illustrates that most pupils have a constructive, purposeful and positive attitude to their learning, and to the school.
- 17 Pupils enjoy school because of its friendly and harmonious learning atmosphere. In lessons, they concentrate well and are often enthusiastic about the challenge of new tasks. Where opportunities are provided, pupils make good use of their initiative, and adopt a responsible and mature attitude to learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are particularly receptive to their good quality teaching. During lessons, most pupils contribute confidently in discussions and are prepared to listen to their peers and teacher, and to consider the views of others, particularly disabled pupils. This was very evident in a Year 6 religious education lesson where pupils made use of their personal experiences to support the topic in an eloquent and articulate manner.
- 18 Pupils show respect for property and share resources helpfully. They work hard and show pride in their achievements. Behaviour in class is consistently good; at playtime it is very occasionally boisterous, but mainly friendly. There are no visible signs of bullying and the vast majority of pupils learn in a harmonious and friendly environment. Racism is not tolerated and the headteacher, governors and staff work vigorously to ensure good, effective race relations and to recognise and appreciate diversity.
- 19 Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, particularly when they are being escorted to the ground-floor dining area. Good behaviour was particularly evident during assemblies. When addressing visitors, pupils are polite, respectful and courteous. Interviews with pupils show they know the rules for good behaviour at playtimes, and what to do if they are bullied. Most pupils are confident that teachers will deal with any incidents effectively. They are particularly proud of the action taken by the headteacher to create a friendly and warm learning environment.
- 20 Relationships within the school are good and these are particularly effective with the disabled pupils. Teachers, and particularly lunchtime support staff, set positive examples of caring, friendly behaviour and this fosters good relationships between pupils and staff. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning and their social and individual development. Pupils open doors and display a very positive and constructive manner towards disabled pupils from the Vale School. During the inspection, pupils were often to be seen helping those in wheelchairs, both inside and outside of the classroom. All pupils are sensitive and they empathise well with their disabled peers. These good relationships mean that there have been no permanent exclusions and only two instances of fixed-period exclusion, involving one pupil, in the last school year.
- 21 Pupils are given good opportunities for personal development, which they exercise, as class and school monitors, members of the school council, and as enthusiastic fundraisers, in a mature, responsible and proud manner. These promote their sense of community and citizenship and enable them to serve their school and the wider community.

- 22 Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and existing levels of unauthorised absence are below the average for similar schools. The staff, including the administrative officer, work diligently to ensure that all absences are thoroughly investigated. Teachers consistently remind pupils and parents of the importance of regular attendance and time-keeping. Registers are taken at prescribed times and comply with statutory requirements. The school continues to work closely with parents and the Education Welfare Officer. However, some pupils arrive late for school and this sometimes disrupts learning and affects the otherwise good standard of punctuality. Since the last report, pupil attendance has been monitored closely and the headteacher continues to work to raise existing levels.

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

- 23 The overall quality of teaching is good, and in all the lessons observed during the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teaching is good in mathematics, art and design, music, physical education and religious education.
  - In English, science, ICT and design and technology, teaching is satisfactory. (There was insufficient evidence to enable judgements to be formed of the overall quality of teaching in history and geography.)
  - Taking account of all the lessons observed, teaching was very good in 6 per cent, good in 54 per cent, and satisfactory in 40 per cent.
- 24 The current high standards of teaching are due in large measure to the support given to teachers new to the school and to the determination of the headteacher and governors to ensure that pupils make progress from year to year. There is a clear link between good teaching and pupils' higher standards of work. In these lessons, pupils generally reach the levels expected for their age, whereas in lessons that are satisfactory, the pupils' finished work often remains below the expectation. Features of good and very good teaching include good planning of the step by step activities for pupils to undertake, allied to a good level of interaction with pupils. In a Year 6 design and technology lesson on moving toys, for example, the teacher used questions to identify the pupils who had already grasped the technique and then to assist others to work out the solutions for themselves.
- 25 The quality of teaching has risen since the last inspection when about one in eight lessons were found to be unsatisfactory or poor. The proportion of good teaching has increased; it was seen in over half of all lessons. As a result of action since the inspection, better assessments are carried out of the outcomes of lessons, and there is now a clear focus on the learning objectives to be covered in the course of each topic. Some areas of weakness still remain in teachers' planning and in the role of subject managers. These have been difficult to address as there has been a large turnover of staff in the intervening period. With the formation of a more stable teaching staff, especially of those with senior management responsibility, the school is now well placed to move forward on these issues.



- 26 In all subjects, teachers have generally good expertise and knowledge to cope with the demands of the curriculum. Teachers are given good support to enable them to teach the full range of activities in ICT. They use the appropriate technical language in subjects like science and design and technology, but often they do not make sufficient provision to ensure that this is understood by pupils whose language at home is not English. This was very noticeable in a science lesson for Year 6 pupils when the words 'rate' and 'control' were used out of their normal context.
- 27 The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented to provide a solid framework for learning. The setting arrangements, whereby pupils in the year group are taught in two groups according to their level of achievement, are assisting teachers to pitch the lessons more closely to the pupils' current attainments. In numeracy lessons, the needs of all pupils in the class are catered for well by organising a variety of activities adjusted to provide differing challenges. This is especially effective in helping pupils with special educational needs, and all pupils make good progress. In some literacy lessons, this provision is less marked when most work is the same for all pupils and the final section of the lesson is not used successfully to reinforce learning for pupils who have struggled. This can often slow progress from good to satisfactory in these lessons.
- 28 The school has used the analysis of test results in 1998 and 1999 to identify an underachievement in the performance of boys. As a result, booster groups have been established in language, mathematics and science which, although not restricted to boys, are being successful in raising the standards for pupils whose current attainments are just below expectations.
- 29 Pupils who enter the school with English as an additional language are given good support in the identification and assessment of their learning needs. Those whose confidence in the language is low are given good quality teaching in small withdrawal groups. Most progress swiftly and soon become able to cope with full integration in normal classes. As a general rule, however, insufficient forward planning takes place for these pupils to be given intensive instruction in the language demands of lessons that they will face in the immediate future. In a number of subjects, extra teaching support is given in mainstream lessons. This is generally helpful in assisting the pupils to cope with practical activities, but some time can be wasted when the support teacher is inactive during periods of whole-class introduction.
- 30 The school has identified a number of pupils who are talented mathematicians. They receive a period of intensive advanced tuition, given on a voluntary basis by a member of staff from the local High School. Capable musicians are provided with opportunities to reach very high levels of performance. These activities help the school to meet the needs of pupils with higher attainments.
- 31 Teaching of pupils with special needs is of a good level. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) works well with teachers to assess the needs of identified pupils. These are given good support in class by classroom assistants who know the pupils well and who, through careful questioning and prompting, enable the pupils to complete their tasks. In a significant number of lessons, however, teachers' planning does not take into account the range of attainments in their class, and in such cases, pupils with special educational needs struggle to cope with and complete their work. In good lessons where there is no help available from support staff, teachers often group pupils together well so that slower learners can be helped by their classroom friends.

- 32 Teachers generally manage their pupils well. They are sensitive and display a caring attitude. This is allied to a high expectation of standards of behaviour. As a result the overwhelming majority of lessons are orderly, and incidents of aggressive behaviour are rare. Teachers encourage pupils to take a pride in their work and this leads to an improving standard of presentation.
- 33 The teachers use a range of suitable teaching methods with a balance of whole class and group tasks. Pupils are encouraged to discuss with one another and to co-operate in planning tasks such as making models or carrying out investigations. Relationships throughout the school are good. Teachers use every opportunity to praise the pupils' efforts and take steps to avoid harming the pupils' self-confidence. Rather than telling a pupil that he or she is wrong, they ask if anyone can help the pupil to arrive at the right answer. Examples of notable contributions are rewarded in the weekly 'good work' assembly. Lessons proceed at a suitable pace and learning resources are generally well prepared and accessible so that little time is wasted.
- 34 Ongoing assessment is used satisfactorily to evaluate pupils' achievement. Through the regular observation of pupils at work and through the marking of work, teachers keep a check on individual progress. This is used to plan future work, although often this is then unrelated to charting the progress of pupils through the levels identified in the National Curriculum programmes of study. The quality of planning varies from teacher to teacher, often within the two classes of the same year group. Stronger planning identifies the learning activities for the different groups of pupils in the class, providing a suitable level of challenge for all. This is seen most markedly in mathematics, but less so in other subjects, where there is often insufficient planning for activities to stretch those pupils who find the work easy or to support those who might struggle.
- 35 Teachers from The Vale School are dedicated to the success of their work. They are co-operative and share their expertise with the staff generally.
- 36 The pupils benefit satisfactorily from the home/school links established through homework, but there is room for improvement in the school's overall practice. Regular reading at home is used on occasions to set up a dialogue with parents on their child's progress. Weekly homework in spelling and a fortnightly mathematics task serve as reminders to pupils that learning is not restricted to their time in school, but what is given is generally unimaginative and lacking inspiration. In some classes, pupils' homework is retained in an untidy state and this does little to ensure their commitment or understanding of its relevance. The outcome of the parents' questionnaires show that a significant number are concerned about the lack of consistency in setting homework.
- 37 On the whole, however, the commitment of teachers to the success of their pupils' learning, allied to their subject knowledge, good pupil management and grasp of teaching techniques, forms a strength of the school and has a significant impact on the good progress that the pupils make.

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

- 38 The overall quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. This is because of the thought that has gone into the delivery of the curriculum and the use of professionally produced schemes of work that cover all areas of the curriculum. The school has adopted a good behaviour and conduct programme within personal, social and health lessons. All teachers and support staff implement this with thorough consistency. Its impact on the pupils can be seen in their good behaviour and attitudes.
- 39 All subjects meet statutory requirements. At the time of the last inspection, the programme for ICT had significant omissions which have been addressed satisfactorily. The strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are having a good effect on pupils' overall learning.
- 40 The breadth and balance of the delivery of the whole curriculum, however, are unsatisfactory. This is seen particularly in physical education and class music lessons, where the amount of time allocated to these subjects is insufficient. In design and technology, history and geography, topics are often taught too far apart for pupils to recall their previous work. This has led to a situation where the full coverage of these subjects and depth of the curriculum are difficult to achieve. At the present time the school rightly gives a priority to the teaching of English, but with handwriting practice, silent reading and a nominal 35 minute session in developing speaking and listening skills, added to the daily literacy lesson of 1 hour and 20 minutes, too much time is allocated to the subject. The challenge facing the school is to develop ways of extending pupils' skills in these areas through subjects such as history and geography.
- 41 In other respects, the school is fully committed to the provision of equality of opportunity and has sufficient strategies in place to ensure that all groups of pupils have the chance to take part in the full range of social, physical and academic activities. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs and to those with English as an additional language who are encouraged to join all school clubs and social functions as well as being provided with support in class. Some of the school musicians miss one of their literacy or numeracy lessons; this means that they may struggle to cope with some of the work, especially if it falls into a series of lessons.
- 42 Long and medium term plans are made for all subjects and give a clear indication of what is being taught. However the needs of the different ability groups and those for whom English is an additional language are sometimes not being met in the detailed daily planning. This is an area that needs to be addressed. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are being used effectively in most other areas of the curriculum, but pupils are not given enough opportunities of using their skills in ICT to support day-to-day studies in other subjects.

- 43 Provision for personal, social, and health education is very good. It is taught through specific lessons and across the wider curriculum. The school has a satisfactorily planned programme for sex education and drug awareness. The citizenship programme for the pupils in Year 6 is very good and has a positive impact on their behaviour and attitudes.
- 44 The range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils is satisfactory overall. It includes many very good musical and dramatic activities; individual music lessons, choir, art, drama and dance. They have a positive effect on the pupils' learning. They are well supported by both boys and girls and the school has a good reputation in this area. There are two after-school football sessions each week that are well led by a qualified coach. However, the provision for extra-curricular sports activities is limited and currently there are no competitive sports matches.
- 45 The contribution of the community to pupils' learning and the relationship with partner schools are very good. The school has good relationships with many local groups who greatly enhance the pupils' experience. Visitors to the school from the local community provide other valuable links. There are links with the local secondary schools and good liaison between the feeder infants school and other local primary schools with teachers exchanging skills and good practice. Pupils have an opportunity for a residential visit to the Brecon Beacons for outdoor and adventurous activities. There are many planned curriculum visits to places in London, which greatly enhance the pupils' experience and learning. The headteacher and staff of The Vale School work very well to integrate the work of their pupils with mainstream activities.
- 46 There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. All pupils have a daily act of worship and assemblies provide an opportunity for learning about the world and moral issues. However, they sometimes lack a moment for spiritual reflection and are not always related to the many diverse systems of beliefs that the pupils bring with them. The programme for religious education provides pupils with an insight into the variety of faiths that exist in the world; however, the locally Agreed Syllabus is not fully implemented.
- 47 The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The adults in the school set a very good example to the pupils and there are clear codes of behaviour. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong through their day-to-day interaction with staff and through lessons and assemblies, which indicate examples of very good moral practices. A strong moral dimension is seen in most lessons, where teachers constantly emphasise good behaviour so that pupils understand what is acceptable conduct. This is reflected in the pupils' conduct. Adults in the school also set a very good example by their courtesy, care and respect for pupils. Pupils respond well to this and, in turn, relate well to others and respect their views.
- 48 There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers plan opportunities in many lessons for developing pupils' social skills such as working together, taking turns and sharing. There is a range of visits during the year that provide good opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their social relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults. The social integration of the pupils for whom English is an additional language and who come from many diverse cultures and communities is a strength of the school. The sense of harmony as a school community is very strong.
- 49 The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good with wide opportunities to study the richness of both their own and other cultures. There is a strong element in

many assemblies and in lessons for pupils to find out about this aspect of life. There is also a cultural contribution made by the study of a number of religions and faiths in religious education lessons. History and geography provide strong links with pupils' own and other ancient cultures, traditions, and the past. Many of the visits out of school contain a strong cultural dimension, and visitors into school, such as local residents, bring a special insight into the cultural traditions represented in the community.

- 50 The school has maintained the very good elements identified in the last inspection report and continues to offer a wide range of activities which support the overall very good development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

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

- 51 The overall provision for pupil's security, safety and well-being is good. The arrangements for child protection are generally satisfactory.
- 52 The headteacher, governors and staff work in a very effective and constructive manner to provide good levels of individual support and guidance. Staff use registration time, assemblies, extra-curricular activity, lessons in personal, social and health education and informal links with pupils to build purposeful relationships. They are always ready to provide information, support and guidance, helping pupils to approach learning constructively and raising their confidence and self-esteem. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils from different racial and cultural backgrounds value the ethos in which they learn.
- 53 Teachers listen and respond constructively to pupils' individual concerns. During the inspection, lunchtime supervisors were observed providing effective supervision and investigating pupils' concerns; ensuring an objective and purposeful solution to pupils' problems in the playground. Supervising staff provide good individual support, and have received training in first aid. The school nurse, school welfare officers and community police officer are involved in a caring and sensitive personal, social and health programme, which includes drugs, health and sex awareness. Parents appreciate this provision. Good levels of individual support for pupils with special educational needs complement the effective and meaningful support provided in class.
- 54 The arrangements for child protection are broadly satisfactory because they ensure the safety and security of the school community. However, the designated teacher and governors have not fully ensured that all staff have received training in the application of these arrangements. Consequently, not all of them are fully aware of the role and name of the designated teacher.
- 55 There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance, and the information gained from them is used to satisfactorily improve attendance and ensure the support of parents. However, the impact of the existing programmes is sometimes hindered by a very small number of parents who fail to send their child to school on time.

- 56 Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. The existing policy is clear and informative. It is consistently implemented by the caring staff, who use constructive strategies to recognise pupils' achievements both inside and outside of the classroom. This motivates pupils' learning and promotes good attitudes, behaviour and constructive relationships.
- 57 The school's measures for monitoring and eliminating bullying, racism, sexism and other types of anti-social behaviour are also good. Overall, the school is making good progress to eliminate aggressive and negative behaviour. The very low levels of exclusions and of reported incidents of bullying reflect the school's good practices. Since the last report, the school has sustained the good overall progress of providing good levels of care, security and well-being of the school community.
- 58 Detailed information is collected on the attainment and progress of pupils in English, mathematics, science and ICT. It is collected by the headteacher and teachers, who keep large assessment files to record the standards of pupils' attainment at particular stages in their school careers. An analysis is made of national test results to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of pupils after they have sat national tests. Teachers assess pupils on a daily basis in English and mathematics and plan their lessons accordingly. However, these assessments are not used sufficiently to inform the planning of lessons to provide challenge for pupils of all abilities on a day-to-day basis: although very high attainers in mathematics are identified and challenged through extra provision. Information from test results has been used well to establish some target groups for extra attention. There are insufficient planned strategies for some pupils with English as an additional language to assist their improvement when they are working at more advanced levels of language acquisition. In history, geography, physical education, design and technology and religious education, assessment is not being used to set the expected standards of achievement by pupils. A new and effective means of assessing the step-by-step progress of pupils' special educational needs is being introduced, following the success of its use for pupils from The Vale School.

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

- 59 Most parents have reported that they enjoy a good and positive relationship with the school. They particularly appreciate the hard work of the headteacher and value the care, support and supervision that their child receives. The school listens to its parents and their concerns are taken into account in lesson plans and in teaching strategies. All complaints are promptly and responsibly acted upon. However, some parents have rightly expressed concerns about the quality and consistency of homework.
- 60 Inspection evidence indicates that a number of parents consistently support learning in the classroom. They assist with reading, writing and numeracy. Parents are encouraged to attend ICT classes and those with English as an additional language are able to join classes in improving spoken and written English. Workshops on improving reading and numeracy are offered to parents. These initiatives help to raise standards and facilitate the active involvement of parents in the life of the school. This action is complemented by the involvement of the Friends of the School. Their fundraising helps the school to purchase learning materials. Their active work has included organising crèche facilities to enable parents to attend language and ICT classes.
- 61 The school provides good quality information through its weekly newsletter. It is written in a user-friendly style and enables parents to celebrate the achievements of

the school community, remain informed of important dates and events, and of topics taught in the classroom. The newsletter is complemented by information in the annual report from governors and the school prospectus, which is partially translated into community languages, increasing the very effective levels of communication for parents with English as an additional language. Both the prospectus and annual report from governors comply fully with statutory requirements.

- 62 Parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and they appreciate and acknowledge the diligence of class teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews. There are regular informal opportunities for parents to meet the SENCO and for parents with English as an additional language to share any concerns with specialist staff. Parents also receive an end of year pupil's report. The contents of these reports is appreciated by most parents, but inspection evidence indicates that the information provided by teachers, whilst including general recommendations for improvement, does not provide sufficient practical guidance for parents to support the progress of their child.
- 63 Most parents have signed the Home School Agreement, but a small minority are not fulfilling their obligation because they fail to send their child to school on time.
- 64 Since the last report, the school has sustained its positive relationship with parents and continues to offer a standard of education which is rightly appreciated by the parent community.

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

- 65 The leadership and the management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and has improved standards in the school in challenging circumstances. The headteacher is re-building the senior management team, has recently appointed a deputy, and is seeking to appoint a science co-ordinator. The role of the deputy headteacher is being reviewed in the current improvement plan.
- 66 The changes in the senior management team have been very well organised and there is a clear plan for developing the role of the senior managers to provide more management support within the school. This is necessary because of the difficulty of retaining enough experienced staff to co-ordinate all the subjects of the curriculum. This results in the expectations of pupils' achievement not being set in foundation subjects and in support workers appearing on occasions in classrooms without the teachers' prior knowledge. Teachers' assessments of their pupils' current levels of attainment are not being used effectively in day-to-day planning to raise the achievement of all groups of pupils in the class. This includes the identification of the language support for those pupils with English as an additional language who are working at tasks beyond their current understanding.
- 67 The governing body, headteacher and senior managers share a common vision for the school. The promotion of good behaviour and positive relationships between the pupils is effective. Standards in the school are rising, most noticeably in English and mathematics, and the school is finding ways in which to engage parents in their children's learning.
- 68 The headteacher provides very effective leadership and has directly raised the standard of musical performance in the school. Other initiatives, such as using the skills of a coach from the local football team, the use of parental support workers, and the continuing partnership with the local special school, all help to create a vibrant

community where opportunities are sought and found to extend all pupils' experiences.

- 69 The commitment to succeed is strong and shared by all senior staff, who have worked hard to develop a two year improvement plan, which is comprehensive and matched to funding. This needs to be refined to identify action focused on raising standards of achievement.
- 70 The roles of subject co-ordinators are under-developed. This is, in part, due to the turnover of staff and the necessity of recruiting newly qualified and temporary teachers. In English and mathematics, co-ordinators are working to raise pupils' achievement by developing teaching skills across the school. In other areas, subject leaders are insufficiently involved in monitoring the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, and this means that they are not equipped with the necessary information to move their areas of responsibility forward. This particular aspect of curriculum management has not yet been adequately addressed. The co-ordinator for ICT has given much in-service training to staff on the use of the equipment and on various programs to support curriculum areas, but this has yet to affect day-to-day classroom strategies generally.
- 71 The school provides well for students who are training to enter the teaching profession. Good systems have been set in place for ensuring that teachers new to the school are well prepared for its ways of working and the teaching of basic skills. They include observation of lessons showing good practice in teaching literacy and numeracy and the provision of extra teaching support in the first days of their employment. An extensive staff handbook has been developed to assist new teachers and other members of staff.
- 72 The new governing body is well informed, and provides good support for the headteacher. The governors have a clear idea of the strengths and the weaknesses of the school. Some have professional skills which have proved useful to the school's development. The governors are well aware of the school's financial system and have a clear strategic view of where development is needed. They evaluate their decisions effectively. Educational policies are well supported through financial planning, although the school does not yet have a fully delegated budget. The administration of the finances is well monitored and the school office staff provide a friendly and welcoming introduction to the school. All funds for specific purposes are well used. The school makes use of the services provided by the Local Education Authority in ensuring the best value for money.
- 73 The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is good. Monitoring of the levels achieved by pupils from different ethnic communities has been used to identify their specific learning needs. These have been addressed through the provision of extra staffing for the formation of smaller tuition groups. The partnership with the Vale School is well managed and adds to the harmonious and socially inclusive atmosphere of the school.
- 74 The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are suitably qualified to teach the primary curriculum. However, the school increasingly has to depend on newly qualified and supply staff and this does put added strain on the management of the curriculum. The access to in-service training for all staff is good. The teachers are set annual targets by the governing body and the school is building on good practice to introduce a scheme for performance management, including monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics.
- 75 The school's accommodation is adequate for the purpose. Classrooms are mostly



spacious and the two-storey building is well adapted, with ramps and lifts, for use by pupils with special educational needs. The library is well sited and well stocked, and provides a pleasant learning environment. The computer suite is now in use. The management and use of this is complicated by the use of two sets of computers. Outdoor play areas are sufficient and safe including a specific area for pupils with disabilities. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory.

- 76 The overall improvement on the areas for development that were identified in the last inspection has been satisfactory. The headteacher and senior teachers have continued to move the school forward in many areas. The governing body has developed its role as 'a critical friend'.
- 77 The school faces its considerable challenges positively and well. With pupils from such a diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and with such a transient population, the teachers do well to create a positive ethos for learning. As a result, pupils are well behaved and want to work. There are major problems in the recruitment and retention of staff, but systems have been set in place which settle new teachers quickly and efficiently into its ways of working, ensuring that standards are encouraged to rise. The school provides good value for money.

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

78 In order to build on the improving standards in most areas of the school's work, and to develop further the issues identified for action in the previous inspection report, the governing body, headteacher, and staff should;

- raise standards in science and design and technology to at least those found in other areas; (paragraphs: 2, 7, 8, 11, 105, 106, 107, 120, 121)
- change the organisation of the curriculum to provide enough time to cover all subjects in sufficient depth; (paragraphs: 8, 12, 13, 14, 40, 66, 87, 89, 124, 127, 131, 146, 155, 161)
- improve teachers' day-to-day planning to take account of the full range of pupils in their classes; (paragraphs: 31, 34, 58, 87, 123))
- provide more structured opportunities for subject leaders to assess the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in their subjects (following the good practice that is already evident in English and mathematics). (paragraphs: 70, 112, 117, 121)

### **The provision for pupils with English as an additional language**

Following on from the third issue identified above, teachers should;

- implement strategies to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language can be given prior help in understanding the key words to be used in lessons. (paragraphs: 5, 26, 29, 42, 66, 82, 87, 91, 98, 108, 115, 120, 123)

In addition to the issues identified above, the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan;

- using consistently more varied and interesting homework; (paragraphs: 36, 59, 89, 101)
- providing more opportunities for competitive sports; (paragraphs: 14, 44, 156)
- continuing to find ways of encouraging pupils' prompt arrival at school; (paragraphs: 22, 63)
- ensuring that pupils learning musical instruments do not miss literacy or numeracy lessons; (paragraphs: 41, 146)
- providing training for new staff about child protection procedures; (paragraphs: 54)
- improving the guidance for parents in the pupils' annual reports (paragraphs: 62)
- using pupils' skills in information and communications technology to support their work in other curriculum areas on a more regular basis. (paragraphs: 10, 42, 71, 101, 111, 125, 134)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	54	40	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	212
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	76

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	59

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	118

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	22	48

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	13	11	14
	Total	27	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (44)	50 (49)	58 (53)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	12
	Girls	10	9	12
	Total	21	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (60)	46 (64)	50 (60)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	30
Black – African heritage	16
Black – other	0
Indian	16
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	7
Chinese	13
White	38
Any other minority ethnic group	98

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	2	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.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3
Average class size	27.9

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-

Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-

Number of pupils per FTE adult	-
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	468,820
Total expenditure	456,139
Expenditure per pupil	2,102
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,507
Balance carried forward to next year	24,188

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	212
Number of questionnaires returned	58

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	28	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	41	7	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	43	29	5	2
The teaching is good.	41	52	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	53	14	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	29	5	0	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	41	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	53	5	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	34	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	47	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	38	10	0	3

### Other issues raised by parents

A small number of letters were received by the inspection team. Most of them were complimentary about the school, but further points were raised about the provision for homework, the unsettling effects of having a number of teachers within the school year, and the manner in which complaints are handled. At the parents' meeting, the majority of comments were favourable, but again parents raised concerns about the large turnover of staff, and the little provision for physical education. During the inspection, discussions with parents did indicate concerns about the consistency of homework.

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

### **ENGLISH**

- 79 The results of the Year 2000 national tests at age 11 showed that pupils achieved below the national average in the subject but above that of similar schools. In the time since the last inspection in 1997, standards have risen generally in line with the improvement seen nationally. This trend has continued, and the evidence of lessons seen during this inspection indicates that pupils are now reaching the standards typical of their age group. This is mainly as a result of the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, alongside the setting arrangements which allow teaching to be more directed towards pupils' overall learning needs. However, standards in spelling remain weak and pupils are insecure at making deductions from what they read.
- 80 When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their attainment, based on the Key Stage 1 tests, is wide-ranging, but overall it is in line with national standards. When they actually enter the school, some time after taking the tests, standards have fallen below average in reading. Many pupils lack confidence in speaking and listening.
- 81 The school has identified that in the national tests of 1998 and 1999, the boys achieved less well than the girls. As a result, more help has been given in 'booster' groups to lower attaining pupils, supported by extra teaching and classroom assistance. This, together with the approach now used in literacy lessons that is more directed towards specific learning outcomes, has resulted in overall improvements and boys and girls achieved equally well in the Year 2000 tests.
- 82 A small number of pupils join the school each year without any knowledge of basic English. These pupils, and others with English as an additional language, are well supported in the early stages of their time in school, and most rapidly acquire a working knowledge of the language, and they make good overall progress in the subject. Their language skills develop sufficiently to become totally immersed in the day-to-day language of the playground and classroom, but a minority of the pupils struggle when faced with the demands of more technical and higher levels of language. At such times, they become passive and unresponsive in lessons.
- 83 In Year 3, after reading together a common text, pupils are able to explain verbally the possible alternative morals in the stories. They extend their oral work by identifying and substituting adjectives in the text. They recognise that the choice of adjective can heighten the impact of a description in a sentence. By Year 6, pupils have progressed to explain how they will present arguments in written form. They discuss the need to have a point of view, to support this with evidence, and to look at the counter evidence in order to attain a balanced view before summarising their argument.
- 84 Pupils make satisfactory progress in their reading. In Year 3, pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle unfamiliar words. Most understand that two letters are often joined together to make sound blends. By Year 4, pupils are beginning to read with fluency and accuracy. They are able to attempt and self-correct unfamiliar words. The middle and higher attaining pupils enjoy reading and, by Year 5, are beginning to express preferences in books. In Year 6, the lower attaining readers express preferences and chose books according to the 'blurb' on the cover. The oldest pupils are confident readers and are adept at gathering information from a range of different written sources. They can use the index and

glossaries found in non-fiction books, select the relevant information, and can gain information from CD-Rom encyclopaedias, although their experience of using them is not wide.

- 85 Standards in writing at age 11 match those generally attained by pupils of this age and this represents good achievement for the majority of pupils. In Year 3, writing is clear and ideas are developed through stories. In the work of the higher attainers, writing is imaginative and the sequence of sentences is logically extended. In Year 4, pupils begin to empathise with a character from fiction, describing their feelings. In Year 6, pupils understand the form of stories from the Greek myths: hero, adversary, the involvement of the gods and a turning event. They plan their own stories using this pattern. Most pupils, however, are not confident in spelling complex words, and, although they use full stops, capital letters and question marks correctly, are less confident in employing commas and apostrophes, and in organising their writing into paragraphs.
- 86 Standards in the pupils' handwriting books are good. The younger pupils practise joining their letters and older pupils develop their personal style through copying texts. The standard of handwriting is consistently good across writing in other subjects. Spelling is weak, and many of the mistakes are common to pupils who have learnt English as an additional language. Overall, the pupils do not have enough opportunities of using their skills in ICT to support their writing. Teachers do not plan on a regular basis to use techniques such as desk top publishing in their day-to-day work.
- 87 Teaching was good in one third of lessons observed; in other lessons teaching was satisfactory. There are no unsatisfactory lessons. There is consistency in teaching reading and writing across the school. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good and pupils support and respect each other's work. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and this framework provides a good structure to the teaching. However, the timing of lessons varies. The overall length of some lessons is long, lasting an hour and twenty minutes, and the pace within lessons is sometimes slow. Teachers can spend long periods talking to pupils without evaluating their listening skills. Opportunities for pupils to review what they have learnt and assess what they need to do next are missed. Teachers' lesson plans do not indicate what needs to be taught to pupils of differing abilities or pupils with English as an additional language. Although teachers keep records of pupils' attainments there are insufficient short-term assessments to guide the teaching for individual pupils. In most teaching there is insufficient planning for meeting the needs of all pupils at the appropriate levels of additional language acquisition.
- 88 Overall, however, the teachers' enthusiasm, good subject knowledge and appropriate selection of teaching material ensures that pupils achieve well and make steady progress. In Year 4, an increased sensitivity to developing spoken language with pupils with English as an additional language helps them to become familiar with phrases and sayings in English that are not immediately evident to them. Verbal checks to see if pupils understand metaphors or similes are made so those pupils become more secure in the forms of the language before attempting their written work. All pupils are encouraged to review and evaluated their work, to set targets and to improve areas that they have defined as weaknesses. In one Year 6 class, pupils benefit from the skills of the teacher in helping them to set down their opinions in a logical form. Good work involves pupils explaining their ideas initially in spoken language before committing them to writing. They are encouraged to extend their writing through using joining words to make longer and more complex sentences, and to make judgements about their work. These examples of good practice derive from



good subject knowledge, allied to a good awareness of all pupils' learning needs. Good quality interaction between the pupils and the teachers, and between the pupils themselves, helps the pupils to see the need for self-criticism and improvement.

- 89 There are reading periods every day when teachers insist on quiet reading. Teachers also take the opportunity to hear pupils read. There is a well-stocked and accessible library with which pupils are familiar and where the older pupils exercise their research skills. Pupils in Year 3 begin to use dictionaries and other reference books to extend their vocabulary and sense of meaning. Pupils keep their own reading records, but there is little evidence that all teachers consistently monitor them. Their comments tend to be factual rather than on their enjoyment, or otherwise of the book. There are some good examples of teachers using the reading records well to establish positive home/school links by exchanging comments on the needs of pupils or giving their efforts praise and encouragement. Homework in the subject is limited to a weekly spelling list of words for pupils to memorise, which, although having some effect on improving spelling skills, does little to inspire pupils with a commitment to the subject. The thirty-five minute period at the end of most days is nominally identified for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. In reality, however, in many classes it tends to be used for finishing off other work.
- 90 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is due in large measure to the guidance received from the SENCO and the work of classroom assistants. Pupils achieve according to their abilities and technical support is given to the hearing-impaired.
- 91 Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress in the early stages of language acquisition. The large majority also make good progress as they become more confident in their language skills, and they respond well to being totally immersed in the everyday language of the school. Teachers do not always recognise the specific needs of the minority of pupils who become passive and unresponsive in lessons. They do not have the skills to cope with more complicated language structures of the classroom.
- 92 Management of English is good. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted by the school and implemented satisfactorily. The co-ordinator sets a very good example as a teacher and other members of staff observe his lessons. His monitoring of their teaching has raised the expectations of teachers. The library, which was criticised in the last inspection report, is now good. It is well used by pupils, and efficiently run. This makes a major contribution to pupils' learning in the school. The co-ordinator collects information to track and improve pupils' progress, but this is not sufficiently used to modify approaches to the learning of pupils with differing attainments.

- 93 There is an adequate policy to develop literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. This is generally successful for reading and writing. In many subjects, such as science and mathematics, reading skills are developed through the use of textbooks and worksheets. Pupils learn to write up the results of experiments and narrate the beliefs and practices of different religions. However, the school has not considered sufficiently well how the skills of speaking and listening can be developed in subjects such as history and geography.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 94 The Year 2000 national test results in mathematics showed that pupils' attainment at age 11 was well below the national average, but in line with those of similar schools. Current inspection evidence from classroom observations, from work in pupils' books and from talking to staff and pupils, however, indicates that the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are now substantially higher and are close to those expected of their age nationally. This is mainly as a result of the implementation of new national guidelines for teaching the subject. These are helping teachers to plan work that is more closely directed at the needs of the different groups of pupils in their classes. As a result, pupils are more confident in manipulating numbers both mentally and in written work. Over the last four years, the school has achieved an overall improvement in results, and this represents good achievement in the subject.
- 95 When pupils enter the school from the feeder infants school, their attainments, as indicated by the tests taken at the end of the previous year, are close to the national average. In Year 3, pupils know that shapes have symmetry if 'what is on one side is on the other'. They understand about place value and can count forwards and backwards in tens. They know the most simple of times tables, such as five and ten times. Higher attaining pupils can work out answers using their knowledge of the three times table. They recognise coins and can work out the change they should receive when buying items costing less than a pound. Many pupils who enter the school after the start of Year 3 have attainments that are well below average.
- 96 By the age of 11, pupils can work out calculations in their heads quickly, and understand basic fractions. They are developing their measuring skills and can use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. Most are aware of place value to one million and can use the correct standard notation in working out problems using the four rules. In Year 6, they have experience and knowledge of how to apply their mathematical knowledge to real life problems. Pupils devise their own strategies for solving problems and set down their findings in a well-organised fashion. The majority are familiar and confident in understanding the structure of numbers, including decimals. They know and can identify the names of the main shapes and are able to work out areas. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are revising their knowledge of fractions and moving on to equivalent percentages and adding fractions that have different denominators. They are making good progress in this area of mathematics.
- 97 The school has considered carefully the data available from the 1998 and 1999 national testing programme which showed that boys achieved less well than girls. Classes in each year group are now organised in sets based on the pupils' identified levels of attainment. Some extra groups have been established to provide intensive periods of tuition. As a result, boys' and girls' attainments were very close to one another in the Year 2000 tests. This strategy also assists pupils with special educational needs to make good overall progress. A small number of pupils have been identified as gifted mathematicians. These pupils benefit well from a weekly period of tuition in more advanced work organised by a member of staff from the local

High School.

- 98 Pupils who have English as an additional language also make good overall progress. Along with other pupils of similar age, the majority cope well with mental operations and they can record their work well. They can carry out practical tasks, such as working with rulers to measure lengths and using calculators to check their work. A small number struggle with lessons that require an extensive knowledge of the language of shapes, space and measures, such as converting grams to kilograms. Teachers do not identify their needs in lesson planning, but they are well supported by classroom assistants.
- 99 The pupils enjoy their mathematics. They work well together in groups and no bad behaviour was seen. Their positive attitude to the subject was evident throughout the school.
- 100 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching; with one lesson being very good, seven being good and the other three lessons satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was identified. Where teaching is at least good, the mental sessions are lively, have good pace and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons, the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives and set realistic achievable and challenging targets. The teachers use, and they encourage the use of, the correct mathematical language. There are good levels of support in numeracy lessons from the well-briefed and able support teachers and classroom assistants.
- 101 The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and most of the staff have received effective training. The positive impact of the strategy is starting to become evident. There is now a need to train the new teachers from overseas who have been appointed recently. Numeracy lessons are structured to give the opportunity for mental mathematics, concept development and the opportunity to reflect on what has been learned. Homework is sometimes lacking in imagination. Most pupils have some experience of using computers to make charts and graphs from information, but this is not used sufficiently to support the pupils' day-to-day learning. Most pupils in Year 6 can use calculators effectively to check their work.
- 102 The good use of a range of modern resources has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Planning is sound, especially as all teachers organise a range of activities that are suitable for, and challenge the different levels of attainment within the class. The division of the two classes in each year group into sets based on the pupils' previous standards of work also helps planning to be more effective. However, it often lacks the depth to include the language needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The teachers have adopted a system of tracking and targeting pupils' progress. They have a sound knowledge of the levels of the National Curriculum and assess the pupils regularly.

- 103 Work in some subjects, such as science, physical education and music, successfully employs and develops the pupils' mathematical learning. Pupils are taught to use calculators and take measurements in science experiments, and they record their results often in tabulated form. They measure and record their performance in athletic events, and use their knowledge of number in recognising the beats of musical compositions.
- 104 There has been monitoring of the teaching and planning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinator. This has had a positive impact on standards, by focussing learning more closely on the specified objectives for each series of lessons. The pupils experience the full balance of the mathematics curriculum, including problem solving and the use of mathematics in real-life situations. This was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection and that has been addressed successfully. The subject is well led by an efficient and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The school has made good progress in the subject since the last inspection.

## SCIENCE

- 105 In the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the age of eleven in the last school year, the attainments of pupils were well below both the national average and that of pupils from similar schools. Over the four years since the last inspection, standards have been rising, but not at the rate seen nationally. This can be attributed in part to the lack of understanding of the necessary technical language by pupils for whom English is not the language normally used at home. The school has recognised this and has set up specific booster groups and a science club designed in part to remedy the situation. This has led to some increase in the levels of overall learning. Inspection evidence now indicates that standards among the oldest pupils have continued to rise, although they remain below the national expectation and below the standards seen in the school in English and mathematics.
- 106 During their time in the school, many pupils make satisfactory overall progress but overall standards are still not high enough. The efficiency with which they learn varies widely from class to class, often within the same year group. This was very evident in work for the older pupils where, in one class, everyone completed an experiment on identifying which of six solids would dissolve in water. However, in the parallel class, a similar task remained at the planning stage even at the end of a lesson lasting well over one hour.
- 107 Over the course of the four years in school, pupils have access to all elements of the science curriculum. In Year 3, they learn about the properties of materials, using for instance, tests for the strength of different types of paper. They learn about the human body and the factors that encourage healthy living. In Year 4, pupils continue to develop their understanding of electricity, learning about materials that conduct and those that insulate. In Year 5, pupils conduct experiments on evaporation. The study of the body extends to a consideration of the uses and functions of the lungs, heart and muscles. In their final year, much of this work is brought together as pupils make more advanced studies of human senses, the spectrum, forces and balances, and filtration. The school places an appropriate emphasis on pupils carrying out practical experiments and on the conditions necessary for a 'fair test'. These are not fully realised, however, when every pupil carries out an identical task and the results are copied down word for word from the board. Consequently many pupils at the age of 11 are not confident in carrying out experiments using their own initiative. This practice is especially marked in the upper years and indicates that the teachers are not providing tasks that take sufficient account of the pupils' prior abilities or difficulties

in learning. By the age of 11, pupils have carried out studies of a satisfactory standard on the world's environment and on the human body, but their work on plant life and physical processes, including sound and light, is weaker. Higher attaining pupils can interpret the results of experiments in the form of tables and charts but many others struggle with this, especially when setting out their own work for themselves.

- 108 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory overall progress, mainly as a result of the help received from classroom assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make satisfactory progress. As a general rule, class teachers do not think far enough ahead to prepare them for the tasks and problems that they will face. On the other hand, some classes are supported specifically by the teacher in charge of the provision for these pupils, and the science club is also a useful factor in building up the pupils' confidence in, and enjoyment of, the subject. This has led to a significant improvement in the overall attainments of boys who, in 1998 and 1999, attained less well in the subject than girls.
- 109 In general, the pupils' enjoy their science activities. They behave well and concentrate on the task in hand for long periods, even when they are unsure of what to do. Pupils' co-operate well with one another, sharing equipment and agreeing on the tasks which each member of the group will undertake.
- 110 The overall quality of teaching science is satisfactory. This was seen in the three full lessons inspected. In one lesson that was visited only briefly, however, the quality of the teacher's questioning and the way in which pupils were skilfully led to expressing their conclusions were excellent. The teachers generally have good knowledge of their subject and pupils learn well. However, when the task is the same for all pupils, as in a Year 5 lesson on evaporation, time can be wasted in explaining work which is too advanced for many pupils' current level of knowledge. One of the two Year 6 lessons seen on the rate of dissolving solids in liquids suffered because the necessary equipment was not available to give the experiment some structure. The pupils did not know what was expected of them. The presence of a timing device, such as a stopwatch, would have helped them to see that they would need to measure changes over time. Normally, however, the teachers' demonstrations are clear and materials are well presented.
- 111 Pupils use their skills in literacy and numeracy in recording the results of experiments and in writing about, for example, the environmental issues of conservation. They have some experience of using a CD-Rom and the Internet to access information about aspects of the subject, such as animal life forms, but this is not a regular feature of their day-to-day studies.
- 112 Following the departure of the previous subject leader to a promoted position, the headteacher is maintaining an efficient watching brief over the provision for science until a new appointment is made. Previously, however, there had been insufficient monitoring to ensure that classes in each year group both enjoy a similar standard of effective teaching which is geared to the learning needs of all pupils. The school has adopted nationally produced guidelines as the curriculum for science and these are being implemented successfully. Plans for developing the subject further are well outlined in future school initiatives. The school is well placed to improve standards towards the levels seen in other subjects. Overall, however, there has been insufficient improvement in attainment since the last inspection and this is rightly regarded by the school as an area of key focus.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 113 The standards achieved by pupils at age eleven are in line with those expected for their ages and are similar to those reported at the last inspection in 1997. Only three lessons could be seen during the week of the inspection. The evidence of lessons, displays round the school, and samples of work, shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, are making good progress.
- 114 The range of art and design skills taught to pupils ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are satisfactorily met. Older pupils for instance take from their work on the Ancient Greeks, the movements shown on Greek vases. By using a jointed card manikin, pupils look at the proportions and centre of gravity of figures in various athletic poses such as throwing a spear or running a race. Pupils use fine pencils to sketch in the movement before moving to a soft, black wax crayon to highlight the shapes, ready to coat the sketch with an orange wash to reproduce the image on the vase. Most drawings show a good appreciation of line and form. Younger pupils look at an Australian Aboriginal painting before producing attractive work in the style of the native 'dotting' pictures. In the lesson, not only did they produce a dot picture but also they investigated the effect of using a white highlighter to add depth and texture to their work. Pupils have also had the opportunity to work in '3D', using a malleable material, such as clay, as well as large collages linked to other areas of the school curriculum when making Roman shields and mosaics. Pupils have used detailed pencil drawings in close observational studies of people, and equipment round the school when making safety posters in science. Large three-dimensional models were not seen, nor was there much evidence of pupils using a range of fabrics in their work, most collage being restricted to card, paper and tissue. Pupils have sketchbooks, but while some pupils use these for their designs, there is only a little evidence of the progressive development of drawing techniques.
- 115 The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is good. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. They prepare resources that are sufficient in range and number, and take the opportunity to see what each pupil is doing and offer support and guidance as required. If they find common points of need, they share their findings and suggest solutions to the class as a whole, making sure that they not only use the correct technical language but also explain carefully what they mean for those for whom English is an additional language. On occasions, however, this good preparation can be wasted when teachers do not give sufficient emphasis to the main language focus of the lesson. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson on colour blending when the word 'hue' was lost among a welter of other writing on the whiteboard. Consequently, towards the end of the lesson, no pupils were able to identify or use the word in its correct context. By the end of each session, however, most pupils have increased their skills of presentation and representation, their awareness of colour and shape, and have knowledge of proportion and movement, and how to represent it using different materials.
- 116 Art supports well the provision for the cultural development of pupils. Pupils have looked at the style, colours and textures of works by artists of the past, such as the Ancient Greeks, as well as native artists from countries such as Australia. The work of artists such as Monet are studied in ICT and painting programs such as *Kidspix* are used as pupils use the textures, colours and shapes in their own work. The works of Van Gogh as well as Saynal are about the school as are Tudor Roses, Henry V111 and his six wives, 'sandwich paintings', still life using fruits and vegetables, and stained glass effects.
- 117 At present there is nobody with oversight of the curriculum. Unfortunately this has resulted in a lack of the systematic development of skills, and the opportunity to work

in perspective and with a range of different grade pencils and paints. Although pupils produced work in block colour, little evidence was seen of pupils using water and oil paints, aqua pencils and background washes. The lack of time given to art on the week-by-week arrangement of lessons is an inhibiting factor in this development.

- 118 The policy for art is matched to the school scheme of work, but with nobody having responsibility for the subject, the monitoring of provision is not occurring systematically. Resources for art are satisfactory overall; each class has access to a range of paints, papers, glue and brushes. The school also has a small, caged kiln. During the inspection, bags and coats that would provide a fire and safety hazard to the kiln licence holder blocked access to this.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 119 During the week of the inspection only a limited number of lessons were seen, involving pupils in Years 4 and 6. Judgements about attainment are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to teachers and pupils about their work.
- 120 The overall standard of completed work reached by pupils at the end of their time in school is below the national expectation. This is mainly as a result of insufficient time being allocated to the subject to cover work in sufficient breadth or depth. In the lessons seen, the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, made good overall progress in developing the skills of planning, designing and making models which are necessary for success in this subject. A minority of the pupils who have a restricted grasp of English, however, become very passive in group activity sessions as a result of their not being sufficiently assisted to understand the task in hand. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson on building a moving toy where some pupils did not understand the meaning of 'pulley', 'cog' and 'clockwise'.
- 121 Throughout their time in school, most pupils complete some work in design and technology, but it is often fairly rudimentary especially in the early years. Work in the subject tends to be completed in blocks of time, and skills previously learned and practised need to be taught over again. This results in work that is often identical for all groups of pupils, despite an emphasis on pupils' designing and completing their own models. Good practice was seen, however, in a Year 4 lesson on making torches, where pupils investigated for themselves the uses of reflective and coloured transparent materials. In this class, also, there was a high degree of classroom support with two teachers able to give attention to all pupils and ensure that they all took part in designing and making the model. In Year 5, pupils learn about food technology, assessing the differing taste, texture, smell and appearance of a variety of breads. In Year 6, pupils move on to more advanced model making; building models of moving cars, buildings to support work in history, and looking at the components of toys. The standard of completed work, however, varies widely from class to class. Scrutiny of work across the school reveals that while some classes complete two or three pieces of good work, pupils from a parallel class may produce one piece of poor work. This indicates inadequate monitoring of the teaching of the subject over the school as a whole.
- 122 Pupils generally enjoy the practical tasks involved in the study of design and technology. They co-operate well with one another and learn to share tasks and equipment. Pupils apply themselves to the task with diligence and maintain a busy working atmosphere.
- 123 Inspection evidence indicates that the overall quality of teaching in this subject is

satisfactory. The poor standard of work from a number of classes means that their pupils are not being taught satisfactorily the skills of design and construction. However, in the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was good. Materials were collected together well beforehand. There was a high degree of pupil-teacher interaction with good levels of questioning. In the Year 6 class especially, these were adjusted to bring the more reluctant pupils into making a relevant contribution. However, there were a number of key words in both lessons that needed to be understood by all pupils. These were not identified beforehand to allow the teacher for pupils with English as an additional language to provide the prior learning which would have helped the pupils to make a more effective use of their time in the lesson. Teachers' plans showed little awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the class. Despite this, pupils with special educational needs made good progress, mainly as a result of the care and attention given to them in the lesson. These pupils were also very well supported in Year 4 with two teachers in the class, one of whom was working specifically to raise the standards of pupils who would otherwise have struggled to complete the task.

- 124 The school has adopted nationally produced guidelines as the scheme that will be followed in lessons. However, there is insufficient time allocated to the timetable to allow this to be covered in enough depth. Currently, staff changes have meant that there is no co-ordinator for the subject. This has resulted in little progress in ensuring a consistency of work across the school. Although the school's future planning does show that provision will be subject to a full audit, there is little evidence to show that there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. There is an adequate supply of materials and equipment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 125 Because of the nature of the timetable and the planning of the geography topics over a yearly scheme, only two lessons were seen and neither was in Year 6. Inspection evidence is therefore based on the analysis of pupils' work, displays, interviews with teachers and pupils and the two lessons. Year 6 pupils have not completed any geography since they were in Year 5. This means that a judgement on the standards achieved by the pupils when they leave the school cannot be made. Work in geography in Year 3 is planned for the end of the spring term. In Years 4 and 5 the standards of work seen were what might be expected for pupils of that age. The aspects covered in these years were appropriate and there is coverage of the curriculum. Continents, oceans, mapwork, settlements and a detailed study of village life in India form part of the work in Year 4 and the pupils have a satisfactory level of knowledge. In Year 5, the pupils have good knowledge of a contrasting area in the UK and are currently studying local geography. Here, their level of understanding of the local issues of traffic, planning, pollution and housing is good. They are also being taught the skills of how they can analyse the information they have gathered, and to identify possible changes and improvements in their local environment. Pupils have used mathematical skills in the display of statistics and other information. This work on the local area is of a good standard. Pupils use their skills in writing to describe the features of plant and animal life, and of the environment. However, the use of the CD-Rom and the Internet as sources of information is not a regular feature of their work.
- 126 The two lessons observed were in Year 5. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen and one lesson was good. Where the teaching was good it was the level of pace, the good planning and clear instructions for challenging work that led to all the pupils learning at a good rate. This good teaching has led to the progress seen in Year 5 work. This progress was seen in boys and girls, pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language. Where teaching is only satisfactory,



lesson plans do not take account of the need to support their specific language development.

- 127 The subject makes a good contribution to the pupil's cultural development by extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples. It covers all areas of the geography curriculum. A published scheme is followed and the teaching of the skills of interpreting geographical information is also covered. The amount of time given to the subject is minimal and this could lead to inadequate depth in the coverage of the whole geography curriculum. The geography topics throughout the school year need to be rearranged so as to avoid long periods of time when the pupils' skills and knowledge could be forgotten.

## **HISTORY**

- 128 Because of the nature of the timetable, only two lessons of history were seen during the inspection week. Inspection evidence is therefore based on the analysis of pupils' work in books, displays, interviews with teachers and pupils and the two lessons.
- 129 Standards achieved by the pupils when they leave the school at age eleven are what might be expected nationally. Both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory gains in their learning. The pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. For example, they look at clothes worn in the past; visit places of local historical importance; look at houses, transport, schools and household objects from long ago, using photographs to compare them with today's lifestyles. The use of role-play, by asking pupils to explain their reactions to past events, brings them alive and turns them into real life situations. At age 11, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of key dates, periods and events in British history. The skills of looking at photographs of objects from the past, finding out what they can tell us about the past and evaluating their reliability as sources of accurate information are taught well and understood.

- 130 Of the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good in one and good in the other. The teaching motivates the pupils who, in turn apply themselves very well, complete a good quantity of work and show much interest in their history. This was well illustrated in both the lessons seen. The teachers focussed the pupils well on the tasks of role-play and looking at sources of evidence.
- 131 The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural knowledge of Britain and other parts of the world. It is well planned, has adequate resources and covers all aspects of the history curriculum. A published scheme is followed and the teaching of the skills of historical interpretation and the use of source material is good. Visits provide good opportunities to further enrich the curriculum. The pupils enjoy their history and no bad behaviour was seen. This was due to the quality of teaching, with good pupil management and an interesting and stimulating approach to the subject. The amount of time given to the subject is insufficient, however, leading to inadequate coverage of the whole curriculum. Pupils use their skills in literacy to describe events and people from periods of history. They have some experience of using computers to gain information about the past, but this is limited.
- 132 At the last inspection the standards were what might be expected nationally but there was no scheme or policy. Standards have been maintained and now there is a policy and scheme in place. This represents an improvement in the organisation of the subject, although there is no monitoring by the co-ordinator of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' learning across the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 133 Evidence from discussions with Year 6 pupils and staff and samples of work, added to lesson observations, indicates that, by the age of 11, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with those expected for their ages and abilities. At the time of the previous inspection in 1997, standards were judged to be below average and became a key issue for improvement. There has been good improvement in standards since that time as the school, through the subject manager, has looked carefully at the curriculum, teacher's skills and the resources available. He has planned the match between existing equipment within classes and that purchased for the new computer suite. Programs to support different areas of the curriculum and develop pupils' access and control skills are arranged, and teachers' training is planned through the New Opportunities Funding. The computer suite has a direct link to the Internet, and a radio link to the local secondary school has been designed.
- 134 All these measures reflect the school's commitment to maximising the opportunities provided by new technology across the curriculum. However, teachers are not yet making sufficient provision in their planning for pupils to apply their skills in day-to-day learning across the curriculum. Some good use of computer programs in art was identified from pupils' completed work, but during the week of the inspection, classroom computers were only used by pupils from The Vale School.
- 135 Pupils' rate of progress in learning has increased because of the quality of the teaching provided, especially the good teaching seen in a quarter of lessons across the school. In the other lessons, which are satisfactory, pupils' attainments are below expectations. This is mainly due to problems with matching the dual systems used at the present time. The new equipment on order should redress this problem.
- 136 Pupils have a good recall of the work covered in previous lessons. They are knowledgeable of the programs they are to use, understand what they are being

asked to do and concentrate and persevere when equipment goes down. Pupils are mature in their attitudes to work, especially in the computer suite. They collaborate over using resources and co-operate when having to move between machines as screens freeze, making new additions to their groups welcome. Pupils are able to select and load programs, enter files, use a range of tools including erase, highlight, change fonts and size of print. In *Clarisworks* pupils load data about, for instance, different animals and creatures, ask the machine to collate and sort according to a range of different criteria, such as legs, colour, or food. They produce block graphs and pie charts to illustrate their findings. Pupils move their work around the screen, produce text boxes in *Hyperstudio* to present information and 'paint' pictures in the style of Monet in *Kidspix* using a range of brush sizes, filling the background with different colours. Pupils print, save their work and exit programs correctly. Sometimes the equipment does not allow them to print out what they have done or view the range and quality of others' work or evaluate their own work away from the computer screens.

- 137 In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Within the limits of the equipment currently available, teachers plan lessons that challenge and extend pupils' existing knowledge and understanding about the use of computers, the Internet and the sending of messages using telephone lines in school, business and at home. They plan activities that enable pupils to develop and practise their skills. Teachers are well prepared and have sufficient skills to guide learning. They have good control strategies and hold high expectations that their planned lessons will challenge learning, give good support to the more uncertain and challenge to the more able. The pupils are taught skills to support other curriculum areas such as English, mathematics and science. Pupils have the opportunity to programme and control a programmable robotic device, called a 'roamer', to draw squares and rectangles, giving instructions to make something happen. This reinforces the idea that computers are not all static, big machines, but rather that much equipment in school and home can be 'told what to do' depending upon its original programming. Pupils thus have the opportunity to take it in turns to instruct the machine to move. They put in commands to turn corners and work out how far forward it needs to move to complete a shape. Even when equipment freezes, teachers use the situation to put across the point that no technology is perfect and that computers support learning, rather than replace it. This makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development of patience, ingenuity and co-operation.
- 138 Pupils enjoy their work, though they do not get so excited that they forget to share resources and take turns. They concentrate when programming the equipment and offer support to each other, think about what they have done and identify what they could do to improve, suggesting different ways of completing tasks. They respect their teachers and have a positive working relationship with all the adults who support their learning.
- 139 The subject has a new co-ordinator who is knowledgeable and energetic. He has rearranged the resources to support learning and has drawn up plans of how to use the new equipment. He maintains the resources and ensures that teachers are up to date in their use. He has researched programmes to support the wide range of the curriculum and planned training for teachers to ensure that they have the skills to use a range of new software suitable for the curriculum. To support the continuity of studies he has introduced a new scheme of work linked to nationally produced guidelines. By following this, teachers are providing a curriculum that builds on previously taught skills and adds new knowledge and understanding.

## MUSIC

- 140 Only one class lesson in this subject was organised during the week of the inspection. Judgements about standards are made on the basis of observing this lesson along with a number of instrumental tuition sessions in playing strings, guitar, piano, drums and steel band. A school choir practice was also seen, and pupils were heard singing in school assemblies. Discussions also took place with pupils who had had music lessons earlier in the school year and with the subject co-ordinator. Over half of the pupils in the school take advantage of the extensive provision for instrumental tuition. The record of the pupils' playing in concert was also listened to.
- 141 Standards of attainment for pupils in their last year of the school are above the national expectation. Some of the pupils who play violin, cello, guitar, drums and steel band instruments reach a high standard of performance. Many of the pupils have extensive experience of performing ensemble pieces and they blend together well. Pupils' singing in school assemblies is tuneful and responsive to the mood of the songs. They understand about singing in parts and they can stay on key even when singing unaccompanied. Musically gifted pupils are given every opportunity to make good progress through the extensive provision of specialist tuition.
- 142 In the class lesson observed, Year 4 pupils learned how to recognise and play notes of different lengths. Year 3 pupils are able to identify different styles of music such as classical, jazz and rock. They understand what a rhythm is and can clap different beats to form a rhythm. Older pupils know about different musical elements such as dynamics and harmony. All pupils learn to appreciate some of the work of major composers such as Vivaldi and Beethoven.
- 143 Music is open to all members of the school community and the contribution of all is valued. As a result all pupils make good progress in the subject, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The school values the variety of cultural backgrounds present in the school population and the music presented to them reflects this.
- 144 Pupils enjoy making music and their attitudes to their teachers and instructors are open and friendly. They show a delight in playing and performing together, with no trace of inappropriate criticism towards those who make mistakes. The atmosphere in the large strings group and steel band practices is particularly pleasant with both teachers and pupils deriving and communicating a great sense of fun.
- 145 In the lesson observed the quality of teaching was good. The two teachers involved gave clear demonstrations of the task, and provided good opportunities for pupils to practise and work in teams. They listened well to the pupils' early efforts and prompted them well to make improvements. The teachers who were observed in school have good knowledge of the subject and the instructors also have good expertise and methods of demonstrating playing techniques. Pupils have had some limited experience in the use of computers as aids to composition, alongside the use of electronic keyboards.
- 146 The school has adopted nationally produced guidelines as the scheme by which music will be taught to the pupils. However, the teachers' plan to cover this in series of lessons that may mean that pupils will not have experience of making music for six months at a time. This is inappropriate for the age range of pupils at the school, and will not provide for each topic to be covered in sufficient depth. A further factor that the school should address is the lack of access to the full range of studies for some of the pupils who take advantage of the musical provision that the school offers. For

example, a member of the strings group who also has a period of instrumental tuition (of which there are a number) misses two class lessons a week. One of these is a literacy or numeracy lesson. This causes difficulty for the class teacher who, in teaching a series of lessons, has to make extra provision for the pupils who miss the lesson or to slow the pace of the next lesson to provide reinforcement for these pupils. Some of the instrumental instructors vary the times of their sessions each week to ensure that their pupils do not regularly miss lessons in the same subject. This is an appropriate method of ensuring pupils' access to the full curriculum. The large school choir meets for practice once a week after school and it is well led, reaching a high standard of performance. The school makes a very valuable contribution to the Haringey Young Musicians group.

- 147 The provision for music continues to be a strength of the school. A tradition of playing, singing and performing has been built up which has the support of the parents and gives a very special flavour to the school, reflecting its multicultural setting and providing many opportunities for pupils to flourish and develop. The subject is very well led by the headteacher who has the expertise and enthusiasm to inspire her pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 148 The standards of achievement seen in physical education are in line with what is expected for pupils nationally. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 149 Teachers' plan for pupils to experience the full National Curriculum programmes of study. In gymnastics, movement and games lessons, all pupils make good progress in the development of their skills. They are taught to improve their skills, and work collaboratively throughout the school. Swimming is part of the curriculum for Year 6 pupils, and they make good progress and enjoy the sessions. The school reports that over 85 per cent of the Year 6 pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by age 11. Pupils are given the opportunity to undertake a week-long residential course of outdoor adventurous activities with a visit to a centre in the Brecon Beacons.
- 150 In all lessons, pupils are encouraged to warm up properly, and are aware of the importance of exercise and safety. They are also taught to cool down correctly at the end of a period of exercise. Teachers provide good role models by changing for the lessons and all pupils change into suitable clothing.
- 151 In Year 3, the pupils learn to interpret the mood and rhythm of a piece of music and to perform moves and stances which they then link into a dance sequence. They move around the hall with increasing control and successfully join the individual movements into a sequence that relates to the music.
- 152 In Years 5 and 6 games lessons pupils practise their football skills, passing, dribbling and controlling the ball. Good progress is made by all the pupils, resulting in improvements to their skill levels. These two lessons are jointly taken by a coach from Tottenham Hotspur F.C, assisted by the class teacher. All the pupils participate and thoroughly enjoy these sessions and they greatly benefit from the specialist input and high level of enthusiasm that the coach puts into lesson. The pupils from the Vale School are encouraged to join in and they make appropriate progress at their own level.
- 153 The quality of teaching was good in all three lessons observed. This represents an

improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The teachers encourage the pupils to take part with enthusiasm and challenge them to think about their performance and how to improve. All pupils enjoy physical education; their response is good and no bad behaviour was seen. The lessons are planned and gradually develop the skill or sequence that is the lesson objective. Teachers have a good subject knowledge, give clear instructions which emphasise how improvements can be made and give encouraging and appropriate praise. This assists pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to make good overall progress within the lesson.

- 154 The school has a satisfactory range of resources and equipment that is well used.
- 155 Because of the structure of the timetable the provision for physical education is limited for Years 3 to 5 to one lesson of approximately 45 minutes a week. This has consequences in the depth of study of the whole physical education curriculum, the amount of physical exercise the pupils receive and the full development of their potential skills. Inspectors agree with the concerns expressed by some parents that insufficient opportunities are arranged for pupils to develop and extend their physical abilities.
- 156 The provision for extra-curricular sporting activities is limited. Apart from football coaching, there are few after school sports activities and no competitive matches. The school has plans to build up this provision shortly.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 157 Pupils in Year 6 show maturity, respect and understanding for the faiths of others in this multi-faith school. Their attainment is around that expected of pupils of a similar age.
- 158 In Year 3 pupils explore the historical character of Jesus. Firstly, by listening and recounting parables from the Bible and then compiling a "Passport of Jesus". This latter exercise allows pupils to discuss issues of nationality and perceptions of the historical Jesus. In Year 6 pupils understand why the Qur'an is held in such high regard in Islam. They appreciate why the respect for this text gives rise to specific rituals and practices which demonstrate that respect. Through their study of Islam and Judaism, pupils learn satisfactorily about the variety of religious faiths that exist in the world, identifying their similarities and differences with Christianity.

- 159 Pupils respond positively. They are well-behaved, thoughtful and respectful of the beliefs of others. Pupils' work is carefully and neatly presented. The older pupils, using their English language skills, provide longer written considerations of religious beliefs. Pupils show sensitivity in their relationships with their classmates and show obvious respect for their religious beliefs.
- 160 In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good overall and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is sensitive and thoughtful, and involves pupils with differing religious backgrounds in the understanding of the beliefs and rituals of some of the major world religions. Well-planned teaching, which challenges pupils and yet insists on mutual respect, allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, to be thoughtful and reflective. They make good progress in lessons, and a number make a special contribution through their own knowledge of specific religious beliefs and practices. The subject makes a positive contribution to all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 161 Overall, the co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. However, some elements of the locally Agreed Syllabus are missing; most notably a unit on 'Sikhism'. This means that pupils miss out on learning about a major world faith community's beliefs and practices. The school has not yet developed a system of recording the significant achievements of pupils. The subject leader has ensured that there are adequate, well-used resources for the subject.