

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

HACKNEY, LONDON

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100270

Headteacher: Mrs L. Kiernan

Reporting inspector: Mr. P. R. Sudworth - 2700

Dates of inspection: February 4th-7th, 2002

Inspection number: 195602

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: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kingshold Rd,
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London

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: The Revd James Funnell

Date of previous inspection: 6th May, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Music; Physical education; English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9030	Robert Love	Lay inspector		Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2512	Brian Emery	Team inspector	Science; Design and technology; Geography; History; Special educational needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2749	Gay Wilkinson	Team inspector	English; Art and design; Foundation Stage; Equal opportunities.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John of Jerusalem is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school situated near to the centre of Hackney in East London. It is a popular and over-subscribed school with 243 boys and girls on roll aged 3-11 years. It serves an area of mixed housing, including a substantial amount of housing association property. Most pupils live in close proximity to the school. Just over half the pupils are of Afro-Caribbean heritage and a further four percent of pupils are from other minority ethnic groups. About one-fifth of the pupils speak English as their second language. Two pupils are at an early stage in their knowledge of the English language. Almost two-fifths of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, above the national average. Fifty-one pupils are on the register for special educational needs, a proportion just over the national average. The school has initial concerns about 43 pupils on the register and a further eight pupils have more pronounced difficulties and receive additional support from specialist teachers. There is a wide variation of attainment at entry but overall it is slightly below average. Children in the Nursery begin the term after their third birthday part-time and commence full-time education at age four. There are two intakes into the Reception class, in September and in January. The school has had a lot of changes of staff in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St John of Jerusalem provides a sound education for its pupils. Both the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Most pupils attain the expected standards for their age but standards are below expectations in some aspects of information and communication technology and in design and technology. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is very good in Year 6 and good in Year 2 and for pupils who have special educational needs. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The promotion of reading and the good progress that pupils make in this aspect of English.
- The joy and quality of pupils' singing and their interest in music.
- The very good quality of teaching in Year 6 and the specialist music teaching.
- The ethos of care, mutual respect, the good quality of relationships and the support for one another.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- The provision for moral, social and cultural education.

What could be improved

- The provision for design and technology.
- Some aspects of information and communication technology.
- The organisation of the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- The quality of assessment, except in Years 2 and 6, in subjects other than English, mathematics and music, and its overall use in planning work for pupils with different needs, particularly for the more able pupils.
- The management and monitoring of the balance of the curriculum and equal access to it.
- The planning of the budget.
- The amount of teaching time in Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May, 1997. There have been improvements in both the science curriculum and in science standards since that time and members of staff are more confident in teaching investigational science. Standards have also improved in history, punctuation, grammar, spelling and in mathematics. Standards in physical education are not as high, except in cricket, but are at expected levels. They remain below expectations in design and technology. Standards in information and communication technology have not kept pace with developments and are below expectations in some aspects. The quality of teaching has improved and there is much less unsatisfactory teaching. Nevertheless, there are still some inconsistencies in pupils' general progress across the school, partly as a result of staffing problems. Schemes of work and policies for the curriculum are better developed but improvement is needed in the planning for the Foundation Stage. Co-ordinators of core subjects have more time to monitor the quality of work in the school and to manage their responsibilities. Links with parents have improved and behaviour is more consistently good. Procedures for health and safety are better. Overall satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. The school has sound potential to make further improvements.

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	D	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	C	E*	E	E

Key

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

Most children in the Foundation Stage reach national expectations in much of their work by the end of the Reception year but a significant minority will not reach the expected standard in literacy and mathematics. The school reached its target for the percentage of Year 6 pupils in 2001 who gained the expected level or above in English but missed it by seven per cent in mathematics. In recent years Year 2 boys have been doing better than the girls in comparison with national gender trends and much better than the school's girls in mathematics. By the end of Year 6 both boys and girls have been doing less well than boys and girls nationally, particularly in mathematics, although results differ significantly from year to year. The trend of results has been broadly in line with the national picture. In most subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils meet national expectations but pupils do not reach the expected standards in design and technology nor in some aspects of information and communication technology such as modelling, monitoring, control and data handling. Progress is unsatisfactory in these subjects in the main. Standards are above expectations in music throughout the school and in cricket by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well in these aspects of work. In other subjects pupils make sound progress and good progress in reading. The very good quality of teaching in Year 6 and the good teaching in Year 2 are the main reasons for the improvement in standards of current pupils in those classes in English, mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school, enjoy their work and take an interest in what they are doing.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is generally good, although at times a few pupils let themselves down. Pupils cooperate with their teachers. The children make friends with one another and play happily together in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between the staff and pupils and amongst the pupils are very good. Pupils contribute well to the class and School Council and take an interest in the school's affairs.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There has been a slight improvement. Pupils are punctual for school. It is slightly below the national average but above the Local Authority average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The teaching of English and mathematics, including the work in literacy and numeracy, is satisfactory in the main and sometimes good. In Year 6 the quality of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. It is good in Year 2. Pupils work particularly well in these classes and make good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because of the good teaching and the detailed planning of their work. The teaching of music is a particular strength and lessons observed were either very good or excellent. Pupils enjoy this subject as a result and make good progress. Insufficient teaching of information and communication technology and design and technology takes place and progress is unsatisfactory. Teachers usually manage their pupils well and use resources effectively to help them understand. Overall teachers do not make enough use of assessment information to plan their lessons and this results in a lack of challenge at times for those who are more able. Lessons begin promptly.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. There is no scheme for the Foundation Stage children. Not enough attention is given to the teaching of information and communication technology and to design and technology. There is a lack of consistency in building up pupils' skills continuously in these subjects. The music curriculum is very good and there is good provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs. They are sometimes withdrawn in groups for extra help. They are supported well in class by their teachers and the teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. No pupils were receiving extra help to acquire English. Two young pupils at an early stage were picking up the language well from other pupils as they worked and played. Other pupils are proficient in the language, although several pupils do not speak English as their main language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good and it is satisfactory for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure and caring environment where pupils are respected and valued. Teachers do not make enough use of assessment overall in planning lessons. Whilst records of pupils' progress are appropriately maintained in English, mathematics and music they are largely absent in other subjects and in the Foundation Stage.

The school tries hard to forge good links with its parents and has good systems of communication with them. Overall, the two way link between school and home is satisfactory. .

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has guided the school well to improve its ethos. The management in the school does not always analyse day-to-day practice and curriculum arrangements sufficiently well and some pupils miss their curriculum entitlement. The quality of school development planning is satisfactory. Some co-ordinators manage their responsibilities effectively but the quality of subject leadership is inconsistent.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well and take much interest in the school. However, they rely much on information provided by the school when taking decisions. Some governors visit the school, observe lessons and have a link with a class. The curriculum committee serves a useful function and finance committee members have good personal expertise.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is beginning to track the performance of pupils more effectively and the progress made by groups such as boys and girls and pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. It analyses the results of national tests effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Unsatisfactory. There is a lack of long-term planning and the budget plan is to some extent historic. The school does not rigorously analyse its grant expenditure against the purposes of the grants. Subject co-ordinators do not prioritise their spending plans.

Quantities of learning resources and books are satisfactory. The school has particular problems in recruiting staff but overall provision is adequate numerically. Accommodation is satisfactory but with a weakness in outdoor provision. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to obtain best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress; • Their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best; • They feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns; • Behaviour is good and the school is helping the children's level of maturity and sense of responsibility. 	<p>A small but significant minority of parents state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not well enough informed about how their children are getting on; • The school does not work closely with parents; • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons; • The children do not get the right amount of homework.

The inspection team agrees with most of the parents' positive views. The pupils are making satisfactory progress overall but good progress in Years 2 and 6. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and parents have good opportunities to discuss the progress their children are making. School reports are of good quality. The school tries hard to work with parents and communication with them is good. Pupils get appropriate amounts of homework for their age and pupils are expected to read regularly with their parents at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children begin school with slightly below average attainment and make satisfactory progress throughout the school overall. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 6 because of the very good, and sometimes excellent, teaching and good progress in Year 2. In both classes the curriculum is well planned. There are some inconsistencies in standards in other parts of the school and in maintaining the progression of work. In some classes this is due to changes of teachers. In the Foundation Stage the children make sound progress overall and most children reach the expectations for the end of the Reception year in much of their work, although a significant minority of children will not reach them in mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy activities.

2. In writing Year 2 boys have been doing better than boys have nationally in recent years and Year 2 girls have equalled the national average for girls. There have been significant differences in attainment over the past three years between boys and girls. In reading and mathematics both boys and girls by the end of Year 2 have done less well than the national average for boys and girls but boys come nearer to attaining the national average for boys. It is very largely the results obtained by the girls at Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, which is pulling down the results in national tests in Key Stage 1. No particular differences were noted in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection.

3. By the end of Year 6, both boys and girls have been doing less well than boys and girls nationally, particularly in mathematics, although results differ significantly from year to year. There was no evidence that ethnic minorities were disproportionately represented in any of the ability groups. There are nevertheless some marked differences in the relative performance attained between different academic years. The school reached its target in English in 2001 but missed it in mathematics by seven per cent.

4. Most Year 2 and 6 pupils meet national expectations in English and a small minority exceeds them. Standards are better in punctuation, spelling and grammar than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory and pupils have good opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Work is often presented well, although spelling is often inconsistent in Year 2, including the spelling of key words. It improves by the end of Year 6. Pupils who were heard to read show a good interest in books, enjoy reading and discuss books confidently and enthusiastically. Year 6 pupils read with good intonation and have good comprehension skills. They know how to use books for research purposes and can scan the text for specific information. Many belong to the local library, furthering their interest in literature and research work. Pupils develop good study skills and by age 11 pupils use their scanning and skimming skills well and can find information quickly. They know the purpose of an index and a glossary and they use them effectively.

5. Pupils in both key stages experience a satisfactory balance of work in mathematics but they do not always have enough opportunities to handle data, particularly in information and communication technology, partly as a result of a lack of software. Their skills in mathematics meet expectations in other aspects of work and they achieve soundly. They make particularly good progress in Years 2 and 6. Most pupils are expected to attain the national standards in Year 2 and 6 in the end of academic year national tests and a small minority should obtain the higher level.

6. Pupils' skills in science in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection and scientific investigation is given greater emphasis in pupils' work throughout the school. As a result pupils are understanding the idea of fair test better and the concept of variables than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work. Most are expected to reach the expected standard for their age in the national tests in both key stages with a few obtaining the higher level.

7. Most pupils reach the expected standards in both key stages in history, geography and art and design and make satisfactory progress. Standards in design and technology are below expectations because pupils have insufficient opportunities to design, make and evaluate. They do not meet expectations in the control, modelling and monitoring aspects of information and communication technology by age 11 but in other aspects of information and communication technology attainment is appropriate. Standards reach expectations in physical education, although they are not as high as they were at the last inspection because more time has to be devoted to English and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress in cricket in their extra-curricular activities and reach a high standard for their age. Standards in music remain above expectations in singing and listening and appraising because of the very good teaching and the enthusiasm of the pupils for musical activities.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Good teaching in withdrawal settings using the reading recovery programme assists the pupils to make good progress in reading. No overall differences were noted between the attainment of different ethnic groups in the school. In some year groups minority ethnic groups form the majority of the highest achievers whilst in some other year groups they form the majority of those who find learning difficult. There is no overall pattern. Pupils who are more capable are not challenged enough in many lessons, particularly in mathematics and English.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils, including the Foundation Stage children, are good. In almost all the lessons seen, pupils showed positive attitudes to school and in their work and this was a significant factor in the quality of learning. Pupils are willing to answer questions and most use school conventions, such as putting up a hand before speaking. There is a purposeful, industrious atmosphere in most lessons. Pupils state that they enjoy school, and parents confirmed this through the questionnaire.

10. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. Pupils play well together in the playground. They co-operate well together in pairs and small groups in lessons. Only one pupil was permanently excluded during the past year and two for fixed terms. Pupils and parents agree that there is little bullying or racism but should it occur it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils from a very broad range of cultures and ethnic origins respect each other within school. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are polite and take good care of the school environment.

11. Pupils willingly take on responsibility and they take their duties seriously, such as when serving on the School Council. Responsibilities are learned quickly, as when very young pupils return registers to the office. Older pupils help in a variety of ways such as getting the hall ready for assembly, acting as library assistants and staffing the school office during the lunch-break. By the time they leave the school, pupils are generally self-confident young people.

12. Levels of attendance remain a little below the national average, as they were at the time of the last inspection despite some slight improvement, but they are well above the average for the Borough of Hackney. Unauthorised absence is above the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory. A few pupils frequently arrive late, even though most live within a short walk of the school. However, registrations, assemblies and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory but with particular strengths in the quality of teaching in Year 6 and in music. It is much improved since the last inspection when almost one-quarter of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of lesson presentation is equally divided between those which are good or better and those which are satisfactory and less than satisfactory. Of the 50 lessons observed, four were excellent, six very good, 15 good and 22 satisfactory. Three lessons were less than satisfactory and one of these was poor.

14. The overall quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and some is good and better. The best literacy and numeracy lessons cater well for pupils' different needs and explanations are clear so that pupils make good strides in their understanding. Good use is made of resources in these lessons as, for example, when all Year 2 pupils were given a card in numeracy with a number written on it. The teacher asked probing questions such as 'Who has a got a number greater than....but smaller than..?' This approach keeps the pupils on their toes. In some literacy and numeracy lessons not enough was being done to challenge pupils according to their prior attainment in the activities which followed the lesson introduction.

15. Teachers make satisfactory use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, for example in science to measure and record results and in history to describe events and to write in the role of particular historic characters. Little use is made of information and communication technology across the curriculum, partly a result of a lack of software but also because teachers do not always see the possibilities.

16. The teaching in Year 6 is consistently of a high quality and some excellent lessons were observed in this class. The teacher's questioning is very thoughtful and used skilfully to assess pupils' understanding, which is then used as a base to build on by the teacher. Pupils are encouraged to think with such questioning as 'How might we...?' 'What effect might the light have on....?' which helps the pupils feel involved and they respond by making reasoned suggestions. In a Year 6 art and design lesson they were led to think beyond their own experience and to predict. 'What might we see if something was very far away?' Pupils were challenged to draw a landscape from photographs and paint in landscape features with reference to distance and perspective and they produced work of good quality as a result. In a Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher made very good use of pupils to demonstrate active and passive verbs and this helped the pupils grasp the concept. In a numeracy lesson skilful use was made of pupils to place fractions held on cards in front of them into the correct order by getting other pupils to move the children about into the right position. In a geography lesson contact by e-mail with researchers based in Antarctica and Peru was bringing their study of these regions alive.

17. The teaching of music is very good and sometimes excellent. The specialist teacher has very good subject knowledge and is a skilled musician. She enthuses the pupils, moves lessons along at a brisk pace and the lesson content is interesting and challenging. Her impromptu piano playing has the pupils spell-bound. She also has good skills in playing the recorder and violin and plays these to good effect to demonstrate particular teaching points such as pitch and mood. Music lessons are planned carefully with a planned progression of skills which helps the pupils make good progress. Her own enthusiasm endears itself to the pupils, such as her own demonstration of Irish music played on the recorder and violin whilst the pupils clap out a steady beat. A wide range of techniques is used to keep the pupils' interest in music and the teacher knows just when to change the activity to retain their concentration. In one lesson the teacher got the pupils to listen to the 'Pizzicata Polka' and pupils interpreted the story of 'Goldilocks' to it in unison with choral effects at appropriate points in the music. In another lesson pupils drew scenes in the style of famous artists as they listened to Delius' 'Cuckoo in Spring' and they responded well with prints by Turner and Whistler to assist their own

interpretations. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and respond well, particularly in their singing, which is enthusiastic, tuneful and filled with joy. The teacher maintains a clear focus in the lessons and refuses to digress [‘Lets deal with that one later’], which helps to ensure the content is covered and the pace maintained. Her good use of praise helps the pupils to feel good about their performance and they want to do well. They contribute effectively in lessons as a result.

18. In other subjects the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Two less than satisfactory lessons were in physical education but overall the quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory and poor, class management and relationships were unsatisfactory, time was not used well, pupils were not challenged or extended enough in what they did and the time devoted to different parts of the lesson was not well balanced. Pupils became restless as a result and managing the classes became problematic. Additionally pupils queued for turns partly a result of the fact that there was not enough apparatus to keep the pupils active. They made unsatisfactory progress as a result.

19. Lessons throughout the school begin promptly. Most lessons proceed in a quiet and calm atmosphere. They show interest in what pupils say and value these contributions even if they are wrong or are off at a tangent. They respond positively to pupils’ suggestions. In most lessons pupils are managed well by close execution of the school’s behaviour policy. On occasion they model learning well for the pupils, as when the pupils were shown how to annotate a text by highlighting and making notes of the words. Resources are often used well and this helps the pupils to gain a better understanding. The Year 1 teacher used large cardboard coins to discuss the value of different coins and how amounts of money could be made up with different coins. In the activities which followed, use of different coins helped the pupils’ levels of accuracy. Suitable use is made of homework across the school to extend the pupils’ knowledge and to practise their reading skills which has a positive affect on standards. Many pupils are becoming very interested in books as a result and many belong to the local library.

20. Teachers have sound subject knowledge in most subjects other than music in which the specialist’s knowledge is very good and they plan their work satisfactorily. Insufficient teaching takes place in design and technology and information and communication technology. In Years 2 and 6 the teachers research the content particularly well which enables the teachers to respond informatively to questions which pupils bring up in the lesson. Teachers make good use of the teaching assistants in lessons to support those who have difficulties

21. One of the major weaknesses in teaching is the lack of assessment about pupils’ levels of understanding in subjects other than English, mathematics and music. In general not enough use is made of assessment across the curriculum, except in Years 2 and 6, to plan work for future learning or to meet the needs of those who are progressing at different rates, particularly those who are more capable.

22. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs, speech and language difficulties and English as an additional language is good overall. The two staff involved in withdrawal work are skilled, experienced and sensitive to pupils’ needs. Work on the reading recovery programme is very effective and small group withdrawal for additional support in writing is of a very good quality.

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

23. The school fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in most respects and most of the areas for improvement in the curriculum identified in the last report have been addressed successfully. However, there is insufficient attention to modelling, monitoring and control in information and communication technology and insufficient attention is given to design and technology and as a result pupils' skills are still below expectations. All subjects now have policies in place and schemes of work have been produced, either written by the school based on National Curriculum requirements or by adopting schemes produced from national sources. Subject co-ordinators have a small amount of non-contact time, which they use to monitor the planning of their area of the curriculum. The monitoring and evaluating of the organisation of the curriculum at a whole-school level remain a weakness. Yearly planning arrangements lack rigour. There are variations in the use of the planning format across the school. Not all subjects are included in termly work with sufficient clarity. For example, in some classes the time devoted to design and technology, art and design, history, geography during the year is inadequate. In some instances both design and technology units of work are undertaken during a single term with no other design and technology during the year. Teaching time in Key Stage 2 is 35 minutes below minimum recommendations weekly.

24. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. In the Reception class appropriate attention is given to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as it affects young children's learning but the planning of work in the Nursery does not ensure that learning is building on individual children's developing skills. There is no overall Foundation Stage scheme by which to implement the national guidance to help develop the children's learning.

25. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented satisfactorily, although there is often a lack of match to pupils' different needs and challenge for more able pupils in these subjects. Teachers plan the curriculum for these areas of work with a clear sequence of activities from day-to-day and the work is often purposeful, such as persuasive writing and poetry studies.

26. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. Pupils take part in a range of well organised cultural and sporting activities and many of these, for example the art appreciation group, gymnastics and cricket have a positive effect on pupils' achievements within the curriculum and also on their social development. Pupils undertake a wide range of visits and journeys to places of interest, including an annual residential journey and make visits within London to museums and art galleries. An interesting development is the teaching of Latin to one class, which is helping the pupils with their understanding of the English language. French is also provided for as an extra activity.

27. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted effectively in all aspects of the school's work. Circle time [group discussion period] is time-tabled weekly in all lessons and pupils report that they both enjoy these sessions and find them useful. At other times discussions address themes such as friendship, care and bullying as they arise. The quality of these discussions is good. Good sex education and drug awareness policies are in place. A range of effective school procedures recognises and rewards good attitudes and behaviour.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils receive effective support in classrooms from teachers and classroom assistants and work is usually appropriate to their levels of ability. The quality of provision in withdrawal sessions for help with reading recovery approach is particularly good. However, the practice of withdrawing pupils from lessons requires

review in order to ensure it does not have a negative effect on their access to a broad and balanced curriculum. For example, on occasion pupils are withdrawn from numeracy lessons for additional work in literacy or history. Work in all areas of the curriculum, in personal, social and health education, and in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and special educational needs, strongly promotes the inclusive ethos.

29. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. This aspect of school life has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The moral, social and cultural elements are good. Provision for the spiritual element is satisfactory. The provision for it is mainly through assemblies and religious education and it is not considered when subject curriculum plans are drawn up. Pupils are rarely given opportunities for quiet reflection. As a result, moments of awe, wonder and mystery for pupils in lessons are incidental rather than planned.

30. The moral development of the pupils is good. This is promoted by the school's overall ethos, which underpins and pervades school life, the good behaviour policies and practices and the provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education. The daily life of the school is successfully built around its 'Golden Rules'. The good behaviour and positive attitudes of the pupils throughout the day demonstrate the success of these. Pupils show their clear understanding of what is right and wrong in their school community. The consistency of adult behaviour towards pupils contributes to this strong aspect of school life.

31. The school's provision for the pupils' social development is good and very closely linked to the very good relationships within the school community. Pupils respond extremely well to the positive atmosphere that allows them to develop their confidence and self-esteem and become happy and assured young people. This was admirably illustrated by a group of pupils with special educational needs who made a very good presentation at a whole-school assembly, which was well received by their fellow pupils, the staff and the parents who were present. The School Council, residential school journeys and the opportunities for older pupils to carry out tasks such as answering the office telephone at lunchtimes, all contribute to the pupils' social development.

32. Opportunities to enhance the pupils' cultural development are provided in many areas of the school curriculum. They exist in music, art and design, and religious education and in geography where pupils compare homes in Britain with those in Kenya, for example. Theatre groups and musicians visit the school and various trips and visits to museums and art galleries take place throughout the year. Work has taken place within religious education to introduce and engage pupils in multi-cultural experiences, and assemblies are held to mark celebrations of other faiths and cultures, for example, Chinese New Year and the Islamic festival of Eid. Cultural diversity is valued and there were displays in classrooms and around the school relating to Judaism, Islam, and African and Chinese art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. In the previous inspection report the school was said to provide a caring and secure environment for children. The school continues to make good provision for the care for its pupils

34. The general ethos of the school makes a valuable contribution to the provision of the safe and caring environment in which every pupil is well supported and valued and enabled to learn. The adults know the pupils very well and they work well as a team to promote the pupils' personal welfare and to make them feel safe and secure. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups are well integrated into the school and receive the same care and support as other pupils. The primary learning mentor, funded through the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative, provides very good support and guidance for pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties.

35. There are good relationships between the pupils and adults and the adults are good role models. The school's programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education, including sex education, provides a good framework for raising the pupils' awareness of healthy and safe living.

36. The school's health and safety policy forms a good basis for ensuring the safety and welfare of the pupils and staff. Governors take an active interest in monitoring health and safety matters. Regular risk assessments are carried out and electrical appliances, fire extinguishers and physical education equipment are checked regularly for safety. There are trained first-aiders on the staff.

37. The child protection practices are satisfactory overall and are based on the locally agreed procedures. The headteacher is the designated teacher. Child protection arrangements are referred to in the staff guide and discussed at staff meetings.

38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and certificates and a cup are awarded for good attendance and this is helping to promote improved attendance. There is little support from external agencies and the school is very much reliant on its own resources to promote good attendance.

39. The policies and procedures for promoting good behaviour are effective and the application of them results in behaviour, both in lessons and elsewhere, that is usually good. Only one pupil was permanently excluded during the year prior to the inspection.

40. There is a very good anti-bullying policy in place and it is effective in practice. The prevention of bullying, racism and sexism and the promotion of good behaviour are underpinned by the ethos of the school and promoted through a variety of means such as the personal, social, health and citizenship programme and assemblies.

41. Sound improvement has been made in assessment and record keeping since the last inspection. Individual pupil targets for academic improvement are now set and a good marking policy is in place but it is not consistently followed. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress contain a few strengths but some weaknesses and are overall unsatisfactory. A range of assessment strategies is in place to provide information on the progress pupils make in English and mathematics. Some of these assessment strategies, for example for literacy and numeracy, are particularly effective, as are the arrangements to track pupils by gender, with special educational needs and those on the ethnic minority achievement scheme. However, the absence of procedures to monitor and record pupils' achievement and progress in science means that teachers have little evidence to indicate how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are progressing. There is little assessment in other subjects, except in music. Insufficient use is made of assessment to inform future planning.

42. Procedures for assessment of pupils with special educational needs are good. Assessments are undertaken by class teachers and by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans of good quality are in place for all pupils on the special educational needs register and progress is carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Assessment as part of the reading recovery programme is very thorough and indicates pupils' strengths and weaknesses very clearly. Arrangements for assessing pupils on admission and the setting and monitoring of targets in numeracy, literacy and social development are sound. A generally good level of importance is attached to the presentation and marking of pupils' work, although there is some inconsistency in marking quality. Teachers' records of pupils' personal development are largely informal and not consistently maintained across the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The quality of the partnership with parents was described in the last inspection report as being unsatisfactory. It has improved and is now satisfactory.

44. The great majority of parents are supportive of the school and only a few express any concerns. Most parents who returned the questionnaires or attended the pre-inspection meeting state that their children like school and are making good progress. They consider teaching is good and are comfortable in approaching the school with any worries or concerns.

45. Eighty-four per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire feel that they are being kept well enough informed about how their children are getting on. Parents are invited to meetings with teachers to discuss their children's targets in the autumn term and again in the spring term. Only about three-quarters of parents accept the invitation and attend. Parents are also provided with end of year reports, which are of good quality and meet statutory requirements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in the annual reviews. The quality of information provided by the school is good. The prospectus and governors' reports to parents contain useful information on school, although the latter has some minor omissions, such as the school's targets for English and mathematics. The findings of the inspection team support the views of the majority of parents who think they are kept well informed

46. Eighty-seven per cent of parents are happy with homework arrangements. The school has a homework policy that is published in the school prospectus. Evidence of its implementation was seen during the inspection and this was deemed to be satisfactory. There is some variability in parents' support with homework, although where this is good pupils make better progress, particularly with their reading.

47. The inspection team agrees with the 77 per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire who state that the range of activities provided outside lessons is satisfactory. Pupils have access to a wide range of activities outside lessons both sporting and non-sporting. Pupils go on a number of visits to museums and art galleries and older pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential school journey.

48. Eighty-eight percent of questionnaire respondents think that the school works closely with parents. The school, in the prospectus, welcomes the involvement of parents and a few parents help in the school. Others attend assemblies whilst others are involved with the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association which raises worthwhile sums of money for the school. There is a willingness by the school to work closely with parents and most parents respond but a minority do not, as is shown by the relatively poor attendance at parents' evenings and the small number of parents who have signed the home-school agreement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The overall quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection. Relationships amongst the staff are better and there is better monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely together. The governing body is more involved in monitoring and setting the budget, although it is based too much on historic detail. The annual governors' report and school prospectus are of better quality.

50. The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher creates a positive climate of care and trust and monitors teaching quality effectively. She gives good professional support for staff. Her strategic leadership of the school and her recognition of staff's

strengths and deployment are good. She is prepared to challenge if parents or staff do not meet expectations. Day-to-day management of the school is satisfactory but leadership is not perceptive and analytical enough about day-to-day practice and standards throughout the school. Overall, management of the balance of the curriculum and access to it is unsatisfactory.

51. The senior management team plays an important part in the leadership of the school and in the formulation of the school development plan but the process also involves other staff and approval of the governing body. On occasion parents are consulted and pupils give their views through the School Council. The school development plan is satisfactory and of better quality than at the time of the previous inspection but there is scope for further improvement. It contains costings and responsible personnel but it does not take a long-term view of the school's development. The targets on the plan are being met and are appropriate given the school's stage of development. Senior management meetings and staff meetings have agenda but decisions reached are not recorded formally on a regular basis. Staff meetings usually relate to the school development plan and focus on curriculum development. Administrative matters are dealt with at a daily staff briefing each morning before the start of school.

52. Administrative arrangements are satisfactory. The administrative assistant undertakes a dual function of secretary and bursar. No-one else on the staff could fulfil the position of bursar in the event of absence. She plays a key role in keeping the headteacher and governing body informed about financial matters. The school has not had a Local Education Authority audit for over three years but the issues which appeared on the last audit have all been attended to.

53. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and meets most of its statutory responsibilities. There are some minor omissions in the annual report to parents. It is soundly led by its chair who has regular contact with the school. Members of the governing body have subject and class links, which help to keep them informed about what happens in the school. The committee structure contributes to the efficiency of the work of the governing body and each committee has terms of reference. The finance committee has good expertise. The governing body considers all new policies and schemes.

54. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science receive regular non-contact time, which enables them to keep abreast of standards and the quality of teaching across the school. Overall the quality of monitoring in this way, given the range of subjects, is satisfactory. They do not formally record the use of their time nor do they make regular written reports about their subjects but most co-ordinators have clear action plans for their development.

55. Financial planning and use of grants are unsatisfactory. The school development plan contains some financial implications but the budget planning is largely historic with some slight adjustments which reflect impending initiatives. The school makes appropriate use of service agreements, as for financial planning and advice, but does not always ensure it is getting best value when making purchases. The school does not accurately check that grants are being spent on the pupils and purposes for which the grants are intended.

56. The school's aims are being met in most respects. The school creates a whole school ethos and curriculum, which develops a positive self-image and fosters mutual respect and esteem. It actively encourages partnership with the wider community and the church. It does not yet achieve the highest possible standards because the needs of the more capable pupils are not met fully and there is scope for higher standards in information and communication technology and design and technology.

57. Members of staff are appropriately qualified to teach primary aged pupils and induction arrangements are sound. The recruitment and retention of staff are major problems and temporary, supply and newly qualified teachers are a permanent feature of the school. Staff turn-over in the past two years has been high. The headteacher and senior management team manage this challenge very successfully.

58. The accommodation is satisfactory overall for the number of pupils and is well maintained. It has some good features, such the outdoor play areas and a wildlife garden. There is no computer suite which makes the teaching of information and communication technology more difficult. Access to the ground floor for the physically disabled is satisfactory but there is no access to the first floor other than by the staircase. There is a disabled toilet on the ground floor. The buildings are clean and in good decorative order and they provide a bright and cheerful environment for learning. The range, quality and amounts of learning resources and books are satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The school is making some improvements in standards in English, mathematics and science. In order to continue this momentum and build up further the work of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **improve standards in design and technology by:**
 - a) providing more opportunities for pupils to build up their repertoire of skills on a more regular basis;
 - b) giving design and technology a more important place in the curriculum.
(Paras 7, 19, 23, 25, 106)

- **improve standards in information and communication technology by:**
 - a) giving more attention to data handling, control, modelling and monitoring in information and communication technology;
 - b) ensuring information and communication technology is used more widely across the curriculum.
(Paras 7, 19, 23, 25, 92, 113, 115)

- **write a scheme of work for the Foundation Stage which:**
 - a) applies the principles of the national guidance for the Foundation Stage;
 - b) gives teachers a clearer direction about how to move through the ‘Stepping Stones’ and reach the Early Learning Goals;
 - c) incorporates clear assessment strategies;
 - d) allows each child to be challenged at their level of development and helps them to take their next steps in learning;
(Paras 24, 62)

- **develop better systems for keeping records of pupils’ progress in science and in the foundation subjects, except music, and use assessment information more effectively for planning work and meeting pupils’ different needs, particularly for the more able pupils.**
(Paras 20, 25, 41, 99)

- **monitor long-term and medium-term planning and curriculum practice more effectively and ensure:**
 - a) classes receive a better curriculum balance ;
 - b) a more uniform planning format is used consistently;
 - c) pupils have equal curriculum access.

(Paras 23, 51, 91)

- **improve financial planning by:**
 - a) linking the budget more carefully to the school development plan;
 - b) prioritising and evaluating spending under curriculum headings more rigorously;
 - c) being more systematic in ensuring money received in the form of grants is used for the intended purposes;

(Paras 52, 53, 56)

- **consider increasing the amount of teaching time so that it at least meets the national minimum recommendation in Key Stage 2.**

(Para 23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	6	15	22	2	1	0
Percentage	8	12	30	44	4	2	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	52

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	36

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	23	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 [93]	90 [93]	86 [90]
	National	84 [83]	86 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	12	11	8
	Total	25	24	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 [87]	83 [93]	72 [90]
	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
	01	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	7	13
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	20	15	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 [50]	56 [50]	81 [58]
	National	75 [75]	71 [72]	87 [85]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	9	9
	Girls	8	6	6
	Total	20	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 [44]	56 [42]	56 [58]
	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	30
Black – African heritage	38
Black – other	29
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	74
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	217

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
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	£
Total income	635,208
Total expenditure	599,344
Expenditure per pupil	2584
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,522
Balance carried forward to next year	65,386

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10.4
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)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	219
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	14	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	29	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	35	2	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	36	6	4	2
The teaching is good.	69	31	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	29	12	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	27	0	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	22	4	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	33	6	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	24	0	6	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	24	0	6	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	35	12	2	8

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

60. Children are admitted into the Nursery during the year that they are three in either September or January and most attend for at least three terms. They transfer into the Reception class twice yearly, in either September or January. All children attend the Nursery initially on a part-time basis, usually for two terms, after which they attend full-time. At the time of the inspection there were eighteen full-time children in the Nursery. The school has good induction procedures to support children and their parents on entry to the Nursery. Children are assessed when they are admitted to the Nursery and the results show that the attainment on entry of the majority of children is slightly below that expected nationally. Children are re-assessed shortly after admission into the Reception class and the information is used to group pupils, as well as to identify those children who would benefit from additional learning support. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children will attain all of the nationally recommended standards called Early Learning Goals and some children will exceed them. Overall the children make sound progress. However, there is a significant number who will not achieve all the expected standards in much of their work, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

61. The quality and range of the curriculum in the Foundation stage are satisfactory overall. Staff members use government guidance for the Foundation Stage. The Reception class uses the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as a basis for long- and medium-term planning and weekly planning is closely related to the National Curriculum in these subjects. The school has not written its own policy and scheme of work for the whole of the Foundation Stage to provide teachers with an appropriate focus for planning. The lack of a detailed structure has been very significant in recent months where there has been a lack of detailed guidance during the considerable and continual staff changes, particularly in the Nursery. The curriculum for the children in both the Nursery and the Reception class consists of a balance of free-choice play and both whole class and group focused activities, planned around termly, or half-termly themes. Whilst focused tasks have learning objectives, particularly in the Reception class, there are no learning objectives identified for the regular free-play activities that would lead to more effective learning. In the Nursery, the staff team plans together and in the Reception class the teaching assistant is fully informed of planned learning objectives. In both the Nursery and the Reception class adults work together well, although in the Nursery there is sometimes a lack of clarity about the different skills that the teacher and Nursery nurse bring to the curriculum and how these might be used. The relationships between all adults who work in the Foundation Stage are good. The specialist music teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator, who supports children with speech and language difficulties, work closely with the Nursery team and the Reception teacher. This makes a positive contribution to the progress that children make.

62. The quality of teaching throughout the Foundation stage is satisfactory overall. The management of children is good. Following the initial assessment profile made on all the children in the Nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse observe, assess and record examples of children's learning across all aspects of the curriculum. They are also in the early stages of using class overview profiles that cover the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, assessment information is insufficiently used throughout the Foundation Stage, and particularly in the Nursery, to challenge all children appropriately. Comprehensive reports are passed to the Reception class when children transfer, although priority is given to information arising from the baseline assessments for the formation of pupil groups and identification of needs in this class. The Reception teacher keeps a comprehensive range of school records relating to literacy and mathematics that include termly learning targets.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children make satisfactory progress in their personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage and the majority of children are on course to attain the standards for the end of Reception year. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is sound. At the time of the inspection, the children who had recently been admitted to the Nursery had settled in well and already had a good understanding of daily routines as a result of the good induction systems and relationships that are established. Those children who had been attending the Nursery for some time talk readily to adults and are confident in their relationships with adults and with each other. During free-play activities, in both the Nursery and the Reception class, most children are able to select an activity from the restricted range put out by the adults and some persevere at this activity for extended periods of time. However, in the Nursery a number of children move from one activity to another and do not develop their play in a meaningful way. The majority of children play happily with their friends showing a developing sensitivity and care for each other. They are helped to take increasing responsibility for themselves and their environments, for example by tidying up when asked. This they do readily and sensibly. There are well established rules for behaviour that the children know, and these, together with the good role models provided by the adults, make a positive contribution to the children's good behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

64. During their time in the Reception class, most children make satisfactory progress in their communication, language and literacy skills and will attain or exceed the expected standards. However, a significant minority of children will not attain the expected standards in this aspect of their learning. Teaching is satisfactory. In the Nursery children talk about their activities to each other and to adults and listen quietly when adults are talking. They have regular access to a tape recorder and headphones so that they can listen to stories and rhymes, as well as listening to stories read by adults. These foster children's enjoyment of books and help them to understand how stories work. There is a well-stocked book corner, although children were not observed to choose reading as an activity for themselves. There are daily opportunities for children to say and sing a variety of rhymes and songs from memory. They are developing an understanding of phonics by learning the sounds and shapes of individual letters and some can relate this understanding to letters in their names. Some children are beginning to experiment with writing.

65. In the Reception class the teacher uses chosen books for focused work, encouraging children to predict story events from the pictures before they read it together. They clearly enjoy this activity and respond eagerly to questions about the story. Through regular phonic activities, the children learn the names and sounds of letters and most know the alphabet. Most children are able to identify correctly the sounds they can hear at the beginning of words and suggest other words beginning with the same sound. The most able are able to use their knowledge of letters to sound out words when reading and writing. There are regular opportunities for writing and the children are learning to form letters correctly when writing simple sentences. Most children can write their own name. They present their work well. A number of play activities, including role-play, that the adults make available, have the potential to contribute to the development of children's language and literacy skills. However, the lack of clear learning objectives for play, combined with limited adult involvement, means that children's language skills are not always developed as positively as they could be in informal situations. Children in the Reception class are regularly heard to read and they enjoy this activity. In both the Nursery and the Reception class children take books home to share with their parents. This practice makes a good contribution to the children's development of positive attitudes towards reading, as well as enabling parents to share in the reading process.

Mathematical development

66. By the end of their time in the Reception class, children make satisfactory progress in mathematics and the majority will attain the standards expected of them in this area of their development, although a significant minority will not. Teaching is satisfactory. In the Nursery there are daily opportunities for children to sing action number rhymes that use counting forwards and backwards to ten. They act out the rhymes and the adults encourage them to work out the difference in number as children are either added or taken away from a row. There are also regular activities that focus on aspects of mathematics, such as counting, and most children can count out loud to ten. Structured activities, such as making play dough with an adult, help the children to develop their understanding of weight. Many of the daily free play activities involve the children in mathematics. However these are not planned or structured well enough to ensure that children's mathematical development is promoted effectively during these sessions. In the Reception class children continue to develop their knowledge of number. The most able can count and write numbers to twenty and can count forwards and backwards. They are developing their understanding of addition and subtraction by counting on and back. Others are learning to write numbers to ten and make simple mathematical patterns. They can apply their number knowledge to simple operations with money. They are developing their understanding of comparative measure through joining cubes together and matching them to different objects. They make sound gains in their knowledge and understanding of plane shapes as they use them to make pictures and patterns.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

67. By the end of their time in the Reception year children make sound progress in this area of learning and the majority will attain the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In planning the adults make positive links between different areas of learning through the use of the termly or half-termly themes and this enhances the children's learning.

68. In the Nursery there is a range of activities available daily, including sand, water and dough play, and through their play the children explore the properties of these and begin to understand how different things behave. When making play dough the children are encouraged to observe how the mixture changes as different ingredients are added and as it cooks. As they play with the dough they are helped to think about its appearance and how it feels and smells using their senses. As they build simple models using reclaimed materials, they learn how to join different materials together. Some children are able to talk with confidence about themselves, their families and events in their lives. As they play outside, they notice different weather patterns and observe different features of the environment, although the use of this area to support children's learning is not currently planned for. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely.

69. In the Reception class the children engage in a range of planned activities relating to the theme being studied. They predict what sort of objects might float and which might sink and then test the objects in water to check if they are right. As part of their work on hearing they predict whether different musical instruments will naturally make a loud or soft sound and then listen very carefully to see if they are right. They are able to control the instruments successfully to make louder or softer sounds and record through drawing what they find out. They can apply this knowledge to making simple instruments of their own, although the opportunity to solve problems and make decisions is limited by the organisation of, and materials provided for, the lesson. They learn how to control the direction taken by a programmable toy by keying in instructions. They develop an understanding of the purpose and significance of maps. The Reception class follows the system used in Key Stages 1 and 2 of blocking history and geography and, therefore, there was no planned teaching of history during the inspection. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, children use the computers independently and are learning the skills that will enable them to use these confidently and with enjoyment.

Physical development

70. By the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, children make sound progress and the majority will attain the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the Nursery, children enjoy daily opportunities for vigorous physical movement in the secure outside area. They are beginning to learn about their bodies and use space well showing an awareness of others around them; they play well together. They use a variety of wheeled toys confidently and safely and respond to any instructions quickly. They have regular opportunities to join in with action rhymes and songs and to move to music, as for example when a group of children listened and responded to music on the tape recorder with a range of actions. They use a range of construction toys to build models of things that interest them.

71. In the Reception class, children have weekly opportunities for physical movement. Most are able to dress and undress themselves unaided. In a music and movement activity in the school hall, they were able to find and use space successfully as they responded to music. They responded to the music's rhythmic patterns as they pretended to be different animals showing good balance. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, children are developing their hand co-ordination skills through activities such as writing, drawing, painting and making things and use tools safely and appropriately, as, for example, scissors when cutting out and glue spreaders when joining different materials.

Creative development

72. During their time in the Reception class, children make sound progress and the majority will attain the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but the specialist music teaching is excellent. Members of staff in both the Nursery and Reception class provide a range of activities that allow the children to express themselves creatively. Children clearly enjoy joining in with rhymes and songs and sing well and tunefully. They enjoy opportunities to play untuned percussion instruments and most are able to clap different rhythms. They can identify a range of familiar sounds and instruments and know the names of a number of instruments. They can respond appropriately to signals to vary pitch and tempo. Whilst in the Nursery an easel and ready mixed paints are always available during free-choice activities, children were not observed to paint from their imagination. Work on display indicates that creative work with paint and collage materials often involves the children in filling in adult-drawn shapes rather than trying out their own ideas and skills. During the period of the inspection, children in the Reception class were not observed to use paint or other materials to represent their experiences. However, some work on display and the teacher's planning show that they have weekly opportunities when they can develop such skills as observational drawing and printing. In both the Nursery and Reception class, children have regular opportunities for imaginative role-play where they can act out different characters and events within a given theme or from their own experience. However, the lack of adult involvement in this play often means that the play is superficial and does not support children's creative development.

73. At the time of the inspection there was no co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage. The Nursery team and the Reception teacher meet informally but there are no systems in place that could support discussion about the curriculum. There is no shared planning that would promote the children's learning development, although staff agree which themes they will study to avoid duplication. Resources in the Nursery and in the Reception class are satisfactory overall. In the Nursery parents are welcomed and supported and parents were observed to be relaxed and confident with all the adults when bringing and collecting their children and they show familiarity with Nursery routines such as the regular book borrowing.

ENGLISH

74. As at the time of the last inspection there is some variability in attainment across the school in part due to the variation in the quality of teaching. In Year 6, where teaching is very good, a large majority of pupils are on target to attain the expected levels. Few are expected to reach the higher level due to the above average percentage of special needs pupils. In some classes there is a lack of challenge in lessons for more capable pupils, which then affects the rate of progress. Overall, most pupils are making sound progress and good progress in reading by Year 6. There are no observable differences in the performance of boys and girls.

75. In the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level or above in reading was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level or above in writing was close to the national average. When compared to similar schools, standards in reading were below average whilst those in writing were above average. Trends over the period 1997 to 2001 are broadly in line with national trends. In the 2001 tests the performances of girls and boys were below the respective national gender averages in reading, with boys comparatively performing significantly better than the school's girls. In writing the performance of boys exceeded the national average whilst the performance of girls was in line with the national average. The school exceeded its targets set for reading and writing.

76. In the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 6, the percentage of the school's pupils reaching the expected level or above was close to the national average, although the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was well below average. In comparison with similar schools standards were below average. Trends over the period 1997-2001 are broadly in line with national trends. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys, although both groups achieve below national gender averages. The school reached its target set for English.

77. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages and the provision made to meet their needs is good. Teaching linked to individual education plans, the setting of precise targets and well-matched learning materials contribute to their success. The work of the teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to these pupils' progress. The school has used the Reading Recovery programme, and the Additional Literacy Support to help identified pupils to benefit from additional focused literacy activities. They have been effective in helping these pupils to make good progress.

78. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils listen attentively to teachers, other adults and to each other and make appropriate responses. They are eager to participate in whole-class and group discussion, expressing their ideas clearly and confidently. They can ask relevant and sensible questions. They show sensitivity to the needs and ideas of others, both when listening and when answering questions. They use appropriate language to talk about stories, discuss grammatical features, empathise with characters and events and express feelings and emotions. The able readers read aloud with good expression taking account of punctuation and features of print. Between Years 3 and 6 pupils' progress in speaking and listening continues to be satisfactory. Pupils show an appropriate understanding of formal language structures and can take account of different contexts and audiences when making informed comments or asking questions. They express themselves confidently using a developing range of vocabulary and take good account of the contributions made by other pupils. The majority read aloud from self-chosen books with good expression that shows sound comprehension. The well-planned whole-class and group activities that are a daily part of literacy lessons contribute to the good progress made by pupils throughout the school.

79. In both key stages an appropriate emphasis is placed on reading and standards are appropriate overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils listen to a variety of stories, poetry and non-fiction books attentively and respond appropriately to questions about the plot and what might happen next, the behaviour of characters and the purpose and effect of vocabulary used. They are able to express personal opinions about the ideas expressed by authors. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read with suitable fluency using sound phonic strategies to decode unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils have a very positive attitude to reading and clearly enjoy this activity. The most able are beginning to develop a personal reading taste and can identify favourite authors and books that they have particularly enjoyed. They are beginning to develop sound study skills and know how to use the contents and index pages and understand the differences between them. By the end of Year 6, majority of pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with enjoyment and can identify the central meaning, citing textual evidence to support their judgements. They make mature, personal responses to ideas expressed. They use an appropriate range of linguistic terms with understanding when discussing texts and demonstrate a sound understanding of syntax and grammar. They can scan and skim texts for information accurately and select information appropriately in order to make judgements. They have well developed study skills. One Year 6 pupil described a glossary as ‘The definition of technical vocabulary in the book.’ They have a good understanding of dictionaries and thesauri and use these to support their work. Pupils in both key stages take books home regularly to either share with parents or read on their own. Pupils are heard to read regularly and teachers keep careful records of pupils’ progress. In addition the school has recruited a number of adults, including some parents, who visit the school regularly to hear pupils read. The work of these volunteer ‘Reading Partners’ makes a good contribution to the development of pupils’ reading skills. Phonic skills and spelling are systematically taught throughout the school.

80. Pupils begin to learn to write cursively in Year 1 and they continue to refine their skills through regular and systematic teaching between Years 3 and 6. In handwriting practice in Key Stage 2, pupils show that they are mastering the cursive style successfully. By the end of Year 6, pupils use cursive handwriting in all their work. This regular practice is helping them to develop good fluency and they are able to write with speed. Some pupils are beginning to develop a personal style. Throughout the school the majority of pupils write finished pieces of work carefully and present their work well across the curriculum, although this practice is less consistent in Year 1.

81. Throughout the school, pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences, including imaginative fiction, personal writing, poetry, reports, factual accounts, book reviews, instructions, letters, lists, note taking and labelling. By the end of Year 2, whilst higher attaining pupils can use their knowledge of key words and phonics to assist them in writing words, there is a significant proportion of pupils whose spelling is inconsistent, including key words. The school has identified this as an issue and is giving greater emphasis to spelling by helping pupils to devise effective personal spelling strategies. All pupils take spellings home to learn and are regularly tested on these. They are beginning to write with greater complexity and most have a good understanding of basic punctuation. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can plan their writing and write extensively, using complex sentences and paragraphs in an appropriate style. They use language thoughtfully to create particular effects as, for example, when a pupil wrote, ‘As he was searching for oysters he caught a glimpse of something glistening in the blazing sun. Excitedly he ran over to the sparkle.’ They use a range of appropriate punctuation in their work, including colons, semi-colons and speech marks and most spell accurately using a range of strategies. However, there is still a significant minority who use phonic strategies to spell a range of words and whose spelling is not always phonically plausible. Whilst they have regular opportunities to draft their written work there are insufficient opportunities for them to improve the quality of their writing through further consideration of their use of language and syntax.

82. Throughout the school, there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills. Pupils write for a range of purposes in subjects other than literacy, for example factual writing in science, personal narrative in music and fictional narrative in history. Speaking and listening skills are well developed in discussion activities related to all areas of the curriculum.

83. Overall pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages. They are well behaved in lessons and apply themselves with good concentration, purpose and interest to the tasks they are set, even when not directly supervised. They co-operate well and help each other both formally and informally in discussing aspects of their work. Their response in the English lessons observed was always positive and lively.

84. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall with some instances of good and very good teaching in both key stages. Where teaching is good, teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning. They share learning objectives with pupils, ask challenging questions and set clear time targets for what pupils are expected to achieve during the lesson. They match the tasks to meet individual needs, maintain a brisk pace and have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attainment. All teachers have a sound understanding of the subject and plan lessons with clear learning objectives that take full account of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the National Literacy Strategy. Information from tests is used to form ability groups and learning targets and teachers keep records of pupils' reading, writing and spelling development. Pupils' work is regularly marked and well annotated with comments that help pupils to make progress in all classes. The work of classroom assistants in providing additional support during literacy activities makes a valuable contribution to pupils' attainment and progress and teachers plan appropriately for this support. Spelling and reading homework is given regularly in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 pupils also receive writing tasks in addition to reading and spelling.

85. The acting English co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and is enthusiastic. She has initiated tracking of pupils' performance in reading, writing and spelling and this is well used to predict pupils' likely achievements so that additional support can be allocated appropriately. She plans to track the progress of year groups in the near future. She has a good understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to raise standards. She provides informed support and advice for colleagues through exemplar teaching and a range of other activities, including the monitoring of teaching and learning and teachers' planning. There is a sound policy in place, although the acting co-ordinator is aware that this needs some revision so that it reflects the school's current practice. Training in issues related to literacy form part of the school's in-service programme. Literacy resources are satisfactory and are organised and accessible in a range of central areas. All classes are well resourced with a good range of general reading material. There is also a well resourced school library that is Dewey referenced, although this was not used much for reference purposes during the inspection. Resources are used well and make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

86. Standards in mathematics are similar to those at the time of the last inspection by the end of Year 2 and have improved by the end of Year 6. The vast majority of pupils are expected to reach the expected levels at the end of both key stages. In the past three years the performance in national tests indicates that the school's seven-year-old boys have been doing better than boys nationally but the girls have been doing significantly less well than girls nationally. At Key Stage 2 both boys and girls have been doing much less well than boys and girls nationally with some marked inconsistencies in results from year to year. The trend of results is, nevertheless, broadly in line with the national trend. The school did not reach its target for the percentage of pupils expected to reach the expected level in 2001. Movement out of the school during Key Stage 2 affects the results at the end of Year 6. Fifty per cent of the pupils who took the tests in 2001 were not on the school's roll four years previously. The results are further affected by changes of teaching staff and the cohort which left in 2001 had several changes of teacher in lower Key Stage 2 which affected their progress.

87. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand simple line symmetry, can measure accurately in centimetres, understand simple fractions such as half and quarter and are gaining a good understanding of two-digit place value. They can add numbers mentally using number bond strategies. They know about the different coins, determine which coins to use for amounts up to 20 pence and know terms such as 'more', 'less', 'least and most value'. By age 11 pupils can convert improper fractions to mixed numbers and can round numbers with two decimal places to the nearest tenth. They know centimetres and metre equivalences and can write large numbers accurately. They are developing good skills to calculate mentally. They can calculate long multiplication and division using written methods. They understand the properties of common shapes and can work in the four quadrants when plotting co-ordinates. They have good opportunities to investigate in number and look for patterns. They can calculate angles and work out perimeter and area.

88. Pupils make good progress in Year 6 and Year 2 but progress in other parts of the school is inconsistent. Overall progress is satisfactory. Some of the work examined did not show a sustained progression and examples of work were observed which were insufficiently challenging for the pupils concerned and did not build consistently on their previous work. Currently about three-quarters of the school's 11-year-olds are in line to reach the expected level by the end of Year 6 and about one-fifth of the pupils to reach the higher level. Most of the school's seven-year-olds are expected to reach the expected level by the end of Year 2 and some to reach the higher level. There are no differences overall between ethnic groups in the progress and attainment of the pupils, although disparities were noted in individual cohorts. Ethnic minority pupils sometimes comprise the major special educational needs component and in other year groups they form the majority of the higher attaining group. No general pattern is evident.

89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 it ranges from good to satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 from very good to satisfactory. It is best in Years 2 and 6. Good use is made of resources in many lessons and lessons are usually well prepared, although not enough use is made of the 100 square in Key Stage 1 to help pupils' sense of order and relationship between numbers. Good use is made of technical vocabulary. Key Stage 1 teachers use terms such as 'lowest value' and 'partitioning' whilst in Key Stage 2 appropriate vocabulary is used to discuss fractions, such as 'equivalence' and 'lowest terms'. The Year 2 teacher discusses strategies well to help pupils in their mental calculations. For example, they are taught to seek out the biggest number first when adding together three digits or to look for number bonds. This is proving successful. In one lesson pupils were asked to add together mentally 7, 8 and 2. One pupil said "I knew 7 add 7 was 14 and I added on 3." Another pupil said "I added 8 and 2 which gave a bond of 10 and added 7". The Year 1 teacher made good use of large replica coins to discuss money and the value of coins. Whilst appropriate work is being given to pupils who have special educational needs, pupils who are more capable are not always being challenged enough and sometimes do the same work as the majority of the rest of the class or merely more examples. In some lessons the pace of lessons is not brisk enough and pupils do not concentrate enough when they are carrying out their individual assignments and the level of informal chat is too high. At times the explanation of work is not sufficiently clear as when pupils were working out fractional parts as in $\frac{1}{3}$ of 600 and the word 'of' was related to multiplication. This merely confused the issue for the pupils in this particular work.

90. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils are getting their full entitlement to mathematics. In one lesson a group of three pupils with emotional problems was engaged on a project about 'Oliver Twist' and missed their entitlement for mathematics for the day. On another occasion a pupil missed the important introduction to the work because he was involved with a reading recovery programme. When he returned another pupil left for the same work and missed the practical application of what he had learned in the opening plenary.

91. Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and usually work with interest and enjoyment. Most concentrate on their work but some will chat if not made to concentrate. Overall pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and pupils make sound progress.

92. The co-ordinator for mathematics is new to the subject but has good skills and has begun to track pupils' progress across the school. She leads by example in the quality of her own teaching which is of a high standard. The school follows national guidance in the subject and a draft policy has been formulated. Resources are satisfactory, although there is little mathematical software for use with information and communication technology and data handling and the use of computers is not very well developed in mathematics. Some use of made of mathematics in cross-curricular work, for example in science in measuring and recording results and in geography in work on co-ordinates.

SCIENCE

93. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection. They are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' and teachers' confidence in investigational work has improved.

94. The most recent teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show pupils' attainment is below the national average. Lesson observation evidence shows that work on physical processes is in line with expectations and scrutiny of pupils' work and records show similar performance in other attainment targets. Pupils' work in scientific enquiry has shown particular improvement due primarily to good teaching in Year 2. Year 2 pupils could design a model which could light up using bulbs and an electric circuit. They were able to explore various ways to complete the circuit with switches and additional bulbs and discovered that as the circuit became more sophisticated the quality of the connections and contacts became more critical. Higher attaining pupils can describe why this is so. In Years 1 and 2, pupils build on their knowledge of science introduced in the early years and they increasingly show an appreciation and understanding in different aspects of their work. They begin to use a simple scientific vocabulary and are inquisitive about the world around them. They understand the food pyramid and can talk about balanced diets, their local environment and how humans and animals grow. They know that plants need light and water and describe how they experimented with light sources to help them understand this. Their work shows evidence of scientific enquiry to good purpose.

95. By age 11, pupils' attainments are in line with expectations, as at the time of the last inspection, and likely to reach a higher standard overall than last year because of the very good teaching in Year 6. By the end of Year 6 pupils' can discuss, describe record and write about science with confidence. They demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding about the way materials change. They discuss issues such as freezing and melting and accurately predict which materials can be subjected to irreversible change. Their use of scientific inquiry is very good. The scientific skills and knowledge build up well over the Key Stage. Pupils develop their understanding of materials well throughout the Key Stage. Year 3 pupils, for example, appreciate that there are differences in particular rocks and soils and can describe sandstone accurately in terms of its hardness. Pupils' understanding of physical processes is good. Year 4 pupils investigate resistance as part of their study into forces and experiment with making a simple helicopter using paper. By experimenting with different shapes and weights and the time their model took to descend from head height, one group discovered that the performance of the helicopter is affected by the weight and the shape and position of the blades. In Year 5 pupils' work with light involves experiments to discover the translucent and transparent properties of a range of materials. After investigations they record their findings and discuss the results. Their knowledge and understanding shows clear improvement.

96. Overall progress in pupils' learning is satisfactory in science. By the end of Year 6, they have developed a wide range of knowledge and over time have learned many facts and appropriate vocabulary. They understand the notion of fair testing, including the importance of variables, and have developed an understanding of how food and health are related. They are confident when conducting investigations and can predict results with reasonable accuracy. They are beginning to take an interest in deeper scientific matters and ask sensible 'how' and 'why' questions.

97. The quality of teaching in science has improved since the last inspection and is now often good. Teachers in both key stages are confident in conducting experiments and have sound knowledge. Work is well planned and organised and teachers use effective techniques. As a result, pupils show good levels of interest in science lessons. They work well together and behave sensibly. Pupils are conscious of health and safety issues when carrying out experiments. Teachers build well on pupils' previous learning and manage discussions very sensitively dealing well with responses which are widely inaccurate. This approach contributes very positively to pupils' learning and their enjoyment of the subject.

98. The subject is well managed by the newly appointed co-ordinator who is currently revising the scheme of work, carrying out a resource audit and generally attempting to raise the profile of the subject. Currently no effective system of assessment for science is in place and this is a weakness. Pupils' performance in science is not tracked as in mathematics and English. Resources for the effective delivery of the subject are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Because of the way the subject is blocked within the timetable it was only possible to observe two lessons, both in Key Stage 2, during the period of the inspection. Judgements are based on these observations, a scrutiny of work in sketchbooks in Years 3 to 6 and in Year 2, work on display and teachers' planning. These indicate that by the end of Years 2 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art and design and achieve standards that are expected nationally for their age. The school has maintained the standards reported at the previous inspection. The present system of blocking the subject in partnership with design and technology constrains the systematic development of skills.

100. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are given the opportunity to explore different media as for example in Year 1 when they use paint and wax crayon to make imaginative pictures representing light and dark. In Year 2 they develop their observational skills through sketching architectural forms in the local environment and making careful drawings of plants. They study the work of western artists such as Miro and Mondrian and use these experiences to inform their own work.

101. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to develop their understanding of media. In Year 3 pupils think about shape and create silhouettes with some work showing careful observation and detailed shape reproduction. Year 4 pupils look at each other's movements in physical education to produce lively pencil drawings. Year 5 pupils produce detailed and imaginative illuminated letters using pen, pencil and crayon. Year 6 pupils think carefully about proportion when using pencil to show different facial expressions and use photographs and pictures as an additional reference source. The work undertaken by gifted and more able pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 who attend the art appreciation club, is of good quality. They study a range of art forms and produce detailed and sensitive work using the techniques and ideas suggested by different pieces of work.

102. In the two lessons observed pupils' attitudes to art and design were good overall and those of Year 6 pupils were very good. They show a lively interest in and enjoyment of the activities they are involved in and are keen to get on with their work. They work well, applying themselves with good concentration. They listen attentively to their teachers and take pride in producing their best work. Their relationships are good and they co-operate well as they share ideas and talk about both their own work and that of others.

103. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was never less than satisfactory and that in Year 6 was excellent. Teachers plan and organise their work appropriately and use a variety of activities and resources to enthuse the pupils. For example, in the Year 6 class the teacher used the digital photographs, taken by the pupils in the previous week, to help them to consider distance and perspective. Effective questioning enabled the pupils to make perceptive comments about details in the photographs and to draw on their mathematical knowledge of parallel lines. Teachers are careful to recap previous learning at the beginning of lessons and make effective use of plenary sessions to reinforce learning objectives through the sharing and celebration of pupils' work. Teachers encourage the use of sketchbooks, although not always as a working notebook of techniques and ideas that could provide pupils with a source of reference to support progress in skill development.

104. At the time of the inspection the subject co-ordinator was on maternity leave and the headteacher had taken temporary responsibility for the subject. It is the intention to include art and design as a focus for development in the school improvement plan. There is a sound policy and the school has recently adopted Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance as its scheme of work. Long- and medium-term planning is securely in place and this supports teachers in their lesson plans. There is a satisfactory range of materials, including a range of prints and posters, to support the scheme of work. These are stored in a range of central locations. In addition each class has a range of tools and materials for their own use.

105. The subject makes a sound contribution overall to pupils' spiritual and cultural development and the work undertaken by the art appreciation group, taken by the headteacher, makes a very good contribution. Good use is made of visits to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils regularly visit local art galleries. There are effective links with other subjects and this is particularly evident in the links made with music where Key Stage 2 pupils have drawn imaginative pictures in response to music. The work done by pupils who attend the art appreciation club makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development. The attractive artwork displayed around the school adds to the welcoming atmosphere and to the climate for learning fostered by the school. Some good links with information, communication technology were observed in Year 2 in designing pictures in the style of Mondrian.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Due to time-tabling and curriculum organisation only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and none in Key Stage 2. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, curriculum organisation, pupil records and discussion with pupils suggest that provision and standards are unsatisfactory and have remained the same since they were identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection. There was little evidence of any design and technology work throughout the school at the time of the inspection. The policy of blocking the subject with art and design means that pupils' skills are not covered at particular points in the year- this was the case with design and technology during the inspection. In the lesson seen, part of a class topic on homes, pupils were studying ways in which houses are usually constructed. They know that walls and roofs are required and they considered ways in which they could make a model of a house, for example how to ensure the walls were rigid and the roof could be supported. The teacher led an effective discussion about these questions.

107. The leadership of the subject has been generally weak in recent months due to the absence of the co-ordinator. The acting co-ordinator acknowledges that a renewed focus on the subject is required. A satisfactory scheme of work is in place and resources are adequate. Teachers' planning shows limited use of information and communication technology in the subject. Numeracy skills were reinforced by discussion about the need for accurate measuring to ensure effective construction.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Only one geography lesson was observed due to timetabling arrangements. This lesson, along with scrutiny of work and displays, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and staff show that standards in geography, as at the time of the last inspection, meet National Curriculum expectations in both key stages. Pupils' work indicates that by the age of seven they have begun to understand aspects of the world around them and by studying life on an island, and comparing it with London, they are beginning to understand differences in locations. By age 11, pupils' geographical knowledge and skills have developed well so that they can discuss, for example, life in a less economically developed country, such as Kenya.

109. In the lesson observed in Year 6, pupils were studying changing environments, a topic researching the rainforests and Polar regions. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are good and, as a result of excellent teaching the progress, they make in geographical understanding in Year 6 is very good. For example, pupils are able to respond quickly and accurately when challenged by the teacher to name five facts about deserts. The high quality of the teaching has gained pupils' interest. They are highly motivated to succeed in their studies of the topic and are using very good research skills involving CD-Roms, and contact with a member of a scientific research project in Antarctica through the Internet as well as books and maps. Their geographical skills are very good. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and her pupil management and enthusiasm for the theme are excellent and have a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

110. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator and resources are appropriate and of good quality. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted through, for example work on temperatures and distances and the introduction of new subject vocabulary enhances work in literacy.

HISTORY

111. Standards meet national expectations by ages seven and 11. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are beginning to gain some understanding of chronology. In the Year 1 investigations into homes they understand that houses have changed much over time and can describe the developments in some features, for example in building materials and energy sources. By age seven, pupils know what history means as an area of study and show interest in old and new and change over time.

112. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their previous historical knowledge and understanding. By age 11 they can undertake simple historical research using primary and secondary sources, for example Year 5 pupils engaged in work on the Victorian era are studying a print of a scene at the Derby to discover aspects of how the Victorians lived. Good questions set by the teacher linked pupils' knowledge to previous learning; 'What is significant about the large numbers of different sorts of people gathered here?' Pupils know the significance of the railways in transporting large numbers of people of all classes for the first time.

113. Although only two lessons were observed due to time-tabling arrangements, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records and discussion with pupils show that standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory, occasionally very good. Teachers show interest in the subject and they use the good range of resources, including artefacts, well. They have good subject knowledge and present their subject in a manner which captures pupils' interest and develops their learning.

114. The weakness identified in the scheme of work at the last inspection has been largely addressed and there is now appropriate balance between historical enquiry and knowledge and facts. No assessment is undertaken in the subject and there is insufficient reference to how information and communication technology will be used to support pupils' learning in the subject. Pupils' literacy skills are supported through researching literature for evidence, for example how the Victorians lived. Pupils study both fiction and non-fiction texts. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who is an enthusiastic historian with good subject knowledge.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Whilst there are some good features in information and communication technology overall, standards are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This is because the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are not yet completely fulfilled in Key Stage 2 in monitoring, control and modelling and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. This is partly a result of some members of staff lacking confidence in the subject. There is a lack of software for some subjects, such as mathematics, and pupils do not engage in enough word-processing in their written work. Standards are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection.

116. By the end of Year 2 pupils can manipulate icons on the screen and move them from place to place. Years 1 and 2 pupils design effective pictures inspired by the work of Piet Mondrian with an art program using straight lines and geometric shapes. With the same art program they fill out designs with colours of their own choice. Year 6 pupils make contact with researchers in Peru and the Antarctic regarding their geographical studies through effective and imaginative application of e-mail to. They also use CD-Roms and the Internet to research their work. They blend text and graphics together to make their own class magazine. Year 3 pupils make Christmas cards with a publishing program and word process their own message. Year 4 pupils make repeating patterns on the computer and Year 5 pupils take digital photographs on a school visit and combine the images with text.

117. Very little information and communication technology teaching was taking place during the inspection but the quality of the two lessons which did take place was satisfactory. Overall quality is affected by the fact that not all pupils are able to see the class demonstrations on the single monitor. Despite this the pupils are very tolerant and well behaved. In both lessons the teachers had researched the program well and were able to explain appropriately how to use it. In the Key Stage 1 lesson the teacher was able to refer the pupils to the different colour of writing in the text and got the pupils to indicate the reasons. She was also able to demonstrate how to use an index either by typing in the word or scrolling. Groups of pupils in the follow up work showed that they had understood the explanation and were successful in their own efforts.

118. The co-ordinator has been in charge of the subject for several years. He has arranged for all eligible staff to receive their national training in the subject. There is no record of skill development in the subject but he has completed an order of learning skills. He has not observed very much teaching in the subject but has had discussions with staff who do not feel confident about how they might approach their work. Discussions have led to agreements about a course of action. There is no portfolio of work samples which might guide the staff about expectations.

MUSIC

119. Standards in music are similar to those at the time of the last inspection and good overall. They are above expectations in singing and in listening and appraising. No lessons were observed which included compositional music. Pupils sing tunefully, enthusiastically and with joy and demonstrate good breathing technique. They listen carefully to others and so sing in unison. Some pupils extend their interest in the subject by attending the extra-curricular choir activity. Others learn the violin. Some pupils are learning to play the recorder. The good standards in singing and pupils' keen interest in music are because of the very skilled teaching and the musical knowledge of the specialist teacher.

120. Pupils listen maturely to music and give good response to the mood of the music and can explain their feelings. Seven-year-olds know about the different sections of the orchestra and can name different instruments within them. They can maintain a steady pulse when tapping to music. They listen to classical music sensitively, as when they interpreted a piece of classical music to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', joining in with actions and words and working together in harmony. Year 6 pupils can interpret live piano music to describe the atmosphere being created and to recorded music such as 'Peer Gynt' and the 'Carnival of the Animals' to describe the particular scene or animals. The whole school sang very movingly in assembly and on occasion in two parts, singing a Latin and English version of the same song about peace.

121. The specialist teaching, which each class receives, is very good. Lessons are interesting, well planned, and contain good musical content. A variety of activities keeps the pupils engaged and focused. Lessons have a clear purpose and build on what has gone before so that pupils are developing good musical knowledge and skills. This was clearly evident in Year 6 in which pupils were studying atmospheric music. This built on work on descriptive music, such as 'Mars' from the 'Planet Suite', television title themes and music and lyrics working together. The teacher uses good technical vocabulary such as 'pizzicato' and 'tempo' which pupils give back in their own responses. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher played Irish folk tunes skillfully on the recorder as pupils tapped the pulse and showed the difference between the descant and treble instruments. Pupils are keenly interested and contribute well in lessons both by musical response and in their answers to questions. They are well behaved and respond well. In one lesson they listened very intently to Delius' 'Cuckoo in Spring' before responding in art to merge colours in the style of Turner and Whistler to reflect the atmosphere of the music.

122. The scheme for music provides a well-structured development of skills and pupils experience the full National Curriculum Programmes of Study, except for work in information, communication and technology. The draft policy contains good aims. The work in music is skillfully led. Resources for the subject are adequate and varied.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards in physical education are similar to those at the time of the last inspection with strengths in cricket maintained. In all other aspects of work which meet National Curriculum Programmes of Study standards are at expected levels for pupils aged seven and 11. Pupils make sound progress in most aspects of their work and good progress in cricket. This is because of the time given to this aspect of work both in lessons and after school and the enthusiasm of the caretaker who acts as coach. In recent years pupils have gained regular success in this aspect of physical education and reached the latest stages of area cricket competitions and played at Lords.

124. Pupils aged seven can make star jumps, travel along benches in different ways, such as hopping, crawling and side-stepping. In dance they represent the movements of different animals appropriately. In games their catching skills are satisfactory. Year 6 pupils can do tuck jumps and link movements together involving jumping and different rolling movements. Many can spring upwards and off a bench and effect a good controlled landing. In cricket lower Key Stage 2 pupils learn to hold a bat correctly and push forward their bat defensively.

125. The quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory overall but the quality of lessons observed ranged from good to unsatisfactory in both key stages. Where it is good the lessons are well paced with good class management and tasks suitably explained. Teachers usually revise quickly on previous work before taking the work forward. Good attention is given to health and safety issues in most respects but teachers do not always ensure that pupils' tops are tucked into their shorts nor do they always ensure that equipment, such as benches and mats are carried correctly. Where teaching is unsatisfactory class management is insecure and the pace is slow. Too much time is given to evaluating each other's movements and the pace flags. In group work the pupils queue for turns and are inactive for too long.

126. Pupils change quickly for lessons. In most lessons pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy it. They work co-operatively on their assignments. On occasions pupils do not behave well and their work suffers. They make little progress as a result. Their behaviour in one lesson caused the lesson to be abandoned.

127. Pupils have good opportunities in extra-curricular activities to develop their skills further, as in cricket and in football and netball matches against other schools, despite the lack of field space. The school makes good use of hard surface areas. The newly appointed co-ordinator, who has not yet had much opportunity to monitor current standards and practice across the school, is keen to provide other opportunities in volleyball and basketball for pupils in extra-curricular provision.