

INSPECTION REPORT

WATER HALL COMBINED SCHOOL

Bletchley, Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110322

Headteacher: Ms. J. Barnes

Reporting inspector: Mr. G. R. Alston
20794

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th July 2002

Inspection number: 195232

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior + Year 7

School category: Unitary Authority

Age range of pupils: 4 - 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Melfort Drive
Bletchley
Milton Keynes

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Telephone number: 01908 377833

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. C. Pooley

Date of previous inspection: 16th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 20794 | Mr. G. Alston | Registered inspector | English, Music, Special educational needs, English as an additional language | What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? Assessment of pupils' academic achievement |
| 19740 | Mr. A. Smith | 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? |
| 29188 | Mrs. G. Ulyatt | Team inspector | Religious education, Geography, Design and Technology, Foundation Stage | |
| 12997 | Mrs. C. Cheong | Team inspector | Mathematics, History, Physical education, Equal opportunities | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 20007 | Mr. T. Neat | Team inspector | Science, Art, Information and communication technology | How well the school is led and managed? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an above average sized combined school with 373 pupils ranging from 4 to 12 years in age, including 93 children who are under six years of age in the Reception and Nursery classes; there are slightly more boys than there are girls. The school also has two classes with 45 Year 7 pupils. The school population is predominantly white and there are 18 pupils for whom English is an additional language; 16 of these are at an early stage of learning the language. The number of pupils entitled to free meals is well above the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs due to learning or behavioural difficulties is above the national average and there are seven pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school serves an area with considerable social and economic deprivation and children's attainment on entry to the school is well below the expected level for their age. This is a popular school with parents but, owing to families continually moving in and out of the area for a variety of reasons, the number of pupils on roll is falling. Since the last inspection the school has recruited 18 new teachers, including a new Headteacher and two new deputies. Only three teachers who taught in the school at the time of the last inspection remain on the staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where, since the last inspection, an excellent headteacher, strongly supported by senior managers and a committed staff has significantly improved the education the school offers its pupils. It is effective because staff and pupils work closely together in a warm, caring environment. Pupils are effectively taught and achieve well. Staff value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs, and work hard to make sure they get the best from their time at the school. As a result, it gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in their lessons and achieve well in English, mathematics and, science based on their prior attainment.
- The quality of teaching is good and the school meets the needs of all of its pupils well. Teachers are enthusiastic, plan interesting, challenging tasks encouraging pupils to do their best; this enables all pupils to make good progress in lessons.
- The school provides a good range of experiences for pupils enriched by many visitors into school, visits out of school and a good selection of out of lesson activities.
- A very good range of experiences develops pupils well spiritually, socially, morally and culturally. As a result, pupils behave well, form warm, sincere relationships and try hard with their work.
- The headteacher, with the support of a committed management team and a caring staff, provides excellent leadership and in consultation with a dedicated governing body ensures that money is used effectively. A strength is the way the school monitors and evaluates how well it is doing.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and science at the age of 11 by continuing the planned programmes already in place.
- Pupils' skills in reading for information, and the standards they achieve in handwriting and in spelling by the age of seven and 11.
- Consistency in the quality of assessment in subjects other than in English and mathematics.
- The monitoring of teaching by inexperienced coordinators to the quality of that seen in English and mathematics.
- The quality of experiences the children in the Foundation Stage receive for their personal development, for example opportunities to develop independence.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The headteacher, with the strong support of all staff and governors, has been instrumental in the very good progress the school has made in its planned programme of improvement since the last inspection in June 1997. Monitoring systems are now well established and provide clear direction on what the school needs to do to further improve and develop. The clearly defined and well-organised management structure has been effective in monitoring the quality of teaching, evaluating the work of the school and in supporting new initiatives. This has led to a raising of standards in reading, writing and number particularly in infant classes. The headteacher and senior managers regularly observe lessons and there is a planned programme for coordinators to monitor the teaching of their subject. This has led to valuable discussions with teachers about their work and from this effective professional development has followed, which has improved the quality of teaching. However, some coordinators are inexperienced in this role. Teachers' planning, and assessment in English and mathematics has significantly improved and all lessons clearly identify what pupils of all abilities are to learn; this improvement has also impacted positively on the quality of teaching. The school has good systems in place to deal with challenging behaviour and no such incidents were seen during the inspection. The priorities the school has identified for development, along with its great enthusiasm and commitment to higher achievement, give the school a good capacity for further improvement. The school almost met the targets it was set in 2001 in English but not in maths. This year it should almost reach the challenging targets it was set in English and mathematics.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | Compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
| | All schools | | | Similar schools | |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 | |
| English | E | E* | E* | E | Well above average A above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E Very low E* |
| Mathematics | E | E* | E* | E | |
| Science | E | E* | E | E | |

The information shows that results in English and mathematics are very low and in science are well below the national average for eleven-year-olds. When the school's results are compared to similar schools they are well below average in all three subjects. Results of 2001 tests for seven-year-olds show that results are very low in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with pupils from a similar background they are well below average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. Results reflect the large proportion of children entering the school whose level of attainment is well below the expected level, the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and pupils entering and leaving the school at times other than usual. However, results have risen over the past three years at a similar pace to that found in most schools nationally. Recent test results are better for pupils aged seven.

The school has worked hard and has greatly improved parental and pupil attitudes, created a stable, positive learning environment and raised standards. At the time of the last inspection, in all but one subject the standards of 11-year-olds were either below or well below the level expected of their age group. The current group of pupils of this age work at the expected level in all the subjects they study, with the exception of religious education. The very clear improvements in the quality of the schooling that pupils receive are already starting to be reflected in the results of national tests for seven-year-

olds. It will take longer for them to be seen in the outcomes of tests for pupils aged 11. Throughout the school all pupils within their capabilities achieve well. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, observing lessons and from discussions with pupils, the standards for pupils aged seven are much better than 2001 test results indicate and are very close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. At 11, pupils' current performance is still well below average in English, mathematics and science. The high numbers of pupils who have joined or left the junior department over the past four years adversely affects the standards in the current Year 6 classes. Records indicate that most pupils entering the school during this period have special educational needs.

Taking into account the variation in levels of ability, standards seen in most aspects of English and in mathematics and science are satisfactory by the age of seven and 11. However, pupils' skills in spelling, the standards they achieve with handwriting and pupils' ability to find and read information in books is also not as strong as their other literacy skills. In information and communication technology, at the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, particularly so when they receive effective help and support from good quality teaching assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn. They settle quickly to tasks and concentrate well. They are proud of their school and give of their best. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour both in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils care for one another, showing respect for adults and other pupils. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils accept opportunities for personal development well and have a clear sense of responsibility. Relationships are very positive. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Recently attendance has improved and is close to the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 - 2 | Years 3 - 7 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Good | Good | Good |

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers successfully meet the needs of all pupils. Across the school all of the teaching was at least satisfactory and 19 per cent was very good or better. Three lessons were judged to be of excellent quality. This shows a significant improvement since the last inspection when 21 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and 14 per cent was very good. Where teaching is good or better, careful preparation provides a good range of resources to support pupils' learning and pupils are motivated well by praise and encouragement. Also relationships are very good and teachers have high expectations of pupils who respond enthusiastically. Lessons are well organised providing pupils with challenging, interesting tasks. The good teaching inspires pupils to try hard and develop an enthusiasm for learning and is instrumental in helping pupils make good progress. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good and most skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught. However, there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at

length in literacy lessons and pupils' reading and writing skills are not being sufficiently well used or further developed in other subjects. The teaching of handwriting, spelling and reading for information is not effective in helping pupils achieve the satisfactory standard they achieve in other aspects of English. The school has identified these areas and has plans to implement programmes focusing on these aspects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good; effective planning; strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy. The curriculum caters well for pupils' interests. A good range of out-of-school activities, trips and visitors into school enrich pupils' learning. In the Foundation Stage there are not enough opportunities for children to be independent. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Teachers plan valuable tasks and provide well-matched activities based on clear targets that enable pupils to learn effectively. Teaching assistants provide good support. |
| Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. | Good. The very small numbers of pupils are well supported by both staff and pupils alike. As a result, they quickly make very good progress and enjoy school. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. There are good opportunities outside lessons for pupils to show initiative and be responsible for their own learning. Good role models from staff, very clear expectations of behaviour and mutual respect between everyone in the school ensures that pupils develop a mature understanding of their social and moral responsibilities. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. Pupils are sensitively looked after in a warm, caring environment. Teachers know pupils well. There are good assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics but not in other subjects. |

Most parents support the school well, both in raising funds and by helping pupils at home with their work. The school tries hard and successfully keeps parents informed about the work of the school and of their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has dealt admirably with the changes in staffing and school improvement. She is well supported by senior managers and there is a very good team approach in decision making and day-to-day organisation. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive and carry out their duties responsibly. They have effective committee systems in place and are kept fully informed. The school considers carefully how it can get best value in purchasing equipment and services. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Very good. The school carefully evaluates its performance. Where areas for improvement have been identified, the school considers and implements ways to raise standards. For example, school has worked hard on further improving pupils' behaviour and raising standards through assessment. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. The money the school receives is used well and resources are effectively deployed. |

Overall, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school has good levels of teaching staff and teaching assistants.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <p>The teaching and the progress that pupils make.</p> <p>The expectation that children work hard do their best and behave well.</p> <p>The good management and leadership</p> <p>The school works closely with parents and staff are very approachable.</p> | <p>The amount of homework pupils receive</p> <p>A more interesting range of activities out of school</p> |

The inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views. However, inspectors' judgements do not support the views where parents expressed concern. Homework is consistently set and supports pupils' learning. The school provides a greater range of activities out of school than that found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results of 2001 tests for seven-year-olds show that results were very low in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with pupils from a similar background they were well below average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. Trends over time show results have been consistently below average and reflect children's low attainment on entry to the school together with high percentages of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is close to the national average in reading, writing and in mathematics. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, observing lessons and from discussions with pupils, the standards for pupils aged seven are much better than 2001 test results indicate and are very close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They have improved due to changes in staffing, which has improved the quality of teaching, and to the good start pupils now get in the Foundation Stage.
2. In the 2001 national tests for pupils aged 11, results in English and mathematics are very low and in science are well below the national average. When the school's results are compared to similar schools they are well below average in all three. Results reflect the proportion of pupils with learning and behavioural problems in the classes that took the test. The movement of pupils in and out of the school also impacts adversely on results. The average change in pupil population is 30 per cent across the school. This makes it difficult to compare results of national tests of cohorts of pupils in Year 2 and again in Year 6. Standards in the current Year 6 class are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Current test results are similar to 2001 test results. Improvements in the quality of education will take longer to be reflected in the results of the national tests taken by 11 year olds.
3. There has been a good improvement in the issues raised in the last report. The school has effectively raised standards across the school in nearly all subjects. However, there are still weaknesses in pupils' achievement in aspects of religious education in junior classes. Great strides have been made in information and communication technology and the school has provided effective support and training for teachers and developed an information and communication technology suite and as a result pupils are making much better progress. The school has worked hard and introduced several new initiatives that are helping to raise standards in aspects of English, mathematics and science. National test results in 2002 confirm this improvement by the age of seven, but it is difficult to show the improvements by the age of 11 due to significant changes in the cohort. However, the good tracking systems the school has in place show the good progress being made by pupils who attend the school for their whole of their education from Nursery to Year 7. The school met the targets it was set by the local authority in 2001 in national tests in English but not in mathematics and has been set challenging targets for 2002 that it is on course to almost meet. The overall feeling of the parents was that they were happy with the standards that pupils achieve.
4. Taking into account the variation in levels of ability, standards seen in most aspects of English and in mathematics and science are satisfactory by the age of seven and 11. However, pupils' skills in spelling and the standards they achieve with handwriting are below

the expected level. Pupils' ability to find and read information in books is also not as strong as their other literacy skills.

5. When children enter the Nursery their attainment is well below average when compared with children of similar age. Most children have limited personal and social skills; their communication and early mathematical skills are also underdeveloped and this affects their overall learning. Although children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, by the time they reach Year 1, their attainment is likely to remain below the national expectation in all areas of learning except in their knowledge and understanding and their physical development where they should achieve the expected level.
6. Overall, pupils achieve well and their attainment in English is close to average at the age of seven but well below by 11. At the age of seven, pupils' attainment is close to national expectations in all aspects. Pupils listen carefully and are becoming confident in expressing their ideas; for example, in the Literacy Hour. In reading, all pupils show a developing enthusiasm for books. By the age of seven, most of them can successfully attempt to read unknown words. The most fluent, confident readers are beginning to recognise the structure of stories but are not confident in the use of the contents in a non-fiction book. Pupils display sound ability in their creative writing, and their vocabulary shows imagination. However, there are too few opportunities for them to write at length or for different purposes in subjects other than English. Pupils' handwriting is mainly printed and they do not have appropriate strategies for seeing spelling mistakes, resulting in incorrect spelling of words with regular patterns. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment is below expectations in speaking and listening and well below in reading and writing. Pupils contribute appropriately to class discussions. Most pupils are able to clearly explain their views using appropriate vocabulary; for example, in discussing a reading journal in a Year 6 literacy lesson. In reading, the best readers are able to discuss with clarity and understanding the texts they read. Pupils understand indices and glossaries, but the skill of summarising the main information points is not well developed due to lack of opportunities to read for information. By the age of 11, higher- and average-attaining pupils use appropriate expressive language and grammatical awareness in a variety of well-structured and planned written work. Pupils' skills in spelling are not as good as their other language skills and handwriting is not accurate or fluent.
7. Across the school, progress has improved in reading, writing and speaking and listening. In infant classes and junior classes, staff long term absence and changes in teaching staff have impacted on continuity in pupils' learning and hence on their progress. The school now has stable staffing and the quality of teaching has improved, both of which have had a very positive effect on the progress pupils make. In reading, however there are still too few opportunities for pupils to read independently or regularly practice their reading and some pupils only read spasmodically at home. In writing, pupils develop bad habits in formation of letters and the current method used to teach handwriting is not effective. Similarly, the progress pupils make in spelling is hampered by their inability to see their own spelling mistakes and over-reliance on spelling phonetically using letter sounds to build up words. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to extend their reading and writing skills in English or through other subjects such as science, geography and history.
8. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is close to average at the age of seven and well below at 11. At the age of seven, pupils are confident in their understanding of the value of tens and units and use this knowledge effectively in the addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers. They tackle problems in a systematic way and explain their strategies confidently. Pupils' understanding and use of mathematical language are sound. Likewise, they are confident to

perform mental calculations quickly and accurately. At the age of 11, pupils do not have rapid recall of multiplication facts up to the 10 times table. Pupils have a limited understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages but their knowledge of shape, space and measures is sound. Pupils are becoming confident in developing their own strategies for solving problems and explaining their reasoning. Their skills in mental calculations are stronger than their computational skills due to good opportunities to discuss their strategies in the mental/oral part at the beginning of the lesson.

9. Overall, in mathematics pupils make good progress in infant and junior classes. Good progress is being made in using and applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday, practical situations as teachers provide good opportunities for them to do this.
10. In science, pupils' attainment at the ages of seven is close to the average and well below at 11. Overall, progress is good considering the low starting point for many pupils. Improvements in the quality of education can be seen in recent teacher assessments at age seven but will take longer to be reflected in the results of the national tests taken by 11 year olds. By the age of seven, pupils make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding and in their investigation skills. When pupils are given the opportunity to plan and carry out an investigation, as observed in a Year 6 class investigating circuits, they work with a high level of concentration in small groups and demonstrate that they can devise and carry out investigations successfully. Taking responsibility for their own learning like this fosters their personal development as well as promoting their knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the natural world but limited knowledge of materials and their properties.
11. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is close to national expectations at the age of seven and 11. All pupils make good progress. At the age of seven, pupils are confident in the use of a 'mouse' and can select items on the screen. They can program a moveable toy to go in a variety of directions and distances, and are beginning to appreciate the impact of control technology in everyday life. At the age of 11, pupils have appropriate skills in word processing, and can save their own work, find information on the CD Rom, and use icons and menus. However, limited use is made of pupils' information and communication technology skills in other subjects and computers in classrooms are under-used at times.
12. Findings indicate that standards for pupils by the age of seven and 11 have either been maintained or improved in all subjects with the exception of religious education at age 11. By the age of seven, pupils of all abilities make sound progress and achieve the expected level in art, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. By the age of 11, pupils of all abilities make sound progress and achieve the expected level in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. In religious education, pupils do not reach the level expected of the Locally Agreed syllabus and discussions with pupils show that overall they have not had enough opportunities to consider spiritual ideas in religious education lessons and can offer very few opinions about religious ideas. Pupils achieve well in music and by the age of 11 and in Year 7 they achieve above the expected level for their age. This is because of significant improvements in teaching and the quality of musical experiences provided for pupil. All pupils now make better progress in infant classes in history and geography and in all subjects in junior classes and in Year 7.

13. The school has made a good effort at introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Careful monitoring in English and mathematics has enabled the school to modify the Strategy to meet the needs of its pupils. Recent monitoring of the Literacy Strategy has shown weaknesses in handwriting and spelling to be identified and a planned programme to address these issues is to be implemented. Similarly, pupils' literacy skills are still not given sufficient emphasis or further developed in other subject areas in both infant and junior classes. There are not enough opportunities for them to write at length for different purposes in English or in other subjects, for example, in science, geography or history. Likewise, there are not enough opportunities for reading for information across subject areas. A similar picture emerges in mathematics, where the use made of pupils' numeracy skills to classify, compare and measure in other subjects is limited. However, some examples were seen in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and science.
14. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual plans, which include records of targets and progress made. Class teachers assess pupils needs and progress, and discuss this with the special needs coordinator who draws up and monitors the individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent review of pupils' targets contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve equally well and their needs are well met. This is because tasks in the classroom are planned effectively by the teacher to meet their particular needs. Pupils are well supported in the classroom when teaching assistants are present and receive support on one afternoon each week provided by the special needs coordinator and teaching assistants. This provides a good opportunity to focus on language development and for pupils to take part in group work. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and good opportunities, together with other pupils, to take part in out of school clubs, particularly in sport and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have very good attitudes and their behaviour is also very good. They accept responsibility very well when the opportunity is presented to them. Although at the time of the last inspection these aspects were considered to be good, behaviour in some lessons was less than satisfactory by a minority of pupils in Year 4 and 5. The school has worked very hard and successfully to strengthen and improve these aspects since the last inspection. There were no incidents of poor behaviour seen during the inspection.
16. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and to one another. They are very interested in school life and particularly enjoy and respond to good teaching. On a small number of occasions a small minority of pupils lose interest. The school deals very well with this small minority, by employing a caring and positive manner. Staff know their pupils very well and have the appropriate skills to deal positively with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children who are working in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school. They all have a good attitude to their work, playing sensibly with each other, sharing equipment and resources. They learn to listen to each other and respect each other's ideas. However opportunities to become more independent and make choices are limited because there are too few activities offered. Children are sometimes over-directed, especially in Reception classes.

17. Pupils are quick to settle to their tasks and they act in a responsible and sensible manner. They show good levels of concern for others and for property and this contributes to why the school is clean and the site is free of graffiti. At break times, in the lower school playground, pupils take care of their school by tidying up litter, working in teams, taking daily turns. Pupils are happy to share. They listen thoughtfully to the opinions of others and organise themselves well in working groups when the opportunity arises. Pupils are confident when giving opinions; for example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils were very eager to participate in giving their thoughts about a piece of American poetry that they were studying.
18. Pupils' behaviour is very good both in lessons and around the school. Parents agree that this has improved significantly in the last two or three years. Discussions with pupils clearly demonstrate that they feel safe in school and are untroubled by bullying. They feel fully included and enjoy equal access to all activities within the school. Pupils are happy to approach members of staff for advice about any concern. Pupils know and accept the school's expectations regarding good behaviour and the greater majority do try very hard to achieve them. The school's positive approach to behaviour management, which is consistently applied, has resulted in very much improved levels of behaviour amongst pupils. There have been no permanent exclusions. However, there have been three of fixed duration, these have all been for unacceptable behaviour. There have been no exclusions this term.
19. The personal development of pupils and growth of relationships are good. There are more opportunities to take responsibility, as pupils get older than were identified in the previous report. Pupils are eager to accept any responsibility offered. There is an established school council, which is beneficial in pupils' personal development. Pupils assist in the preparation for assemblies and in their classrooms they take pride in being selected to take messages throughout the school or other duties. Older pupils willingly assist in working with younger ones and some year 7 pupils were observed in the lower playground participating in games with younger pupils. Relationships between pupils are very good and reflect the great value that the school puts on harmony and equality.
20. At the last inspection attendance and punctuality were considered to be poor with a number of pupils regularly arriving late each day. Evidence now shows attendance levels similar to those found in most similar schools. This is due to the successful efforts that the school has made, in implementing and monitoring improvements. However, there are still a small number of parents who do not fully respond to the school's efforts.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of teaching is good and the needs of all pupils are well met. In the lessons seen all the teaching was at least satisfactory and was very good or better in 19 per cent of lessons. In the previous inspection the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in 21 per cent of the lessons seen, mainly in junior classes. The quality of teaching has significantly improved and there are now no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers now have far higher expectations of pupils, plan lessons well and use time effectively. The amount of very good teaching has increased, and three lessons were judged to be of excellent quality. A number of factors have contributed to the improvement in the overall quality of teaching:
 - a rigorous programme of monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior managers, which has led to discussions with teachers on strengths and areas for development in their teaching;
 - the increase in the number of teaching assistants to help pupils;

- a raising of teachers' expectations through target-setting;
 - teachers' short-term planning has improved;
 - lessons clearly identify what pupils are to learn;
 - the development of good assessment procedures, particularly in English and mathematics.
22. A number of other factors have also contributed to the improvement in teaching. There have been a large number of teaching staff changes bringing new ideas into the school and staff training has been beneficial in improving the teaching of English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good and most skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught. However, there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in literacy lessons and pupils' reading and writing skills are not being sufficiently well used or further developed in other subjects. The teaching of handwriting, spelling and reading for information is not effective in helping pupils achieve the standard they should. The school has identified these areas and has plans to implement programmes focusing on these aspects.
23. Where teaching is of high quality, careful preparation provides a good range of resources to support pupils' learning and pupils are motivated well by praise and encouragement. The teacher has high expectations of pupils and they respond enthusiastically. Lessons are well planned and organised, providing pupils with challenging tasks. An example of excellent teaching was in a Year 6 personal, health and social education (PHSE) lesson as pupils discussed families and what makes a good parent. The pupils responded enthusiastically to the task the teacher had given them and concentrated hard. As a result, they enjoyed the activity and reached a good understanding of different family situations in their own culture and other cultures and the teacher gave immediate extension or reinforcement as the need arose. In an excellent Year 5 mathematics lesson with lower attaining pupils, as pupils reflected on multiples and factors, the teacher used perceptive questions that focused pupils on the task and valued their contributions to the discussion. The lesson provided pupils with the opportunity to investigate number patterns and use their newly acquired knowledge purposefully. In literacy and numeracy sessions, teachers have established good classroom routines for pupils and there is an industrious working atmosphere. When teaching assistants or other helpers are present their skills are used well and provide good support for pupils; for example, in a class shared writing session the assistant provided good support to lower attaining pupils with their spellings. Pupils were encouraged and wasted no time in successfully completing the task to the best of their ability.
24. The best lessons are well planned, cater for the needs of all pupils, have a clear purpose, include challenging activities and proceed at a good pace. In a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, with the support of the teacher pupils focused well on how to create a new verse for the poem 'The apple and the worm' substituting different words for the key words. The teacher used an effective range of teaching strategies and had high expectations of what pupils could achieve and how they should behave. In this lesson, discussion and questions were used well to challenge pupils' thinking, to inspire ideas and to see alternative possibilities. Whole class teaching was effective, but pupils also had the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively, which they did well. This resulted in pupils settling quickly to the task, working at a good pace and quickly developing their own poem about how a bird moves using colourful words such as 'spikey' and 'fluttery'. In a good Year 4 geography lesson, the teacher used her time well in monitoring and supporting pupils as they worked in groups discussing route-ways and geographical features around Bristol. She listened carefully to the discussions, and joined in when necessary, ensuring opportunities to extend

and clarify pupils' ideas were effectively taken. In other good lessons, teachers use questions well to check on past and present learning and develop the lesson successfully from pupils' responses. In a good Year 7 music lesson, pupils explored enthusiastically how they could compose a piece of music using jazz rhythm. Very good use was made of open-ended tasks and questions for example, 'What is special about the style of jazz?' or 'How could you compose your own jazz riff...?' The pupils responded with great enthusiasm and learnt a great deal from each other about jazz and composing their own tunes using the keyboard effectively.

25. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In a good Year 2 information and communication technology lesson, the teacher's expertise and ability to use a CD to gain information motivated the pupils well. The teacher carefully balanced the amount of information she gave to pupils against effective questions to check on pupils' own evaluations. This resulted in pupils gaining a clear understanding of not only how to load but how to access information. Teachers' management of pupils is very good, ensuring very good levels of discipline and creating an industrious working atmosphere. Teachers show great sensitivity towards pupils' needs and as a result pupils feel valued and confidently contribute to the lesson. Pupils are eager to learn and when given their task, respond positively by working hard and producing good quality work that is matched to their ability. The good teaching is instrumental in helping pupils make good progress.
26. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and there is mutual respect. In the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage, teachers value greatly children's efforts and responses. Staff have high expectations of the children in all areas of learning. They plan appropriate activities carefully and intervene in the learning when necessary to challenge the children successfully to make further progress and to improve levels of attainment. In a good lesson, the teacher intervenes effectively, making clear teaching points, and posing open questions which lead children forward with their work, and provides positive feedback. Homework is consistently given, used appropriately to support the work in classrooms and its regular use is effective in promoting the development of reading, spelling and mathematics with most pupils. Little use is made of reading diaries however, which have great value as an effective link between home and school. Most parents are happy with the amount of homework given and expressed this view at their meeting with inspectors.
27. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good and is supported well by the special needs coordinator and the teaching assistants. Teachers are familiar with the process of identifying pupils who have special educational needs and follow correct procedures. Targets are specific and teaching is well focused. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good with a clear focus on developing confidence and opportunities to develop important skills. The teaching assistants give excellent support and have very good relationships with the pupils and teachers. They work in conjunction with the teachers to raise standards and to ensure that all pupils gain full benefit from their lessons.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good. The curriculum is broad, relevant and generally balanced. It meets the statutory requirements the National Curriculum well in all subjects. The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils'

intellectual, physical and personal development and generally prepares them well for secondary education. The curriculum makes an effective contribution to educational standards, with a good focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It also provides a wide range of learning opportunities, including health education and citizenship. Badminton, an unusual sport in primary schools is taught in addition to more regular sports. Sex education and drug education are taught in line with the policy agreed by governors.

29. The issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been almost fully addressed. There was in the past great variation in the extent to which school policies were being implemented. This is now better, although some inconsistency remains, for example, in the extent to which the school assessment policy is implemented in some subjects for example, in physical education. This is to some extent related to the significant staffing changes in the last two years. Short-term planning, found to be a weakness in the last inspection, is now good.
30. The curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is effectively based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes, the curriculum recommend for children of this age group. However, it lacks sufficient opportunities for children to make choices and follow their own line of interest in their play. Also, too little provision is given outdoors for all of the six areas of learning.
31. The school is working hard to raise standards in the core subjects. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are firmly in place and beginning to have an impact on standards as pupils move up through the school. However, the school has not developed sufficient good strategies for teaching and reinforcing basic skills of literacy and numeracy within lessons other than English and mathematics. In a few lessons it is used satisfactorily, for example, when scientific data is used in mathematics to give pupils opportunities to display and interpret data. Information and communication technology is not used well enough in most subjects for example, in mathematics.
32. The school provides good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. Pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English as an additional language are able to access the full curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. This good practice was clearly seen in the integration of pupils with severe learning difficulties and disabilities into the daily life and learning in different year groups. Pupils in the early stages of learning English are well supported both in classrooms and when given extra help in small groups. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils who have special educational needs. The special needs coordinator takes overall responsibility for the individual educational plans. The plans are stringently reviewed and this means that targets are always specific and relevant. Pupils benefit from the close liaison between the coordinator and their class teachers. Pupils who have special educational needs are included in all aspects of the curriculum and make good progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection
33. The range of out of school activities offered by the school is very good, particularly in sporting activities, which enhances and extends the main curriculum. A great number of sporting activities are provided, which operate over the school year, for example cross-country in the autumn and basketball and badminton in the spring. There are visitors from a good range of sports who provide coaching, for example, from the local rugby and football clubs. Staff provide a good range of other clubs, including gardening for the youngest children and drama for years 3 and 4. The school takes part in sporting events such as athletics meetings, at which they are very successful. Pupils regularly collect for charity.

The school also provides a homework club, booster classes for English and mathematics and a Breakfast Club. The school gives pupils opportunities to take part in a variety of educational visits. These help to enrich the curriculum by providing additional significant experiences that pupils remember and build on. These include an overnight stay, with team sports and problem-solving activities.

34. A strong element of school life is the contribution that the community makes to pupils' learning. Local churches are involved in the curriculum for religious education and assemblies, and help with the breakfast club. A representative of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children spends time in school each week. Other recent visitors have been members of the police service, a local Member of Parliament and local musical groups. The school has good links with partner institutions that enhance the learning opportunities for all pupils. For example, a local comprehensive school supports the school with joint activities over a three-day period involving Year 9 pupils in the school. Local businesses actively support the school through giving prizes and lending equipment.
35. The headteacher and staff make very good provision for personal development. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is much improved provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are offered good opportunities in assemblies and acts of collective worship for personal reflection and prayer. In acts of worship, issues such as friendship and caring for the environment are discussed. Pupils are given good opportunities to think about their own and other people's feelings and beliefs in religious education, collective worship and times when whole classes sit and talk together. This encourages pupils to share their thoughts and ideas, and respect the views of others. Some class lessons also have a spiritual dimension; for instance, when Year 5 pupils study wedding ceremonies in different religions, they look at a Sari with a sense of wonder and, when wearing it, discuss how it makes them feel. The way in which teachers value pupils' ideas, encourage pupils' self-confidence, and celebrate their successes reflects how well the school promotes spirituality.
36. The school makes very good provision for the moral development of pupils. Pupils are helped to distinguish right from wrong in various ways. Classrooms display rules and rewards. Schools rules and expectations are mostly adhered to. Pupils are helped towards an understanding of the rules by the very strong, positive behavioural management policy practised by the staff. Pupils receive praise and stickers in "Gold card" assemblies for areas such as kindness and thoughtfulness. Issues such as friendship and care for the world are talked about in assemblies through the reading and telling of stories. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They are given very good opportunities as part of the curriculum to discuss moral issues; for example, in Year 7, pupils discuss and write about racism. Relationships are strong. Pupils are welcomed into classrooms. Teachers are thoughtful and consistent about the routines, organisation and management of pupils, and these help pupils to know exactly what they should do and the way they should behave. The school has a very good system for starting pupils in school in the middle of terms, in order to help pupils settle and conform to the expected levels of behaviour.
37. The school's provision for social development is very good. All teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to promote this area. Staff provide good models for pupils on which to base their own behaviour and relationships. Teachers give pupils many opportunities for them to develop their social and co-operative skills. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, pupils quickly co-operated and talked in pairs to invent a scoring system for a bouncing ball game. Pupils' social development is also promoted strongly through the requirement for older pupils

to support younger children, such as through 'Buddy' systems where they play and read with them. Each term, pupils co-operate to help in the school's drama production for parents and contribute to fund-raising activities. There is every opportunity for pupils to learn social conventions through contact with visitors, such as people from different cultures who come to talk to them.

38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school's ethos of inclusion is very strong and this has a good impact on the life of the school. Staff try hard to promote a community where pupils can learn about, and take part in, their own local culture, and learn about the culture and traditions of others. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, by music in assemblies, a little in art, and by learning about festivals such as Diwali in religious education lessons. Regular visitors, such as local Bengali people, come into school to talk and show artefacts. Pupils also learn about other cultures in geography and in French. The very strong emphasis the school places on raising money for worthwhile causes also promotes pupils' cultural understanding very well. The school promotes culture locally by taking part in local events such as singing at Christmas in old people's homes and in a shopping centre. Also involved in the life of the school are local church communities, local police and the community doctor and nurses.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school provides a caring environment for its pupils and the procedures it has in place are sound. Overall, the previous inspection report judged the quality of care and welfare to be good. Relationships and behaviour were considered to be good, with child protection being well promoted and health and safety requirements in place.
40. The headteacher is the member of staff with overall responsibility for child protection and has undergone appropriate training. She ensures that all school staff are suitably aware of the current requirements as well as keeping them updated about specific cases. There is appropriate liaison and meetings with outside agencies, such as social services and education social workers. The senior teacher is to take over the role in the autumn term.
41. The school is effective in ensuring the health and safety of pupils. The school has a large number of qualified first-aiders in the school. All staff have recently undergone training and there is in place a three year plan for refresher courses to maintain proficiency. All school staff are committed to the positive care and support of the pupils under their supervision. They show understanding and are consistent in the warm, sensitive and supportive relationships, which they enter into with pupils. The senior teacher is responsible for pastoral care of pupils and has generated across the school a high profile in this area, resulting in excellent pupils' pastoral records being maintained in classrooms.
42. Attendance and punctuality are very carefully monitored and acted upon. The education welfare officer(EWO) who makes fortnightly visits to the school further checks the data. The EWO is involved in following up on any absence by making contact with families as required. The school has access to the EWO by telephone if required at other times. The school has made very good improvements and current school figures show a very positive increase in attendance and expectations are that the annual figures will show that the school is very close to the national average for attendance.
43. These improvements include the introduction of very early contact with home on the first morning of a pupil's unexplained absence and the awards systems for punctuality and

attendance by pupil, class and year. In addition, there are reminders in newsletters, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents about the impact upon children of absence and late arrival, which causes disruption to the whole class as well as the difficulties it places on the latecomer. The school is correctly considering additional measures to improve attendance even further by additionally impressing upon both pupils and parents the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

44. The school has an effective behaviour policy, and classroom rules and guidance are known by staff and accepted by pupils, who help to devise them. They promote the development of self-control and respect for others and for property. The very good behaviour by the majority of pupils in classes is fostered by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. The school's policy on bullying is effective in dealing with oppressive behaviour and promoting equality.
45. The procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance are good for English and mathematics. However, the good practice that is seen in these subjects is not developed consistently in all the other subjects and there is variation between teachers in the quality and detail of what they record of pupils' achievements. This is to some extent related to the significant staffing changes in the last two years. Assessments in English and mathematics provide a clear, detailed picture of pupils' achievements and this is helping to improve the standards in both subjects. Assessments are thorough and on going and pupils are assessed at the end of week on the objectives stated in the teacher's planning. Class and group targets are set and teachers and pupils have a clear picture of what the pupils know and understand and the skills that are developing. All teachers use this information effectively to build on past learning and to plan for the next stage of learning. This ensures that the tasks given to pupils are sufficiently challenging. Teachers know the pupils well and very good systems are in place to record pupils' personal development. Pupils' work is marked carefully but there is inconsistency in the comments made about how well pupils have done and what they need to do to improve. Last year results that the pupils achieved in the standard attainment tests at aged seven and 11 were carefully analysed in mathematics and in English. This information is being used well to improve standards in both English and mathematics for example, confidence building and problem solving. In English, spelling and handwriting have been identified and a planned programme of improvement is being introduced. The school recognises the difficulties arising from pupils' movement in and out of the school and has developed appropriate systems to record pupil progress for those who enter school at times other than at the start of the school year, or in classes other than the Nursery.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school has good links with parents and their views about the school are very positive. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report, which identified partnership with parents and the community as satisfactory. The school has been very active in developing links with parents and has been successful in developing greater parental involvement in their children's learning.
47. The school provides good information about social and news items for example; regular newsletters contain much valuable information about various aspects of school life, and social events. There are well placed notice boards outside the school as well as good levels of information well displayed internally throughout the school. Pupils' annual progress reports to parents clearly identify what the pupils can do and have areas for parental and

pupil comment upon the report. Reports are consistent across the school in highlighting future targets for pupils to achieve. There are meetings between parents and teachers each term. The school has an active open door policy at the school encouraging parents to visit whenever necessary. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved with the special needs process and are asked to attend review meetings so that they can be kept fully informed about their child's progress. Similarly, there are good links with parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language are they are invited into small group teaching sessions, in order to gain ideas about how they can further support the work of the school with their children.

48. The school is active in making initial contacts about any matters they feel that parents should be aware of about their children, achievements as well as any difficulties. There is a school policy of initial home visits before pupils begin school to establish as early as possible a home/school relationship. The school recognises the value of parental involvement. It strives to develop this through the whole school by regular reminders and invitations to parents and carers to come into school and help. There is an open invitation to parents to call in and assist in any way, such as reading with pupils. A dedicated core of parents, though small in number, regularly help in school which is of great benefit to pupils, staff and other parents.
49. The school has a strong belief in the value of promoting parents' understanding of teaching and learning in the school. To this end, the school has provided various courses to assist parents in developing greater skills, for example in literacy information, availability of computers and music resources. The 'Friends of the School Association' has been disbanded, although parents do support the school's various fund raising and social events, such as pupil productions very well. This raises valuable additional funds as well as generating social and community activities for the benefit of school, pupils, parents and the whole community.
50. There was a low response rate to the parental questionnaire, but opinions coincided with those of the small group of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting in that they were happy with the education the school provided for their children. Parents commented on the improvements made in recent years by the current staff. Analysis of the meeting and the questionnaires shows that overall there is positive support for the school. The majority of parents feel that their children like school, make good progress, and that behaviour is good. Parents also agree with inspection that the teaching is good, the school is helping pupils to become more mature and responsible, and that pupils are expected to work hard. A small number of parents wanted to see improved levels of homework and more extra-curricular activities. The inspection team supports all the positive opinions that parents hold about the school. However, they do not agree with the less positive comments. Homework is generally consistently given and supports pupils' learning and the current levels of extra-curricular activities are better than that found in many similar schools and are very beneficial in developing pupils' interests and skills.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The very effective leadership and management of the headteacher and senior members of staff have been crucial in helping the school to recover from a very difficult period in its history. When the headteacher was appointed about three years ago there had been no

headteacher for a year and a half. Many parents had a low opinion of the school and the attitudes and behaviour of many pupils were poor. The outstanding, resolute and clear-sighted leadership of the headteacher has greatly improved parental and pupil attitudes, created a stable, positive learning environment and raised standards. At the time of the last inspection, in all but one subject the standards of 11-year-olds were either below or well below the level expected of their age group. The current group of pupils of this age work at the appropriate level in all the subjects they study, with the exception of religious education. The very clear improvements in the quality of the schooling that pupils receive are already starting to be reflected in the results of national tests for seven-year-olds. It will take a little longer for them to be seen in the outcomes of tests for pupils aged 11.

52. The headteacher is supported very well by the two deputy headteachers who perform different, complementary roles very effectively. The senior management team works very well to oversee the work of the school and to ensure that reforms are carried out successfully. Many different members of staff join this team when required to help achieve particular objectives. Team managers provide a very valuable link with class teachers and free senior managers from day to day organisational tasks. Their work has helped very much in improving behaviour, creating positive relationships with parents and promoting the professional development of new and inexperienced staff. This has been particularly helpful since the turnover of teaching staff has been very high. The rapid changes have made it difficult for the headteacher and senior staff to ensure that the subject coordinators work as effectively as they could. The senior managers are aware of the need to give the coordinators more responsibility and greater opportunities for monitoring the teaching done in their subjects and raising standards further. The problem of the headteacher and deputy headteacher being preoccupied with discipline, identified in the last inspection report, has been eradicated by the work done by the team managers. Relationships throughout the school are very good with a strong focus on racial equality.
53. The headteacher's open style of management is reflected in the work of all staff in positions of responsibility. This ensures that everyone feels involved in changes that are made and knows that their suggestions and concerns will be heard. As a result, the staff work very well as a team, sharing a strong resolve to raise standards and improve all aspects of the school's work.
54. The governors are very supportive of the school and show a developing understanding of the strengths of the school's performance and those areas that need to be developed. It is sometimes difficult to get people to become governors and many are new to their roles and responsibilities. Nevertheless, the governing body fulfils its statutory duties well.
55. A strength of the management of the school is the extent to which it monitors and evaluates how well it is working. The quality of a wide range of outcomes, such as teachers' planning, pastoral records and reports to parents about their children's progress, are examined closely. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has been a particular focus, and the success of this can be easily judged by the increase in the proportion of effective lessons since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher's excellent management of people has contributed very strongly to the improvements, through her determined action to confront teachers who do not perform well enough, recruit good quality staff, unify disparate factions and develop productive teamwork. Good arrangements are in place to manage the performance of the headteacher and teaching staff.

56. The clearly stated aims of the school are reflected very well in its life and aspirations. Everyone works hard to ensure that all its pupils are included. Members of staff expend a great deal of effort in giving all pupils equal opportunities to learn. They are particularly mindful of the needs of pupils whose behaviour is challenging. Recently, the school has started to use a special computer program to keep track of how different groups of pupils are doing. This will help it to ensure that all those in its care make optimum progress. Use of the program also helps in setting appropriate targets for pupils' attainment.
57. The special needs coordinator is experienced and liaises with the class teachers and learning support staff to give pupils the extra assistance required for them to make progress and be fully integrated into the life of the school. Pupils who have statements of special needs receive their entitlement to extra support. The coordinator has worked effectively to make sure that all pupils who have a special need are identified early, and collaborates alongside other teachers so that all staff become effective in delivering appropriate programmes of work. The management of special educational needs is good. The administration of work is up to date, individual educational programmes are well maintained and reviews conducted in line with the Code of Practice.
58. Good arrangements are in place to make it easier for pupils joining the school after the year starts to settle in. Pupils are quickly assessed and programmes of support initiated where necessary. Teachers who are new to the school or have just started teaching are supported well. There is a member of staff who effectively ensures the school's induction process is professionally followed.
59. Since the last inspection the planning of the use of the funds the school receives has improved and is now good. Money is used carefully and wisely to enhance pupils' achievements. Overall, finances are administered and controlled very well. The recommendations of the last auditors' report have been implemented and the headteacher exercises very effective oversight of procedures. The governors are appropriately involved in drawing up the budget and check well whether spending follows the agreed pattern. Specific funds such as those to promote the learning of pupils with special educational needs are used to good effect. The school employs computer technology well to record financial transactions and communicate. Arrangements for auditing and writing off stock are underdeveloped. Satisfactory attention is paid to applying principles such as comparing the school's performance with others and consulting those having a stake in its life and work.
60. There are good numbers of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. The buildings and the areas around the school allow the national curriculum to be taught satisfactorily. The problems with lack of materials and equipment available to teachers and pupils identified in the last report have been addressed effectively in most areas. However, more books are needed in the library and classrooms and computers used in classrooms need updating.
61. Taking account of the context of the school, how well pupils achieve, the above average income per pupil, the very good behaviour and relationships, the very good management and good teaching, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order for the school to further improve the quality of education its provides and build upon the very good progress it has made since the last inspection, the governors, headteacher and staff should;

1. Continue to raise pupil achievement in mathematics and science in junior classes by continuing to implement the planned programmes for improvement the school already has in place. (Paragraphs 93, 100)
2. Further raise standards in English by the age of seven and 11 by focusing on areas the school has recently identified for improvement in the coordinators action plan such as
 - improving pupils' handwriting and spelling skills,
 - ensuring there is a greater focus given to developing pupils' skills in reading for information and more opportunities for pupils to use these skills in research,
 - raising the profile of reading and providing pupils with more regular periods of practice,
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length in English and in other subjects. (Paragraphs 4, 6, 81, 82, 84)
3. Further improve management by continuing to implement the planned programme the school has in place aimed at improving the effectiveness of coordinators through -
 - training coordinators in the skills needed for them to effectively monitor the teaching and learning in the subject for which they are responsible
 - establishing a planned programme to provide coordinators with the time to fulfil this role
 - formulating a three year programme of curriculum review for the foundation subjects linked to the next school development plan with a focus on how pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills can be further utilised and further developed in each subject. (Paragraphs 7, 13, 31, 52)
4. Further improving the learning experiences that children receive in the Foundation Stage by increasing the opportunities for children's personal development for example,
 - developing children's independence and initiative
 - creating environments inside and outside school where they have greater freedom to choose for themselves

and further,

by improving the planned provision for outdoor play to include all areas of learning. (Paragraphs 30, 64, 66)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Improve the provision of books and facility offered in the Library and in classrooms. (Paragraph 84)

Ensure there is consistency in the quality of assessment in subjects other than in English and mathematics. (Paragraph 44)

Raise standards in religious education by the age of 11 (Paragraphs 144, 147)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 65 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 36 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 3 | 9 | 27 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 5 | 14 | 41 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y7 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 26 | 347 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 127 | |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y7 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 7 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 20 | 84 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 18 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 39 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 88 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % | Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 9.4 | School data | 0.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 | National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2001 | 20 | 25 | 45 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 15 | 14 |
| | Girls | 17 | 19 | 18 |
| | Total | 29 | 34 | 32 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 64 (69) | 76 (73) | 71 (87) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 14 | 18 |
| | Girls | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| | Total | 31 | 33 | 37 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 69 (73) | 73 (87) | 82 (58) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2001 | 27 | 20 | 47 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| | Girls | 6 | 5 | 12 |
| | Total | 16 | 15 | 32 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 34(37) | 32(23) | 68((42) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 9 | 15 |
| | Girls | 8 | 5 | 7 |
| | Total | 19 | 14 | 22 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 40(46) | 30(46) | 47(51) |
| | National | 72 (70) | 74 (72) | 82 (79) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 4 |
| Black – other | 1 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 10 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 358 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 20 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19 |
| Average class size | 23 |

Education support staff: YR – Y7

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 12 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 308 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 26 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 33 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 13 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 22 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 18 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 3 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 3 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/2 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 1016020 |
| Total expenditure | 984814 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2782 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 20062 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 51268 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 422 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 48 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 69 | 27 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 44 | 52 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 35 | 56 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 27 | 42 | 17 | 4 | 10 |
| The teaching is good. | 42 | 48 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 42 | 35 | 13 | 8 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 58 | 30 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 67 | 25 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 35 | 44 | 15 | 4 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 48 | 33 | 10 | 6 | 2 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 48 | 46 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 46 | 33 | 13 | 2 | 6 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. The school admits children to part-time places in the Nursery at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. They enter the Reception classes in a similar way in the following September, January and April during the term in which they will be five years of age. At the time of the inspection there were 52 part-time nursery places with 26 children attending in the morning and 26 in the afternoon. There were 22 children full-time in one Reception class and 19 of the youngest children part-time in the other Reception class.
64. A significant majority of children begin Nursery with poorly developed skills, particularly in communication, language, literacy, mathematics and personal and social development and their attainment is well below average when compared with children of similar age. Although children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, by the time they reach Year 1, their attainment is likely to remain below the national expectation in all areas of learning, except in their knowledge and understanding and their physical development, where they normally achieve the expected level. This is due to the good teaching overall within the Foundation Stage. Planning has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers now use clear guidelines based on Foundation Stage curriculum guidance to support their plans. However, planning for outdoor play does not focus sufficiently well on all areas of learning and as a result opportunities for learning are sometimes missed; children are directed too often and have too few chances to choose for themselves. The new coordinator is enthusiastic and has already implemented changes in planning in the Nursery to ensure all six areas are well catered for. A strength of the teaching is the way staff write clear and relevant details about landmarks in children's progress. Arrangements in the Reception classes demonstrate well how staff use information from observations to plan for individual children. Assessments on entry are in place, but there is no detailed on-going assessment overview to support planning in the medium term. Teamwork is good within the Foundation Stage and all staff, including those supporting children with special educational needs, work and plan together making sure that children are well supported.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

65. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is well below the level expected of children of this age. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and contributes to the steady progress children make. By the time they reach Year 1 children's attainment is below what is normally expected of children of this age and the majority have not reached the early learning goals.
66. A good feature in teaching is that staff are caring role models for the children and children are encouraged to work with others. Children are keen to come to school; they enjoy being with their friends and good relationships are developed. Children are proud of their work and happily show staff the work they have done. Children have some opportunities to develop independence. They carry messages from one member of staff to another and in the Nursery they can choose when they want to have their snack. There are *special helpers* in Reception classes who wear badges and have important jobs to do. All children work amicably together, however the quality and range of activities on offer are limited, particularly in the Nursery. In Reception classes the range on offer is satisfactory, but children are directed too often and have too few chances to choose for themselves, which prevents children

developing initiative. All children behave well and respond positively to staff's directions and requests and children quickly become familiar with school routines. Teachers explain clearly and this helps children to understand right and wrong in relation to school rules. Older children in Reception classes learn to listen to each other and respect each other's ideas. They learn to share adult attention and take turns when they play structured games. Teachers actively encourage children to show care and concern for all things. Reception children plant seeds and nurture seedlings outdoors. They look for snails and show great care in the way they handle them. In the Nursery children learn to put things away, but there are too few established systems to ensure that they take full responsibility for clearing away water or paint that spills. Personal hygiene is taught well; the youngest in the Nursery know to wash their hands before handling food and do this without adult support.

Communication, Language and Literacy

67. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is well below the level typical of this age group. Teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy is good overall and children make good progress. By the time they reach Year 1, however, the majority are still below the expected level and have not reached the early learning goals. Communication skills remain well below the level normally expected. Children who do not speak English at home are fully catered for and staff work hard to improve language levels so that children make good progress in their speaking and understanding of English.
68. A good feature of the teaching is the way staff use books to teach children new vocabulary. In the Nursery staff teach children words such as *hamper* and *cottage* through well-chosen stories and encourage good interaction during story sessions. In Reception classes children are encouraged to express their ideas in whole class teaching sessions. Role-play in Reception classes offer children chances to use new words as they play in the '*garden centre*'. Role-play opportunities in the Nursery are less well developed and this affects children's progress in language development. Many children sound out letters to help them read words they do not know. More able children in the Nursery retell familiar stories using pictures as clues. Children take books home to share and read with parents. Reception children have reading diaries in which teachers document children's progress. This is an effective means of communication between the school and home and helps children develop a love of books. Children of above average ability in the school read well and know many words by sight. Teachers provide activities to help children develop early writing skills. In Reception classes children are taught initial letter sounds and letter blends. They are learning to write their own name from memory. Writing through play, however, is not developed enough; for example, in the Nursery writing is too formal and children have too few incidental chances to write through play activities. Overall, children do not have enough access to writing areas to encourage them to write things such as notes or lists, as they play. Children learn to express their ideas through painting and most willingly talk about their work, although their vocabulary is limited. Opportunities to develop this area of learning are limited in the outdoor provision.

Mathematics

69. In mathematics teaching is good overall. Children enter Nursery with standards well below what is typical for their age group. By the end of Reception the majority of children make good progress, but are still below the level expected for children of this age and the majority have not reached the early learning goals before going into Year 1.

70. Teachers are beginning to make mathematics part of everyday life. They count children as they come to school and identify numbers on the line. Nursery children are beginning to represent numbers using fingers; less able children identify numbers 1 and 2 and more able children know numbers to 10. A good feature of teaching in Reception classes is the way teachers use games to keep children interested. Although children find these difficult at times, because of a limited understanding of mathematical vocabulary, teachers carefully demonstrate and explain helping them eventually succeed. Children learn to sequence numbers by correcting the *Silly Pig* who cannot remember number names in the right order. Through careful guidance by staff more able children understand the language associated with addition and manage to record simple sums showing a developing understanding of the plus and equal symbols. In the Nursery, children play with small cubes and match templates, but opportunities to use numbers through planned play activities are limited. Teaching makes good use of rhymes and songs to help children become aware of numbers increasing and decreasing. Role-play activities focus around buying items in the 'garden centre' in Reception classes and supports learning about money. Reception children learn about size and length, but in the Nursery there are too few play activities provided to develop children's understanding of measurement. Children make symmetrical mini-beasts. The range of mathematical activities on offer outdoors, however, is insufficient.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

71. In this aspect, children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below the level that is typical for their age. However children make good progress, especially in the Reception classes where teaching is good, and by the time they enter Year 1 the majority have reached the early learning goals.
72. Children become aware of changes in plant and animal life as they observe seeds and plants growing. Reception children plant their own peas and enjoy eating them. They find and examine snails and discover how they move, where they live and what they eat. They know a spider has 8 legs and insects have 6 legs because staff hide small creatures in the sand for children to find. This makes learning exciting. Staff in the Nursery help children to find flowers and insects outdoors and these are placed in large magnifiers so children can see details closely. Children play in sand and water both indoors and outside, but sometimes the focus of learning is unclear and staff interaction is insufficient to maximise children's learning. Children make good progress in designing and making skills. They access a range of equipment and make various designs. In Reception classes they make well-formed butterflies and snails and talk about how they were made. In Nursery they use tools to make paper crumple. Progress in information and communication technology is generally good. Computers are always available and the programs used match the children's levels of interest well. Children become aware of their school environment when playing in the school grounds. Reception children use the school hall for different activities. The outdoor curriculum supports this area of learning well as children undertake various activities each day. However, opportunities are missed during inclement weather for children to experience rainfall under the dry canopy or to go out in it, with an umbrella. Children learn about important festivals as they occur during the year and birthdays are generally celebrated. They dressed up for the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Physical Development

73. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is below the level expected of this age group. In physical development the teaching is good and children make good progress. By the end of Reception classes, the majority normally achieve the early learning goals.
74. In Reception classes, children learn to move spontaneously in the large area and develop an awareness of their space and that of others. A good feature of the teaching is the way teachers encourage skill development by demonstrating well for children and also by praising their efforts. They teach children to transport equipment safely in the hall. Outdoors, children learn to climb, balance along beams and move in different directions. They use tricycles and trolleys regularly, learning to control movement and negotiate pathways around objects and other children. Children have plenty of freedom to experiment; they learn to run vigorously, always being mindful of others. Staff make sure that children use resources and tools to help them develop fine finger skills. Children have regular access to play construction equipment and they learn to push and pull to join two pieces together. In Reception classes children manipulate dough as they make snails, however malleable materials are not used enough in the Foundation Stage to support finger skills. Children handle paint brushes, thread beads, and use scissors and pencils. Activities provided help children with their co-ordination and this supports their early handwriting and painting skill development. Teachers make sure children become aware of the importance of healthy food; they drink milk each day and know why it is good for them; they eat fruit as part of their snack in the Nursery. Staff teach children how to care for themselves in terms of toileting and personal care. Reception children learn to undress and dress before and after physical activity.

Creative Development

75. Children enter the Nursery with few prior opportunities for creative development and standards in this aspect that are well below the level typical for their age. Although the quality of teaching is good overall and children make progress, by the end of the Reception class, the majority of children are below the level expected for this age.
76. Staff encourage children to explore and mix paint for themselves by providing a limited range of colour. Most children do this well and express interest in the variety of colour they produce. Children use a range of resources and make marbled paintings and drawings with chalk. They use collage to make spiders and in the reception classes children make 3-dimensional insects using card and dough. Staff display children's work well work and show how much they value their efforts. Much of the work produced, however is staff-directed, because the organisation of resources shows that children do not have enough access or opportunities to use materials and resources for themselves to express their own ideas. Role-play activities are available, but there is too little intervention by staff to encourage children to fully develop their imaginative ideas. Role-play opportunities are limited in the nursery. Teachers plan well for children's musical development. Children learn to sing songs and rhymes from memory and instruments are readily accessible. Staff work hard with children to develop their skills, however many older children cannot tap out a simple beat.

ENGLISH

77. On the evidence of the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment is close to the national average at the ages of seven, well below by the age of 11 and well below at the end of Year 7. These findings are reflected in the school's realistic targets in national tests where

50 per cent of pupils are expected to achieve Level 4. Pupils enter the school at four years of age with levels of attainment in language that are well below average. Overall, their level of achievement is good over their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in relation to their prior learning in whole class lessons and very good progress when supported by teaching assistants.

78. The previous inspection report found that standards of attainment were below the national expectation at the end of the infant stage and well below by the end of the junior stage and in Year 7. There is evidence that standards remained low at the age of seven after the last inspection due to instability in teaching staff. However, with the appointment of new staff recently standards have risen significantly and been improved. The improvement in infant classes has not yet had time to fully impact on junior standards although the teaching and provision are much better with the appointment of new teachers. At the end of the junior stage results have fluctuated and reflect the proportion of pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties. Results are also adversely affected between Year 2 and Year 6 due to changes in pupil population. For example, in the current Year 6 class, 60 per cent of the pupils left or joined this class since they took the test in Year 2 and this makes comparisons in standards results questionable. Evidence indicates that most of these pupils had learning or behavioural problems. The results of the 2001 tests for seven-year-olds show that results are very low in comparison to the national average in reading and well below in writing. When results are compared to similar schools they are well below average in reading and below in writing. For pupils aged 11, results are very low in comparison to the national average and well below when compared to similar schools. Recent test results are much better at the age of seven.
79. Across the school the quality of presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting and spelling skills are not as high as their other language skills. Standards in most aspects of reading and writing are high enough but teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to read for information and write at length in English and in subjects other than English. The impact of new staff has helped to raise standards. There were several weaknesses highlighted in the last report, mainly concerned with the teaching in junior and Year 7 classes through the lack of teaching basic skills, work not matched to pupils' abilities, unsatisfactory behaviour and weak teacher planning. Teachers' planning is now good but the weaknesses identified in the teaching of handwriting and spelling continue to be the same and have not significantly improved. However, the quality of teaching has significantly improved and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
80. By the age of seven, pupils achieve expectations in speaking and listening. Most pupils at seven are articulate, use well-formed sentences and an appropriate range of vocabulary. Their responses are considered and appropriate, reflecting the quality of their listening skills, especially during the literacy hour. Higher attaining pupils speak clearly, and during the class reading of 'The Apple and the Worm' they confidently explain which are the key words they would change to create a new verse. The lower attaining pupils answer questions related to the text but lack some fluency of speech. By the age of 11 and at the end of Year 7, pupils' skills are below the national expectation. Higher attaining pupils are skilled at analysing and discussing the differences and similarities in two different texts written by Michael Morpurgo. In the discussion at the end of the lesson these pupils are able to confidently explain what they have learned and share their own efforts with other pupils. During literacy lessons pupils express their ideas and feelings fully and confidently. They also engage in good levels of conversation with adults and respond confidently when given more formal opportunities for

speaking and listening to a wider audience in class assemblies and drama productions. The skills of lower attaining pupils are more limited but with the encouragement they receive, especially in the whole class tasks, they are beginning to show confidence in sharing their ideas. Progress in speaking and listening at both in infant and junior stages is good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The provision for pupils in the early stages of learning English is enhanced when these pupils meet together for a full afternoon. Well supported by the special needs coordinator and teaching assistants, this presents a good opportunity to focus on language development and for pupils to develop their confidence. Pupils support one another well in these sessions.

81. Pupils achieve expectations in reading at the age of seven. Higher attaining pupils are independent, fluent and confident readers of both fiction and non-fiction. They have a good understanding of the text and are beginning to recognise the structure of stories and use the correct vocabulary to evaluate the book. Most pupils use a wide range of strategies to read new words and to self correct more difficult ones. The increase in reading materials to support the literacy hour has improved the level of enjoyment shown by the pupils in their reading and is increasing their ability to read with expression. However, average and lower attaining pupils do not show a good understanding of alphabetical order in using the index of reference books to find information. They are not as confident when reading non-fiction books as they are when reading fiction books and they find it difficult to extract information from what they have read. The attainment of pupils at the age of 11 and the end of Year 7 is well below national expectations. The best readers are able to discuss the text they read with clarity and understanding. They are fluent and articulate in their reading, and use appropriate expression. Pupils read a wide range of fiction texts but a limited range of non-fiction books. Few have favourite authors but can discuss clearly their preferences and the different styles of writing. Lower attaining pupils are more hesitant in reading a new text but most have a sound knowledge of strategies to use and are gaining confidence and independence in their reading. More able pupils' are able to skim and scan when reading and their research skills are sound. Overall, across the school progress in reading is good. However, in infant classes staff do not always place a high priority on hearing pupils read individually. In junior classes, not enough time is given to teaching library skills including research skills. Similarly, due to a lack of books both in classrooms and in the library, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use and further develop these skills by reading to find information. The library is not used effectively to develop study skills and for pupils to make use of the catalogued library.
82. Pupils' attainment in writing by the age of seven is at the expected level. However, at seven, handwriting is not always clear or well formed and very few pupils confidently use a 'joined-up' style. In their extended writing, higher attaining pupils demonstrate a very good awareness of the structure and sequencing of events in a story. Their ideas are imaginative, varied and clear. For the majority of pupils, spellings are not accurate but the use of punctuation is sound. There are frequent opportunities during the literacy hour to practise phonics (letter sounds) rules to improve spellings, and pupils are confident in using these skills independently in their written work. However, pupils spell common words incorrectly such as 'kikt' for 'kicked' or 'wail' for 'whale' and do not easily see their mistakes. There is a range of examples of different forms of writing such as, letters, diaries, poems or retelling favourite stories. Opportunities for pupils to write at length are limited, however, and there are few examples of where written work is linked well to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in writing by the age of 11 and at the end of Year 7 is well below the national expectation. The introduction of the literacy strategy is improving skills, although

there are still not enough opportunities for extended writing in the literacy hour. Higher attaining pupils use good expressive language and grammatical awareness in a variety of well structured and planned work that includes letter writing, book reviews, poetry, descriptive and narrative stories, newspaper articles and character analysis. In information and communication technology pupils do not often illustrate and edit their work on the computer. Written work is generally not well presented and although the use of grammar is of a satisfactory standard, handwriting is not fluent or joined in the majority of the work. Handwriting skills are not well developed. As in infant classes, average and lower attaining pupils spelling skills are not as good as their other language skills and pupils' spell phonetically but do not see when common words are spelt incorrectly such as 'grate' for great or 'comfertble' for 'comfortable'. Overall, across the school progress in writing is good but progress in handwriting is unsatisfactory. This is mainly due to the fact that teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for regular handwriting practice, and opportunities for extended writing in subjects other than English are very limited. In junior classes, progress in writing is limited by a lack of opportunities for pupils to write at length and for different purposes in their English lessons and as well as in other subjects.

83. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. No teaching was unsatisfactory and in 35 per cent of lessons observed it was very good. In infant classes, 20 per cent of the teaching was good and 20 per cent very good. In junior classes, 25 per cent was good and 50 per cent was very good. Staff have worked hard to improve strategies for the teaching of the literacy hour. A particularly good example was in a shared reading activity when Year 5 pupils discussed performance poems focusing on 'The Hairy Toe'. Questioning was used effectively to promote and assess understanding. The teacher had high expectations of pupils and valued their contributions to the discussion. In the literacy hour teachers have established good classroom routines for pupils and there is an industrious working atmosphere. All pupils have positive attitudes to learning, and work hard with enthusiasm and interest to complete their work successfully. Year 3/4 pupils, when sharing a text, were fascinated by the different ways that adverts had used the words to create a visual image. Relationships are very good and pupils support each other well, giving help and encouragement to anyone who has a problem. This support was particularly noticeable in a Year 1 lesson in which other pupils applauded pupils' responses. Behaviour is very good, especially in the literacy hour where pupils have the control to work independently. Pupils concentrate well and their work output is good. In the good and very good lessons, planning is clearly focused on practising and improving key skills for pupils of all abilities. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher provided pupils with good examples from a text that reflected the importance of captions in order to add detail to what was happening in the picture. This good teaching enabled pupils to write their own captions successfully. Good classroom practices and management of time are well-established enabling learning to occur without distractions. In less effective lessons, staff focus for long periods with one group and as a result the teacher has difficulty intervening with other groups and on these occasions progress for more able pupils is limited. In other lessons, the tasks teachers provide do not challenge higher attaining pupils. Staff are skilled at using the support staff productively in the literacy hour. The plenary session is focused sufficiently well on re-emphasising points from the lesson or giving constructive feedback.
84. The coordinator manages the subject well. She provides good support and guidance for staff. Her effectiveness is enhanced by the opportunity to monitor teachers' planning and how the subject is taught. Monitoring has identified areas for improvement such as writing and resources. Although the school has effectively implemented the Literacy Strategy there are still areas for improvement to resolve; more focus is needed in infant and junior classes on raising the levels of attainment of pupils' handwriting and spelling skills. Pupils' reading

and writing skills are not given sufficient emphasis in other subjects. There are good systems for assessment in place, which provide a clear picture of pupils' achievements. Pupils are set individual targets that provide a focus on what they need to do to improve the standard of their work, for example, 'check my work carefully for full stops or use more interesting words in my writing'. There are up to date examples of leveled work for teachers to judge the attainment of pupils and monitor the progress pupils are making. There is a lack of good quality books both in the library and in classrooms. A strength of the provision is in the language support sessions when pupils are taught in small groups out of the classroom, and in the support given in lessons from teaching assistants.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils achieve well based on their prior attainment and pupils' attainment by the age of seven is close to the national average in all areas of mathematics. Pupils' attainment by the age of 11 and in Year 7 is well below average in all areas of the curriculum. Over time, pupils' performance has been consistently well below the national average but is improving at a rate broadly in line with the national trend. In junior classes, the very large number of pupils with special educational needs, the very high numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school throughout the year, and the recent high rate of changes in staff help explain these low results. This year the school should exceed the targets it set itself for pupils aged seven. It will come close to attaining them this year for pupils in Year 6. No significant difference in levels of attainment was found between boys and girls.
86. The school has made some good improvements since the last inspection. Standards at seven have improved well, though by the age of 11 and in Year 7 standards are only very slightly higher than as they were last time the school was inspected. Behaviour in mathematics lessons is no longer an issue. Now, nearly every pupil is keen to learn in all lessons. All teaching is now satisfactory or better, with much that is good, and some very good or excellent. The school has good systems for assessment and record keeping.
87. When pupils enter Year 1, the overall standard of attainment is below that normally found. In the Year 1 and 2 classes pupils make good progress so by the time they leave Year 2 standards are close to the expected level. By the age of seven, many pupils have secure knowledge of place value and most are beginning to demonstrate some knowledge of number facts and an ability to work them out. Overall their standards of number are broadly average. The teachers' constant daily routines and good methods enable all pupils to count in twos, fives and 10s quickly and accurately, but few can yet use these to work out division facts. Many can order and write numbers on a hundred-square. Most of the younger pupils write two-digit numbers satisfactorily when reminded helpfully by a puppet. Supported by the teachers' good emphasis on relevant technical vocabulary, pupils are extending their range of mathematical words well. For instance, they used accurate vocabulary when explaining their weighing activity in Year 1, where more-able pupils are just starting to balance objects against grams. Pupils' ability with shape and measurers is sound. In Year 2, they could satisfactorily record data on a block graph. Helped by the good, clear explanation of the teacher, about a quarter of the class were beginning to understand scale and draw block graphs where each square represents two objects rather than one. Staff give pupils good opportunities to talk about the methods they use and standards for this part of the mathematics curriculum is satisfactory. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and whose with English as an additional language is good.

88. The standards being achieved by Year 6 pupils are well below average for all parts of the mathematics National Curriculum. Standards in Year 3 are better for their age than in other junior classes or Year 7. In Year 3, pupils are generally nearer to the national expectations. By the age of 11, most pupils can demonstrate some understanding and knowledge of basic computation. Many pupils are still at the stage of needing to practise adding and subtracting numbers to twenty. Many of the older pupils are unsure of their number bonds and multiplication tables up to ten, and teachers do not sufficiently stress the need to learn them. This lack of knowledge is holding them back. It slows down the number of examples that they complete in a lesson, for example, when working out whether a number is a factor of another number. Overall, pupils' ability with numeracy is well below the level it should be in Years 4 to 6. While levels of understanding are well below average in each of these age group there are a minority of pupils who are in line with expected standards and a few who exceed it. For example, in Year 6 a few more-able pupils are able to change fractions into percentages quickly in their heads and confidently carry out more complex calculations with a calculator, checking their answer by doing the same sum different ways.
89. Teachers are rightly equipping pupils with a variety of methods both for oral and written calculations, and they do this well. Teachers generally give good encouragement to pupils to explain their methods, and most pupils can do this fairly clearly, for example, when working on problems involving capacity and estimating lengths of time. They collect data and use an appropriate range of graphs and charts, but rarely use line graphs to display their data or use a computer. Teachers help pupils well to develop the appropriate skills to work independently and follow their own lines of enquiry, for example, when they use the digits 7 and 10 and the operators + and – to make all the totals from 1 to 10. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in all age groups.
90. In Year 7, pupils build satisfactorily on previous work. Teachers provide them with a satisfactory range of mathematical tasks and some interesting problems, such as working out the area of cloth needed for a set of different-sized towels. They can identify angles and symbols for geometric shapes, measure angles accurately and, with support, work out the internal angles of triangles and quadrilaterals. More-able pupils are well supported and manage work at a higher level. Pupils' work satisfactorily covers all parts of the mathematical curriculum for their age group.
91. In all age groups of the school, pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is underdeveloped. Little use is made of other subjects to support pupils' mathematical development.
92. The quality of teaching is good. In infant classes 80 per cent of the teaching was good and 20 per cent was very good. In junior classes all the teaching was at least satisfactory with 20 per cent good and 33 per cent very good or better. In Year 7 it was good. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. Lessons are well planned. The mental arithmetic part of the lessons and the methods that teachers employ to ensure that all children contribute are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Teachers generally have good regard to the differing abilities of pupils within the classes. They remind pupils of previous learning well and mostly give clear exposition and timings. Resources are carefully prepared and ready to use, such as the bags containing the white boards and number fans. Teachers share the learning objectives with their classes and return to them at the end of the lesson, reinforcing pupils' knowledge and confidence well by talking about what they have learnt and achieved. The teachers' knowledge is generally

good and sometimes very good or excellent. Teachers provide pupils with many good opportunities to work co-operatively. The marking of exercise books is generally good. Individual and group targets are regularly set and updated and many pupils are clear what their personal target is. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with limited understanding of English, and to the smooth running of the classrooms.

93. Systems for assessment and record keeping are good. The record keeping is clear and easy to administer using the key objectives for each year. The staff in infant classes use the school systems very well indeed. A wide range of pupil assessments is undertaken. National tests are well used to analyse overall weaknesses and trends, and to set targets for improvement. Teaching and learning are monitored in lessons. The good, enthusiastic coordinator is clear about what has been achieved and what still needs to be done in implementing the existing planned programme focusing on improving pupils' mental and problem solving skills.

SCIENCE

94. On the evidence of the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment is close to the national average at the ages of seven, well below by the age of 11 and well below at the end of Year 7. Pupils enter the school at four years of age with levels of attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world that are well below average. Overall, pupils' level of achievement is good during their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in relation to their prior learning in whole class lessons and very good progress, when supported by teaching assistants.
95. When national averages are published, the results of teachers' formal assessment of the standards of seven-year-olds carried out this year are likely to show that attainment is average compared to all schools and above average judged against schools working in similar circumstances. The significant improvement in the school's leadership, new ways of assessing pupils' progress and higher expectations have resulted in much better standards than when the school was last inspected. At that time standards were well below average.
96. Pupils' attainment at the ages of seven is close to the average and overall, progress is good. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding and in their investigation skills. They show strengths in all the different aspects of science. In investigative work, the good demands placed on them by their teachers enable pupils to explain in simple terms how the tests they do are fair. This is usually something that older pupils do. Pupils work above the expected level in recognising that forces can help to speed up the movement of the wheeled toys with which they experiment. In their study of living things, pupils work well to identify how different creatures are adapted to suit their environment, but have not investigated the conditions needed for animals and plants to survive.
97. Improvements in the quality of education will take longer to be reflected in the results of the national tests taken by 11 year olds. The information held by the school suggests that standards for this age group will remain well below average compared to all schools and below average in relation to similar schools, when national data are published later this year. Inspectors' judgements confirm this. The standards of pupils aged 11 are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. When pupils are given the opportunity to plan and carry out an investigation, as in a Year 6 class investigation of circuits, they work with a high

level of concentration in small groups and demonstrate that they can devise and carry out investigations successfully. Taking responsibility for their own learning like this fosters their personal development as well as promoting their knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the natural world, but limited knowledge of materials and their properties. Pupils respond well to the challenges set for them in carrying out experiments. They find out whether the size of particles affects the rate at which substances dissolve. They identify variables such as the thickness of wire used in electrical investigations, but do not easily explain how to alter one variable without affecting the others. These pupils do above average work in understanding that if opposing forces operating on an object are equal it will be stationary. However they do limited work about materials and their properties, which restricts their knowledge in these areas.

98. Year 7 pupils attain standards in line with those expected of their age group. They show strengths in their knowledge of preparing slides and using microscopes to find things out. They apply their understanding of acidity and alkalinity appropriately in predicting the outcomes of experiments. by commenting. Pupils show some weaknesses in their grasp of facts about the solar system.
99. An analysis of pupils' work shows that average and more able pupils make good progress through the infant years. Less able pupils make very good gains, thanks to opportunities to attempt work at a higher level. Boys and girls make similar progress. The achievements of pupils in the junior classes and Year 7 are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. Not enough opportunities are provided for infant pupils to develop their number skills in science lessons, and junior pupils do not write at sufficient length when recording their work. Teachers miss opportunities in their marking of pupils' books to raise standards in written English. Throughout the school pupils do not use computers enough in science work.
100. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan together well in year groups to provide pupils of the same age in different classes with equal opportunities to learn. Good and often imaginative methods are chosen to make learning interesting and relevant. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to science work, listening well and taking an active part in lessons. Year 6 pupils observed by inspectors were asked to act as detectives, applying their knowledge of electrical circuits to solve a problem set by a (real) high-ranking police officer. Although teachers try to include all pupils, sometimes they do not always expect enough of higher attaining pupils. In a few lessons too little attention is paid to how well time is used and pupils do not complete as much work as they could.
101. The coordination of science is good. The new coordinator has developed a very good system for judging how well pupils in the infant classes learn in each lesson. This is helping to make teachers aware of the progress pupils make. In the junior classes and Year 7 the informal methods of assessing progress do not always ensure that tasks are matched closely enough to the needs of different groups and individual abilities. The coordinator is clear about what has been achieved and what still needs to be done in implementing the existing planned programme focusing on improving assessment of pupils in junior classes and pupils' recording skills.

ART AND DESIGN

102. Pupils attain standards expected for their age at both seven and 11 years of age and by the end of Year 7. The standards of seven-year-olds have been maintained since the last inspection and those of 11 year olds and pupils in Year 7 have improved. Some

improvement is evident in opportunities for junior pupils to experience three-dimensional and large scale work, which was a criticism in the last report. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were seen to be making sound progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

103. A strong emphasis on three-dimensional work results in some good quality examples from infant pupils. In Year 1 imaginative arrangements of feathers and pebbles to form temporary sculptures arise out of the enthusiasm of both teacher and pupils. By the age of seven, pupils produce lively designs for clay tiles, which they decorate with brightly coloured paints. Pupils draw from direct observation both in the school grounds and at the zoo. Pupils learn about tactile elements and use their knowledge to produce good pictures in imitation of Van Gogh's work, applying a mixture of glue and paint with paint spreaders. They make suitable use of computer programs to draw and 'paint'. There is little evidence that pupils have studied artists from non-European cultures.
104. By the age of 11, pupils work in a variety of styles and media confidently. Their pictures using charcoal on a background of paint applied with sponges are of good quality, and show an appropriate understanding of tone. Pupils co-operate effectively in large-scale work such as mosaics of fishes. They evaluate their own work and that of others, writing responses such as, 'It makes me feel bored because there is no movement.' Pupils in Year 5 make good progress in painting from life, thanks to the teachers' good knowledge of the subject and the good materials available for pupils to use. Artists from different cultures are studied, including native Australians. A very valuable unit of work in Year 5 allows pupils to examine architecture over the last millennium, encompassing different movements and cultures.
105. In Year 7, pupils achieve standards that are at the expected level for their age. They have a good understanding of terms such as middle ground, vanishing point and wash. More able pupils have well-developed drawing skills which they show in studies of a church with trees in the foreground. Their use of shading is inconsistent, with good attention being paid to defining the form of trees, but not the building. In other landscapes done in poster colours pupils' work shows good form and composition, but too little awareness of colour balance.
106. No lessons were observed in infant classes or in Year 7, but the scrutiny of pupils' work in sketchbooks and displays, the examination of planning and discussions with pupils suggests that the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory in the junior classes. Pupils enjoy the lessons and work purposefully, with care. In Years 5 and 6 good quality lessons were seen. Appropriate stress is placed on getting pupils to appraise their work and form judgements about the work of others' including famous artists. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 the sharing of pupils' drawings of themselves as the work proceeded helped to raise overall standards. Good quality marking of work in Year 4 contributes strongly to improving attainment. Teachers spend a good deal of time in lessons helping individuals and ensuring that all pupils feel included. Sometimes, however, teachers do not challenge more able pupils enough, leaving them to complete the same task as the rest of the class instead of setting higher expectations.
107. The knowledgeable, new subject coordinator has made a good start by drafting a new policy. She has led staff meetings in which the standards that pupils achieve were discussed and agreed, and has audited and organised resources. Sensible plans have been made to review the programme of work followed by pupils. The lack of agreed procedures for assessing how well pupils learn makes it difficult for teachers to match tasks to the needs of different groups and individuals. Teaching is not monitored by lesson observation. However,

improvements in the assessment procedures and observation of teaching are planned and are intended to put the school in a position to raise standards further. Some use is made of the library to find information about different artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection for infant pupils and improved for junior pupils and pupils in Year 7. The standards that pupils achieve are in line with those typical for pupils of these ages. No judgement could be made on the quality of teaching as no lessons were seen. Due to curriculum organisation there was no teaching seen so judgements on standards are based on discussions with pupils and work scrutiny. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress. In the last two years planning and teaching has been reviewed to match the national guidelines adopted by the school.
109. A strength of the teaching is the way that teachers encourage pupils to use design and technology to solve problems that are relevant to them. By the age of seven, pupils design and make a winch to rescue pets from danger. This problem came about in response to the popular story *The Rescue Party* by Nick Butterworth. In discussions, pupils are keen and interested in their work; they say that the subject is fun and enjoyable. All feel well supported and resources are accessible. Teachers encouraged pupils to look for resources where necessary. For example, they search for twigs in the school grounds to make roofs for houses. Infant pupils use a variety of tools and resources competently. When making puppets, they choose appropriate materials for the job, designing it with paper first and then with felt. Pupils in Year 2 use a good variety of tools and resources to make the winding mechanism and the winches they make work well.
110. Older pupils in Year 5 analyse different objects and their uses successfully. They choose an object such as a car and learn to write step-by-step instructions on how to make it. Pupils in Year 6 speak proudly and enthusiastically about Tibetan-style houses on display. The pupils, based on their geographical knowledge designed these and drawings show the front elevation and the layout plan. Drawings are measured accurately and drawn to scale, linking well to mathematical learning. Pupils are very clear about why they choose certain components and materials; they make bricks with clay and use twigs for the roof. Pupils have some ideas about how they can make the houses stronger, however they are not clear about evaluating their work and making changes. Pupils in Year 7 are clear about the strategies they need to produce a good design. They undertake work related to food, by designing snacks such as pasties. They write recipes and show awareness of health and safety.
111. Insufficient use is made of English in pupils' writing and opportunities are missed to teach pupils how to communicate in an instructional style. Resources to fully extend this age group are limited. Teachers make good links with other subjects such as geography to develop pupils' design and technology skills. They make sure pupils are aware of how the weather impacts on home designs. There are some weaknesses in teaching, for example in teaching pupils to evaluate their products. Teachers do not include evaluation and modification sufficiently in their planning to enable pupils to analyse their work in a logical way and explain how and why they would make changes. There are too few direct links to information and communication technology within the subject.
112. Subject coordination is good. The coordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and has worked hard to support teachers throughout the school, but in particular those working with

older pupils. There is a clear subject development plan that identifies what the school needs to do to improve and develop the subject. This places the school in a good position to be able to continue to raise standards. Systems for assessment have yet to be devised so that the information they offer can help teachers pitch work at different levels. Teaching is not monitored by lesson observation. However, improvements in the assessment procedures and observation of teaching are planned and are intended to put the school in a position to raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

113. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were seen to be making sound progress, and standards in geography have improved for infant, junior and Year 7 pupils since the previous inspection. The work produced by pupils in the subject is typical for their age and their knowledge and understanding of all aspects are satisfactory. Teachers have improved the way they plan what pupils learn and do, by using national guidelines that enable pupils to learn more effectively step by step.
114. A good feature of teaching is the use of fieldwork in the locality and further afield. As a result pupils enjoy the subject and gain an understanding of its relevance. By the age of 7, pupils use large-scale maps of the locality to follow routes. They identify the school and the streets where they live. They learn to identify land and sea on a map and recognise the shape of the United Kingdom. They begin to compare their own locality with another successfully. Their work shows the differences in life styles between children in Tocuaro and children in Bletchley.
115. In Year 5, pupils confidently discuss the difference between Milton Keynes and Plymouth focusing on geographical features, such as the harbour. By the age of 11, pupils show concern for the environment through a well-planned visit to the *Blue Lagoon Nature Reserve*. Following the visit, pupils wrote to the council expressing concerns about the dumping of rubbish here. Pupils examine the school environment and consider ways of bringing about improvements. They have a sound knowledge of mountains and can locate mountain ranges on a map. Pupils in Year 7 increase their knowledge and understanding when writing questionnaires to discover the viability of a new leisure centre in the area. They investigate settlements in greater depth analysing why particular localities are chosen. They study volcanic eruptions and the effect these have on the immediate area.
116. The teaching is satisfactory although there are some weaknesses. In the best lessons, pupils feel their ideas are valued; this is because of the good relationships teachers have with pupils. This encourages pupils to concentrate on their work and try their best. Teachers include all pupils in the lessons, particularly during question and answer sessions; this helps them all to concentrate and remain focused. Teachers make sure pupils are clear about what they are going to learn as each lesson begins and they review the objective at the close of the lesson. This ensures that pupils are clear about what they are learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to work together when they look for places on the map of Bristol in Year 3 and 4, for example. Teachers make good links between geography and other subjects. These strategies help pupils secure their knowledge and understanding. For example, teachers in Year 2 use one of the *Katy Morag* stories to illustrate how islands are different from mainland. Pupils learn to compare differences between lifestyles. Most teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and make the subject interesting particularly when dealing with local issues. Recently pupils in Year 6 visited the

proposed site of the *Green MK Centre*, which is to be developed as huge a waste disposal unit. Teachers plan activities that interest the pupils, such as devising an advert supporting the project or objecting to it. This links well with the literacy lessons where pupils are encouraged to write advertisements using persuasive language. Teachers take good advantage of pupils' enthusiasm to encourage them to discuss ideas for and against the project. However pupils' underdeveloped language skills, including limited vocabulary, prevent them from expressing their ideas clearly.

117. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of geography. The presentation of work is not as good as it should be. When teachers assess pupils' work they mark it often with simply a tick, usually without a useful comment. This does not give pupils an awareness of how well they have learned and it does not encourage them to do better. Pupils in Year 6 use the computer for writing texts; they use the web site, but overall teachers do not use information and communication technology sufficiently to support pupils' learning in geography. Some teachers link geography skills into work in other subjects, but many opportunities are missed for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills.
118. The coordinator is new in post and has good knowledge about the subject. She is enthusiastic about improving standards and has a clear view of what needs to be done. There is an action plan for geography and the coordinator has already achieved some of the aims. She has undertaken an audit and has identified some gaps in the resources for junior pupils and Year 7 pupils. She has written a new policy to match the newly established curriculum. She has begun to sample pupils' work for moderation purposes and is developing a portfolio to support teachers. Teaching is not yet monitored by lesson observation. Assessment procedures are inconsistent and do not provide sufficient information on pupils' attainment. However, improvements in the assessment procedures and observation of teaching are planned and are intended to put the school in a position to raise standards further. Some use is made of the library to find information about different countries.

HISTORY

119. Standards are better now than at the time of the last inspection. Last time the school was inspected, the standard of history was below the nationally expected level at the age of seven and well below at the age of 11 and in Year 7. Now standards are broadly in line with those expected for both the seven and 11 year-olds and Year 7 pupils, which is a very good improvement. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were seen to be making good progress, although from a low starting point. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory, with some good and very good teaching seen in Years 4 and 5.
120. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the past, having entered the Year 1 classes with little knowledge or understanding of the subject. They are helped satisfactorily to develop their sense of events and historical people through work on Mary Seacole and Louis Braille. Pupils are starting to understand why people acted as they did; for example, Florence Nightingale with her pioneer work in hospitals. They visit a museum to learn about the difference between old and new objects by looking at toy bears and old and new household appliance such as cookers and ranges. Helped by these good learning experiences, pupils are able to answer questions satisfactorily about the past.

121. The good progress continues between ages seven and 11. Teachers provide satisfactory, and some times good or very good, opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of chronology. They increasingly recognise that the past can be divided into the periods that they study, such as the Vikings or the 1960s and the differences between then and now. By the age of 11, pupils have a reasonable knowledge of the dates of the periods they have studied and the majority can recall many facts they have learnt in their recent work. For instance, they can explain many differences between Victorian times and the present day, in terms of transport, methods of teaching, and child labour. Pupils have clearly enjoyed the work and been interested in it. They can explain about changes within the period and how improvements came about by reform and Acts of Parliament, but few understand clearly how the past can be represented or interpreted differently or explain which sources of information are likely to be more reliable. Teachers use exciting and novel methods to help pupils learn and understand. In Year 5, pupils thoroughly interrogated a 'visitor' who was dressed as a 'Hippie' from the 1960's. The visitor turned out to be a teacher dressed up, but with very good knowledge, able to answer all their questions and help them learn very well. From this very good lesson, teachers ensured a high level of involvement, understanding, and later recording.
122. In the Year 7 class, these satisfactory standards continue with pupils learning about medieval times, the feudal system and the Black Death. Throughout the school, pupils in the early stages of learning English and pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the lessons and make progress similar to their classmates.
123. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The range and quality of the curriculum provided is satisfactory. As a planning framework, the school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines, which they have adapted to their own needs satisfactorily. Teachers are effective in helping pupils acquire knowledge and understand the reasons why things happen as they did, particularly towards the top of the school. In some classes, there is a good focus on changes within and between periods of history. Teachers are less good at helping pupils have an appreciation of key features of a historical period. The emphasis on the teaching of skills to aid historical enquiry is not consistently strong throughout the school. In some years there is a strong emphasis on visits to historical buildings and museums, and on visitors, which all help bring the subject alive.
124. Subject coordination is sound. The coordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and has worked purposefully to support teachers throughout the school. There has been some opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject. There is a subject development plan that identifies what the school needs to do to improve and develop the subject. This places the school in a good position to be able to continue to raise standards. The statements from the programmes of study are well used as a base for assessment and ongoing record keeping. Assessment is used very well in infant classes and overall its use is satisfactorily but this is not used in junior classes. Computers are used very little to support the subject and pupils have too few opportunities to read for information or to write at length in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. The attainment of pupils at the age of seven and 11 and at the end of Year 7 is close to national expectations. The standards of seven-year-olds have been maintained since the last inspection and those of 11 year olds have improved. Taking into account the relatively small proportion of pupils who have computers at home, all pupils, including pupils with special

educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achievement is good. Boys and girls make similar progress. The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed effectively, except that records of attainment are still not used to adapt planning.

126. At the age of seven, pupils are confident in the use of a 'mouse' and can select items on the screen. They work confidently to find things out using computers and are beginning to appreciate the impact of control technology in everyday life. In a lesson for Year 2, the teacher's clear explanations and good questioning helped pupils to learn about animals using compact discs and express opinions about finding information in this way. They work at a good level in giving commands to achieve particular effects. They do this both on the computer, instructing a 'turtle' to get to the birthday party, and with a programmable toy on the floor. Pupils achieve good results using an art program to produce Christmas cards, but they lack experience of working with music and in discussing the use of computers outside school.
127. At the age of 11, pupils have appropriate skills in word processing, and can save their own work, find information on the CD Rom, and use icons and menus. They gain good experience of exchanging information using computers for example, in emailing Bedfordshire police to find out about the dangers of abusing drugs. Pupils work effectively with spreadsheets, recording information and using formulas to find the cost of taking different numbers of children to see a show. Their work on programs that simulate life in Roman times helps improve their knowledge of history. They use computers to design their own newspapers and web-site pages and have experience of creating presentations using sound in conjunction with text and graphics. Some do not have much knowledge and understanding of the use of computers in business and commerce.
128. In Year 7 pupils standards are in line with those expected of their age group. A particular strength of their work is their use of digital cameras to add to the personal profiles they create as part of a 'leaving school' project. They import the photographs and combine them with the text they produce using word-processing skills. Pupils also compose music. One pupil chose to call hers 'Traffic Jam'.
129. The scrutiny of pupils' books shows that there are some good examples of computer skills being developed in other subjects. Stories are written on laptop computers in Year 6 English lessons, and Year 5 pupils use the British Museum web-site to support their history work. However, this sort of provision is limited and is not sufficiently well planned for in all subjects. As a result, limited use is made of pupils' information and communication technology skills in other subjects and computers in classrooms are under-used at times.
130. Not enough teaching was seen in the infant classes to make valid judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. No lessons were observed in Year 7. Teaching and learning are good in the junior classes. Teachers plan and conduct lessons confidently. They question pupils well to ensure that the key points are understood. Their good discipline results in pupils listening well and concentrating hard, often for long periods. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that not all the tasks that are set for them are appropriate for example, pupils in Year 4 are asked to draft an email on paper rather than trying it on screen. Teachers circulate well in lessons to try to include all pupils, but do not always succeed. More able pupils are not always challenged effectively and this slows the progress they make. Too little use is made of written prompts to remind pupils of the steps they need to follow. This detracts from the speed at which more able pupils can work.

131. The provision for working in this subject has improved considerably since the last time the school was inspected. A special computer room has been created and the school has enhanced access to the Internet by buying a 'broadband' contract. There is much interest and enthusiasm for the subject amongst both teachers and pupils. Teachers bring their own laptop computers to school, 'pooling' them to allow groups of pupils to use them in classrooms. Several teachers are co-operating in the creation of a web-site for the school.
132. The school has made good use of local education authority advisers to check the quality of teaching and learning. The coordinator for this subject has been absent ill for some time, but has supported her colleagues well hitherto. The national training for teaching computer skills has boosted teachers' confidence significantly. The school has made very good use of the money available to it and plans to improve the quality of machines available for use in classrooms, and to fill gaps in the provision of software, for example, to support teaching in science. The lack of agreed procedures for assessing how well pupils learn makes it difficult for teachers to match tasks to the needs of different groups and individuals. Teaching is not monitored by lesson observation. However, improvements in the assessment procedures and observation of teaching are planned and are intended to put the school in a position to raise standards further. Little use is made of the library to find information about different aspects of the subject.

MUSIC

133. At the last inspection standards in music matched national expectations in Year 2, Year 6 and in Year 7. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were seen to be making sound progress in infant classes and good progress in junior classes and in Year 7. Subject provision has been improved and pupils attain standards expected for their age at seven but above them at 11 and in Year 7. Specialist teaching in junior classes and in Year 7 enhances the progress pupils' make.
134. There is a music room for junior pupils and one for infant pupils that house a good collection of both tuned and untuned percussion instruments including instruments from other cultures, as well as a growing collection of CDs. Pupils listen carefully, both to commercial recordings and to each other, and handle instruments with respect. By the age of seven, pupils can clap simple rhythms, model simple notation and perform for other pupils in the class. Lessons are a good balance of listening and performing and develop both skills effectively. The quality of singing in the infant stage is similar to that of most pupils of this age. In whole school assemblies it is tuneful and expressive. Most follow and maintain the beat, showing appreciation of the melody. Pupils are developing an appropriate repertoire of songs and enjoy singing. Talking to pupils reveals a satisfactory knowledge of pitch, duration, tempo and dynamics, that they enjoy composing and playing simple rhythms and that they can name pieces of music.
135. By the age of 11, pupils learn to recognise and repeat rhythm patterns, which vary in tempo and include rests. They identify and copy rhythms carefully when listening to music. Pupils develop the skills of music appreciation through listening to a wide range of music. They are able to describe in simple terms how music makes them feel and what occasion they think the music was written for. Many pupils have some difficulty in expressing themselves clearly, as they are able to use only a limited descriptive vocabulary. However, because they enjoy the subject they persist with their efforts and are well supported by their teachers. Pupils in Year 6 sing 'Problem Child' well with a strong focus on good posture, clear diction and

controlled breathing. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary associated with music. They are able to compose music using simple graphic notation as they compose 'The Breakfast Club' song using keyboards. Pupils respond to music enthusiastically and have confidence in composing their own songs and tunes.

136. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is consistently good in junior classes, which are taught by the subject coordinator who is very skilled in music. The teacher plans good opportunities to develop pupils' listening and appraisal skills through listening to, identifying and evaluating a variety of music styles. The teacher's clear explanations develop pupils' understanding of simple notation and in Year 7 they play keyboards effectively developing their own jazz riff, practising the musical elements. The teacher uses, and encourage pupils to use, correct terms; for example, 'chords', 'bar' and 'triads'. Junior pupils sing expressively, with improving control of diction and phrasing, and sing 'partner songs' with some success. Effective teaching happens when good class management, the exciting use of instruments such as keyboards, and very good relationships all motivate pupils to try hard.
137. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets statutory requirements. The school uses its own scheme of work to plan appropriately for progression and continuity. This has been adapted recently to meet the specific needs of the school. Assessment however is inconsistent and little information is recorded of pupils' achievements. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and provides good leadership. He gives good support to those teachers who feel uncertain about teaching music and there has been some in-house training for all staff during the year. However, subject leadership is somewhat diluted through a lack of opportunities to monitor teaching in infant classes. As a result the coordinator does not have an overview of teaching and learning, in order to identify strengths and areas for development. Visiting musicians, concert performances and extra-curricular recorder activities enriches the curriculum. A number of pupils are taught to play the violin by a peripatetic teacher. Resources are adequate and accessible to all. Music enhances pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Literacy skills are developed effectively as pupils read songs, discussions and developing a musical vocabulary. Numeracy skills are used appropriately, when pupils count in beats to keep in time. The use of ICT is developing appropriately through the use of keyboards and computer programs. Pupils of all abilities are included in all activities and have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy these opportunities for extra-curricular music and they enhance the musical provision of the school. Little use is made of the library to find information about aspects of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. The appointment of a coordinator with very good qualifications and knowledge in sports has given the subject the boost that it needed. The previous inspection found that for the younger pupils, in the infant classes, standards were below those generally found, while for the older, in junior classes, they were well below the expected standard. This is no longer the case. Overall, standards are now at the level expected for pupils at the age of seven and 11 with some pupils at 11 considerably exceeding them in areas such as badminton, swimming and athletics. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards in Year 7. The coordination of the subject is very good.
139. The last report commented on the lack of teachers' subject expertise, said lessons lacked challenge, did not build progressively on previous learning and teachers' expectations were low. None of this is now the case. It was not possible to see all the components parts of the physical education syllabus being taught. Therefore, the overall judgement on the quality of

the teaching, attainment and progress of pupils is made on the limited range of lessons seen, discussion with pupils and teachers, and an examination of teachers' planning and record keeping for all aspects of the subject.

140. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the infant stage. Pupils are able to bounce large balls into a hoop for their partners to catch using a two handed overhead throw with enough accuracy for their partner to be able to catch it. They make up their own games to practise their skills further, and invent good methods of scoring it with their partners. In badminton they develop their racquet skills using balloons with good emphases from the teacher on watching the balloon and controlling it. Most pupils show a reasonable level of skill and a few are good. This Year 2 class is just completing the first level of the Badminton Association of England's award.
141. Pupils make satisfactory progress through junior classes. A considerable minority of pupils exceeds these expected standards in areas such as badminton, swimming and athletics. In swimming about three-quarters of the pupils achieve at least the nationally expected standard of swimming 25 metres unaided by the time they are 11. Pupils work with enjoyment and energy to improve their own performance, in terms of variety of movement, quality and accuracy; for example, when playing dribbling and throwing team games. Most pupils listen and follow instructions carefully.
142. Teaching is good. A strength is the careful planning of lessons that systemically builds one on another to develop pupils' skills in effective ways. These plans have also helped raise teachers' expectations, which are now high. The range of sports has improved, too. Many teachers have increased their subject knowledge and expertise by undertaking training in areas such as badminton. A good feature of lessons seen was the way that teachers, through a wide and challenging range of quick activities, gradually improve pupils' skills. Teachers set the right tone for the lessons by changing into appropriate clothing and this makes them able to demonstrate skills well, such as ball control in basketball. Occasionally the demonstration and talking takes too long and pupils cool down. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate aspects that make an effective performance, such as retrieving a rolling ball. They generally give good attention to health and safety aspects, such as warming up at the start of a lesson. As a result, pupils clearly understand the need to warm muscles and exercise the heart. Some classes have good routines for this. Pupils in Year 2 showed great enthusiasm and gave careful attention to the teacher's warm up instructions, where they jogged until they were out of breath and played a 'snowball fight' with fluffy soft balls. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to develop social and co-operative skills. Higher up the school, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work in teams, supporting one another, co-operating well in mixed girl/boy groups when asked to do so and giving helpful hints to each other. Currently, pupils who do not have the correct footwear sit working in school rather than being asked to watch for particular features during the lesson and evaluate what they see. Although there is a good system for assessment, not all teachers use it consistently.
143. Teaching assistants undertake their role effectively, helping all pupils to join in, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. This enables them to make progress in line with their peers. In one instance, a teaching assistant enabled a child to take part fully in an exciting and challenging lesson that the pupil would otherwise not have been able to join in.

144. The enthusiastic coordinator manages the subject very well. He has put together good, detailed plans for every lesson. These plans have considerably improved teachers' knowledge and skills by showing them what sports skills to cover and how to teach them. However, although the scheme is fully implemented, assessment of pupils' abilities is not yet firmly established in all classes, although there is a clear action plan for this to happen. Consequently, in these classes this sometimes prevents teachers from planning the next stage of learning by building on the work pupils have learnt in the previous lessons. At present, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, which limits the coordinators' effectiveness in gaining an overview of the subject across the school. This is planned for the future. The range and quality of the curriculum provided is good. Extra-curricular activities make a very significant contribution to pupils' games skills and to their spiritual and social development. The school has 11 sports clubs that involve many pupils of all ages from 7 to 12 that are organised by a dedicated core of the school staff. The staff also make a very good contribution to extending the skills of the more able sports players. The school has many regular outside visitors from the world of sport including badminton and rugby. The school has two halls of suitable size for gymnastic and dance lessons and provides a good surface, although it is less useful when classes of the older pupils practise baton-changing skills as part of athletics. There are good changing facilities. The outdoor hard surface is large but the grassed areas are not suitable for lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. Standards in religious education have been maintained for pupils aged seven and meet the required standards prescribed by the Milton Keynes Agreed Syllabus. Standards for pupils aged 11 and pupils in Year 7 remain below what is normally expected. This is mainly due to the lack of confidence teachers of junior pupils have in delivering aspects of the subject, particularly spirituality. As a result, pupils have not had enough opportunities to consider spiritual ideas in lessons and can offer very few opinions about religious ideas. In recent months religious education has had an improved focus with junior pupils and pupils in Year 7. This places the subject in a good position for improvement and development. The coordinator has identified staff training needs and has begun a programme of staff development to improve learning opportunities within religious education.
146. At the age of seven, pupils talk confidently about places that are special to them such as the local Christian church and explain why this building is special. They know about Christian symbolism, such as the cross, through direct experience and have a knowledge of artefacts used in celebrations, including the chalice and candles. Staff in the school offer good support to pupils to help their understanding of different religions. For example, a Muslim member of staff shows infant pupils how Muslims pray and demonstrates the importance of the prayer mat. Pupils use the computer to make their own colourful mats.
147. Pupils in Year 5 enjoy religious education and improve their knowledge as they compare a Christian wedding with a Muslim wedding enthusiastically. They look in awe at the sari, hear Muslim wedding music and see Muslim wedding photographs. The information results in focused and sensible questioning by the pupils. By the age of 11, when studying the Victorians in Year 6, pupils show a clear understanding as to why Doctor Barnardo and General Booth were each committed to their Faith. They realise that these people were driven by their Christian ideas to do good for others.
148. The school is currently working hard to address spiritual concepts in religious education and these are starting to be linked to other curriculum areas. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 use

pupils' knowledge of climatic conditions to show how clothing reflects different cultures. Pupils see examples of African and Indian clothing and learn to be respectful of people. These ideas support pupils' spiritual and cultural development well. A strength in the teaching is the way infant teachers link religious education to everyday life. Teachers in Year 1 encourage pupils to express their feelings about nature through art. They offer pupils awe-inspiring experiences such as watching a *volcano* erupt or a spider building a web. Pupils then express their feelings through a variety of art media. Teachers make good use of local resources to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are some weaknesses in teaching and these are mainly in older junior classes where, discussion with pupils show that overall they have not had enough opportunities to consider spiritual ideas in lessons and can offer very few opinions about religious ideas. There are too few opportunities for pupils to read for information or to write at length in the subject and the presentation of work is not as good as it should be. Teachers mark pupils' work but do not make comments to help them improve the standard.

149. Teaching is sound overall and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress overall. Teachers' planning is detailed and includes lessons that involve pupils studying main world religions, including festivals and traditions. They do this by making clear comparisons between religions so pupils compare the Torah, the Koran and the Bible and learn similarities among places of worship. Throughout lessons teachers ensure all pupils are fully included especially when asking questions. This ensures all listen and concentrate well. Teachers value all pupils and encourage those of different faiths to express their views and opinions to their classmates. Videos are used well to illustrate how religion impacts on the lives of people. This offers pupils good opportunities to see inside a Jewish home and understand how the family prepares for the Sabbath. The resources in the school are satisfactory and teachers use them well to support lessons. Celebration assemblies are used well to enhance pupils' social and spiritual development.
150. The new subject coordinator who is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about improving the religious education manages the subject effectively. She has a clear view of current standards and what needs to be done to improve, and has been proactive in using work in the school to exemplify standards. The new Locally Agreed Syllabus is due for publication soon and policies, procedures, assessments and resources will be updated accordingly. She supports staff well by monitoring planning and working with individual year groups to improve curriculum content and delivery. At present, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, which limits the coordinators' effectiveness in gaining an overview of the subject across the school. But this is planned for the future.