

INSPECTION REPORT

**FORTY HILL CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Enfield, Middlesex

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102028

Headteacher: Richard Yarwood

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock
21261

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 195558

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Denise Ellis
Date of previous inspection:	6 th May 1997

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18919	John Kerr	Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology History English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12394	Carole May	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art Physical education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Forty Hill Primary School is in a rural area on the outskirts of the London Borough of Enfield. It is a popular, oversubscribed school, about the same size as others of its kind. Its 205 pupils are aged four to 11 years. There is an imbalance of genders in some classes, notably Years 1 and 2. Because of its denominational status, it draws pupils from a wider area than is usual. Children entering Reception in the September after their fourth birthday show a full range of abilities, though, overall, they are assessed as average for their age for baseline purposes. Approximately 17 per cent of pupils receive support from ethnic minority achievement grant funding. Around eight per cent are learning English as an additional language - more than in most schools. None is at an early stage of English language acquisition. Almost nine per cent of the school population is eligible for free school meals, below the national average. About 17 per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs Code of Practice register. A small number, representing 0.5 per cent of the school population, have a statement of special educational need. These figures fall below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Forty Hill is a good school. Children in the Reception year achieve well in all areas relative to their age. They are confident learners, well prepared for transfer to Year 1 at the end of their first school year. Standards in English, mathematics and science in the main school have risen over recent years. By Year 6, all pupils reach expected standards, taking account of their differing capabilities, owed to the frequently good teaching throughout the school. It is also owed to the school's positive ethos, informed by Christian principles. Pupils feel cared for, yet accept the generally high expectations adults have of their behaviour and work. The headteacher leads in expecting all members of the school community to give of their best. He brings many strengths to the school. Leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy head and senior staff are good. All staff work as a team. They are hardworking and committed to common goals. The chair of the governing body together with a committed core of governors works hard on the school's behalf. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Generally good teaching underwrites pupils' enjoyment of school and attitudes to learning. All work hard and achieve better than might be expected, in many lessons.
- Provision for pupils of differing capabilities has improved, with rising standards in English, especially, mathematics and science.
- Good links are made across subjects, so pupils apply literacy and numeracy skills purposefully. Learning is meaningful.
- Pupils' frequently good progress is owed to teachers' very good behaviour management skills.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Quality support from teachers and classroom assistants helps these pupils learn important skills by ensuring they enjoy success.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with strengths in moral and social development. Pupils learn to care for others and to work and play harmoniously together.
- Very good relationships have been established with parents through the headteacher's 'open door' policy.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good, with a range of activities that pupils find stimulating and enjoyable.

What could be improved

- Consistency in planning for pupils of differing capabilities.
- Standards, especially in subjects such as history and art and design.
- The way pupils are withdrawn from lessons for work outside the classroom.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in May 1997. Teaching has improved, overall, and is now mainly good throughout the school. Teachers in all classes plan in line with the latest guidance for the age-range. The implementing of national strategies for literacy and numeracy has helped raise standards in teaching and learning. Teachers' understanding of the demands from different subjects, and how these can be met in the planning of teaching and learning activities, has improved. There is marked improvement, too, in provision for more able pupils in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 and in English for Year 2. This involves withdrawing groups from classes for some lessons. Targets are set for pupils in English and mathematics and the school plans further developments, extending targets to science and information and communication technology, for example, and considering how pupils might be involved in setting their own targets. Standards in geography and history are about the same as at the last inspection. Such non-core subjects have acquired a rather low profile as a result of government initiatives in other areas. Some raising of standards in information and communication technology has resulted from a structured teaching programme. Pupils apply relevant skills to subjects across the curriculum. There is very good improvement in provision for information and communication technology, especially in the range of equipment for classrooms and the newly opened computer suite. Accommodation is much better than before, beneficially affecting school life generally. Parents report how far standards of behaviour have risen, especially in Years 5 and 6, enhancing the school's ethos. The 'open door' policy for parents introduced by the headteacher is much appreciated.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	C	B	B	B
Science	C	D	C	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table illustrates pupils' well above average performance in English compared to their peers in all and similar schools in last year's statutory tests for eleven-year-olds. They also did well in mathematics, and in science compared to their peers in similar schools. Science results were broadly in line with the national picture. Over five years, the school's results are broadly in line with the national trend. Girls do better than boys in English, but less well than boys in mathematics over this period. Both genders are about on a par in science, following the national pattern. Inspection findings show no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. They uphold the good picture in English and show that pupils reach good standards. Most achieve as expected for their age and a significant number do better. Improvements are seen in science, with standards judged good, overall. In mathematics, pupils reach standards broadly in line with expectations for eleven-year-olds, although, again, a significant number do better. The school sets realistic statutory targets in light of test results and other assessment data. Targets set in English for 2001 were exceeded. Those for mathematics were missed by a margin representing a very small number of pupils. Results can, of course, fluctuate markedly where the number of pupils taking tests in a year group is relatively small, as here. Inspection findings show that pupils in Year 2 reach above average standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening and science. In mathematics, standards are broadly in line with expectations. More able pupils exceed expectations at times. However, a significant number of average and below average pupils achieve below expectations in some lessons. No differences were found in the performance of girls and boys. Wide variations in cohorts from year-to-year are evident. For example, the current Year 6 and Year 2 cohorts have substantial numbers of pupils of lower ability. Whilst these pupils mostly do well relative to their prior attainment (especially in Year 6), the imbalance clearly affects standards reached. Pupils of seven and eleven reach broadly average standards in other subjects (such as information and communication technology, music and history) although the oldest do better in the games

strand of physical education – the only strand time-tabled during the inspection. Pupils also reach good standards in swimming, with almost all managing to swim at least the required 25 metres by the end of their primary schooling.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils of all ages enjoy school. They settle to work quickly and frequently manage high levels of concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, overall. Pupils listen attentively, and are generally courteous and polite towards adults and their peers. They are keen to work co-operatively.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are frequently harmonious in classrooms and around the school. Pupils enjoy working and playing together and make good relationships with adults both in and out of classrooms.
Attendance	Good. Pupils arrive at school promptly, which means the school day starts well.

There is a good work ethic in the school. Pupils' generally positive attitude affects their progress in lessons. Even the youngest can organise themselves and the equipment they need. At times, pupils' manage high standards of behaviour, as in assemblies when it is exemplary. A significant minority, in a number of classes, however, find it hard to concentrate and engage fully in learning. These pupils sometimes persist with low-level disruptive behaviour aimed at distracting others. In spite of teachers' considerable behaviour-management skills, the pace of a lesson can falter, affecting the learning of all in the class.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Very 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.

Teaching is a strength throughout the school, especially in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6. English and mathematics are well taught, with strengths in the teaching of English. Across the school, basic skills' teaching in literacy and numeracy is at least good. At times it is much better than this. Teachers plan really well for pupils to apply key skills to subjects across the curriculum. This planning enhances skills and makes the content of lessons meaningful. Teachers also usefully plan opportunities for pupils to transfer skills from information and communication technology to their other work. At times, though, insecurity in teachers' subject knowledge is evident here. This was seen in the computer suite when a teacher did not match tasks suitably to pupils' understanding, so little progress was made. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need. They match tasks appropriately to needs identified. Pupils make good progress in reaching set goals because of the frequently good extra support they receive, especially in literacy and numeracy. Planning for non-core subjects such as geography and design and technology is satisfactory, overall. On occasion, however, teachers do not take sufficient account of pupils' differing capabilities. The same level of task is given to all pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the Reception class. Satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It is broad, generally balanced and relevant to the age-range.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The early identification of pupils with problems (in learning and/ or behaviour) means they are monitored and supported well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are supported in line with assessments of their learning needs so they make good progress and achieve on a par with monolingual peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall, with strengths in provision for social and moral development. Pupils are taught 'right' from 'wrong' consistently across the school, helped to realise the value of living in diverse communities and of respecting others. Assemblies have a very nice feeling of spirituality and reflection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, overall, with strengths in the personal support and guidance given to pupils. Pupils feel safe and cared for by the adults who work with them.

The very good relationships with parents are a strength of the school. Curricular planning makes useful links across subjects. Non-core subjects have acquired a rather low profile during recent times as the school has responded to government initiatives. Curriculum 'focus weeks' work to redress this imbalance to an extent. They are popular and provide good opportunities for pupils' learning across subjects to be extended. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher brings much expertise to his work. He is a strong leader, well supported by his deputy head and senior managers who work in close partnership with staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors have a sound grasp of their role in monitoring all aspects of the school's work and are committed to raising standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Senior managers have a good overview of the school's work through many monitoring activities. Plans are well in hand to extend the work of subject leaders.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds are allocated for their designated purposes. Financial matters are managed stringently, with good levels of expertise.

Considerable staffing changes at all levels have taken place over recent years. The school now looks forward to greater stability. There are sufficient staff with good levels of expertise to meet pupils' needs. Accommodation has been improved considerably, enhanced by the new computer suite and areas such as the library. Learning resources are sufficient. A stimulating collection of books for guided reading in all classrooms gives pupils great pleasure and makes reading enjoyable. The headteacher has had a significant effect on the school since taking up his post. A thorough analysis of the school's work has led to staff expertise being deployed effectively to strengthen the senior management team. It has also led to greater clarity in subject leaders' responsibilities so as to raise standards in all subjects. The school applies principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school. • The way parents are welcomed in to school. • The ready availability of the headteacher and staff. • The way behaviour has improved since the headteacher took up his post. • The quality of teaching and teachers' high expectations of children's work and behaviour. • The good information given about all aspects of school life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Information about the school's work and children's progress. • Extra-curricular provision.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents in questionnaire responses, by letter, and at the meeting prior to the inspection. They find homework is given regularly in accordance with the school's policy. Teachers often make good links with learning in subjects across the curriculum for children to explore at home. Very good information about the work of the school is given to parents. For example, a user-friendly, informative newsletter reaches them each week. Reports on children's progress each year are of good quality, but the school is reviewing the format of these to see if improvements can be made. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is held during lunch times and after school. These are popular and some are oversubscribed. The school targets information and communication technology well, giving priority to those pupils who do not have access to computers at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. A full range of ability is represented in children entering the Reception class. Baseline assessments, made soon after children start school, using local authority guidelines, find their abilities match those expected of four-year-olds in main areas of learning. These are: communication, language and learning; mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development. Inspection findings are that children make good progress in these areas. In knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development, children's progress is also frequently good and is never less than satisfactory. All speak confidently and listen attentively, in a variety of contexts (as when they explain how to make different kinds of musical sounds). They know how books 'work', and the more able are learning how to read simple words correctly. All know print carries meaning and want to record their ideas in writing. Children with less well-developed skills are beginning to 'write' in a flowing style, making patterns approximating to lines of writing. They count sequentially to high numbers when counting together. Most can count objects one-to-one and the more able do this with numbers to 10. Children skilfully manipulate a computer mouse to arrange shapes to their liking on a screen. In their role-play, they take on different social perspectives, like that of a doctor in the classroom 'surgery', telephoning for help. In physical education lessons and when playing with wheeled toys outside, they generally show good co-ordination skills. They throw and catch beanbags and quoits with fair skill. In all, most are set to achieve Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Particular strengths are noted in children's personal, social and emotional development.
2. Statutory test results in 2001 show seven-year-olds above the national average in reading, broadly in line with this average in writing and below average in mathematics. This pattern of attainment is the same when results are compared to results gained by pupils in similar schools. Differences in standards between girls and boys follow the national trend over five years. So, girls do better than boys in reading and writing and boys are better than girls in mathematics (although the gap, here, is not so marked). Teachers' science assessments find pupils achieving above their peers nationally at the expected Level 2 and well above these peers at the higher Level 3. These assessments show pupils reach very high standards in speaking and listening at the expected level (that is, in the top five percentile of all schools) and well above average at the higher level.
3. Inspection findings support the good picture in English and science for pupils in Year 2. Overall, pupils reach good standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening and science by seven. In mathematics, standards are broadly in line with expectations for this age. More able pupils exceed expectations at times. In some lesson, though, a significant number of average and below average pupils fall below expectations. No differences were found in the performance of girls and boys.
4. Statutory test results for eleven-year-olds show pupils well above the national average in English, above this average in mathematics and broadly in line with this average in science. Compared to similar schools' results, pupils reach well above average standards in English and above average in mathematics and science. Over five years, girls do better than boys in English and boys do better than girls in mathematics. In science, both genders achieve more-or-less on a par. This picture fits national trends, although boys' scores for mathematics are significantly better than the average for all boys, and better than girls in the school. When scores for all three subjects are aggregated over five years, the trend in results is broadly in line with the national trend. Fluctuations are evident over time, but results are rising, especially in English. Inspection findings show no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in these subjects. They uphold the good picture in English and show that pupils reach good standards, overall. Most achieve what is expected for their age and a significant number do better. Improvements are seen in science, with standards also judged good, overall. In mathematics, pupils reach expected standards, given their age, although, again, a significant number do better than expected.
5. The school states that there are wide variations in cohorts from year-to-year to account for variations in test results. Inspection findings agree. For example, the current Year 6 and Year 2 cohorts have substantial numbers of lower ability pupils. While these mostly do well relative to their prior attainment (especially in Year 6), the imbalance affects standards reached, overall. Through its

analyses of last year's test results, the school has found where weaknesses lie in writing and mathematics concerning pupils' achievements at Level 3 for seven-year-olds and Level 5 in mathematics for those of eleven. As a result, more able pupils in Years 2 and 6 are taught separately in some lessons. This strategy successfully pushes these pupils' learning forward. The school sets statutory targets realistically in light of test results at seven and eleven and other assessment data gathered systematically. Targets set in English for 2001 were exceeded, against the school's expectations. All but one pupil actually achieved at least the expected Level 4 and almost half achieved the higher Level 5. Targets for mathematics were missed by a margin representing a very small proportion of pupils.

6. By seven, pupils have secure speaking and listening skills across all subjects. All read texts matched to their abilities and can tackle unknown words (for example, by 'sounding out' initial letters). More able readers extract information from quite demanding texts and have many strategies for unknown words (for example, two boys worked out 'amphibian' and discussed its meaning). When writing, pupils' punctuate correctly, at a basic level, spell many words correctly and guess those they find more difficult. Lower ability pupils need support in such work, but, otherwise, manage well enough. More able pupils re-tell familiar stories, using 'book language' and an awareness of how stories are structured (using "Once upon a time..." for example). In mathematics, most pupils' knowledge of place value and the ordering of numbers to 100 is sound. Pupils have a good grasp of addition and subtraction facts and associated vocabulary. They apply their knowledge to simple problems. Some more able pupils do this, using numbers to 1000. In science, pupils name the main parts of plants and discuss conditions needed for growth. They describe the uses of electricity around a home and explain in simple terms why toy boats float. They are beginning to understand principles informing 'fair testing'.
7. By eleven, pupils across the ability range explain their ideas during class discussions fairly articulately. They present the 'pros' and 'cons' of an argument really well, as when they discuss the effect of harmful substances on the body. Pupils read confidently and with expression. Most can make inferences from a text to reach sensible conclusions, although some of average and below average ability are supported through judicious questioning. For example, pupils realise that too much alcohol will affect a person's actions and might lead to a serious accident (in some circumstances). Pupils understand how to aim their writing at different audiences, to match a task's purposes. More able pupils and some of average ability write at length in sustained, coherent pieces where choice of words and correct punctuation help gain effect. Pupils have a well-developed grasp of place value in large numbers. They show their good knowledge of number patterns through their use of tables. They apply addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to problem solving, quickly and accurately. The more able explain relationships between percentages, decimals and fractions, and convert information on to a pie chart, by using their knowledge of angles and degrees. In science, pupils talk confidently about their studies. They use correct terminology (for example, 'dissolve', 'evaporate', 'condensation') and realise the need for fair testing. Pupils predict likely outcomes for their experiments and generalise from their findings in ways that show they are learning key scientific principles.
8. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need, make good progress in their learning and achieve in line with their prior attainment. This progress is owed to teachers' planning in terms of identified needs and the deployment of support staff to ensure that these are met. Support is consistently available in literacy and numeracy lessons in classes from Year 1 upwards, facilitating pupils' progress. Those with English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve in line with their monolingual peers. No pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition were in school during the inspection.
9. Throughout the school, pupils learn to apply literacy and numeracy skills well to other subjects. In addition to recording factual information researched during history studies, for example, they write imaginatively about what it might have been like to live at a different historical period. Such work is well reflected across the age-range in connection with the school's recent celebrations of its 150th birthday, which strongly stimulated cross-curricular activities where basic skills were applied to different subjects. Pupils use mathematics to organise charts for collecting data and make graphs for science and geography purposes. Similarly, they apply information and communication technology to other subjects, creating useful graphs in their science work. Whilst standards in information and communication technology by Year 2 and Year 6 are only satisfactory, pupils are now gaining

important computer skills in light of much improved provision.

10. Pupils of seven and 11 years of age reach standards at least in line with those expected for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In the only strand of the physical education curriculum seen (games) eleven-year-olds reached above expected standards. Pupils also exceed expectations in swimming by the time they leave school, almost all having managed at least a required 25 metres. Overall, this picture represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. From the Reception class upwards, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are good. The youngest cope well with school routines and show an interest in all they do. Children are happy to choose activities from whatever is on offer and take part enthusiastically in whole-class work. They mix well together and willingly share toys and resources. Parents confirm that their children are keen to come to school.
12. There is a good work ethic throughout the school. Pupils' generally positive attitudes affect their progress in lessons beneficially. They settle to work quickly and follow instructions. Even the youngest show a good capacity to organise themselves and the equipment they need. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers during whole-class work and want to contribute to discussions. They work equally successfully on their own, with a partner or in a group, sharing tasks and materials. Good examples of this are seen during guided reading sessions in all classes, at the start of each day, when concentrated attention to reading is well established. At these times, high levels of co-operation promote a good learning atmosphere, with more able pupils helping others in some instances.
13. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good, overall, and, at times, very good. For example, the youngest children in the Reception class behave consistently well towards others, children and adults, notwithstanding minor disagreements (as when two boys found it hard to share building blocks). Most frequently, pupils are polite and courteous to their peers and to adults who work with them. They work and play harmoniously together. No instances of bullying or harassment were observed during the inspection. Pupils know the importance of seeking adult help if anyone behaves in unacceptable ways. They respond well to adults' frequently high expectations and apply themselves to tasks. A significant minority, in a number of classes, however, find it hard to concentrate and become fully engaged in learning. These pupils sometimes persist with low-level disruptive behaviour aimed at distracting others. In spite of teachers' considerable behaviour-management skills, the pace of a lesson can falter, affecting the learning of all in the class. Often, these few pupils are unaware of how their actions affect others, being concerned only with their own feelings. Nevertheless, during assemblies, all pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They enter the hall and sit listening to music before assembly starts, quietly. They listen hard to the headteacher or the vicar of the local church on some topic connected with the week's theme. Many want to answer questions or give an opinion about what they hear. For example, they listened in 'pin drop' silence when the headteacher explained how Martin Luther King worked against racism to ensure all people are treated with equal respect. They could link these ideas to what is expected in school and how respecting others is important to the life of a school community.
14. Pupils make good relationships with their peers and with teachers and non-teaching members of staff. This is true also of those pupils who sometimes behave inappropriately, as outlined above. Pupils know they are cared for and can seek help from adults. They have a good grasp of what to do when minor accidents happen in the playground at break times or there is a quarrel about who owns a ball in a game, for example. Interactions between pupils and adults at these times are friendly and a concerned audience of friends is often anxious to make sure fairness results. Pupils play well together during break times, older pupils helping to organise games for the younger ones. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have well-developed levels of self-discipline. For example, during a swimming session, Year 5 pupils paid close attention to adults' instructions showing responsible attitudes throughout the lesson, both in the bus and at the pool side. Pupils frequently help the less able or those less physically skilled than themselves. Their responsible attitudes result in very good relationships in class as well as in the playground.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. They carry out classroom tasks willingly, tidying up at the end

of lessons and knowing where equipment belongs. They move around school confidently, taking messages to the secretary's office. Children in the Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes enjoy seeing how quickly they can take the register to the school office, before morning and afternoon sessions. They want to know how far the rest of the class has counted while they have been absent. "But we didn't run!" says a girl in the Reception class when a teacher congratulates them on getting back on the count of 63. Most pupils respond well to high levels of challenge. For example, in a Year 5 music lesson, pupils' group work was very successful with little adult intervention. They were intent on completing tasks and performing to the rest of the class, in spite of noise, knowing they were on trust to work co-operatively. By Year 6, pupils talk enthusiastically and responsibly about the contribution expected from them. In particular, they like being members of the School Council and take this role seriously. As they mature, they respond well to widening opportunities for personal study, as when they do research at home connected with classroom work. At times, however, the development of independent learning skills is hampered, in that pupils are not expected to deal with important concepts by themselves. This was seen in a Year 4 science lesson when adults who supported group work did too many of the tasks involved in setting up a fair test, limiting the impact of the lesson on pupils' learning.

16. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils arrive on time for school, which means that there is an efficient and purposeful start to each day.
17. Overall, the picture presented here is like that of the previous inspection, although parents agree there has been a marked improvement in pupils' behaviour across the school. This improvement is noted, especially, in Years 5 and 6.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is good, overall. As at the previous inspection, there are strengths in the Reception year and in Years 5 and 6. There has, though, been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school. In all, 96 per cent of teaching is judged at least satisfactory. Of this, 38 per cent is of good quality, a further 26 per cent is very good and another four per cent is excellent. Four per cent of all teaching is judged unsatisfactory.
19. In the Reception class, teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory and is most frequently very good. The class teacher and Nursery Nurse work closely together. They have high expectations of children's work and behaviour. Adults' good knowledge of these young children's learning needs underpins basic skills' teaching. Consequently, children make good gains in early literacy and numeracy and in basic information and communication technology. A balance is struck between teacher-directed tasks and children choosing their own activities. For example, whole-class teaching helps children think about mathematical shapes, provoking a girl into forming square and triangular fields when she later plays with toy animals. Adults monitor children formally and informally and use information gained for planning. For example, the Nursery Nurse notes children's responses on an observation sheet as they listen to a story, then decisions are made about how individuals can best be helped take the 'next step' towards the Early Learning Goal in communication, language and literacy.
20. In Years 1 and 2, teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, but is mainly good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory and is very good, overall. Where teaching is good or better, strengths are seen in the way lessons are planned for mixtures of pupils with very different abilities. For example, excellent literacy teaching in Year 6 made sure that all pupils took part in whole-class discussion, referring back to prior learning, then grasped well the task they had to do. So, lower ability pupils succeeded with a task requiring them to apply their understanding in ways they found quite demanding. In the better lessons, teachers use resources well to motivate pupils and extend learning imaginatively. They also demonstrate secure subject knowledge and an ability to convey this in ways that interest pupils. In a very good Year 3 history lesson, for example, pupils consolidated previous learning and made very good progress in learning about World War Two events because of the varied artefacts used and a teacher's obvious interest in the subject.
21. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers plan lessons carefully and pitch content so as to draw on pupils' earlier learning, extending it through discussion. However, they do not always pay sufficient attention to meeting the varied needs of their pupils through tasks set. For example, a Year 4 science

lesson got off to a good start with everyone listening and many pupils making thoughtful contributions in response to questions. Subsequently, all pupils did the same work then, mainly, watched adults performing experiments. This limited opportunities for more able pupils to extend their thinking and then write up their findings on a personal level, although those of lower ability were helped to succeed through good support. More generally, where unsatisfactory teaching is seen, this happens because there is a mismatch between a lesson's content and pupils' abilities to grasp what is involved. The mismatch reflects insecurity in teachers' subject knowledge. This was seen in a Year 2 information and communication technology lesson where most pupils could not really see what was asked of them when asked to find then print out the work of a famous artist. The pace of the lesson suffered. Otherwise, teachers keep a brisk pace. Where teaching is very good or excellent, the pace challenges pupils to work to their limits. At times, though, (and as already noted) pupils' behaviour affects lessons in spite of the best efforts of skilled teachers. This was seen, for example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson where persistent disruptions of a tiny minority affected everyone's concentration at some point. Even so, pupils made good gains by the end of the lesson because a teacher pursued planned goals and insisted they pay attention. Teachers across the school have very good behaviour-management skills. They remain calm and act quickly to stop inappropriate behaviour. Classrooms are usually harmonious places where hard work is accepted as the order of the day.

22. Teachers consistently discuss learning goals with pupils at the start of lessons and most frequently check whether these have been met at the end. A lesson's 'learning intentions' are written where pupils can refer to them. This good practice is seen to have a beneficial impact on pupils' understanding. For example, at the end of a Year 1 science lesson, pupils' good knowledge of concepts of different materials showed as they checked off whether they had achieved the 'learning intentions' talked about earlier.
23. Teachers are secure in their teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills, with strengths seen in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are structured in line with national strategies, although the organisation of some lessons gives rise to queries about pupils' involvement in whole-class activities (see below). Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to apply basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to subjects across the curriculum.
24. The teaching of English is a strength and is most frequently very good. The teaching of mathematics is more variable. It is satisfactory, overall, in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Year 2, when a large number of low ability pupils could not grasp the content of a lesson and little progress was made. In the main, teachers are secure in their subject-knowledge across the curriculum and how to plan in order to move pupils' forward. Planning is frequently good and is better than this at times, especially in Years 3 to 6. In a few lessons, some insecurity of subject knowledge is evident (as noted in information and communication technology above). In some lessons (also noted), the same task is given to all pupils and is insufficiently challenging to encourage independent learning, especially for more able pupils and those of average ability. Such planning is most frequent in non-core subjects like geography, which have taken a 'back seat' recently because of national initiatives. Strengths in these subjects are seen too, however. Overall, good teaching is seen in geography and music, and in history in Years 3 to 6 (no history lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2). In physical education, teaching is frequently good across the school with strengths in classes for older pupils. Good science teaching for all ages contributes significantly to pupils' good learning in this subject and a rise in standards. Teaching in art and design and design and technology is satisfactory. Again, this picture reflects priorities pursued by the school. It also reflects instability in staffing over recent years, which has affected teaching in terms of achieving continuity of practices both over time and across the school. This has led to subjects being maintained rather than developed further, with a consequent impact on standards reached. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory, overall. Development of the subject remains a priority in school improvement planning, especially with regard to furthering teachers' skills and knowledge.
25. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need. Planning takes account of pupils' individual education plans, as appropriate. Support staff are deployed effectively to pupils with identified needs. This is especially the case in literacy and numeracy where all classes have additional support. Teachers also frequently monitor these pupils' progress during lessons and intervene to keep everyone on task. This was seen in the Year 6 literacy lesson outlined above. Teachers also take account of the needs of English as additional language learners. These pupils make gains in learning on a par with their monolingual peers in all subjects,

benefiting from additional support where this is deemed appropriate. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers to make sure that the assistants know a lesson's purpose. They give good feedback after working with groups or individuals, so teachers know what pupils can do or find hard. Teachers are generally very skilled at monitoring pupils' progress around tables, seeing where extra help is needed. For example, a Year 2 teacher talked to more able pupils about the writing, which had engrossed them while she had attended to others. She quickly realised how they could be pushed further, pointing out how they could check spellings around the room as well as use dictionaries. Teachers' ongoing assessments inform future planning and they make adjustments accordingly.

26. The school works to ensure that all pupils are catered for in the light of their identified needs. This includes able pupils as well as those who have difficulties learning. For example, able pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 and some lower ability pupils in Year 4 are taught separately for some mathematics. More able Year 2 pupils are also 'setted' for some literacy lessons. The teaching in these withdrawal groups is at least good and is frequently better. For example, excellent mathematics teaching was observed in the Year 6 group. However, whilst all teachers work closely to the three-part structure of the numeracy and literacy strategies the arrangement described means that pupils, especially in Years 2 and 6, can miss out on an important dimension of their learning. Pupils may, for example, miss whole class teaching at the start of lessons or time given at the end for them to consider, together, what they have learned. Where a full ability range is not included, whole-class work is affected adversely, with lower ability pupils seen to lack the motivation commonly present, leading, unusually, to more teacher-dominated talk. Discussions lack 'spark' and pace whereby pupils help one another with answers to teachers' skilled questioning. The school has yet to consider the effect of this practice on pupils at both ends of the scale. It is also aware of the implications for equal opportunities for all its pupils, while withdrawing them from lessons. Some, attending weekly music lessons from visiting specialists miss large parts of class lessons, although the arrangements are agreed by parents.
27. The homework policy is applied well. Homework is mainly set in English and mathematics, but is also given in other subjects as appropriate. In Year 1, for example, pupils were asked to find out about the properties of metal, expanding on a science lesson on different materials. In Year 6, science homework is given regularly to support learning and reinforce concepts taught.

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

28. A broad and generally balanced curriculum is relevant to the needs of the age-range taught. It reflects the latest guidance for children in the Reception class, set out in areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 relative to the National Curriculum. It meets statutory requirements. It also reflects the school's aims and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, connected with its Christian ethos. Since the last inspection, the school has kept its curricular strengths and made many improvements. There is a well-established programme of personal, social and health education, which includes citizenship. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
29. Provision for children in the Reception class is good. Aided by recent guidelines, planning takes account of children's different needs as they reach for the Early Learning Goals. Good links are made across areas of learning, so children reinforce and build on skills, developing relevant knowledge and understanding. Structured planning for the development of children's early literacy and numeracy skills is emphasised, as recommended for young children. Planned activities occur outside as well as in the classroom, although poor weather during the inspection meant children were mainly indoors. The school energetically pursues solutions to problems presented by not having all-weather provision for work and play outside. Such provision should soon be in place. There has been real improvement since the previous inspection.
30. The curriculum fits into a tightly managed school week for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Curriculum 'maps' show subjects organised across the school year to meet requirements outlined in the latest guidelines. In some instances, though, time-tabling shows imbalances. For example, rather less time is given to teaching design and technology and geography than to history. This affects pupils' ability to make progressive gains in subject skills and understanding. Currently, some flexibility is

given to teachers' planning for such non-core subjects across the school year, although it is understood that units of work as set out in the agreed 'map' will be taught within that period. For example, a teacher may move a unit from the Summer to the Spring term to extend a theme planned in other subjects or because a 'block' of time can, then, be given to it more easily. The effect of this policy waits to be evaluated. Teachers make very good links across subjects in planning lessons and curriculum 'focus weeks' achieve such links in ways relevant and meaningful to pupils. They also give an impetus to non-core subjects and go some way to addressing issues about time given to these. For example, in a 'music focus week' teachers linked music to many subjects, wherever this was feasible. Pupils investigated sound in science. They thought about how music was experienced through their senses. They wrote poems or imaginative pieces in literacy lessons and painted representations in art and design lessons. Time allocated to lessons often exceeds recommended times, especially (although not solely) in Years 1 and 2. On occasion, this led to a loss of pace in lessons as pupils struggled to maintain interest (for example, in a Year 1 music lesson). Lessons in the computer suite, too, are generally long and were seen to lead to problems of concentration for Years 2 and 3 pupils.

31. Standards have risen through implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Literacy skills are exercised well through different subject content being included in literacy lessons. For example, Year 6 pupils further developed writing skills, concerning style and presentation, by applying these to pieces geared to persuading 11 to 13-year-olds about the dangers of alcohol. This theme linked effectively to work in science and personal, social and health education lessons. The latter became a vehicle for key skills when pupils put forward their views on 'good' and 'bad' drugs, listening carefully to others, then taking their opinions into account. All teachers seek cross-curricular links for literacy purposes. Numeracy is similarly well developed. For example, Year 3 pupils learn how a data-base can be used in science when sorting out categories for different materials. Year 1 pupils improve their reading and spelling skills on a computer while learning to control a mouse. Across the school, pupils use number skills to work out relevant dates and periods of time for history work, learning about historical time. The school aims to cater for all pupils' known needs, currently organising some numeracy lessons for more able pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 and lower ability pupils in Year 4 outside whole-class lessons. This policy is well considered, but (as already noted) the school is aware of the need to review practice in light of its commitment to equal opportunities for all.
32. Planning for information and communication technology is thoughtful, in that skills are taught through subjects across the curriculum where practicable. Planning also allows pupils to apply specific information and communication technology skills to other subjects. For example, pupils learn to produce spread sheets and different kinds of charts and graphs for mathematics and science. Provision in this subject has much improved since the last inspection, mainly because classrooms now have better equipment and there is a computer suite. Good use is made of overhead projectors and digital cameras. Pupils across the age-range use the camera, and older pupils become proficient in managing the overhead projector (as seen in a Year 6 music lesson).
33. The school has a structured programme for personal, social and health education, which includes citizenship. Broadly based topics deal with issues such as drugs awareness, racism and bullying. Pupils discuss health and safety matters and events in the wider world. Sex education is also planned carefully and taught through these lessons, staying in tune with the aims and ethos of the school. The school prepares its pupils well for the next stage of their education, keeping satisfactory links with its main feeder secondary school. Very good relationships are fostered with a local playgroup, for the sake of children transferring to the Reception class.
34. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special need, is good. Classroom support is deployed so that all pupils have full access to a planned curriculum. In particular, pupils are well supported during literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers pinpoint pupils' needs at an early stage and devise clearly targeted individual education plans based on close observation and understanding. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is also good. The school gives value to pupils' home languages and to their knowledge and understanding of different cultural and faith practices. French is one of the languages other than English listed as common in the school. It is highlighted in a number of ways, as pupils are observed enjoying learning familiar words and counting in French in Year 2 registration sessions.
35. Educational visits to places of interest support classroom work to good effect, especially in history

and geography. For example, Year 3 visited St. Albans, to look at the Roman remains. They could dress as someone living in Roman times. Visitors also come in to school for educational purposes. For example, during the 150th birthday celebrations, members of the local community shared their experiences of attending the school when they were young. Year 6 pupils undertake an extended study visit to the Isle of Wight, presenting very good opportunities for geography, history, physical education and pupils' personal and social development. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, mostly after school but some during lunchtime, extends the taught curriculum. These include football, netball, information and communication technology and drama clubs. The French club is very popular and oversubscribed; the design and technology club helps keep up the profile of the subject and has contributed to work in art and design. There are good links with other primary schools. Pupils participate in inter-school sports matches and were observed, for example, thoroughly enjoying a netball match during the inspection. The curriculum benefits from good contacts with the wider area, such as the school's parish community, underwriting its Christian ethos. Pupils are expected to consider the needs of the wider society and make collections for many worthwhile charities. During the Christmas period, they brought in 66 shoeboxes full of toys and gifts for more needy East European children. The school is developing links with the church community in Loanda in Angola, helping raise funds to build a school there. It is hoped these links will be strengthened through the use of the Internet and electronic mail.

36. Overall, provision for pupils' personal development is good. Assemblies make a very good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural welfare.
37. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Opportunities are given in some lessons for pupils to think deeply about their experiences (as when Year 5 pupils listen attentively to music at the start of a lesson). Singing during assemblies is generally good. Pupils sing happily and with expression. They reflect through quiet prayer at the end of morning and afternoon sessions in classrooms. The local vicar leads assemblies regularly and co-operates well with the headteacher, sharing assembly themes, helping pupils grasp difficult concepts such as racism and slavery. During the inspection, the fruits of this co-operation showed both in assemblies and in discussions with pupils about issues, such as those arising from studies of David Livingstone in Africa. This topic connected well to the theme of Martin Luther King and his dream of equality in America. Talk and role-play during assemblies create a very nice feeling of spirituality and reflection, with quiet prayers at the end.
38. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Teachers and other adults are good role models in how to treat others. They teach, clearly, the difference between right and wrong, and the way our actions can affect others. Such teaching is consistent throughout the school and happens even during play at lunchtime. In a Year 1 lesson, a teacher explained in terms pupils well understood what had been 'good' about a lesson and what had made her 'unhappy'. Pupils saw that some children's inappropriate behaviour stopped them all playing instruments because time was wasted making sure everyone was listening. Circle time is also used by teachers to convey their moral expectations of pupils. Good relationships are promoted and pupils work and live harmoniously together. Many classroom activities are structured on a 'buddy' system, whereby more able peers help the less able, so everyone succeeds. Pupils show respect for others. In the playground, older pupils help younger ones. Parents are pleased with the way the school helps its pupils to become mature and responsible citizens. The School Council, well established now, has an important role in representing others' views and deciding issues affecting the community as a whole. It helps develop responsible attitudes in pupils, so they know what is expected of them as good citizens.

39. Good provision for pupils' cultural development marks an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils are learning about the multicultural nature of their own and the wider society. They are helped to appreciate the diverse cultures, languages and faiths in the school community, through classroom work and teachers' own attitudes to such diversity. Stories and dance from different cultural traditions, and displays of artefacts and books from other cultures, during curriculum 'focus weeks', aid this process. For example, a visit from African dancers generated much interest amongst pupils during a 'music focus week'. Assemblies include celebrations of festivals located in other faiths (such as Diwali, Eid and the Chinese New Year). Curriculum planning incorporates work on these celebrations so as to give them a wider context. Subjects, such as history and geography, nurture pupils' understanding of different ways of life. The school recognises there is scope to extend resources further for teaching pupils about diversity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Provision for the care of pupils is good, especially in the way they receive personal support and guidance where it is very good. Strategies used in related areas (such as the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour) are very good. Pupils of all ages feel happy and secure, knowing that they will be well advised by their teachers. Considerable thought has been put to behaviour-management, now showing results in that good behaviour is seen consistently throughout the school. This picture marks an improvement on that of the previous report.
41. Very good procedures induct new children into the Reception class, ensuring that all children become familiar with school routines. Initially, they are introduced part-time, before beginning full-time at around half-term in the Autumn. The youngest children (that is, those who are only just four), in particular, are helped to adjust to their new environment through this approach. Before they start school, many attend weekly 'Saplings Group' sessions where they meet adults who will work with them each day and also get to know the headteacher. These sessions are well organised. They allow children to play together in ways that interest them and help them relate to one another. The headteacher monitors procedures affecting all new pupils carefully, ensuring that sound planning helps them settle quickly into school routines. Examples of the effectiveness of these procedures were seen during the inspection, when new pupils started in several classes.
42. Teachers know their pupils well and are concerned for their wellbeing. For example, a Year 3 teacher adjusted her planning because of a pupil's recent experiences. Her planned physical education lesson was to explore ideas for a 'rabbit dance' in connection with traditional stories studied in literacy lessons, but when she discovered a child's rabbit had just died, she judged this idea might not be altogether appropriate. Generally, teachers are sensitive to pupils' personal circumstances. They frequently ask "Are you OK now?" when they know a pupil has been upset for some reason. Classroom assistants and other adults supervising pupils (such as mid-day supervisors) also know pupils well and have a high regard for their welfare. At a meeting prior to the inspection, a parent wanted it recorded that the school makes very good provision for pupils experiencing long periods of absence (for example, for health reasons). They are eased back in to classrooms really well and are soon 'back in their stride' as part of a class. More generally, parents were agreed that levels of care are very good.
43. Reception children are monitored closely, from entry to school. Baseline assessment is administered in line with local authority guidance. The class teacher and Nursery Nurse observe children during ongoing activities, making 'quick notes' to record anything pertinent to an individual's learning. These notes contribute to a record of progress over time. Children are also monitored in more structured ways. For example, the Nursery Nurse noted children's responses to a story during a session. She watched who asked questions spontaneously and which children made efforts to read when the teacher held up the book. As they work with children, in small groups or individually (perhaps to support handwriting, for example), adults note progress made and where difficulties are encountered. By the end of the Reception year, children's development in each of the six areas of learning is on record and their progress is reported to parents. Annual reports are detailed and informative, giving good pointers about strengths observed and where a child might be helped to improve.
44. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is good. It has improved since the previous inspection. In Years 1 to 6, teachers assess pupils' English and mathematics work regularly, setting targets for improvement. Plans are well in hand to extend such assessment and target-setting to

science and information and communication technology. Currently, most non-core subjects (such as art and design, physical education, and history) are not formally assessed to determine 'next steps' in learning, to inform planning. Teachers use targets from a commercially produced scheme, matched to relevant National Curriculum programmes of study. Whilst these are expedient, they do not reflect discussion about pupils' own evaluation of their performance so they realise themselves how to improve. Teachers' marking in some classes is very good, with pupils gaining clear ideas about how they can improve. More generally, marking lacks clarity and frequently consists of ticks (or comments such as "Well done!") to show work has been seen.

45. The school routinely analyses statutory test results for seven and eleven-year-olds and also makes good use of local authority information, allowing comparisons with other schools in the borough as well as with national data. Account is also taken of optional test results in Years 3, 4 and 5 to check pupils' progress over time and review statutory targets. These targets vary year-to-year, in line with the very varied levels of attainment found in each cohort of pupils. The school is aware of the need to look closely at the way different groups perform in tests and so sharpen existing practice. It has recently started to do this with groups of more able pupils and some who find learning hard - especially in mathematics. However, whilst such strategies are beneficial in meeting identified needs, they raise questions about equality of opportunity, as noted earlier.
46. Early identification of pupils giving rise for concern in any aspect of schooling leads to prompt action, with pupils monitored against the Code of Practice register of special educational needs. Where appropriate, individual education plans are drawn up in line with any relevant needs, including where a statement of special need is in place. All involved are kept properly informed, including outside agencies (where necessary). The school is aware it has to review existing good practice to follow new initiatives in this area of its work. Good quality extra support helps to make sure that pupils' needs are well met on the whole, especially in relation to literacy and numeracy where all classes get support.
47. High priority is placed on pupils' personal development. The headteacher has established this priority, setting an appropriate tone, by re-examining the school's behaviour policy and working with all staff to lift expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work. Evidence of the success of this policy shows in Years 5 and 6 where pupils previously having problems now more consistently display mature and self-disciplined attitudes. Pupils know bullying and harassment of others will not be tolerated, accepting they must inform adults about incidents, which will be followed up meticulously. No such incidents were observed during the inspection. Most commonly, pupils work and play happily together in classrooms and outside. However, as already noted, the best efforts of teachers and support staff are sometimes thwarted by the persistent misdemeanours of a very small minority of pupils.
48. Procedures for child protection and the promotion of pupils' wellbeing and health and safety are good. The health and safety policy of the school is thorough. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of premises and equipment and defects are dealt with swiftly. All staff members are well aware of child protection procedures. The school benefits from its own designated welfare officer. She makes sure accidents and injuries are dealt with promptly, keeps meticulous records and keeps parents informed. The monitoring of pupils' attendance is also good. With the co-operation of parents, almost all absences are accounted for. Where this is not so, or parents forget to inform the school, staff are vigilant at taking prompt action. Effective procedures ensure that pupils are punctual at the start of the day.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school's partnership with parents is very good. It is a strength of the school. The headteacher gives high priority to this aspect of school life, too. He has worked hard to establish an 'open door' policy whereby parents feel able to come in and talk about matters of concern to them. Parents say this policy is successful and efforts at improvement continue. They are very supportive of the school and appreciate efforts made to involve them in their children's education. They like the headteacher's ready availability in the playground each morning. They also find other members of staff friendly and easy to meet. All who returned a questionnaire say they feel comfortable talking to staff about concerns they have about their children's education or welfare. Whilst this picture appears similar to that given in the previous inspection, parents themselves believe good improvements have occurred in

this aspect of school life since then.

50. Information for parents is very good. The governors' annual report to parents is interesting and provides all necessary information. Parents find the headteacher's general weekly newsletter excellent. It is informative and 'user friendly' in tone and format. Parents are well informed about what their children are being taught and about work to be completed at home. Those who come into school to meet teachers informally get up-to-date information about their children's progress. They become aware of their children's strengths and know when children have difficulties in learning. Parents report they are involved at an early stage when concerns about behaviour or progress arise. They appreciate this very much. Where children are considered for placement on the Code of Practice register of special educational need, parents are told about this decision beforehand and consulted about their views. They are kept well informed about events, subsequently, and take part in any review procedures in place.
51. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality, although the school is currently reviewing the form these take, seeking to make improvements. Reports are personal, giving details of what pupils know and can do, providing pointers for improvement as well as emphasising strengths. Parents have good opportunities to meet formally with teachers each term to discuss progress. They are helped to understand how to support their children through this. Pupils' reading diaries form a useful contact between school and home. Overall, inspection findings do not support those parents, who say, in questionnaire responses, they are not well-informed about their children's progress. At the pre-inspection meeting, most were happy about the homework given to their children, although one or two said they would like more information about it. In the questionnaire, a minority expressed dissatisfaction with homework, although it is not clear what aspect of homework they are dissatisfied with. In general, inspectors do not uphold their negative view. Inspection findings show homework is kept in line with school policy and well matched to pupils' learning in classrooms, especially as they grow older and more is expected of them. They also show (as already noted) that the range of extra-curricular activities is very good, contrary to the views expressed by a minority of parents.
52. The school benefits greatly from regular and loyal parent volunteers. They make a valuable contribution to activities such as the gardening club and help with study visits linked to classroom work. Some help in classrooms. Four very committed volunteers run the Saplings Group for prospective parents and their children. This Group not only provides a very good introduction to the school for the youngest children and their parents (as discussed), it also provides a welcoming setting for parents to meet together. They gain good information about school from the Reception teacher and Nursery Nurse as well as from the headteacher, through informal 'pop in' visits and structured talks. Volunteers organise an interesting programme of such talks to help parents grasp the needs of young learners and how these are met in school. As well as school staff, visiting speakers are invited. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association, which raises substantial funds, used for projects such as the Millennium Patio outside the Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes. This patio is an attractive outdoor play space for the youngest children during the school day. It is also well used at lunchtime by their older peers. Funds raised by parents have also supplemented the provision of large toys for Reception children.
53. An after school computer club enables pupils who do not have computers at home to have additional support in acquiring necessary skills. By their fundraising and valuable help in school, parents, volunteers and governors help to widen the educational opportunities offered to pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is a strong leader. In a little over a term since taking up his post, he has made a notable impact on school life. Changes he has instituted have already affected the school's ethos positively. He has worked hard with staff to improve behaviour management techniques in all classes and has made good relationships with parents through a much appreciated 'open door' policy. Also, he is ensuring greater staff stability after many changes during recent years. Whilst further change is in view, actions to date have raised staff morale, producing increased commitment to raising standards in all areas of school life. Teachers and non-teaching staff strive as a team towards common goals. The headteacher is ably supported by a hard-working and committed deputy head. She, too, has been in post for only a short period. She brings expertise and knowledge of the age-range taught, complementing the

headteacher's. Together with his staff, the headteacher works with the governing body to meet school aims. Governors say they detect purpose in the school's work and a strengthening of its Christian ethos, underpinning values promoted through the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all.

55. On starting at the school, the headteacher conducted a thorough audit, which included observing teaching and learning in classrooms and examining roles and responsibilities of post holders. In re-defining priorities for school improvement planning in a way more readily accessible to others, the headteacher took good account of areas of expertise. Subsequently, the senior management team was strengthened. All post holders now have clearly defined areas of work attached to responsibilities. They have time out of classrooms each week for required work. The headteacher sees as crucial the need for subject leaders to receive training in all aspects of such work, both as a means of gaining confidence in leadership roles and to develop important professional skills. He judges it critical that subject leaders gain first hand knowledge of how standards can be raised by seeing where improvements are needed in classroom practice. The start of a related training programme was, in fact, deferred, because it coincided with the inspection. The headteacher links all staff training directly to raising standards, not only in core subjects such as English, but across the curriculum. The school knows well the need to assess how standards are reached in non-core subjects, such as art and design, in order to plan better for these. Performance management is securely in place, with agreed targets set out for teachers in ways linked to school improvement planning, aimed at meeting individual needs, highlighted through professional discussion. Non-teaching staff members' training needs are similarly well met. For example, the headteacher has overseen the appointment of additional classroom assistants to support learning in literacy and numeracy in all classrooms. Implications for training such staff are taken fully into account. Inspection findings show new staff at all levels are inducted thoughtfully in to the school. Care is taken to match experienced classroom assistants with new teachers and inexperienced support staff with experienced senior teachers. This strategy maximises skills and eases new staff helpfully into school life. A network of informal support is also available, whereby experienced staff give advice and practical help.
56. Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. A suitable committee structure ensures a proper delegation of responsibilities. The chair of the governing body gives good support to the headteacher and his staff through regular visits. She works hard on the school's behalf. Governors now have a better understanding of their monitoring roles in taking the school forward. For example, they are linked to curriculum subjects and have begun to visit classrooms to observe 'their' subject for agreed purposes. These are structured so that governors understand classroom processes and provide useful information for feeding back to subject leaders and governing body meetings. A comprehensive policy and guidelines for visits wait to be ratified. Visits help governors to a better insight into the school's strengths and where improvements can be made. Whilst a core of committed governors are enthusiastic about these developments and enjoy being involved, some are seen at meetings infrequently and are not so committed.
57. School improvement planning is easily accessible, setting out priorities with time-lines and responsibilities delineated and realistic cost implications given. Grants for designated purposes are used to good effect. In fact, governors have supported supplementing these to ensure that pupils with identified needs have good support. This is the case both for monies allocated to pupils with special educational needs and for those supported through ethnic minority achievement grant funding. The headteacher has a very good grasp of financial matters. He works closely with the school secretary and a bursar who visits regularly to audit accounts and check spending levels. Currently, the school is working to a budget set by the previous headteacher, although planning for the new financial year is well in hand. The headteacher, bursar and chair of the finance committee work in partnership at the new budget in ways matched to priorities, so better account is taken of principles of best value. These are well understood. Appropriate tendering for services is monitored and how spending affects school life and pupils' learning is reviewed. The school manages a current surplus efficiently. Plans for its use are clear. For example, it actively seeks ways of placing a Nursery on site and wishes to improve car-parking facilities, because of safety issues on the school's frontage. This latter issue has been a matter of concern both to the school and its parent community for some considerable time. Through the finance committee, the governing body is kept well-informed about all aspects of financial management. Points for action raised by a recent Audit Report are being dealt with.

58. Good systems are in place for day-to-day management of school affairs and such matters are handled efficiently by the secretary. She knows the school and the wider community well. She is a friendly point of first contact for visitors and enjoys meeting pupils who come to the school office - to bring registers, for example. Satisfactory use is made of new technology in managing the school, but this will improve in light of better facilities for all staff to support their work.
59. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The headteacher currently acts as 'caretaker' until the co-ordinator returns to school from a leave of absence. She visits school regularly to keep in touch and her role will be strengthened on her return by additional time allocated out of the classroom. This acknowledges not only the importance of her work but also her need to assess practice against new requirements recently published. Pupils on the Code of Practice register, including those with statements of special need, are monitored against targets set in their individual education plans. Provision ensures that all measures for reviewing these are properly in place. The newly appointed governor for special educational needs is very keen. She has already read the new Code of Practice and searched the relevant web site for details of training courses. She has a good grasp of responsibilities relating to her role.
60. There are sufficient teachers to ensure that curricular demands are met from the Reception class to Year 6. The number of non-teaching staff has been substantially increased to ensure that pupils with identified needs are consistently supported in all classes, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school uses staff members' varied skills, experience and expertise very effectively. They are well deployed. Accommodation is used to maximum benefit (to house libraries and provide space for small group-work, for example). Classrooms are adequate for curricular demands. A good-sized hall is a pleasant space for physical education and assemblies and for meetings such as those of the 'Saplings' Group. The computer suite is an added bonus, enjoyed by all. There is a very pleasant, relatively new outdoor play space for Reception pupils, greatly appreciated. The school is well maintained and cared for, indoors and out. Resources are sufficient in all subjects. There is a good quantity of musical instruments and recent purchases have extended the range to include instruments from different cultural traditions. A stimulating selection of books supports daily guided reading sessions in all classrooms. Pupils clearly love choosing from these books, which they find motivating. Reading is, for them, a pleasurable activity.
61. In view of the good progress made in improving teaching, the rise in standards in English especially, but also in mathematics and science, improvements in the quality of school life as seen in the behaviour of pupils and better relationships with parents, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- i. Teachers plan consistently to meet the learning needs of all pupils.

(Paragraphs 3, 21, 24, 85, 88, 122)

- ii. Standards rise, in line with school improvement planning, especially in non-core subjects, through:

- extending the formal assessment of pupils' progress to all subjects;
- teachers' use of assessment information for target-setting; and
- co-ordinators extending their monitoring to include teaching and learning in classrooms.

(Paragraphs 10, 21, 24, 30, 44, 55, 85, 88, 95, 97, 99, 100, 102, 105, 106, 108, 111, 113, 114, 119, 120, 122, 125, 130, 135)

- iii. The way pupils are withdrawn from lessons for work outside the classroom is reviewed.

(Paragraphs 26 and 45)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. This is indicated in paragraphs: 30 and 123.

- Time allocated to lessons is reviewed, especially (although not solely) in connection with the computer suite.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
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	2	14	20	15	2	0	0
Percentage	4	26	38	28	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18

Special educational needs

	YR- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	35

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	14
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (80)	97 (93)	93 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	93 (93)	97 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	18	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	17	12	17
	Total	29	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (81)	77 (90)	97 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (77)	93 (90)	97 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	8
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	152
Any other minority ethnic group	16

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	502917
Total expenditure	502314
Expenditure per pupil	2474
Balance brought forward from previous year	60829
Balance carried forward	61432

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	29	60	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	57	3	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	54	11	2	3
The teaching is good.	43	46	8	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	54	18	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	6	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	45	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	51	46	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	42	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	37	14	3	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. Direct comparison between judgements made about provision for children in the Foundation Stage in the previous and current inspection is difficult, because the organisation of teaching and learning for these youngest pupils has changed substantially, as a result of government initiatives. Nevertheless, now, as then, children are found to get a very good start to full-time schooling in the Reception class. The class teacher and Nursery Nurse work closely together, jointly planning all aspects of provision. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Although, as before, none is judged less than satisfactory, the overall judgement now is that teaching is very good. In all areas of learning, indications are that the majority of children are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. This includes those children learning English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs make good progress and build successfully on prior learning. They are well supported by the careful deployment of staff, matched to their identified learning needs. Particular strengths are noted in the personal, social and emotional development of all pupils.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Teaching in this area is very good. Adults are excellent role models, showing in their own actions how they expect children to behave towards others. Children know classroom routines well, sensibly moving around for whole-class work on the carpet or when choosing an activity for themselves. They listen for their name at registration and give the teacher's name when answering, politely, "good morning". As two children take the registers to the school office, the rest of the class enjoy counting to see what number they will reach by the time the 'helpers' return to the classroom. Children enjoy stories, continuing to pay close attention as they drink their milk or juice. They know they have to do this quietly and put the carton down without fidgeting when it is empty. Almost all can manage this and the one or two who have difficulty respond promptly to adults' unspoken signals to listen. A teacher's calm manner and quiet voice ensures that everyone is peaceful by the end of a session. Children speak up to answer questions or to ask their own. During a story about a boy who might be scared by events in the story, a child wanted to know "why is he scared?", provoking a sensible discussion. Children understand simple rules about hygiene. They accept they should wash their hands after using the toilet or before handling food when cooking. They put on their coats when going outside to play and can dress and undress themselves for physical education in the hall with little adult support.
64. Children maintain concentration on self-chosen and adult-directed activities for appreciable periods of time. For example, four boys worked very amicably together to build a train track, highly motivated towards their agreed aim. They explained they were making "a spiral", which went "round and round and round". Children play co-operatively together outside. They share wheeled toys made for two, consult each other on how to weave through posts set as obstacles, without banging into any. A girl instructs her partner to stop if the gap is too narrow, then moves a post. They enjoy the 'joke' when the Nursery Nurse exclaims "Oh! that's cheating". Children cheerfully give up a toy when an adult says "all change", realising they can have another turn in future and happy to find something else to do. They interact well with adults, accepting that their opinions and ideas will be taken seriously. They react promptly to a signal to stop work and listen, when the end of a session is in sight. They help to clear things away willingly, knowing where equipment belongs and how it should be stored. They do this remarkably quickly.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Children are developing good skills, knowledge and understanding in this area of learning. Teaching is at least good. Overall, it is judged to be very good. The teacher and Nursery Nurse push learning forward by reinforcing and extending children's communication, language and literacy skills whenever they can. For example, the Nursery Nurse worked with a girl to help develop her handwriting skills, talking about the shapes of letters and checking that the pencil was held correctly. She also

monitored another girl playing with small world farm toys on the table-top, asking her questions and making comments that supported earlier class work on mathematical shapes.

66. Across the ability range, strengths are evident in children's speaking and listening. They are attentive when a teacher takes them through a pancake recipe, needed later for cooking, and add to the discussion. A boy makes a good link with a current theme (Chinese New Year celebrations), reporting how he chose his own fillings for his pancakes at a Chinese restaurant. Another child knows the colour of the cooking mixture will be "yellowish" at the end. All can read "eggs" and "milk" from the list of ingredients and manage the rest with adult support. All listen and watch expectantly as a teacher reads a story and asks about accompanying pictures. They like talking about these and can keep track of how many toys a character collects, naming all of these at the end. They talk about their favourite toy and see why a boy in the story loved his "blue kangaroo" best of all. They like to choose books to read by themselves or share with a friend. At such times, they sit purposefully in the library corner, showing how much they recognise that pictures as well as words help them grasp a book's content. They turn pages in the correct order, starting at the front.
67. More able children already have well-developed early writing skills. They write simple sentences independently and spell some words correctly. Those of average ability realise that print has meaning and gives messages to a reader. Using 'emergent' writing skills, they record ideas carefully and are acquiring a good repertoire of letter shapes and sounds that match the words they choose. For example, a girl who spelt 'rat' accurately showed a good grasp of the letter 'a' sound in the rest of her short sentence. Pupils at an earlier stage of development are beginning to link sounds with letters at the start of some words and record these with adult support. It is clear that these pupils find it hard to hold pencils and sustain their effort, but they manage. Children of average and above average ability write legibly and quite neatly. They try hard to make letter shapes more or less the same size. Children develop their spelling skills through using simple programs on the computer to play 'spelling games'.
68. Children engage in role-play, fitting language to situations set up in the 'role play' area. For example, in the 'surgery' they use the telephone to call an ambulance for a patient. Outside, a boy and a girl each played with a pram, becoming deeply engrossed in discussing their doll 'babies', going to the shops. A girl at a computer uses correct terminology when she tells a boy "Watch the printer. I clicked the mouse to make it print." Children like using mathematical vocabulary and can name two-dimensional shapes accurately. They like saying the words "rectangle", "oblong", "triangle". They know a chart on the classroom wall tells them the names of flat, two-dimensional shapes as well as those with three dimensions.

Mathematical development

69. Children's mathematical development is good. Teaching is good, with some very good teaching also seen. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore number in everyday situations. For example, they talk about the date on a calendar. A teacher helpfully says "One more than 22 (yesterday's date)" and a boy knows this is "twenty-three". He chooses the right felt numbers for the date but puts them in the space as '32'. Another child corrects this. Children know they can refer to the number lines in the classroom and to the square of numbers from one to 100 to help them record numbers. More able children and those of average ability are beginning to write numbers correctly. As noted above, all enjoy counting as the register is taken to the school office. With adult support, they can count to 67 on one day and 63 on another. Some children know that 67 is "more than" was counted that morning. A teacher holds up five fingers and puts them down one at a time as children start at 30 and count back to 25 to work out how many pupils are in school that day. An able girl counts how many pigs in a 'field' she makes with 'small world' toys. She adds them to the set of pigs in a smaller field. She counts one-to-one accurately to add four and two. She knows immediately that one pig taken from a group of five "makes four left" and a horse added to the six pigs makes "seven animals altogether." Children playing with an attractive 'Noah's Ark' know the animals went in 'two by two' and make pairs to go up the ramp. A girl playing with sets of plastic 'fruit' prefers to put them into colour sets rather than find pairs, although she can do this. Across levels of ability, children count posts set outside as obstacles for them to steer round on wheeled toys. Some know there are seven, however the Nursery Nurse arranges them. Two or three have to count them when they are re-arranged, starting from one each time but eventually realise the number stays constant. After practising this over a period, they are all quick to realise the number is six when a post put to one

side is not included.

70. Children of all abilities name squares, circles and triangles when a teacher holds up two-dimensional shapes. A boy states “triangles have three sides” and another adds “and three corners”. A girl focuses on colour and another describes a shape as “red and round”. “It’s a circle” a boy says and another adds “it’s a sphere and it will roll”. The teacher picks up on this last comment to talk about three-dimensional shapes in the box. Children do not know the word “cylinder” or “cube”, but can describe the properties of the shapes accurately. Some begin to count the number of “sides”, not managing to use the alternative word “face” (given by the teacher), but understanding what it means. Later, children apply their learning to various play situations. For example, a girl playing with fencing and farm animals makes a square field and a triangular field quite spontaneously. Boys play with a train track (described earlier) and link talk about mathematical shapes to a previous discussion about spirals when deciding how to construct the track.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children’s development in areas relating to knowledge and understanding of the world is at least satisfactory. Quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, but is good, overall.
72. Adults foster an awareness of the wider world and different cultures and traditions in ways young children understand. For example, they know that February follows January and can recall an earlier discussion about Chinese New Year being celebrated in February. They are helped by a simple world map put up to connect with learning about the celebrations. A boy knows everyone present lives “in North London” and many recognise the icon of Big Ben symbolising the British Isles, connecting it with London. Someone asks, “What’s the map for?” Then, as the teacher probes for an answer to that question, several children make the link with where they live themselves and the Chinese New Year. A boy says his Mum went to South America and another that his parents went to Cyprus. He *thinks* they had to alter the time on their watches when they went there. Children know it takes a long time to fly to countries that are a very long way away. The boy says it took his Mum “about six hours” to fly to South America. The teacher accepts this and says “Oh! what time would we get there if we set off to-day at one o’clock?” Someone works out it would be 8 o’clock that night and all agree this is very late: it will be dark, here, at that time. Children know the classroom clock tells them about time relative to the school day, in simple terms. A girl informs others around her “it’s time to clear up, it’s dinner time”. They also learn about change in relation to growing older, exploring ‘when I was little’ and comparing ‘then’ to ‘now’.
73. Some children can talk informatively about what they do on computers. Work on display shows they all develop good skills in ‘clicking and dragging’ items to put the correct clothes on Goldilocks and the Three Bears until they are fully dressed. More able children achieve high levels of accuracy in matching the clothes to the characters’ body shapes. Children see the use of ‘drop down’ menus to give instructions. They play purposefully with mouldable material. A boy rolled some out until he was satisfied the shape and size were right, lifting the material carefully onto the palms of his hands. “It’s a birthday cake” he explained proudly and pretended to blow out a candle. When making pancakes, pupils know the mixture will change colour as they add ingredients and mix them together. They know the milk they use comes from cows and cows eat grass. As children play with a range of construction and ‘small world’ toys or participate in role-play in ‘the surgery’ corner or outside, they make up stories about what they are doing, showing a keen awareness of the world around. This was seen, for example, in their careful handling of doll ‘babies’, showing that a girl and a boy knew how real babies are held and rocked when they need comforting.

Physical development

74. Children’s physical development is good. Teaching is also good, overall. A very good lesson in the hall helped all children progress at throwing, catching and rolling a ball to partners, acquiring increasing control and accuracy. Children laughed as they succeeded, enjoying the challenge. At the end of the lesson, they were helped to reflect on what had helped them to improve their skills so they could build further on these. They put away mats and equipment carefully, showing good body control and awareness of space. Similarly, outdoor play reveals their skilful manipulating of wheeled toys. When weaving in and out of the obstacle course (described above), some show a very good grasp of the need to take special care with the back wheels of their vehicle when negotiating a narrow space.

They move very slowly and pedal to-and-fro to make sure they do not knock against a post. This is a very skilful manoeuvre where a 'long' vehicle with large back wheels is involved. Other children heed an adult's advice and work hard to improve their skill.

75. Children use tools with confidence. They cut various materials with scissors to make a 'collage' and stick their patterns in place with glue-sticks. They roll dough with a rolling pin and use cutters or make shapes with their hands, pulling, rolling and fashioning until satisfied. For example, a girl lined up a tiny set of figures she was making, each with a recognisable head and body and a suggestion of limbs. Children mixing pancakes manage equipment well, beating hard to get rid of "lumps". They use pencils and similar equipment (such as felt-tip pens) to write for their own and adult-directed purposes. The more able and those of average ability are learning to hold such tools correctly so they can achieve a desired outcome. Children with less well-developed skills are helped by adults. They copy-write over letter shapes with reasonable accuracy. Increasing confidence in using tools showed where a boy had moved his pencil over the paper in a flowing style to create lines of 'writing' for a story. This marked a 'leap forward' in his hand control as well as in his understanding of the purpose of writing. Several children on a computer used the mouse correctly to compose a pattern of cubes on the screen and alter the arrangement they had made. They did this with some care, persisting at moving the cubes slowly until they were in the right place. Children have good opportunities to play with a wide range of construction materials that support their physical as well as their intellectual development.

Creative development

76. Children's creative development is at least satisfactory. At times, it is better than might be expected. For example, very good teaching in a music lesson led to good gains in learning as a teacher worked with half the class at a time and focused directly on children developing an understanding of how musical patterns can be made with instruments. More generally, children engage with this area in various ways in the course of each day (such as during role-play and construction work). Although they were not observed painting, classroom displays show children work in two dimensions, independently or in relation to general themes. For example, paintings of pairs of figures, linked to work on counting in twos for mathematics, are confidently done. Bold paint-work dominates the paper space, albeit in ways expected of this age-range. That is, figures have heads and limbs, appropriately placed. Some have facial features. Children choose, thoughtfully, from a range of materials when making their own cards, cutting, placing and sticking shapes and colours for a desired effect.
77. In music, children thoroughly enjoy playing instruments. They shake, bang and strike jingle sticks, maracas, drums, chime bars and tambourines properly. They are beginning to see how an instrument's sound is affected by how it is held. So, although a boy has difficulty striking a triangle held tightly, close to the metal, others show how to let it swing, while finding it tricky to strike. At first, children play loudly and hardly listen to one another as they experiment with their instrument's sound. Quite quickly, though, they are helped through skilful questioning to think about making a sound pattern. A girl suggests "Someone could stop (playing)" when deciding how different instruments could be better heard. The teacher thinks this is a good idea and also says some people might play more quietly. Children listen attentively once more to a tape of Chinese music, to check these points. They also recall signals for 'loud' and 'soft' and 'stop' and 'start' when the teacher rehearses these, then pay more attention as she 'conducts'. After a little more practice, they respond to the teacher's signals and finish more-or-less together, pleased at this. Later, all the class sings a song they are learning to prepare for the Chinese New Year celebrations. They listen and watch as the teacher demonstrates the melody on the chime bars, and sings the words for them. They hum the tune correctly, keeping time with the teacher's playing. They then listen to and sing each line of the song after the teacher's demonstration. When the Nursery Nurse shows disappointment at missing this because she left the room for a few minutes, they are delighted to sing the whole verse again. Already, after beginning to learn the words only that morning, almost all can recall the verse and keep in tune. When the teacher reads the next verse in preparation for next day, a girl recalls one line means "Happy New Year" in Chinese.

ENGLISH

78. At the last inspection, standards were broadly in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven in all aspects of English. Also, Year 2 girls out-did boys in writing. Current inspection

findings reveal further improvement. Overall, year 2 and year 6 pupils reach good standards in English with no significant difference between genders. In literacy lessons and when applying literacy skills to other subjects, pupils of all ages learn confidently. Year 1 pupils use good spelling skills in science when labelling items in the classroom, with one pupil explaining to another that 'globe' has an 'e' on the end. They are good at listening to others and explain themselves in a range of contexts by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make good progress and achieve in line with their prior attainment. Extra support is well deployed to meet known learning needs. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve in line with their peers.

79. In a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils explored characters' feelings in 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' before being set a writing task. Because a teacher's skilled questioning links to good modelling of how a character might feel, pupils were able to ask pertinent questions of 'Goldilocks' and then 'Baby Bear', sitting in a 'hot seat' to be questioned. These characters kept in role when answering questions from their audience. For their part, those watching were anxious to participate and had many questions. They listened attentively to each character's response. For example, 'Goldilock' admitted she was afraid when she heard the bears coming back to the house. Pupils showed a secure understanding of story content during this process as well as knowledge of conventions in traditional stories. They realise the familiar "Once upon a time..." often starts such stories. More able pupils settle immediately to a writing task. Those of average ability were well supported in this by a teacher's careful recapping of what they were to do when recording their ideas. Because questions were matched to pupils' needs, pupils could practise writing skills on personal 'white boards' with marker pens successfully. For example, they recalled the need for capital letters for names and used speech marks to show when someone was talking. However, since this group was large, time spent ensuring that everyone understood the task meant that pupils did not begin independent work until quite late. Consequently, although they made good progress in the time available, they did not finish what they had been asked to do.
80. In an excellent Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils extracted relevant information from a 'fact file' relating to drug awareness, revealing very good skills. More able pupils see how information not made explicit in a text has to be inferred from it. Pupils across the ability range generally explain their ideas well, building on one another's contributions. Those who struggle to find the right words contribute on a par with their peers because they are well supported. For example, a boy could not quite recall the word "opinion" to mean a personal point of view. He was helped by a teacher's good knowledge of his difficulties and supportive questioning. Pupils know how to put forward 'pros' and 'cons' in an argument and understand that 'persuasive' writing is not necessarily balanced in this way. For example, previous written work contained arguments 'for' and 'against' European countries opting for the new Euro currency. In this lesson, pupils worked on a first draft of writing aimed at persuading 11 to 13 year-olds of the dangers of alcohol. Those of average ability marshalled ideas sequentially, matching words to messages they want to put across. The more able sustain an appropriate tone with arguments skilfully incorporated into messages they give. They write in the third person, able to make immediate impact on the reader to hold attention and provoke thinking. Less able pupils record their ideas in a simpler form, but confidently expand on these when explaining their intentions behind the text. They are helped by a classroom assistant who keeps their thinking well focused.
81. Pupils write at length in ways helping them to build on ideas and apply skills meaningfully. For example, pupils of all abilities in Year 4 enjoy writing stories and know how to sequence these as chapters. They choose interesting words to help set a scene or describe a character and to give a sense of pace. Lower ability pupils can use correct, basic punctuation and speech marks with fair accuracy. The more able write long chapters, reflecting a good knowledge of 'book language' and conventions. These already reach high standards for their age. A teacher's very good marking is well aimed at helping all pupils. Considered praise is given for effort and "points for improvement" are noted. These are plainly linked to pupils' work. However, more generally, marking in English is bland – accepting that some good examples of marking are also seen elsewhere. For example, comments such as "excellent" are used with no explanation as to why the work in question is excellent. By Year 6, pupils' writing is generally neat and well formed. Most use a joined script, although some writing is still in print form. Very little work in ink was seen. Handwriting and spelling vary between classes, although neatness and good levels of accuracy are more often seen in finished 'best' work. Pupils develop good dictionary skills by eleven. The practice of drafting written work and then improving on this is well established. For example, Year 5 pupils' writing during lessons does not reflect the good

understanding of lesson content pupils use in discussion. However, final versions of pupils' first efforts in workbooks are better. They are not only longer, but are also more considered and reveal an individual's understanding of the content taught, as well as conforming to conventions about structure, spelling and punctuation.

82. The teaching of English is a strength, with none found less than satisfactory and most (representing two-thirds, overall) good or better. In fact, half the lessons seen were very good or excellent. Often, teachers' love of the subject comes through. In a very good Year 5 lesson, a teacher's dramatic reading of the 'The Lady of Shalott' absorbed pupils. It helped them put themselves in the place of characters and think hard about difficult words. A challenging text was discussed in detail, helping pupils put forward their own ideas and build on prior learning. Related materials were displayed on the classroom wall. Teachers make excellent use of a brief period after morning registration for guided reading. Across Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils in all classes settle down purposefully, choosing something of interest from a 'book box' on each table. These are filled with a stimulating range of books well matched to pupils' needs within each group. Pupils enjoy deciding either to share with a group member or read independently. By Year 6, they become absorbed in silent reading until the end of the session. In Year 2, two boys discussed a book about frogs, reading quite a demanding level of text. One made a good stab at "amphibians" and both were interested in exploring what this meant. They were able to make sensible guesses in light of what they already knew. These sessions develop pupils' understanding of reading as an enjoyable activity as well as helping their reading skills in a structured way. So, teachers work with each group in turn throughout the week, focusing on shared texts. Classroom assistants are well deployed in supporting pupils' literacy skills by, for example, accompanying groups to the library to choose from a different selection of books and polish pupils' library skills.
83. Teachers are skilled at planning for the literacy strategy, which is well established and adapted to suit the school's needs. For example, giving separate time to guided reading as outlined above releases time for discussion and subsequent writing tasks during literacy lessons. Very good links are made across subjects, as in the Year 6 lesson where drug awareness was linked to personal, social and health education. Now that information and communication technology is better established, related skills are applied suitably to English lessons.
84. The co-ordination of English is very good. The co-ordinator brings high levels of commitment and skill to her work, not least in continuing to raise standards further. She has a good insight into what is happening in classrooms through monitoring activities that have included monitoring teaching and learning. This good practice is to be re-started in line with school improvement planning. The co-ordinator disseminates her own excellent practice through modelling lessons and makes sure colleagues attend In-service training as they can in order to keep updated. She also energetically builds up resources. For example, she organises book fairs twice yearly to raise funds for buying extra books for class and school libraries. Overall, this picture represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

85. Inspection findings show that most pupils in Year 6 meet expectations for eleven-year-olds. A significant number exceed expectations. No difference was found between girls and boys. Both are equally represented in the more able set, taught separately for some lessons. Overall standards in Year 2 also, broadly, meet expectations. More able pupils exceed expectations at times (when withdrawn for additional teaching support, for example). A significant number, however, achieve below expectations in some lessons. They work hard to understand what is expected of them, but make insufficient progress in their work at times, because a teacher's explanations of what they are to do lack clarity. More generally, pupils throughout the school make good progress, including all with special educational needs. These achieve in line with their prior attainment because of good quality support. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve in line with their monolingual peers.
86. By seven, most pupils' knowledge of place value and the ordering of numbers to 100 is sound. Pupils have a good grasp of addition and subtraction facts and associated vocabulary. They apply their knowledge to simple problems. Some more able pupils do this, using numbers to 1000. They count in 2s, 5s and 10s, applying such counting skills appropriately to practical work. Pupils understand about sharing in day-to-day contexts when required to make such links. They use money in shopping

activities. Most know the value of coins to a pound and can give and take the right amounts of change. They estimate before measuring objects and are learning how to make approximations as well as measuring actual lengths, when using non-standard measures. More able pupils apply knowledge of 'number bonds' from zero to 10 to numbers beyond 20. For example, they know that $2 + 5 = 7$ so $22 + 5$ must = 27, and $32 + 5$ must = 37, and so on. They use such know-how when they add the totals of numbers in a game with dice, developing speed as a lesson progresses. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to master addition and subtraction facts, using numbers to 20. They are learning the size and ordering of numbers to 100.

87. By eleven, most pupils have a well-developed grasp of place value in large numbers. They show their good awareness of number patterns through the way they use tables. They apply their grasp of the four rules of number (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) to problem solving, quickly and accurately. The more able explain relationships between percentages, decimals and fractions, and convert information on to a pie chart, by using their knowledge of angles and degrees. By Year 6, pupils calculate areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes with understanding and make tables for their results. Their knowledge of standard measures is secure. For example, they convert Imperial measures into metric measures of weight and transfer this information to a graph. They make good use of their mathematics in science experiments, when finding out which materials are the best insulators, looking at falls in temperature and recording findings on a line graph. They make comparisons between different types of graphs and discuss which is best for their purpose.
88. Teaching is good, overall, which marks an improvement since the last inspection. Particular strengths are in Years 3 to 6 where it is never less than good. In some lessons, it is very good or excellent. In Years 1 and 2, teaching ranges more variably from very good to unsatisfactory, but is satisfactory, overall. Where strengths are seen, teachers across the school build well on pupils' prior learning and keep a good pace. This was seen in an excellent lesson for more able pupils in Year 6 where a teacher's secure subject knowledge and very high expectations underpinned a brisk pace and challenges set. So, pupils consolidated and extended concepts of fractions and percentages through quick mental calculations. The teacher's mathematical vocabulary reinforced important teaching points, when discussing polygons and quadrilaterals, for example. Where teaching is less secure, lesson-pace falters. This happened in Year 2 when, despite careful planning, a teacher did not sufficiently explain the purpose of a lesson. Pupils' resulting confusion was compounded by terminology which, though mathematically correct, was too complex for the substantial number of lower ability pupils. They did not really see why or how to partition numbers as instructed, or which numbers to collect together first to reach a total. Generally, teachers use worksheets judiciously to match work to broad ability groups within each class. In the best lessons, pupils perceptively evaluate their own learning. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson for the more able, they saw an important 'turning point' when someone suddenly realised how their activity was structured. Skilled probing by a teacher led everyone to realise that their calculations (in this instance) would always be greater than 15, so they could start adding from this number.
89. The National Numeracy Strategy, firmly in place, is having a good effect on pupils' learning and standards. Information and communication technology skills are applied suitably to mathematics (as when Year 6 pupils make a database with line graphs and bar charts showing the relationship between the stretch of an elastic band in centimetres to mass in newtons). Similarly, pupils' literacy skills are well utilised, especially their speaking, listening and reading skills. For example, they interpret data in tables, line graphs and pie charts through class and group discussions and read problems from work sheets, exploring what is to be done. Few instances of applying writing skills purposefully were seen, however (for example, for planning steps in problem-solving or for further extending findings from surveys). Pupils apply numeracy skills to other subjects. They are familiar with time lines in history and construct graphs and charts for science and geography.
90. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection and standards are rising. Generally, the curriculum is broad and balanced. Mathematics' resources are used well. They are sufficient to meet curriculum demands and easily accessible. Pupils' finished work contributes well to the attractive displays on classroom walls. These relate to such aspects as number, shape and space and data handling. Homework is set regularly, in accordance with policy, and marked frequently. It usefully consolidates newly-learned ideas and, at times, extends these by encouraging pupils to apply them to new situations.

91. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been strengthened. The new co-ordinator manages the subject well, with a clear view of its strengths and areas for development. She gives a good lead in supporting teachers and leads in setting targets for improvement. Presently, she is not involved in monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms, although a start has been made with this. More generally, she monitors teachers' planning and samples pupils' work to ensure that curriculum goals are met and check their progress.

SCIENCE

92. Inspection findings show that standards in science are above those expected for both seven and eleven-year-olds. No difference between standards of girls and boys is seen. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need, make good progress, achieving in line with their prior attainment. Those with English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve in line with monolingual peers. Generally, standards are better than at the last inspection when achievements at seven and eleven were judged in line with nationally expected levels.
93. By Year 2, pupils can name the main parts of plants and discuss conditions needed for growth. They describe the uses of electricity around a home and explain in simple terms why toy boats float. Pupils' workbooks show them recording their findings in a number of ways - such as with tables and diagrams. Year 1 pupils explore forces and can differentiate between 'push' and 'pull' actions. They point out that if you want to turn a globe round to see another country the action required is a push. They also know that the downward motion in a set of scales is caused by objects' mass in the scales exerting a push and that opening a door requires either a push or a pull. Pupils know they must work carefully and safely so that no one gets hurt and that equipment and resources are well looked after.
94. In Years 3 to 6, teachers build systematically on pupils' earlier learning. This was seen in Year 4 when, answering a teacher's questions, pupils recalled their learning about materials when they were younger. After predicting what might happen in an experiment, they went on to decide whether or not solids change as a result of being immersed in water. So they developed their understanding of reversible and non-reversible changes. They wrote up their experiments in a scientific way, explaining the purpose of the experiment, the methods used, the outcomes observed and their conclusions in light of these. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about their scientific studies. They use correct terminology (for example, dissolve, evaporate, condensation) and realise the need for fair testing. They know what has to be taken into account when setting up such a test, explaining that there must be exactly the same amounts of water in containers when experimenting to find out which solids dissolve and which do not. They also know that results can be reliable only if solids are weighed beforehand, to ensure a constant weight from experiment to experiment. They explain how to use a Newton Meter to measure mass. They record their findings in graph form on a computer. Pupils predict likely outcomes for their experiments and generalise from their findings in ways that show they are learning important scientific principles.
95. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, but is good, overall. Teachers plan lessons well, setting new concepts into familiar contexts. This helps pupils grasp new ideas in terms of their own experiences. For instance, when Year 2 pupils talked about their work on changes in materials, they mentioned bread turning into toast and ice into water. They could readily understand which of these changes were 'reversible' and used correct terminology confidently. Teachers suitably emphasise scientific enquiry, as evident in the lessons seen and in pupils' work. Consequently, all pupils make good progress, learning to hypothesise when answering questions such as 'What would happen if...?' In practical lessons, pupils often pair with 'work buddies', increasing motivation and leading to the good standards seen. Discussion between 'buddies' reveals that all make gains in learning, especially pupils of lower ability. At times, however, too little is asked of them, so they sit back while adults demonstrate what they might usefully accomplish for themselves. For example, in an otherwise well planned Year 4 lesson, pupils stirred solids into water, but did not measure what was put in to the containers or otherwise take charge of experiments. Year 6 pupils' science is reinforced and extended to good effect by homework tasks. Teachers mark pupils work regularly, but few comments are made whereby pupils realise what they have done well and how they might improve. Pupils are encouraged to use literacy and numeracy skills as they make predictions, discuss their findings and record their ideas, both in writing and in graph form. For example, in Year 1, they spell simple words correctly and more difficult ones at least plausibly. Across the school, they also use

information and communication technology purposefully, as when they create graphs to report results in their experiments.

96. There are sufficient resources to meet curricular demands. The curriculum is well planned so that topics are 're-visited' over time and pupils build on their skills, knowledge and understanding incrementally. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has observed teaching and learning in some classrooms (for example, to check the standard of written work). Currently, the deputy head and a previous co-ordinator of science 'care-take' the subject until the recently appointed new co-ordinator settles in. This arrangement works well. School improvement planning shows that the school has rightly pinpointed the need to develop a system of assessment for science. Overall, the picture in science is good.

ART AND DESIGN

97. As at the previous inspection, standards in art and design are average for pupils of seven and eleven years. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need, achieve well because of the support they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in line with their monolingual peers and reach standards expected for their ages.
98. Year 2 pupils made patterns for Joseph's 'coat of many colours' linked to their design and technology work, although the link was not made explicit. Their use of pastels show they have a good grasp of what these can do. They experiment on paper with colour and line, inspired by computer printouts of the work of Bridget Riley, showing real insight into how the artist makes her patterns from alternating colours. Year 3 pupils also explore and create patterns while learning about mirror images. They are intrigued by the matching of triangular spaces to triangular shapes cut from the edge of a strip of paper, quite successfully sticking each 'matched' triangle so it reflects the empty space. Pleased with the results, they become scrupulous at matching and sticking as they see their patterns emerging. They see the importance of making a good match. More able pupils soon move on to their own more complex designs, revealing a very good grasp of the technique they have just learned. In work on display, Year 5 pupils have produced high standard still-life compositions. These contrast noticeably with other work, seen in a lesson following music, where pupils found it hard to settle. While they were able to select from a range of view-finders to suit their purpose, most made little progress because of their excitement and inability to concentrate. Year 6 pupils built well on previous learning when putting a sense of movement into images they made. Their well thought-out sketches really did the trick, and group work was highly successful. For example, one group showed progression in movement with a series of images for a cartoon sequence made by a digital camera. Another created plasticine figures at different stages of a movement and yet another overlapped images, which were then photocopied, to show the action of a rocking chair. Information and communication technology made a good contribution, here.
99. Teaching varies from good to satisfactory and is satisfactory, overall. Where teaching is good, teachers structure lessons well and provide an interesting range of activities, as in the good Year 6 lesson investigating movement, discussed above, when pupils worked with high levels of concentration throughout and acquired new techniques. They were well able to evaluate, for example, the limitations of techniques such as those associated with the use of digital cameras, since changes in movement they photographed were always too large for the movement sequence to appear realistic. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers can be unclear what purpose activities serve. In Year 3, for example, although the teacher's main focus was to create mirror images (again, discussed above), some groups made patterns with pencil crayons. Those working with colour applied themselves well enough, but some had not realised they were to copy wall paper patterns to extend their thinking. Most saw the activity as a 'colouring in' task. One group of boys agreed they could trace over their wallpaper patterns, which made things easier. Teachers deploy support well. In the Year 3 lesson, for example, adult support helped those with specific learning needs to make very good progress with cutting and sticking shapes in ways that pleased them, achieving better than expected results. Year 2 pupils' high levels of concentration were owed in good measure to the consistent support given by adults' questioning and practical help to surmount difficulties.
100. Currently, the headteacher is 'caretaking' the subject, although arrangements are in hand for a part-time member of staff with a specialist interest to take over co-ordination. While the curriculum is planned to meet latest guidance and is 'mapped out' over the school year, it reflects a mainly Western

bias in the famous artists chosen and the contributions of different cultures to art and design. A few resources from non-European traditions were seen (for example, relating to Mexican and Islamic influences), but pupils' work does not generally refer to these. It is not clear, either, how three dimensional work fits in to curriculum planning, although pupils' sketch- books make reference to work with clay in some classes. At present, there is no formal system to assess and monitor pupils' progress in art and design, or to moderate standards, either through sampling work or observing teaching and learning in classrooms.

101. The art curriculum is supplemented and enlivened by an annual 'Art Day' when all pupils choose from a wide range of interesting and exciting art and design activities. Celebrating 'Art Day' has become a tradition of the school, enjoyed by all members of its community. Findings are similar to those of the previous inspection and reflect, in part, priorities given to government initiatives in other areas of the school's work so that non-core subjects such as art and design have suffered.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Three lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence from these, from samples of pupils' work (including photographs), both this school year and in a previous year, together with discussions with pupils show standards broadly in line with expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. This finding is similar to that at the previous inspection. Subject provision has been generally well maintained since then, with improvements made in some aspects. For example, a new draft policy and scheme of work (based on the latest guidance) have been agreed.

103. Year 2 pupils use a variety of materials and equipment for their designs and models, exploring the sensory qualities of fabrics, paints, wool, paper and card for collage effects. They consider the purpose of an end product and strive to fit their work to this. For example, when designing patchwork motifs for Joseph's 'coat of many colours', they choose pattern, colour and shape for desired effects. Pupils working with paper focus on cutting triangular shapes of different sizes from magazines and newspapers, assembling these on to sections of the 'coat' in pleasing ways. Working on fabric, others concentrate equally hard on making patterns with fabric pastels and achieve attractive 'abstract' designs with each section carefully filled in. These show a great deal of imagination. Yet others use different coloured wool and wide-eyed needles to stitch patterns. During the course of a lesson, and at the end, pupils discuss what works in a design and how it might be improved. In Year 1, displays show how pupils have designed and made many toys for their classroom, choosing materials and tools carefully, discussing how they might push and pull a vehicle to make it move. There is evidence of planning and the evaluating of what has been done (with help from a teacher) and of drawing intended designs. Good links are also seen with themes in history and science (where, for example, 'push' and 'pull' forces are explored).

104. Year 5 pupils design a moving toy, studying models from a local secondary school to stimulate their imagination. These imported models show, for example, how a 'cam' creates movement (for example, when lifting a litter-bin lid up and down). Pupils are highly motivated by what they see, recognising the main principle involved. Enthusiastically, they set about deciding how to incorporate this into their own ideas. They work in pairs, choosing a theme for their models and materials they will use. Most manage quite a detailed first design by the end of the lesson and two girls drill a hole in the wheel for the 'cam' mechanism. Mainly, though, pupils depend on adults to help them finish planning. They follow a teacher's step-by-step guidance. Although they record their evaluations of work done and think about resources, their deliberations still reflect a dependence on adult support. Pupils in Year 6 develop many techniques and ideas when designing and making. They select from a range of materials to design and make photo frames, having thought through their choice of resources and speculated about different possible outcomes. They reflect on their products and propose how different materials and designs would, next time, affect changes. By 11, pupils make detailed designs of their chosen structures, make some use of a computer for designing and develop a good knowledge of materials and components. They can evaluate, modify and refine their original designs, as seen in photographs from 'Science and Design and Technology Challenge' in which last year's Year 6 pupils took part. They had used electric circuits with motors and buzzers to create different games.

105. Throughout the school, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is generally good, although in some lessons teachers do not plainly set out what pupils are to learn. At times, a lack of confidence in subject knowledge is evident, as when insufficient attention is given to assessing what pupils have achieved and how designs might be improved. For example, Year 4 pupils did not talk easily about

their work, so a teacher evaluated outcomes for them. Similarly, Year 5 pupils lost a chance for such discussion when time ran out and they had to pack away for the next lesson. These pupils, too, relied heavily on adult support in achieving tasks set, as noted above. Basic skills are taught well and there is good use of resources, including the use of classroom assistants to support pupils. For example, during a Year 4 lesson, a teacher skilfully demonstrated how a simple machine produced different types of movement and this generated good ideas from pupils about their own designs. In Year 2, there was good support for pupils learning to thread their needles and use a running stitch, with different colours of wool on pieces of materials. Transferring their designs from paper to fabric, using fabric crayons, they needed further support, which was readily available.

106. The curriculum leader gives sound advice to teachers translating the new policy into practice and using the agreed schemes of work. In order to raise the subject's profile and 'fill in' gaps, the school has made use of the 'Design and Technology Focus Week'. This project largely achieved its aims, bringing together the whole school community and developing cross-curricular links with other subjects, such as science. Information and communication technology is used in designing and making, although this is limited, currently. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning in classrooms and so has limited knowledge of strengths and where improvements might be made.
107. There is a good range of well-organised resources, including suitable tools, materials and equipment. A well-run Design and Technology Club has access to these resources and provides good opportunities for interested pupils to extend their skills. Nevertheless, although provision has to an extent improved since the last inspection, the picture, overall, hasn't changed a great deal, reflecting (again) the way subjects such as Design and Technology have lost out to other priorities.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Time for geography is 'blocked' for each class from Year 1 to Year 6 with units of work planned in line with the latest curriculum guidance. Lessons in two year groups were seen during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils shows that pupils reach standards broadly in line with those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged below expectations, overall.
109. In Year 2, pupils' secure knowledge of different forms of transport shows when they talk about how Barnaby Bear goes from Chester in the North of England to Roscoff in Brittany. Many can relate this journey to one they have made. Some talk about going on a train. Others describe boarding the car deck of a ferry to go to France or Ireland. A boy explains what a 'bird's eye view' is, drawing on his experience of being on an aeroplane. Pupils are learning about compass points and can, mostly, distinguish North and South by pointing upwards or downwards appropriately. More able pupils are beginning to realise where the West is as they watch an arrow on a map on a video programme move towards Plymouth from London. They know that maps show places relative to one another and that the narrow blue 'strip' between England and France is the wide stretch of the English Channel. They can locate the different parts of the British Isles and name these. They see why Barnaby Bear has to change his money from English coins to French francs at the Bureau de Change on the ferry, and they also know that he would now need euros. In Year 1, pupils can draw maps of the route from home to school. Those drawn by the more able are quite detailed, showing features of particular interest (for example, different kinds of houses passed en route).
110. Year 5 pupils' knowledge of water conservation is good. They know water is a "precious resource". They can argue for and against not wasting it, according to the viewpoint of particular groups of people. For example, they know those concerned about protecting the environment want to save water. They agree it is important not to load appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines with small loads of crockery or clothes, because this is wasteful. They also know that using a shower is much better than taking a bath because less water is used, although they think it can be nice to relax in a bath with a book when you are "stressed out". They understand that some people depend on water for their livelihoods (for example, those selling swimming pools or water features for gardens). Pupils well understand hygiene matters concerning water usage in the home and how this can lead to extravagance, as when dishes are rinsed under running water. During the lesson, pupils' written work showed how most have difficulty recording ideas they talk about so well. However, previous work shows that pupils have good opportunities to refine their writing over time, so ideas are set down in sequence and more accurately reflect their understanding. A group of Year 6 pupils recall tracing the

route of a local river on its way to Portsmouth when studying an area within the immediate locality. They have downloaded maps and information from the web site on to computers to support their studies. Helping one another, they explain about “erosion” and “deposition” in connection with this work, showing they knew how the earth is worn away or built up as water flows along a river’s course. They talk enthusiastically about an imminent extended study visit to the Isle of Wight where they will undertake activities like orienteering. They can explain what this means.

111. In the lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan activities well to include all pupils fully in lessons. In Year 2, a teacher used a video programme effectively by repeating the first few minutes of ‘Barnaby Bear’s travels’, but stopping it at intervals so pupils could comment and answer questions. She judged well when to stop this activity and move on to the next part of the lesson, as pupils became restless. In Year 5, a debate was organised. Groups of pupils had to develop arguments they would put forward from a particular viewpoint given on their task cards. For example, one group had to role-play water-board employees overworked trying to cope with burst water mains. The teacher managed the debate to very good effect. At times, she acted as a protagonist, making additional challenges, after listening to an argument. At others she was a neutral observer, making sure that everyone participated. A good pace was maintained and pupils were truly involved in the parts they played. However, the follow-up task was the same for all pupils, which detracted somewhat from an otherwise stimulating lesson.
112. Work from a past geography ‘focus week’ shows good links made across subjects, notably using literacy and information and communication technology. For example, Year 6 pupils write about accessing the Internet, searching for and then downloading maps and other relevant information turned up by their searches. Planning for the week shows that links are extended to many subjects, including pupils’ personal, social and health education. A display for Year 6 pupils preparing for their extended study visit makes strong links with history in setting out the places to be visited on the Isle of Wight. The school makes very good use of its immediate environment and localities beyond this for field study.
113. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily. The co-ordinator monitors teachers’ planning to make sure it matches units of study mapped out over the year. She samples pupils’ work, especially as this is represented by work completed during the ‘focus’ study weeks when geography is highlighted for cross-curricular purposes. She does not, currently, monitor teaching and learning in classrooms, although this process is highlighted for development in school improvement planning. She controls the budget for the subject and audits resources regularly. These are sufficient to meet curricular demands. For example, pupils throughout the school use globes and a variety of maps to support their work.

HISTORY

114. The curriculum is now organised into ‘blocks’ of time across classes during a school year, and planning based on the latest guidance ensures suitable coverage. Lessons were observed only in Year 3 and Year 4. A scrutiny of pupils’ work and teachers planning, together with discussions with groups of pupils in Years 2 and 6, show that seven and eleven-year-olds reach standards expected for their age. This is especially true for Year 6, where pupils talk widely about their learning and where written work is more extensive. This judgement represents an improvement on findings in the last inspection.
115. In Year 1, past work and teachers’ notes on what has been learned show that pupils are beginning to think about passing time in ways meaningful for them. They consider how toys to-day are different from those in the past, comparing ‘old’ toys with ‘new’ ones, including their own. Activities encourage talk about ‘now’ and ‘then’, with links made to other subjects. For example, pupils apply literacy skills when reading ‘big books’ with illustrations reinforcing vocabulary relevant to their history learning. They sort new from old toys for mathematical purposes, recording their findings in Venn diagrams. In Year 2, more able pupils enjoy talking in some detail about work they did on the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils learn about important days in the year, such as Remembrance Day, which they know commemorates people giving their lives during World War 1. Clearly, they have discussed when the war started and ended. Good use is made of time-lines throughout the school as well as for marking more personal events. For example, the school’s recent 150th anniversary features in classrooms across the school, while milestones important to younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are marked (such

as birthdays and the year they started school).

116. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils make effective use of books, photographs and posters to learn about aspects of everyday life during World War Two. They recall last week's enjoyable visit to the school air raid shelter, which helped bring content 'alive'. They also enjoyed talking to grandparents about what it was like in the war, willingly sharing this information, helped by a teacher's skilled questioning. Pupils in Year 4 explain the route the Vikings took from their homelands using a map, and realise why the Vikings invaded other countries before settling in these. They know something of the daily lives of the Vikings, such as the kinds of houses they lived in and how they farmed. In discussion, Year 6 pupils show how well they can empathise with people from past times. They imagine what it must have been like to be a child in the Victorian era having to go out to work. They extract relevant information from books, pictures and artefacts, making pertinent comparisons with their own lives. They know how Lord Shaftsbury shaped the lives of women and children and improved the conditions of people working in coal mines. Pupils throughout the school use correct terminology and, by Year 6, talk about different historical periods by referring to the appropriate dates.
117. In the lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory. It was very good in a Year 3 lesson where a teacher's interest in the subject was foremost, leading pupils to a good insight into events in World War Two and how peoples' daily lives were affected by air raids. Resources such as old photographs, newspapers, facsimiles of letters and a taped air-raid siren motivated pupils of all abilities to imagine they lived during wartime. Questioning provoked empathy with others' lives. More generally, teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject show in their planning and organisation of lessons, marking an improvement since the last inspection. In most classes, a major strength in teaching is the way literacy skills enhance pupils' understanding of history content and concepts taught. For example, 'writing frames' help pupils structure ideas prior to writing about these at greater length.
118. In addition to using resources as outlined above, teachers also make good use of study visits. Years 5 and 6, for example, visited the British Museum as part of their history topic on the Ancient Greeks. During a recent 'History Focus Week', the school celebrated its 150th birthday culminating in a 'Victorian Day', when staff and pupils dressed up and role-played aspects of school life during Victorian times. This theme quite clearly made a significant impact on all those involved, including parents. Themes for school assemblies also strengthen pupils' grasp of past events and the lives of famous people. For example, Year 2 pupils recall earlier learning about David Livingstone and can link this to finding out about Martin Luther King that week.
119. The level of resources has improved since the previous inspection, although limited evidence of resources for pupils' own researches through information and communication technology was seen during the inspection. The school has adapted the latest curriculum guidance to its own needs, achieving consistency of practice, especially in lesson planning. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator helps with lesson planning and monitors longer term planning to check that it underpins units of work allocated across year groups. She also monitors the use of resources and pupils' work, noting what levels are achieved and how the subject is developing. The monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms is not yet in place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Standards for seven and eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with those expected, marking an improvement since the last inspection. A further, very good improvement in provision is the recently finished computer suite, now regularly used by all classes. It motivates staff and pupils alike. All are keen to develop their skills and make full use of this exciting facility.
121. Year 1 enjoyed their first lesson in the computer suite. They selected and dragged objects across the screen with a mouse to complete a task. Similarly, they matched words and placed them correctly to label a picture. They quickly learned how to give instructions to a printer so as to print out work. In Year 2, displayed work shows pupils' high success rate when designing bags, with a computer, for Barnaby Bear to take on holiday. In the computer suite, however, pupils were seen making little progress in one task because most found it too demanding. They were uncertain about what to do. They were asked to locate pictures by Bridget Riley (an artist they are studying) and print these out. Pupils frequently sought reassurance and help from the adults and some were then pleased to print

out the artist's work. Quite a few, though, lost interest, turning to their own paper and pencil designs. Year 3 pupils manipulated objects on a screen competently, moving these around as directed by on-screen instructions. The more able had very good skills and moved objects quickly. All could follow instructions and saw how to click with either the right or left-hand mouse button. They understood simple, drop-down, menus. More able pupils progressed through different levels of a game, starting to realise how rules affected the choices they made. Year 5 pupils skilfully controlled a mouse when entering data into cells on a spreadsheet. They confidently matched icons to tasks, making very good progress towards realising their own intentions. More able Year 6 pupils construct a pie chart from data they have entered, also revealing a good grasp of what is involved. Most know that the size of each section of the chart will alter, relative to the number of cars represented. They can change the size as necessary and flood each section with a chosen colour. They then insert a title and explanatory text into the finished chart, and print this out.

122. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory, overall. This was seen for example, in a Year 1 lesson where tasks were well matched to pupils' different learning needs so that all succeeded according to their ability by the end. Pupils, who finished early, extended their skills via a word-search task, linked well to prior learning. Mostly, the skills taught and explanations given by teachers are grounded in secure knowledge. Teachers monitor pupils' progress effectively and are well supported in this by classroom assistants. At times, support staff are very skilful in sensing pupils' difficulties and helping them overcome these, as was seen when Year 2 pupils met a rather demanding task. Where pupils experience difficulty, this generally reflects teachers' insecure subject knowledge, so tasks are not matched suitably to pupils' abilities. Teachers make good links with other subjects, as they do throughout the school. For example, there are evident links with literacy in Year 1, design and technology and geography in Year 2 and mathematics in Years 5 and 6. Often, linked work is completed on classroom machines, now complementing those in the suite.
123. In light of the novelty of the computer suite, the school is evaluating its use. Time allocated for lessons is quite long and inspectors saw this as sometimes militating against sustaining a lesson's pace. For example, Years 2 and 3 pupils were plainly affected by the length of time spent in the suite. Momentum was lost as they began to fidget and seek distractions. A good Year 6 lesson proved frustrating for all involved (teacher and pupils) when the Internet 'crashed' and information linked to a visit to the Isle of Wight, to be undertaken very soon, could not be accessed. In this lesson, pupils stayed remarkably patient while adults tried to remedy the problem. Progress was made with other tasks and pupils explained in detail how to use a 'search engine' on the web site. They named several of these. Information and communication technology remains a priority of school improvement planning, not least with regard to furthering teachers' skills and subject knowledge so that quality of teaching and learning gains greater consistency, in line with the best practice seen.
124. The headteacher currently acts as co-ordinator, although plans are in place to replace him. He brings very good expertise to the subject and has arranged a systematic programme for teaching necessary skills so pupils develop their knowledge and understanding successively, over time. Plans are also well in hand to ensure that pupils' learning in the subject is assessed regularly. Overall, the school is in a strong position to move forward in improving both provision and standards reached.

MUSIC

125. Because of time-tabling, only three lessons were seen. No music was seen taught at the end of Key Stage 1. A judgement on standards for seven-year-olds is, therefore, not made, although these are expected to match satisfactory standards, overall, given what is achieved by other year groups. In those aspects of the curriculum observed, standards are judged in line with what is expected for pupils' ages (including Year 6). Pupils were seen exploring different musical elements (for example, pulse and rhythm) and appraising and improving their performance of group compositions on pitched and unpitched instruments. They also responded to different kinds of music on CD. Singing was heard in assemblies and in a Year 6 lesson. Inspection findings show standards as broadly the same as those reported at the last inspection. Provision has improved since then, however, with good attention paid to covering the full curriculum, following the latest guidelines. The curriculum is structured so that each music strand is taught in the course of the school year and pupils build successively on skills, knowledge and understanding over time.
126. Singing in whole-school assemblies is tuneful. Most pupils know the words of familiar hymns by heart

and the youngest children in Reception year work hard to join in with their older peers. Pupils keep good time to a piano accompaniment and make a pleasing sound responding to this, altering dynamics to sing softly or loudly as appropriate. They enunciate words clearly and sing in tune. In one assembly, a group of Y6 boys and girls led the singing from the front of the hall to very good effect. Others watched them with interest and, in fact, the older pupils' lead ensured that all sang a difficult hymn really well.

127. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils join in with a teacher, clapping the palms of their hands on their knees and keeping good time to a simple beat. They copy a pattern of three claps accurately and sustain this for some time. They find it harder to play a new game where they say their names in time to a drumbeat. After some practice, about a third of the class succeeds and more begin to get the idea. They enjoy making up clapping patterns in small groups and most have fair success with this, supported by their teacher, although some find it hard to concentrate. By the end of a lesson, a group claps quite a fast hand-and-knee rhythm in time together, when asked to demonstrate what they have done. By Year 5, pupils have a secure grasp of how to make different quality sounds on a range of instruments. They know some instruments continue resonating for quite some time after they are played and understand why. For example, a boy explains the air still vibrates after a cymbal is struck. Pupils understand a teacher's signals for fast or slow playing and for soft and loud. They use the correct terminology for these when answering questions and when talking about their work. For example, they talk about 'tempo' and 'dynamics'. This good practice is seen across the school from Reception upwards. In Year 6, pupils know how to change dynamics during a song in order to stress some words and reflect its mood. They suggest parts of a familiar hymn should be sung in a "prayerful" way, relating this to 'soft' 'sweet' or 'calm' qualities. They modulate their voices to this end. They enjoy the challenge of working in small groups, notating compositions on large sheets of paper, for keyboard instruments accompanied by claves, triangles and tambourines. They manage this so that each group follows its own composition when performing to the rest, but individual groups soon realise the complexities of their task when others try to follow what they have written and have to ask "Is this bit higher up the keyboard or lower down? ... When does the tambourine come in?"
128. Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well so pupils work as actively as possible to reach goals set and build on skills across different elements linked in considered ways. For example, in Year 1 and Year 5 lessons, pupils listened to music on CD and were invited to reflect on the mood created and how it made them feel. In Year 1, pupils soon moved their bodies in time to a lively beat with some trying to click their fingers to keep time, reinforcing earlier work. Older Year 5 pupils listened to Holst's planet suite with intense concentration, set up by a teacher's calm expectation that all would settle in this way. They thought about how the mood and *texture* (or layers) of the music were created, preparing to include such elements in their own compositions. In Year 6, planning ensures pupils make links in relation to achieving a melodic sound (reflecting the meaning of the words they sing) with a composition they are to work on over a series of lessons. Mostly, pupils work hard and want to please their teachers. This was especially notable in the Year 5 lesson when pupils sat in a circle and followed a teacher's conducting extremely well. They were anxious to improve their ability to control the dynamics of sound possible with their instrument and achieve the quietest possible sound.
129. Resources are sufficient. There is a range of recorded music to be heard, reflecting different styles and musical traditions. There are enough instruments for all pupils when playing and composing in class lessons. On occasion, pupils were observed banging inappropriately - especially on drums - although, as noted above, they play with care when a need to do so is brought to their attention. Pupils whose parents opt for them to have musical tuition have good opportunities to learn how to play instruments taught by visiting specialists (for example, the guitar). Their extra musical expertise is used well by class teachers. However, these pupils have, of necessity, to leave ongoing lessons for tuition, which means they can miss substantial parts of a lesson. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to perform to others during the school year. For example, they show class-work in school assemblies and take part in concerts at Christmas time. These involve all pupils in the school and are popular with parents.
130. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure that the programme of work now mapped out across the school year is kept to. She does not, however, monitor teaching and learning in classrooms, although she can see the outcomes of this when work is shared in assembly. She checks resources and manages the budget. She promotes

In-service for colleagues when possible and sought support from the local education authority centre for the arts for a recent 'focus week' for music. Then she arranged for an African dance troupe to visit the school. These focus weeks are successful in giving the subject a higher profile in such ways, providing a wider range of musical activities than is more usually the case. Outside expertise enhances teachers' confidence in the subject to good effect. A specialist has visited each classroom to demonstrate a lesson in the use of unpitched instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Games and dance lessons were observed in both key stages, but gymnastics was not seen because of how the curriculum is organised across a school year. Seven-year olds reach standards expected for their age in dance and games, very much as at the previous inspection. By eleven, standards in games and swimming are above those expected. This marks an improvement since the last inspection where standards by eleven were stated to meet expectations, overall, for this age. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make good progress because of the good support they receive. Those with English as an additional language make progress and achieve on a par with their monolingual peers.
132. In a Year 1 games lesson, pupils work hard at tasks. They demonstrate, on the spot, correct ways of kicking, jumping, running and skipping. They control a ball with their hands and feet to kick, stop and travel with it. A boy shows how to 'dribble' a ball, keeping good control. In dance, Year 2 pupils listen closely to music and clap in time. They follow instructions and move in a manner suggesting a mood. For example, they show they are happy when at the seaside. They can rise slowly from a curled position on the floor until they are fully stretched, arms up as far as they can go and legs forward, imagining they are a giant sandcastle. They can relax and make their bodies quite floppy as if waves are washing the sandcastles away. They can also march in time to band music, varying their speed according to the type of music and changing directions whilst still keeping in time. In Year 3, pupils sequence three movements together to suggest raindrops, with some high and some low movements. Pupils watching a group's work can explain what they liked about a dance and what they think might be improved. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate accurate throwing and catching when practising and then applying skills to team activities. They take careful aim and strive to improve a performance, following a teacher's instructions. By Year 6, pupils have good levels of control, precision and accuracy and understand the tactics needed for ball games. They evaluate their work and suggest how to improve a performance. When asked, they give constructive feedback to a teacher about how the games she devised could be improved. Through this, they show a good grasp of rules and why these are necessary in game situations.
133. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good, overall. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and understanding. They build 'warm-up' and 'cool down' sessions into lessons and ensure that pupils see why these are important. They make good decisions about when to intervene to move lessons forward. For example, Year 1 pupils who were especially good at stopping and starting balls were asked to demonstrate their good skills. The rest of the class was then able to re-focus on improving performance. In Year 6, a teacher's very good skills in such judgements and in managing inappropriate behaviour kept a brisk pace. Potential problems were quickly dealt with. Pupils made discernible progress in developing their knowledge of successful games' tactics. Teachers and support staff are good role models. They dress suitably for lessons.
134. Pupils in Year 5 go for lessons to a local swimming pool to be taught by specialist coaches. Most swim at least the expected 25 metres by the end of a series of lessons. The school takes part in inter-school football and netball games, achieving creditable success in these. It aims to foster enjoyment in such activities and lets all pupils who wish to take part be included. An annual cross-country 'fun' run is one of the highlights of the school calendar. Extra-curricular clubs for football, netball and athletics are well attended.
135. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject. In her capacity as deputy head, she has a general overview of where strengths are found and improvements might be made, but does not formally monitor teaching and learning in lessons. She monitors teachers' planning to ensure this matches the curriculum 'map' agreed for each class over the school year. The curriculum is well planned to take account of the latest guidance. Resources are good and well organised.