

INSPECTION REPORT

PRINCESS MAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

STOKE NEWINGTON, LONDON

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100239

Headteacher: Miss Marion Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pat King - 7853

Dates of inspection: February 25 – March 1, 2002

Inspection number: 196104

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Princess May Road Stoke Newington London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Vera Hanby
Date of previous inspection:	9 th – 13 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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7853	Pat King	Registered inspector	Religious Education.	The school's results & pupils' achievements; How well pupils are taught; How well the school is led and managed
9275	Candy Kalms	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils; How well the school works in partnership with parents.
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	Geography; History; Music; Science.	
8798	Dennis Maxwell	Team inspector	Equality opportunities; Information and communication technology; Mathematics; Special educational needs.	
24137	Gail Robertson	Team inspector	Art and design; Foundation Stage.	
2700	Peter Sudworth	Team inspector	English as an additional language.	
2749	Gabrielle Wilkinson	Team inspector	Design and technology; English; Physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Princess May is above average size for a primary school with 190 boys and 192 girls on roll. Twenty-nine children attend full-time and thirty-three part-time in the nursery. At the beginning of the term in which they are five the children join one of two reception classes. Six per cent of pupils are of UK heritage. The main ethnic groups that make up the rest of school are 26 per cent Black Caribbean, 18 per cent Black African and 13 per cent of Asian heritage. 75 pupils are refugees, pre-dominantly from Turkey. A high percentage of pupils have English as an additional language and of these 307 pupils, 110 pupils are in an early stage of English language acquisition. The vast majority of pupils live in rented accommodation and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. In most years there is a high turnover of about 20 per cent, in addition to those who leave at the end of Year 6. Almost forty per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is well above average and higher than at the time of the last inspection. Only one pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is below average. Attainment on entry to the school in the nursery is well below average overall. The headteacher has been in post for just under two years and there has been a high a high turnover of staff in the last two years during a period of difficulties in teacher recruitment. The school is involved in an Education Action Zone, which has promoted business links, liaison between primary and secondary schools, information and communication technology and links between the school and the community effectively.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Princess May Primary is an improving school. The school's leadership and management have been successful in ensuring a commitment on the part of the staff to providing a positive learning environment for pupils that promotes their self-esteem and interest in learning. The impact of this is evident in pupils' overall satisfactory attitudes in lessons and in the improved quality of teaching. The school received a national award for the significant improvement in pupils' attainment from 1997-2000. However, standards are well below average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and Information and communication technology despite the satisfactory progress that pupils make from entry to the school in the nursery. Weaknesses in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils in the early stages of acquiring English means that these pupils could do better. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children have a secure start to school in the nursery and the reception year.
- Pupils make good progress in science and reach average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Links with the community and partner secondary schools are very good and these help to raise standards.
- Members of the school staff value all pupils and are successful in raising their self-esteem.
- They promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school makes good use of teaching assistants to support pupils in their learning.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and information and communication technology;
- The curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language;
- The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- Pupils' attendance.

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 1997. Since then standards have improved significantly. The school has made satisfactory improvements in meeting the key issues included in the last inspection report. The promotion of pupils' spiritual development is now satisfactory and arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements. The curriculum in information and communication technology, mathematics, religious education and science meets statutory requirements. Curriculum planning overall is better and ensures that pupils in different classes in the same year group have comparable learning experiences. Whilst teaching has improved, despite national teacher recruitment problems, a similar variation in quality of teaching remains. Assessment procedures are not yet used consistently to assist teachers in meeting fully the needs of all pupils. The school has not done enough to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

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	E	E	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E*	E
Science	E*	E	E*	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes from very low attainment overall on entry to the school but their attainment is well below that expected for their age when they enter Year 1. When comparisons are made with similar schools based on the percentage of free school meals, pupils' attainment was well below average at seven and eleven in the national tests in English and mathematics and science in 2001. When compared to all schools, pupils' attainment was in the lowest five per cent nationally. However, these comparisons do not take account of the above average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the high proportion of pupils in the very early stages of acquiring English and the high turnover of pupils. Those pupils who remain in the school throughout the infant and juniors make satisfactory progress overall. However, pupils with special educational needs

and pupils in an early stage of acquiring English could do better if their work were matched more closely to their needs. The targets set for pupils to achieve in English, mathematics and science in 2001 were much higher than those set in previous years and were not met. During this inspection, pupils' attainment was found to be well below what is expected nationally in English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6. However, standards have risen in the national tests during the last four years at the end of Year 6 and most noticeably in science in which they are currently in line with what is expected nationally. Pupils' attainment in the majority of subjects is in line with national expectations, except in information and communication technology in which it remains below average, despite improved resources and teaching. This is mainly because pupils need more opportunities to practise their skills across the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are well motivated to learn and are interested in their work and their school activities. A minority of pupils with special educational needs find it difficult to concentrate for long.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Most pupils are clear about the standards expected and behave well in lessons and the playground. A few pupils in the infants and lower juniors are sometimes noisy and restless in introductions to lessons but generally behave well within group tasks when given additional adult support.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils are good and pupils from different ethnic, cultural and social background work and play together harmoniously. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities that they have for taking responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are poor and have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress.

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 quality of teaching seen was mainly satisfactory across the school. Almost three out of every ten lessons were good or better, with some teaching being very good or excellent. About one lesson in ten was unsatisfactory or poor. Teaching in the nursery and the reception classes was never less than satisfactory and was often good. More variation in teaching was seen in Years 3-6, with a higher proportion of good or very good teaching and some excellent teaching. The unsatisfactory teaching was mainly in Years 3 and 4 and in the teaching of the support teachers for pupils in the early stages of acquiring English. This was most often due to lack of match of work to the pupils' learning needs and

occasionally in class teaching to poor management of pupils' behaviour. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. In lessons that are good or better teachers provide work that interests and motivates the pupils so that they are keen to learn. Lessons are mainly well planned and organised and teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well. Some teachers provide work that enables pupils to make good progress. Most do not match the work closely enough to the pupils' individual needs, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. However, the teaching of these pupils is most often satisfactory because teachers use teaching assistants well to ensure that the pupils complete the tasks set.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and community links.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. These pupils have access to the school's curriculum but it is not adapted sufficiently to meet their needs based on systematic assessment procedures.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The curriculum provision for these pupils is often unsatisfactory. This means that pupils who are in an early stage of acquiring English are not able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school promotes pupils' social, moral and cultural development well and their spiritual development satisfactorily. A strong emphasis on personal and social education helps pupils to develop the self-esteem needed to play a fuller part in learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure and caring environment to meet the wide range of pupils' personal needs and social needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher offers satisfactory leadership and management and is well supported by senior staff and curriculum leaders. The new co-ordinator for English as an additional language has identified some of the improvements needed in this provision. The leadership and management of special educational needs are unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, which has many new members, has put in place some good procedures for keeping itself informed about the school's curriculum provision and standards. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily but are not yet involved enough in planning school improvements.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Some good procedures are in place to monitor teaching and learning and to analyse test results and pupils' progress. The school has made a good start in using this information to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, their approach to this is not yet systematic enough to involve governors and staff fully in gaining a comprehensive picture of the key areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff to support the wide range of needs in the school, with a good level of educational support staff. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Financial planning and monitoring are satisfactory, with appropriate attention given to obtaining 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"> • Pupils enjoy school; • Pupils' behaviour is good; • Teaching is of good quality; • The school expects pupils to work hard and their best; • Standards have improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that is given; • How the school works with parents.

Inspection findings generally agree with the parents' positive views of the school. The inspection team followed up the concerns of a few parents and found that arrangements for homework are inconsistent. The school works hard to establish positive relationships with parents and to keep parents well informed through regular newsletters. Recent initiatives have been effective in involving parents more fully, such as a teacher acting as interpreter for Turkish parents and involvement of the community in weekend classes for pupils. However, the school could do more to promote the involvement of parents in helping their children in school and with homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The school has been successful in raising standards since the last inspection in 1997, despite a significant increase in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and with a similar percentage of pupils in an early stage of English language acquisition. Recognition of this improvement was given when the school gained a national Achievement Award in 2000. Standards have risen most particularly in English, mathematics, science and religious education by the end of Year 6. Lessons in these subjects are now more sharply focused on what pupils are to learn and pupils make mainly satisfactory progress and some that is good.

2 When analysing the test data and pupils' work during the inspection, it was evident that those pupils who remained in the school throughout the infant and juniors made satisfactory progress overall. In English boys have not done as well as girls in the national tests over the last three years in Years 2 and 6. This gender difference was greater in Year 2 in 2001 and was evident in English and mathematics in that year. It was accounted for by the nature of the cohort and also by the less positive attitudes of some boys to learning.

3 Pupils of average and above ability who have a reasonable or good command of English make satisfactory progress overall, mainly those pupils who have been in the school since the reception class. Many pupils with English as an additional language under-achieve, particularly amongst the Turkish/Kurdish and Afro-Caribbean pupils. This is due in part to high rates of mobility, on occasion to pupils' social backgrounds and in some cases to frequent changes of teachers, but in large measure because teachers do not have clear, short-term targets for the pupils' learning. In lessons observed, pupils at an early stage of learning the English language often made unsatisfactory progress, due to a lack of targets and focus for all aspects of their English work. The progress of pupils who have little or no English and those who have a working knowledge of English, is inconsistent. Much depends on the quality of teaching. Often expectations of these pupils are not high enough.

4 Of the 56 pupils who were in Year 6 in 2001, only 21 were at the school in the reception class. These 21 pupils made at least expected progress in reading and some very good progress. Although progress in writing was not as good, it was in the main satisfactory. Pupils made expected progress in mathematics. The overall 2001 national test results, from which seven pupils were disapplied because they were new to the country, indicated under-achievement of Afro-Caribbean pupils in English and mathematics in particular. African and Turkish/ Kurdish pupils under-achieved in science and Turkish and Kurdish girls under-achieved particularly in mathematics.

5 Pupils with special educational needs are not making enough progress overall since for many their learning targets are not sharp enough to be of use to teachers when planning to meet their needs. Many of these pupils are at an early stage of reading and find it difficult to find meaning in the text. Similarly in mathematics, the younger pupils are reliant on counting to find answers and do not understand early number processes. The support given by teachers and other adults for activities undertaken during group work help maintain pupils' concentration so that progress during these times is usually satisfactory. Those pupils with behavioural difficulties are handled well on most occasions but at times their behaviour adversely affects their own as well as others' learning and progress.

6 Children make good progress in the nursery in their personal, social and emotional development. The secure and caring atmosphere promotes independence and enjoyment in learning. At this age many children have speech that is unclear but the staff use songs and stories very effectively to develop English language skills. In the infants and juniors teachers place appropriate emphasis on speaking and listening in all lessons and pupils learn to listen attentively and take turns. However, too often some pupils who have little English do not participate enough in whole-class sessions to promote their speaking skills satisfactorily. In good teaching in subjects like history and religious education pupils have the opportunity to discuss within groups and in pairs and made good progress in developing vocabulary and sharing ideas. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing and reading and there is evidence of higher attaining pupils doing well in writing in particular. Pupils are able to write for a variety of purposes and by Years 5 and 6 can use research skills well in subjects like geography. However, across the school pupils show weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of words when reading and in spelling and grammatical consistency when writing. These aspects are not yet addressed consistently across the school and subjects because on some occasions pupils are given too few opportunities to write in their own words or have worksheets that are inappropriate to support the development of their language

7 In mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress across the school, particularly the highest attaining pupils. Teachers provide good practical experiences in the nursery, reception classes and Years 1 and 2 that enable pupils to develop their mathematical vocabulary and understanding satisfactorily. Teachers in Years 3–6 enable pupils to build on their mathematical skills appropriately because of the emphasis placed on number work. However, in the infants and juniors pupils are not developing their mental strategies fully enough to support them in carrying out calculations.

8 In science in the years up to the age of seven, pupils are able to carry out investigations but often have difficulty with aspects of science that require prediction and explanation. They make satisfactory progress from very low attainment on entry to the nursery and their attainment overall remains below the national expectation by the age of seven. The current Year 6 pupils have made good progress and currently are reaching the national expectation overall. This is due to teachers' precise use of scientific vocabulary and practical work linked to discussion that promotes pupils' scientific understanding.

9 In information and communication technology pupils respond well to the improved learning opportunities that they have had since the last inspection. Their progress in knowledge and understanding is satisfactory but they do not have frequent enough practice across the curriculum to develop their skills fully and their attainment remains below the national expectation. In other subjects pupils' progress is mainly satisfactory and attainment is in line with the national expectation by Year 6. In music pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress due to the excellent teaching provided by a visiting music specialist.

10 Poor rates of attendance and poor punctuality by a significant number of pupils affect progress and attainment adversely.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are variable but satisfactory overall as they were at the time of the last inspection. Many pupils come to school with good attitudes to learning, although a small but significant number of pupils, particularly boys, have both inappropriate attitudes and behaviour. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers are satisfactory, as is their personal development.

12 Many children have limited personal, social and speaking skills when they enter the nursery. They slowly settle into school routines and are in the early stages of developing positive working habits because of the support they receive. They learn to play and work with other children, sharing toys and resources and generally becoming more confident. In the reception classes, most pupils continue to develop the positive working attitudes acquired in the nursery.

13 In the infants and juniors many pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They are well motivated and interested in their work in many lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers, follow instructions and respond well when the work is interesting and the teaching is good, as seen in a Year 2 geography lesson on finding out about the seaside. Many pupils are keen to participate in lessons and answer questions, for example pupils in a history lesson in Year 6 were very willing to discuss past events. However, some pupils in the earlier stages of acquiring English are less confident to contribute their ideas.

14 Pupils with special educational needs demonstrate a satisfactory level of interest in their lessons and tasks. Teachers work hard to gain their attention by providing mostly well chosen activities, such as stories they can enjoy. Many of the pupils are not able to concentrate for long, however, so do not benefit fully from the whole-class sessions. They are on occasions inattentive, becoming noisy and restless and unable to concentrate on their work. The group activities help to sustain their concentration and effort since the support assistants ask focused questions and respond positively to pupils' answers, so that their progress during these times is satisfactory.

15 Behaviour in the school is variable but satisfactory overall. Many pupils are clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them and behave well in lessons and around the school. The behaviour of a minority of pupils in the infants and the lower juniors, who have been identified as having special needs, is often challenging in lessons. The school has not set up sufficiently robust procedures to gather evidence of such behaviour in order to target support, although a form to track behaviour is used for a few pupils.

16 Most pupils play well together on the playground and no deliberately aggressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Documentary evidence, however, indicates that a number of incidents of bullying and inappropriate behaviour do occur both in lessons and at playtimes. The number of exclusions has increased since the previous inspection. In the past year twelve pupils have been excluded but the school only excludes pupils when it is essential and works hard to prevent it from occurring. Harassment and bullying do sometimes occur and any incidents are appropriately dealt with.

17 Relationships between pupils and teachers are satisfactory despite the number of staff changes. Around the school pupils are friendly and polite. The majority of pupils get on well together. There are generally harmonious relationships between pupils from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. In some lessons pupils' co-operate and work well together, sharing equipment and resources, but at other times they are unable to collaborate and share sensibly. Whilst many pupils settle to work quickly and work well independently and in small groups, there are some occasions when they take time to settle and are noisy. Pupils generally respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was illustrated in a Year 5 religious education lesson when many pupils willingly shared the religious symbols in their lives.

18 Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Many pupils are aware of the impact that their actions have on others, but a minority lacks a sense of personal responsibility and do not fully understand that their inappropriate attitudes and behaviour affect the learning of others. There is no whole school approach to providing pupils with responsibilities in their classrooms. Apart from a few pupils volunteering as 'playground brothers and sisters' and some acting as fruit monitors, older pupils are not

involved in the day-to-day routines around the school. Pupils' are elected to serve on the school council and are developing an understanding of the role they can play in improving the school's facilities.

19 Pupils' attendance is poor and has remained very low in comparison to other schools. There are no significant differences in the attendance of different groups of pupils such as boys and girls and those from different backgrounds. Patterns of attendance are not consistent and vary between year groups and between classes within the same year group. In many classes attendance regularly falls below 90 per cent and current data shows that the school has many pupils with attendance below 80 per cent. Several factors affect overall attendance figures. These include pupils staying home for health reasons or family circumstances, pupils starting and leaving during the term as well as the relaxed attitude of parents to the importance of regular attendance. A more important factor is the lack of regular systematic procedures to monitor attendance and follow up absence. Registers are not always accurately marked, with some absences being incorrectly recorded as authorised. Despite this, unauthorised absences have remained well above the national average because parents do not always provide reasons for absence. Poor punctuality was identified at the previous inspection and continues to be a problem. High numbers of pupils arrive late for school, including a number who are regularly late. The school is not fully aware of the numbers arriving late, as pupils are not being recorded as late until 10 minutes after the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20 Despite difficulties in recruiting teachers, the school has made improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection in 1997. The percentage of unsatisfactory class teaching has been reduced and teachers' subject knowledge has improved in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education, which enables them to provide pupils with a more balanced programme of work. In recent years, the school has concentrated on introducing and improving the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. As a result the overall teaching of the literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, with some teaching that is good or better. However, the variation in the quality of teaching across the school means that the skills of spelling, handwriting and speaking and listening and mathematical strategies are not taught consistently enough to enable the pupils to make the best progress possible.

21 Teaching is satisfactory or better in the nursery and the reception classes in all the areas of learning. It is effective in enabling children to make overall sound progress, with much that is good. There are good working relationships between staff and children. All members of staff provide good role models and have appropriate expectations of children's work and behaviour. Activities are well planned and matched to the needs of the children. Assessments are used effectively to identify individual targets and to plan to meet the children's individual needs. Weekly plans have clear learning objectives that build well on what children already know and can do. All have a sound understanding of how young children learn. Children's confidence and independence are promoted. Where teaching is not as effective, there is a lack of focus and teaching becomes too supervisory. A good range of resources is available and used to good effect. All adults work hard to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment. Teaching promotes appropriate learning experiences for the age of the children and provides a secure foundation for future learning.

22 Members of staff in the nursery and reception classes provide a satisfactory range of activities for the young children with little or no English enabling the children to begin to develop competency in spoken English during their play activities, through story and visual images. Multi-lingual staff switch smoothly in and out of community languages, which has a very positive effect on children's understanding. The use of the teacher for support for ethnic minority achievement is not satisfactory in the reception class. This teaching is not focused sufficiently on those children who need to develop basic English vocabulary and language pattern.

23 In the majority of lessons in Years 1-6 teachers plan carefully and organise the activities well so that work is purposeful. Where teaching is good, teachers' explanations are very clearly presented in introductions to lessons, for example in Year 2 the teacher modelled a piece of writing which included errors and through discussion took the pupils forward very successfully in their spelling skills. However, there is a tendency in lessons that are satisfactory for teachers to offer very brief explanations of what pupils are expected to do individually or within groups at the end of the whole-class introduction because of some difficulty in holding the attention of some pupils for a sustained period. This results in a temporary loss of pace and an increase in noise level as pupils transfer from one activity to the next. When this occurs, the teacher is usually able to give individual support to help pupils to understand what they need to do. However, in the unsatisfactory or poor teaching, the teacher is not sufficiently aware of what is involved in the learning to help the pupils with their individual needs and as a consequence they produce little work.

24 The vast majority of teachers manage pupils very well and pupils show respect for each other and the teacher. A few teachers are not able to apply the school's strategies for managing pupils' behaviour consistently and as a result pupils do not make enough progress on some occasions. In the best teaching teachers' expectation that pupils will work hard and complete the task set are made explicit to pupils throughout the lesson by setting time limits for individual and small group-work and is followed by very focused support for individuals and groups of pupils. In these lessons pupils concentrate well and work at a very good pace.

25 In the excellent or very good teaching, pupils are inspired by the teachers' enthusiasm, which promotes an enjoyment of learning, such as in Years 5 and 6 when pupils were keen to perform in music because of the teacher's evident subject expertise. In lessons of this quality teachers place a strong emphasis on pupils learning through speaking and listening to develop their understanding. They use well prepared questions to check pupils' understanding and extend their thinking and vocabulary. They ensure that all pupils are included in whole-class discussions by directing their questions at reluctant participants or matching their questions to the pupils' stage of understanding. In this way pupils are confident to speak because they are challenged appropriately. In Year 5 in religious education the teacher extended this approach by putting the pupils into 'buddy' pairs to prepare sentences about pictures of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. Pupils were grouped so that the fluent English speakers could act as role models for others. The benefit of this was evident in the pupils' sensitivity towards their partner's needs and in the sharing of ideas from which the whole class gained in the final part of the lesson.

26 Most of the unsatisfactory teaching seen was in the support given for pupils in an early stage of English language acquisition. In Years 1-6 the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory for pupils whose knowledge of the English language is still developing, particularly for those who arrive with little or no English during the key stages. The quality of teaching provided by those teachers who give additional support for the ethnic minority pupils is unsatisfactory because they do not have clear individual pupil targets for different aspects of language work. As a result, these teachers' work is insufficiently focused and their planning lacks detail to help individual pupils make progress. Some of their teaching time is not used effectively and purposefully, particularly in that detailed for 'induction activities'. There is not a clear strategy and programme of work to help pupils with little English to acquire the language. Insufficient use is made of dual language texts and audio-tapes to help pupils develop language. Equally insufficient use is made of visual aids during lessons. Whilst class teachers and teachers who provide additional support for ethnic minority pupils plan together, the outcome of this is not effective because the teachers of the ethnic minority pupils do not have sufficient expertise to share.

27 Teachers generally mark pupils' work thoroughly and positively. However, as at the time of the last inspection, marking is not used enough to let pupils know what they need to improve. Most teachers set improvement targets for pupils but the approach is very inconsistent. Pupils can not often say what these are or what they mean because of their complexity or the language used. Where the approach to target setting is effective, pupils understand what the targets mean and are beginning to use them within lessons to focus their efforts. Teachers generally assess pupils' understanding as the lesson progresses through questioning and discussion and at the end of lessons by asking pupils what they have learned. They work hard to meet the very wide range of needs in each class but assessment information is not yet used enough when planning future lessons to meet pupils' learning needs. Too often pupils are given the same work regardless of their past learning and are only able to make overall satisfactory progress because of the regular support given by the class teacher and other additional adults. However, when this additional support is not available and work sheets are inappropriate, such as seen in a religious education lesson, particularly for pupils with limited acquisition of English, insufficient progress is made.

28 Teachers try to take account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs during lessons

but the procedures to monitor their progress are inadequate so that skills are not built up progressively. Lesson planning for English and mathematics usually sets out activities for the low attaining pupils in a satisfactory way. There is very little evidence that lesson plans overall are properly informed by the specific learning needs of these pupils. Good support structures, such as key words, prompts for punctuation, or guidance on steps in arithmetic are seldom arranged. However, the teaching assistants usually give good, direct support during group work for specific lessons. Their careful explanations enable the pupils to engage in the activities and gain new skills. Most teachers are quick to praise the pupils for their efforts.

29 Where homework is set, it is often related appropriately to class work and extends pupils' skills and knowledge. However, its use is inconsistent across the classes.

30 Overall the quality of teaching is having a positive affect on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Teachers provide pupils with a balanced curriculum and make good use of visits to enrich pupils' understanding. Lessons are generally well planned and structured. Some teachers provide work that enables pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs to make good progress but there is not a whole-school approach to teaching that is based on a full understanding of the strategies needed to meet the learning needs of these pupils fully.

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

31 The curriculum in the nursery is broad and balanced, but it is not as well balanced in the reception classes. The reception curriculum is based upon the literacy and numeracy strategies in the mornings and the early learning goals in the afternoon. This is not fully appropriate for the majority of children who have particular language development needs. There is an emphasis on teacher-led tasks and children are not encouraged to be independent in their learning or to take initiative.

32 The school has made good improvements in the provision for the curriculum for pupils in the infants and the juniors since the last inspection. It is now broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The National Literacy Strategy is incorporated well into curriculum planning and is reflected in the structure of literacy lessons. It is increasing pupils' confidence in reading. Pupils' literacy skills are also developed satisfactorily in other subjects throughout the school, for example reading for information and writing for a range of purposes in science, geography and history. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and has increased pupils' competence in numeracy. Pupils are systematically taught the basic skills satisfactorily overall and pupils' numeracy skills are developed in other subjects throughout the school, as for example accurate measurement in design and technology. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy as part of the school's initiative to raise standards. However, information and communication technology skills are insufficiently used across the curriculum. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide pupils with an appropriate range of interesting and relevant opportunities and the overall time allocated to subjects is appropriate in both key stages. Curriculum planning has been developed to emphasise links between the various subjects in order to support pupils' learning. However, this occasionally leads to some subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, not being taught for considerable periods of time. This results in pupils not having the opportunity to develop and consolidate skills in these subjects.

33 The curriculum includes good provision for personal, social and health education. Sex education, drugs awareness and health education are currently addressed through the science curriculum or as opportunities arise. Assemblies, class discussions and circle time activities are effectively used to encourage pupils to think about issues, such as caring for and sharing with others, trust and taking responsibility as well as fostering their self-confidence. In circle time activities pupils talk readily about a wide range of issues, including some that are intensely personal, and they clearly value these opportunities. The school has also participated in the Young Enterprise project and pupils have been involved in a project on citizenship. There is a School Council where pupils are able to raise issues that concern them as well as discussing issues raised by staff.

34 The school places emphasis on including all pupils in the activities provided in lessons and at lunchtimes and after school. However, whilst all pupils have equality of opportunity within the curriculum, some weaknesses in the provision means that some pupils are not able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities available. The curriculum provision for pupils with English as an additional language is often unsatisfactory because there are no defined procedures and principles to help pupils acquire key language and key skills to help them access learning effectively. On some occasions pupils with English as an additional language are being given the same work as pupils with special educational needs when it does not match their particular needs in relation to learning English.

35 Pupils with special educational needs are identified carefully through teachers' observations and assessment information. They receive the full curriculum although the process of adapting it to their needs is only partly successful. The absence of a whole-school approach to gathering useful information on pupils' progress means that preparation based on on-going observations is missing for English and mathematics. Evidence from teachers' planning and from several lesson observations indicates that for other subjects even less attention is given to adapting the approach and tasks for these pupils. In many lessons the same task is given to all pupils. This has the effect of making it difficult for these pupils to be fully included in the tasks and of slowing their progress. They are not achieving appropriately in relation to their individual education plans since the management and procedures are unsatisfactory overall. Teachers direct the attention of the support assistants to them.

36 A good range of out-of-school activities enriches the curriculum and supports pupils' social development. It includes music, African and Bengali dance, literacy, touch typing for information technology, design and technology, mathematics, pottery and science. The school has also made effective use of the Education Action Zone funding to support different ethnic groups in out-of-school activities, for example the after-school class for Turkish pupils and the Bengali class. A breakfast club and an after-school play centre are well attended. Games activities such as football and badminton and opportunities to participate in events such as the local swimming gala make a positive contribution to the development of team spirit as well as standards in physical education.

37 The school makes good use of a range of visitors, including artists and performers. A poet and sculptor-in-residence have worked with pupils within lessons. Pupils have participated in a Black-Caribbean boys' poetry project on rap writing and performance. They make visits to museums and other places of interest both within the local community and further afield. Pupils in Year 6 also have the opportunity to undertake a residential visit. These activities broaden the pupils' experience and promote their personal development.

38 The school has developed good links with the community and other schools. One good example of this was its involvement in a range of events with the specific focus of fostering understanding of different cultures in the community such as the 'Roots' project, which looked at cultural heritage, especially that of Afro-Caribbeans. As part of their work in religious education, pupils visit local places of worship, which increase their understanding of world faiths. Good links with local primary and secondary schools include such activities as a poetry project with Year 6 pupils and music tuition and instrument loan. The school participates in a number of local events involving other schools, including music festivals and sporting events. A number of positive links with industry and educational institutions have been established, for example links with the Chamber of Commerce to provide reading partners and the 'Shine' project where students work as mentors with identified pupils to promote their self-esteem. These activities make a positive contribution to the curriculum.

39 Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good overall and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The daily act of collective worship, which now complies with statutory requirements, provides positive opportunities for spiritual development, as for example the recognition and celebration of individual pupil's achievement and the use of a lighted candle as a focus for personal reflection and prayer. A satisfactory use of contemporary and Bible stories, role play, art, song and music provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives, attitudes and feelings and experience a sense of awe and wonder at the joys and mysteries of the world. Work across the curriculum, for example in literacy, in art and design and in music, also contributes to pupils' spiritual development, although at present this tends to be informal rather than planned. The school celebrates a range of religious festivals and topical events.

40 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The behaviour policy places a strong emphasis on positive rewards and praise, which makes a significant contribution to promoting pupils' moral development. Teachers show pupils the difference between right and wrong and place a high value on truth and honesty, with the result that pupils' understanding of right and wrong is good. This is well reinforced by staff who provide positive role models by demonstrating respect and care for others and commitment to their work. The school has also made effective use of Education Action Zone funding to teach Yoga to each class and this has contributed to pupils' self-awareness and self-discipline. As a result the school is an orderly community. There is a positive work ethic and most pupils work well even when not directly supervised. Stories and themes covering moral issues are regularly used in collective worship and literacy lessons and are also addressed through circle time activities.

41 Provision for the social development of pupils is good. Teachers and support staff set a good example to the pupils through their work as a mutually supportive team. In all classes pupils are provided with opportunities to take some responsibility, which they accept willingly. They work well together in collaborative tasks, including competitive games. They play well together on the playground at break times. The planned work on social and emotional development through the use of 'circle time' and the School Council are making a good contribution to the development of pupils' self-esteem and social maturity. The school participates in both local and national events that encourage the pupils to think about their place in the community as well as the wider world.

42 Promotion of pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils make visits to places of interest including museums, historical sites and other places of interest and a good range of visitors participate in the school, including community members and artists and performers. Activities such as the African and Bengali dance after-school clubs, that are open to all pupils, make a good contribution to pupils' awareness of both their own and other cultures. This awareness is promoted further by activities in history, geography, the study of world faiths and religions in religious education and opportunities to learn about non-western festivals that help prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43 As at the time of the last inspection, the school continues to provide a secure and caring environment that meets the wide variety of personal and educational needs of the pupils in the school. Appropriate procedures are in place for first-aid and care for pupils who are unwell. Where applicable, class teachers are informed of any pupils in their class with a medical condition, but current procedures do not ensure that all staff, including supply staff, are given this information. Child protection is taken very seriously and there are suitable systems to deal with any issues that occur. Procedures are currently in a transitional stage, but designated staff and the headteacher have received recent training. Some staff training has taken place but there are no procedures to ensure all staff, including new staff, are given regular information. Frequent checks of the site and premises now take place. Concerns are documented and appropriate action taken where possible. Arrangements have recently been introduced to ensure all equipment, including fire extinguishers, is now checked regularly.

44 Pupils' personal development is well supported through the caring atmosphere in the school. Despite changes in staff, class teachers know pupils well and understand their individual needs and difficulties. They use this knowledge to monitor the personal development of pupils in their class. Any serious concerns are discussed with phase group or year group leaders as well as being shared at daily briefing meetings. Mentors provide some additional support to pupils. All pupils' achievements are recognised and rewarded each week in assemblies and on the small notice board in the foyer.

45 The approach to the welfare and care of the children with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff take good account of these pupils' general needs and respond sympathetically when they are upset. Good arrangements are made to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language who are new to the school settle in socially through the appointment of playground 'brothers' and 'sisters' who speak the same language.

46 The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are poor. The school has not addressed a key issue from the previous inspection to establish regular or systematic procedures to monitor attendance and follow up absence. The home-school liaison officer is now checking registers more regularly but current systems are not sufficiently consistent or rigorous to improve attendance or punctuality or reduce the high levels of unauthorised absence. Unexplained absences are not routinely followed up so that pupils are absent for days without the school knowing the reasons. The school has no routine systems to identify the many pupils with unsatisfactory and irregular patterns of attendance and punctuality and has not developed systems for dealing with the many pupils who are late. The home-school liaison officer has begun to identify pupils with poor patterns of attendance but this is not sufficient to reduce the high levels of absence. Parents are reminded about the need for regular attendance and punctuality, but this is having little effect.

47 Satisfactory procedures are in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. The headteacher and staff have a shared commitment to promoting high standards of behaviour and work hard to meet a wide range of behavioural problems. They have continued to put much effort into improving behaviour around the school. Class teachers have a basic framework of rewards and sanctions to use but no clear guidance on when to apply them. The school does not present a clear and consistent expectation for behaviour in the classroom that explains and follows through the sanctions for persistent inappropriate behaviour in lessons. Many teachers cope well with these pupils so that the flow of lessons is not seriously disrupted. However, the way in which some teachers manage behaviour is not effective for all pupils and this affects their own learning and the learning of others.

48 Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is good analysis of pupils' performance in national tests at the age of seven and eleven. Evaluation of this information is carried out to inform the school of general trends. For example, the school identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments and investigations in science and concentrate on the development and understanding of scientific language. This is now helping to improve the pupils' attainment. The school makes good use of the optional national assessment materials and other nationally available tests to check pupils' progress from one year to the next. Furthermore, the records provide a useful tracking system of pupils' test performances so as to form an overall picture as they move through the school. Information from the analysis of tests is used to target specific pupils or groups of pupils who need extra support to raise their levels of attainment. For example, booster classes are in place for those pupils who are on the threshold of reaching a higher level of attainment in the national tests or pupils are grouped according to their ability in literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 6. The tests also provide useful information on the impact of levels of mobility, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who need extra help with English as their second language. Targets are set for individual pupils at the beginning of the year and compared with the actual test scores at the end of the year to check if their progress is good enough.

49 In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, there are no formal or consistent systems to assess and record the acquisition of knowledge or skills. It is not an easy task to check what pupils have been taught and even more difficult to identify what individual pupils know, understand and can do in all subjects. Teachers lack this information when planning for new learning.

50 Procedures to monitor and assess pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. The arrangements to gather supporting evidence of pupils' needs for their reviews are unsatisfactory. Insufficient attention is given to observing the pupils for a specific purpose to gather evidence that informs planning and teaching. For example, there is very little direct evidence, related to the targets in pupils' education plans, which may be used to track progress.

51 The assessment arrangements for pupils with little or no English are unsatisfactory. Whilst examples of work are kept to show evidence of progress during the term, there are few clear short-term targets for learning against which judgements can be made. The co-ordinator is, however, tracking progress over time by ethnic groups and gender to good effect and this is beginning to identify which ethnic groups require more focused support. Whilst teachers summarise attainment against stages of language fluency in speaking and listening, reading and writing, the record system does not help to identify whether sufficient progress is being made because there are no detailed individual targets. Teachers are unable to take account in lesson planning of the steps these children need to take next or to assess how well individuals are progressing.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52 Many parents are happy with the school and with what it provides. Parents who returned the questionnaires and attended the pre-inspection meeting generally felt their children like school and are helped to work hard and achieve their best. Many are happy with teaching and behaviour. They generally find staff approachable and consider the school to be well led and managed. They feel that the school helps children to become mature and responsible, are happy with the range of activities provided outside of lessons and the information they receive about progress. In general, inspection evidence supports the favourable views expressed by parents. Some parents, however, do not feel that the school works closely with them and were concerned about the level and consistency of homework. Inspection evidence shows some support for their concerns.

53 The headteacher is working hard to establish a positive relationship with parents. Induction procedures into the nursery are satisfactory but this initial relationship is not being developed further in the rest of the school. Parents can make informal contact with teachers at the beginning and the end of the day. They are invited to class assemblies, and English lessons for parents have been organised. However, there are few other activities to encourage parents to work more closely with the school and most parents have little involvement in the life of the school. Few help in classrooms or around the school but a small parents' association arranges social and fund-raising events that have helped to purchase additional equipment for pupils' use.

54 There is little provision to involve parents of other cultures in the education of their children and the life of the school generally. In particular, the rich variety of different cultures represented by parents is not being used as a resource. Translators can be provided for parents attending meetings, but very few documents are available in community languages.

55 Parents make insufficient contribution to their children's learning at school or home. For a variety of reasons, many parents find it hard to support their children's education, sometimes because the lack of English is a barrier. A few pupils take reading books home, but this is not consistent throughout the school. A system for regular communication between teachers and parents relating to homework has not been established. The school has no up-to-date homework policy. Some teachers set homework but a regular pattern of homework has not been established for all classes.

56 The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus contains useful information about school routines and includes most of the information required, as does the governors' annual report to parents. Regular newsletters and additional letters when necessary keep parents informed about school matters, key dates and forthcoming events. The school provides some information for parents to gain an understanding of the curriculum. Each half term teachers in all year groups present information about the curriculum topics being covered in lessons but there is some variation in detail. Curriculum focus evenings are not a regular feature. The recent annual general meeting was used as an opportunity to explain to parents how mathematics is taught, but was poorly attended. Meetings each term offer parents the opportunity to discuss pupils' progress or any concerns. Annual written reports for parents are satisfactory. They are primarily computer generated, using language that is not always easy for parents to understand.

57 The school invites parents to attend the reviews if they have children with special educational needs and approximately half of these parents do so. They are also welcome to discuss their child's needs with the class-teachers at other times and the procedures for making such arrangements are straightforward.

58 There are some good links with parents of Turkish pupils through one of the teachers who offers support for ethnic minority pupils and acts as an interpreter. He has encouraged the setting up of a Turkish after-school club. Good links have also been established with the African and Afro-Caribbean parents, for example in the Saturday morning class provided by the community and with Bengali parents through dance activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59 The leadership of the school is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has been successful in securing a commitment to school improvement on the part of the teaching staff and support staff. There is strong emphasis on including and valuing all pupils and on improving pupils' behaviour and the learning environment. She has worked closely with the senior management team to develop their leadership and management skills and the impact of this is evident in their ability to take on responsibilities confidently and efficiently. This is shown in the good leadership of the Foundation Stage and the infants and juniors. However, staff changes in the last year have slowed down this process and the headteacher now has to redefine roles and responsibilities and extend the work of the middle managers, for example key curriculum leaders. Weaknesses in leadership and management of support for pupils with English as an additional language have been addressed by the recent re-allocation of responsibilities but weaknesses in the leadership and management of special educational needs remain an issue for urgent attention.

60 School management is satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior management team have put in place some good procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. The main impact of this has been to focus support for individual teachers. The success of this is evident in the reduction in the amount of unsatisfactory teaching since the last inspection, despite staff changes and difficulties in recruiting good quality teachers. The senior management team analyses performance data well in terms of gender differences and differences in progress of ethnic groups and uses the information effectively to plan additional support through booster classes for example. However, the outcomes of classroom monitoring and data analysis are not used fully enough at present to gain an overview of what needs to be improved. The school development plan contains many appropriate actions for improvement but the links between the priorities are not made sufficiently to give all staff a clear focus on special educational needs and English as an additional language, which the school recognises as its main areas for development. Success criteria are precise and measurable but dates for completion of actions and for monitoring are not always included. This means that the plan is limited as a systematic and comprehensive procedure for evaluating the work of the school and giving clear direction to future improvements as part of the annual review.

61 Many of the governors have been recently appointed and they have a good range of expertise to offer to the school. They are very supportive of the headteacher and staff but also question decisions appropriately to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. The governors have some good procedures in place to keep themselves informed about curriculum provision and standards through discussions at governing body meetings and committee meetings. They make regular visits to the school but these seldom have a specific focus and the outcomes are not formally shared with other governors. They discuss the school development plan with the headteacher but are not sufficiently involved in its preparation or its evaluation to play a full role in strategic planning or in judging the school's effectiveness or value for money.

62 The newly appointed English as an additional language co-ordinator has very good skills and a thorough and methodical approach to her work. She has a good background with bi-lingual pupils and pupils with little English and a thorough knowledge of the pupils' backgrounds. She has begun to track pupils effectively by gender, ethnicity and date of entry to school and has a clear perception of what needs to be done to ensure pupils with English as an additional language make better progress. She is beginning to share this with other staff.

63 The level of support for pupils with English as an additional language is appropriate. The teachers involved in this provision have a long background of experience in this work but they are not being used to best advantage in the school. Their timetables are not being managed carefully enough, particularly when they are carrying out 'induction work' for newly admitted pupils. The purpose of these sessions is unclear

and time is often poorly used. For example, one of the teachers spent the largest part of two afternoons observing children in the early years. The evidence obtained could have been provided more thoroughly by the class teachers who are in daily contact with the pupils for all aspects of their work and know their children well.

64 The leadership and management of special educational needs is poor. Insufficient attention has been given over several years to building up effective procedures that track and support the pupils, despite positive action by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The quality of most individual education plans is poor. Few of the pupils' targets may be interpreted usefully to direct action towards pupils' needs. This makes the teachers' task of planning for their needs difficult, if not ineffectual. Many examples of too long a gap between reviews were noted, some well over one year. There is no evidence in the teachers' special educational needs files of monitoring by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Insufficient daily support by way of a managed system for keeping notes, with dates, is provided for class teachers. The effect is that there is an absence of useful observations to direct teaching or to assist the process of review. The special needs support assistant is setting up an efficient filing system to help ensure that the requirements of the new Code of Practice, including holding reviews, are followed.

65 Despite a high staff turnover in the last two years and difficulties with teacher recruitment, which are found nationally, the school is fully staffed with teachers who are generally appropriately trained to teach this age group. Staffing provision in the nursery and reception classes is good. The co-ordinator offers good leadership and has enabled a temporary member of staff to settle in quickly and make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Teaching assistants are well qualified and are effective members of the teaching team.

66 The school employs a high number of teaching assistants to work with pupils who have special educational needs and these are well deployed within classrooms to work with groups and individual pupils. They are trained well, show a high level of commitment and are effective in ensuring that pupils complete tasks set in classes. Their contribution is limited by the co-ordinator's inadequate management procedures.

67 Satisfactory induction procedures that include curriculum planning in year groups ensure that inexperienced teachers are supported in providing an appropriate curriculum for the pupils. The deputy headteacher, who currently does not have a class responsibility, is deployed very effectively in supporting inexperienced teachers by acting as an effective role model in working alongside them in the classroom. The positive impact of her work was seen during the inspection.

68 The school's arrangements for staff professional development, which are linked closely to school priorities and individual needs are good. The benefits of this training have been evident in the improvements in teaching aspects of information and communication technology, mathematics, religious education and science. Performance management procedures have been introduced well and are linked closely to the priorities in the school development plan. Their main benefit so far has been in informing the senior management team of how to support teachers individually with their teaching where weaknesses have been identified.

69 Financial planning is satisfactory and is linked to the school's priorities for improvement through the use of a school improvement plan. However, the school had a deficit budget of £42,614 at the end of the financial year 2000/1 because of some unforeseen staffing costs and long-standing repairs required to the caretaker's house. The headteacher and governors are currently working with the Local Education Authority on different options for balancing the budget over the next two years. A part-time bursar manages the budget well on a day-to day basis and works closely with the headteacher and governors in monitoring expenditure regularly. A newly appointed governor with good experience in financial

management is now able to offer good support to the school in financial planning and management. Governors are beginning to consider the principles of best value satisfactorily. They have compared standards and costs in the school with those of other schools, are striving to obtain good value for money when planning the refurbishment of the toilets and occasionally consult parents about initiatives, such as the new behaviour policy. However, there is not a clear approach to evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken in terms of their impact on teaching, learning or standards. For example, the governors made the decision to employ additional teaching assistants to improve pupils' behaviour but have not put in place specific strategies to evaluate the value for money within an agreed period of time.

70 External grants are applied appropriately for the support of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language and the school adds considerable funding from its own budget to increase the level of classroom support. The effectiveness of the use of these grants is limited because of weaknesses in the present management of special educational needs and recent past management of English as an additional language. The school makes good use of funds within the Education Action Zone to promote pupils' attainment, for example through the provision of an art therapist and external specialists such as artists, musicians and poets. . The school's standards fund is used well for staff professional development

71 Learning resources are satisfactory overall in quality, quantity and range and they are well matched to the school's curriculum. In art and design, in design and technology and in information and communication technology they are very good. The school has benefited from funds available as part of their involvement in the Education Action Zone to provide sufficient computers of good quality in the information technology suite and in classrooms to teach basic skills and to extend the use of these skills across the curriculum. In English, science, history and physical education and in the nursery and reception classes learning resources are good. In other subjects, whilst they are satisfactory, some items are in need of replacement or more are needed. For example in geography, there are insufficient maps and globes and in religious education the quantity of artefacts is not sufficient to enable teachers to have enough items for pupils to observe and discuss when classes in a year group are studying the same religion. Resources for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are unsatisfactory and do not allow teachers to provide fully for the pupils' individual needs.

72 The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school is a large Victorian building on three floors. Recent redecoration has significantly improved the appearance of many areas, in particular the reception area. The school benefits from a number of specialist rooms that include music, art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology. The headteacher and governors are aware, however, that the school has insufficient toilets to meet legal requirements and arrangements are underway to address this issue of pupil welfare. The displays in classrooms and corridors celebrate pupils' work and provide a stimulating environment for learning. The outdoor play area is spacious when compared to many inner city schools. The nursery has its own individual outdoor play area, but pupils in the reception classes do not have access to a secure outdoor area.

73 The quality of leadership and management overall has not changed significantly since the last inspection. However, the leadership and management of special educational needs now have weaknesses, which were not identified at the time of the last inspection when there was different co-ordinator in post. No clear judgement was made in the last inspection about the leadership and management of English as an additional language. The governors are now meeting their statutory responsibilities in respect of a daily collective act of worship and in providing for the curriculum in information and communication technology, mathematics, religious education and science,

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74 in order to build on the improvement made the headteacher , governors and staff should:

(1) improve pupils' attainment in mathematics, English and information and communication technology by ensuring that:

- pupils have regular opportunities in numeracy to learn mental strategies to support them in making calculations;
- speaking is carefully structured and planned within a wider range of groupings to enable all pupils to develop their language skills more fully;
- pupils are taught to use a wider range of strategies when reading;
- more attention is paid to spelling, grammatical structure, the presentation of work and the specific needs of boys in writing;
- marking and target setting are used more consistently and appropriately so that pupils are clear what they need to do to improve their work.
- arrangements for homework are consistent throughout the school and involve pupils and parents more fully;
- pupils have more opportunities to use their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.

(Paras. 2, 6, 7, 9, 25, 27, 29, 51, 55, 104,106, 107,108,109, 114, 122, 130, 153, 160)

(2) improve the curriculum provision and quality of teaching for pupils who have English as an additional language so that they make better progress by:

- making more effective and efficient use of the teachers who give additional support to ethnic minority pupils and developing their teaching skills further;
- developing the assessment systems that determine individual pupils' needs;
- having clearer targets for individual pupils' progress, particularly in speaking and listening, reading and writing;
- developing better systems for monitoring the work of the teachers with specific responsibility for supporting ethnic minority pupils;
- ensuring that support teachers for ethnic minority pupils are able to support class teachers more effectively in planning the teaching approach and the level of work;
- improving the quality of learning resources.

(Paras. 3,26, 27, 34, 60, 63, 71, 117, 121)

(3) improve the leadership and management of special educational needs by ensuring that:

- pupil reviews are carried regularly in line with the Code of Practice;
- procedures for assessing and tracking pupils are more effective in determining pupils' needs and in identifying when early support from outside agencies is required;
- clear targets are set for pupils in their individual education plans and that class teachers and teaching assistants take account of these;
- the approach to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs
- across all subjects is made more explicit to all staff and is implemented and monitored systematically.

(Paras. 5, 27, 28, 35, 50, 59, 60, 64, 66, 70, 71, 117, 121, 128, 140)

(4) improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

(Paras. 19, 46)

In addition to the key issues, the school should address in the action plan how to involve parents more fully in supporting their children in school.

(Paras. 53, 54, 55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	97
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	4	31	47	8	2	0
Percentage	3.2	4.2	32.6	49.5	8.4	2.1	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. The number of lessons included in the chart is 95 because two of the lessons observed were less than 30 minutes and were therefore ungraded.

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)	46	352
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	184

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	151

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	307

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	72
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	80

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	20	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	14
	Girls	13	12	15
	Total	23	22	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	52 (49)	50 (47)	66 (69)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	17	19
	Girls	13	19	20
	Total	24	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	55 (51)	82 (71)	89 (62)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	21	35	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	6	13
	Girls	16	11	20
	Total	24	17	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (51)	30 (47)	59 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85))

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	7
	Girls	17	20	20
	Total	23	29	27
Percentage of pupils	School	41 (41)	52 (53)	48 (61)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	98
Black – African heritage	69
Black – other	0
Indian	12
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	29
Chinese	0
White	63
Any other minority ethnic group	73

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	4	0
Black – African heritage	8	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	2	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.2
Average class size	27.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	294.7

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	46.0
Total number of education support staff	4.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	1301,607
Total expenditure	1377,221
Expenditure per pupil	3,114
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,000
Balance carried forward to next year	-42,614

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.0

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	311
Number of questionnaires returned	175

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	21	3	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	40	40	10	2	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	33	7	3	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	29	22	11	5
The teaching is good.	49	37	6	2	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	37	10	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	28	7	3	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	32	4	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	42	30	14	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	41	36	9	4	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	40	11	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	32	10	3	16

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

76 Children in the Foundation Stage are catered for in the nursery and in the two reception classes. The nursery admits children in the term after their third birthday, initially on a part-time basis. In the term before children are transferred to a reception class they can attend full-time, including lunchtimes. Transfer into the reception classes takes place in the September or January of the year in which the children are five. The school has a well thought out programme for transfer into the reception classes, which ensures that children are confident and happy going into a new class with new adults.

77 The quality of teaching and experiences offered to the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and often good in all the areas of learning and provides them with a secure base for the next stage of their education. One of the strengths of the Foundation Stage provision is the caring, supportive, welcoming and secure working environment that promotes respect and understanding. Relationships between adults and children are good. Members of staff are sensitive to individuals' identity, culture, race and gender resulting in children feeling valued and pleased to come to school to learn. A high percentage of children attending nursery and reception are from homes where little or no English is spoken.

78 The introduction into the nursery is a well-organised feature of Princess May. Meetings for parents and visits to the nursery are well planned, giving children a sound preparation for the start of school. Parents and children are confident to begin the home/school partnership necessary for successful learning.

79 The nursery, which is located in the school building, is large and airy. It allows for every aspect of the Foundation Stage curriculum to be taught in comfort. The secure outside area for adventurous play contains climbing equipment that is old, but safe, and children enjoy climbing and chasing on it. The school has plans for its refurbishment and development. The two teachers and three nursery officers, two of who are part-time, work extremely well as a thoughtful, caring and experienced team. It is a fully inclusive nursery catering for children who have special educational needs and English as an additional language. Members of staff have learned basic words in many languages to ensure that all children are encouraged to learn.

80 The two reception classes are not large, but they are attractively decorated with a balance of child and adult work. Each room is equipped for all the areas of learning. Between the two classes there is a very large hall that is acoustically poor and is used for physical education and assemblies. There is no enclosed area for outdoor play and children join the rest of the school in the playground at lunch and break times. The two reception teachers and two class assistants are professional and kind in their approach and work hard to provide the children with good first-hand experiences. Members of the nursery and reception staff are at a stage where they could now share each other's good practices in the teaching of these young children.

81 Children have a wide range of abilities but overall attainment on entry to the nursery is very low. Most children do not speak English and many have had a traumatic time as refugees. The baseline assessments carried out in the reception class confirm these informal assessments in the nursery. The results of these assessments and the targets set for the children are shared with the parents who are expected to support their children's learning.

82 All children benefit from the caring and supportive environment and the well considered and structured learning opportunities provided, particularly in the nursery. The initial nursery assessment and the reception baseline assessment results are used to identify children with special educational needs. These children are carefully monitored, but the special educational needs co-ordinator is not sufficiently involved at this stage.

83 At the time of the last inspection children's attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations in all areas of learning. However, attainment on entry is currently lower and a higher percentage of children have special educational needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

84 Children make good progress in personal and social development, particularly in the nursery. By the end of the reception year, most attain national expectations. Children are generally well behaved, learn to take turns and share the resources. Members of staff establish a supportive caring ethos and the establishment of routines helps to promote independence. Children have a growing awareness of the difference between right and wrong. For example, they prompt their friends when they forget to put on aprons for painting and working at the water tray. In reception classes, when preparing for physical education, children quickly undress themselves. They can make an orderly queue and remember their table manners at lunchtime. They are on the whole, polite and play well together in the playground.

85 Children listen carefully to staff and try hard to please, showing great pleasure when they are praised or rewarded. They all enjoy new experiences. Children develop positive relationships with staff whom they know well and those who speak little English gain confidence when spoken to in their own language, which has a positive impact on their progress.

Communication, language and literacy

86 The children enter the nursery with attainment that is very low for their age, particularly in conversational skills, vocabulary depth and hand control for writing. Many children have little understanding or use of English. All children make satisfactory progress. However, although a few children are attaining standards that are in line with expectations for their age, the majority are not and will not achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the time they reach the end of the reception year.

87 Almost all children listen attentively. and follow instructions when they carry out activities. Many respond well to questions about a story, especially when they know it well, although their response is often in single words. Even during relaxed and social times there is little sharing of information about family and friends beyond a simple response to a question. This is due to poor understanding of English, lack of confidence or an inability to focus sufficiently on a response to a direct question.

88 Children use a growing vocabulary, either in English or in their mother tongue. All have sufficient nouns and verbs to express their needs but many are unable to use adjectives with confidence. The speech of many children is unclear and difficult to understand. This inhibits their confidence to talk to each other, although staff work hard to provide the correct pronunciation or encourage them to say the phrase in their mother tongue.

89 During story time and singing sessions, the use of repetition and songs stimulates even the quietest children and those with special educational needs to contribute. They join in with the action rhymes and familiar stories and anticipate repeated words and phrases. For example in the nursery when the same story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears was repeated during the week, children began to talk to staff about the story and chose it as a favourite book. This strategy is also used in the reception class with the story of the Gingerbread man. The reception children begin to recognise characters and use adjectives to describe them, for example “old man”, “fast Gingerbread man”.

90 Children enjoy books and understand that pictures and print have meaning. Some children in the reception class understand letters and single words in print, especially in home-made books to support learning. Many children are able to find their own name and recognise their surname and names of other members of the group. A few can point to the correct letter after hearing its sound. Children use a variety of writing tools, such as pencils and felt tip pens, to make ‘lists’ and to write very simple ‘stories’, and a few produce recognisable letters without copying. Most children can trace over words, or copy them, and some children write their names in clear, well sized letters.

Mathematical development

91 Mathematical development on entry is very low for children of their age, due largely to their underdeveloped language and literacy skills. By the end of reception most children’s attainment is in line with expectations for their age in areas of practical mathematics, such as capacity and sorting. However, in aspects, which require mathematical language, verbal reasoning and recording, attainment is well below that expected.

92 By the time they leave the nursery, most children can count to ten, and count a corresponding number of objects. However, they are not necessarily logical in their approach and do not always start or finish in the appropriate place. Many can recognise numbers up to five, but some confuse the numbers three, five and eight. They can also name the simplest mathematical shapes, such as circle and square, but have difficulty in describing their properties. Whilst they enjoy singing and joining in with number rhymes, some of the children sing to the sound of the words without understanding them. Most children understand how to order by size, for example teddy bears. They improve their understanding of capacity in water play. Many understand the concept of time by the structure of their nursery session, for example, ‘tidy up time’ and ‘home time’. Whilst many children can name and sort a range of colours, few can continue a simple repeating pattern such as making a tower of interlocking bricks in alternate blue and red. Few write numbers or choose to record their work; even in ‘pretend’ and their skills in problem solving are very limited.

93 Children in the reception classes make sound progress in their counting skills, number recognition and mathematical language. However, teaching the numeracy strategy to these children is not always appropriate because they have not developed language sufficiently to access all the planned activities. Mathematical understanding is reinforced during group work, for example, during registration in counting the number of children present.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

94 Overall, children make satisfactory progress but are not likely to reach the early learning goals of this area of learning by the end of the reception year. However, their skills in some areas are appropriate for their age.

95 By the time they leave the nursery, children have made satisfactory progress in understanding their local environment. They are confident in moving around the nursery, knowing in which rooms

different activities take place and can competently find resources and equipment. Children know about local shops and facilities, such as parks, and learn about the work that people do in the community, such as the police. They appreciate the festivals associated with different religions and cultures and enjoy the celebrations. However, many find it difficult to talk about their experiences, their families and where they live, and to describe events that happened in the past, due to their underdeveloped language skills and limited experiences and concepts.

96 In the reception classes, many good opportunities are provided for children's knowledge and understanding of the world to be developed. Early morning break times and lunchtimes are used as an opportunity to talk about family, home, past and present in their lives.

97 In the nursery and reception classes, children learn to explore their world. They investigate objects that float and sink in the water and take the opportunity to experience splashing.

98 All children make sound progress in their early scientific understanding. In the reception classes they have appropriate opportunities to investigate themselves and are able to do so by looking at and naming different parts of the body and comparing types of hair and colours of skin. They learn about electricity and its dangers, and can identify household items that need electricity to work. Children are slower to develop appropriate scientific vocabulary and have more difficulty in describing their experiments and findings than expected for their age. Children in nursery and reception classes have sound experience of technology. They go to the computer suite once weekly and their mouse control skills improve rapidly. There are no remote control toys and the nursery computer has been stolen, with the result that the children are not able to use technology freely.

99 Children in nursery and reception make good progress in exploring and choosing materials to make things. They improve their skills appropriately in handling simple tools such as scissors, glue and tape and can make recognisable objects such as a wind sock from waste materials and string. They build models to their own design from a variety of small and large-scale construction materials.

Physical development

100 Most children enter school with limited experience of physical control and awareness of space, although some have physical skills appropriate for their age. All make satisfactory progress and the majority are on line to attain what is expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Nursery children have immediate access to outdoor play and reception children take part in the school's physical education programme and playtimes. The lack of an outside area limits the opportunities that the reception classes have to develop their physical control.

101 In the nursery children's gross motor control is well developed and teachers provide good experiences for children to explore their body's potential. Outside activity is always well supervised. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, most children reach the expected standards in body control, but not their fine hand control, which is necessary for writing and the creative aspects of the curriculum. Children in the nursery move confidently both inside and outside the classroom, being aware of space and the need not to bump into each other. Their control of the wheeled toys is excellent; they manoeuvre at speed around the obstacles. Climbing and adventurous structures give opportunities to climb, jump, stretch and balance. Some show reasonable control of the small equipment.

Creative development

102 Children's attainment is below that expected nationally on entry. They make good progress overall and attain the expected levels by the end of the reception year.

103 The teachers link this area of learning very closely to the topic or book of the week and give children imaginative tasks to complete. Children explore sound in an imaginative way. They sing and experiment with instruments in a range of creative activities, showing developing skills and evident enjoyment. They explore a variety of materials, including sand, paint, modelling materials, crayons and glue. Children use their imagination well and use paint boldly. They learn basic skills well. In the reception classes there are opportunities for children to experience role-play and they do so, often reflecting stories they have heard, for example, "The Three Bears".

ENGLISH

104 Standards in English are well below average in the work seen by both ages seven and eleven. In the national tests in 2001 for pupils aged seven, standards in reading and writing were very low compared to the national average and with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 2 or above when compared to similar schools was very low and in the lowest five per cent nationally. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 3 in writing was at the average, indicating that the school is making satisfactory provision for the higher attaining pupils in this aspect of English. Standards have improved in the national tests since the last inspection but improvements in the school's performance have not kept pace with the national trend, particularly in writing.

105 In the national tests in 2001 for eleven year-olds, standards were very low in relation to the national average and well below the average for similar schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 based on the national test results was well below the average progress made. The high numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school during each year meant that only about one-third of pupils taking the tests in Year 6 had had the benefit of a settled education in the school from the reception year. This partly explains the low performance since pupils take time to settle into school and become ready to learn, and the changes affect pupils already in the class also. An analysis of assessment data shows that those pupils who were in the school at Year 2 made satisfactory progress to Year 6. Standards in the work seen in Year 6 are similar to those at the time of the last inspection, although the school has significantly more pupils with special educational needs. The improving trend in the national tests was above the national trend to 2000, but the lower standards in 2001 produced a trend that is broadly in line with the national picture.

106 Overall, progress in English is satisfactory from Year 1-6 when account is taken of the high percentage of pupils who leave and join the school during that period. The school is using the National Literacy Strategy to positive effect to raise standards. However, pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language could do better. Although they are given additional support in lessons, their needs are insufficiently assessed and therefore the activities planned for them are not often appropriately matched to their prior learning. Girls do better than boys in writing in the infants and in English overall in the juniors.

107 Standards in speaking and listening are well below average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6. By the age of seven most pupils listen attentively to teachers, other adults and each other. Those with an appropriate understanding of spoken English are ready to participate in whole-class and group discussions, express themselves confidently and can maintain the general flow of the discussion without divergence. They make sound progress in their ability to ask relevant and sensible questions and show sensitivity to the needs and ideas of others when making responses. They use appropriate language to talk about stories, discuss grammatical features, empathise with characters and events and express feelings and emotions. By the age of eleven this sound progress is sustained as pupils respond to the many opportunities provided in literacy and other lessons for them to speak and listen. Those pupils who have a good understanding of spoken English 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 wider range of vocabulary. They listen carefully and respond well to the contributions made by other pupils. The majority read aloud from self-chosen books with good expression that shows sound comprehension. However, there are too few planned opportunities for those pupils in the early stages of learning English in the infants and the juniors to practise and increase their knowledge of spoken English and to contribute their ideas in discussion.

108 Standards in reading are well below average in both key stages, although overall pupils make satisfactory progress. By the age of seven pupils listen to and read a variety of stories, poetry and non-fiction books. They give appropriate answers to questions about plot, events, characters and vocabulary and this reflects their interest in and understanding of the texts read. They are able to draw on their personal experiences to comment on the ideas expressed in stories. Phonic skills are taught systematically. As a result, by the age of seven, the ablest pupils read fluently for their age, using a range of strategies, including phonics, to decode unfamiliar words. By the age of eleven most pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with evident enjoyment. The most able readers read aloud with good expression, taking account of punctuation. They use evidence from texts appropriately to support their views when discussing meaning and the most able make personal responses to features and events in the stories they are reading. They use an appropriate range of linguistic terms with understanding when discussing texts they are studying in lessons. However, there are a significant number of pupils in Years 3-6 who rely on phonic strategies to sound out words and who have not yet developed an adequate sight vocabulary. Pupils in all classes can take books home, either to share with parents or read on their own, and reading cards in home languages provide an effective means of communication between parents and teachers. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school. In school pupils are heard to read regularly both individually and in group reading activities and records are kept of their progress. There are regular timetabled periods for quiet reading throughout the school and these activities emphasise the importance the school places on reading whilst also encouraging pupils to develop the reading habit. Links with the Chamber of Commerce provides reading partners for pupils, which helps them to become more confident in reading aloud to adults.

109 Present standards in writing are well below average overall by the ages of seven and eleven, although pupils make satisfactory progress. In both key stages pupils are given the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes and audiences, including imaginative fiction, personal writing, poetry, play scripts, reports, factual accounts, instructions, letters, and labelling. By the age of seven pupils learn how to plan their written work and are beginning to write at greater length. The higher attaining pupils also write with greater complexity and with more careful choice of words and have a good understanding of basic punctuation. By the age of eleven most pupils plan their writing and the highest attaining pupils can write extensively, using complex sentences and paragraphs in an appropriate style. They use a range of punctuation accurately. The most able select words carefully as for example when a pupil in Year 5 wrote, 'All the feelings were indescribable. I felt that I had been struck by an arrow'. However a significant number of pupils have difficulty in maintaining grammatical consistency when writing. Although higher attaining pupils in both key stages can use their knowledge of high frequency words and phonics to assist them when writing, there is a significant number of pupils in each year group who do not use their knowledge of phonics and spelling rules when writing. Spelling of high frequency words is often inconsistent. All pupils are encouraged to re-read, revise and edit their work. During the period of the inspection pupils were often encouraged to use dictionaries or word banks to support their writing. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory overall. Pupils begin to learn how to join their writing in the infants and continue to refine their skills through regular and systematic teaching in the juniors. Handwriting practice shows that pupils are mastering the cursive

style successfully. However, in all year groups many pupils do not apply their knowledge of letter formation when writing, and work is often poorly presented.

110 Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils write for a range of purposes in subjects other than literacy, for example factual writing in science and accounts of life in different historical periods. However, the use of some worksheets does not enable all pupils to express their ideas appropriately. Speaking and listening skills are developed in discussion activities related to all areas of the curriculum. Pupils were not observed to use computers to support their developing literacy skills during the period of the inspection.

111 The school makes positive use of a variety of intervention strategies to support pupils, including Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy Support.

112 Overall pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school, although during the period of the inspection the attitudes of pupils in Year 1 were unsatisfactory in literacy hour activities. Most pupils behave well in lessons and apply themselves with good concentration, purpose and interest to tasks they are set even when not directly supervised. They co-operate well when working in pairs and small groups and help each other both formally and informally in discussing aspects of their work.

113 The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall with some instances of good or better teaching in both key stages. Where teaching is good or better teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning. This is a feature of the whole-class work at the beginning of literacy lessons when teachers skilfully review what pupils have learned previously so that new work is purposeful and relevant. Teachers make the purpose of lessons very clear and this helps the pupils to understand what they are doing and why. During group activities pupils complete tasks that are matched appropriately to their individual needs and as a result they make satisfactory progress. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and of their behaviour and this means that lessons proceed smoothly. Teachers' relationships with pupils are good and these are significant in promoting and maintaining pupils' good attitudes to their work. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and this helps them to plan and teach with confidence.

114 There is a whole-school system in place for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in reading, phonics and writing. Pupils' work is marked regularly, although marking rarely includes comments that help them to understand what they need to do to improve. All pupils have personal literacy targets and these contribute particularly to the satisfactory progress of the higher attaining pupils. However, the use of assessment information to inform daily planning is in the early stages of development. The work of classroom assistants in liaising with teachers to provide additional support during the literacy hour makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Spelling homework is generally set regularly in both the infants and the juniors and pupils in Years 3-6 also receive writing tasks.

115 The co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge and is enthusiastic. She provides support and advice for colleagues through a range of activities, including monitoring teaching and learning, monitoring test results, analysing planning and school based in-service training. As a result of these procedures the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to raise standards in English. This has led the school to put in place a number of out-of-school initiatives such as the class for Turkish pupils, the African and Caribbean School and the Bengali class. Literacy resources are good and these are centrally organised to meet the needs of each key stage. All classes have a good range of general reading material as well as having sets of books, including bi-lingual books and tapes, for home-school reading. In addition, there is a wide range of good quality resources for the literacy hour, some of which are targeted specifically to support the needs of particular ethnic

groups. These are used well and make a good contribution to pupils' learning and the status of literacy throughout the school. The school library is in the process of being reorganised and relocated and therefore was not available for use by pupils during the period of the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

116 Standards in mathematics and numeracy are well below average in the work seen by both ages seven and eleven. In the national tests in 2001 for pupils aged seven, standards were very low compared to the national average and well below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 2 or above was very low and in the lowest five per cent nationally. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 3 was average, indicating that the school is making satisfactory provision for the higher attaining pupils. The improving trend was above the national trend to 2000, but the low standards in 2001 produced a trend that is broadly in line with the national picture. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection in the work seen when they were judged to be close to the national average. Overall pupils are making satisfactory gains in acquisition of skills.

117 In the national tests in 2001 for eleven year-olds, standards were very low in relation to the national average and well below the average for similar schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 based on the national test results was well below the average progress made. The high numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school during each year meant that only about one third of pupils taking the tests in Year 6 had had the benefit of a settled education in the school from the reception year. This partly explains the low performance since pupils take time to settle into school and become ready to learn, and the changes affect pupils already in the class also. An analysis of assessment data shows that those pupils who were in the school at Year 2 made satisfactory progress to Year 6. Pupils at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language have not been receiving the experiences required to enable them to make appropriate progress and their progress is below that expected. Pupils with special educational needs are too dependent on adult support and therefore their progress is inconsistent. They could do better if work were matched more closely to their individual needs. Standards are lower than was stated at the time of the last inspection in 1997. The trend in the school's performance was close to the national trend until 2000 and the school gained an achievement award. The lower standards in 2001 produced a trend that is below national.

118 There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls. On balance there is no significant difference between the progress of differing groups of pupils from differing backgrounds, other than, as stated, those at an early stage of English language acquisition and with special educational needs.

119 By age seven, most pupils count correctly to 50 and give the numbers that come before and after a given two-digit number. They usually enjoy the class discussion times with the teachers and are keen to give answers, although a few pupils with special needs or English as an additional language are slower to be ready to answer. They have an early understanding of the value of numbers in the units and tens positions, working hard along with the teachers. They count up and down in 10s from, say, 47 when a number grid is there to watch. Very few pupils are confident with counting in 10s from 99. Most pupils know the meaning of add and take away but rely on objects or fingers to find an answer such as $2 + 7$. In Year 1, for example, the good choice of task and management of a lesson enabled pupils to have good experience at finding simple money totals such as 3p and 5p. Most pupils used the coins correctly, although several did not understand that the 2p coin is worth the same as two 1p coins. The good practical experiences planned by the teacher enabled the pupils to make good gains in their understanding and to consolidate early number skills. Pupils applied their numeracy skills well to the task and most pupils worked well together. The higher attaining pupils worked well independently and recorded their sums correctly, with good understanding. In a lesson with pupils in Year 2, the school's good emphasis on mathematical language and links to literacy was

shown by pupils' knowledge of several words connected with add or subtract, such as 'total' or 'subtract'. Only the higher attaining pupils knew the meaning of 'difference'. Evidence from pupils' understanding in lessons and from their previous work shows that standards are well below average across the mathematical areas of study.

120 By age eleven, pupils have generally had a good range of experience that covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 5 were treated to a lively presentation of negative numbers that emphasised well how -3 is less than -1 , for example. Practical work using dice with special numbers stuck on the faces gave the pupils good consolidation of 'greater than' or 'less than' so that many pupils understood simple comparison. The higher attaining pupils responded well to the challenge of making up a word problem with their numbers and demonstrated above average understanding. Throughout the junior years, pupils are making satisfactory gains in numeracy skills through the teachers' firm emphasis on number and calculation, although pupils' standards of numeracy are well below average. Pupils do not have easy fluency with number calculation, are not confident with numbers to one hundred, and generally have poor recall of early number facts. Many pupils make a good effort to do the sums, although they use counting methods rather than patterns and relationships amongst the numbers. The pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to build mental strategies through the teachers working with them to practise and become confident in routine mental calculations. Pupils in Year 6 have close to average skills for visualising the three-dimensional solid of a two-dimensional net. They recognised most of the nets that could be folded into a 3-D model, showing that their skills of mental imagery are developing. Overall observations in lessons and an analysis of pupils' previous work shows that pupils' attainment is well below average across the mathematical areas of study.

121 The majority of pupils in both key stages quickly become interested in their work through the teachers' approach and good choice of activities. Their attitudes to mathematics are satisfactory overall, although many pupils demonstrate good interest and effort for parts of their lessons. A few pupils are reluctant to answer. Those with English as an additional language try hard to work out answers, often with the good help of support assistants. In several lessons the teacher leads the discussion too strongly, allowing little opportunity for pupils to contribute. There is also a tendency to have the pupils seated for too long on the carpet, so that they become restless and there is insufficient time for them to complete the main task. For example, most pupils in Year 6 produced only one design for the net of an open cube and were not challenged to find four or five, or even eight. Most teachers have good relationships with the pupils that are reflected in the good level of pupils' interest and effort in mathematics. The majority of teachers direct questions to all groups of pupils, ensuring that they are all involved in the tasks. However, on several occasions teachers did not give enough basic support for pupils who had difficulties so that they lost interest and learning was affected adversely. This was shown, for example, by not providing simple support posters for the method of reading or recording co-ordinates; or by not including sufficient practical resources that help consolidate understanding.

122 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 1-6. Planning is to national guidance and is good, setting out what different groups of pupils are to do. There is little evidence of comment, however, on the intended teaching strategies to be used and several lessons are not sufficiently thought out in terms of how teachers are to develop pupils' learning. The one unsatisfactory lesson was ill prepared in this respect and, as a result, pupils completed little work. Several lessons demonstrated good methods and tasks, with thorough questioning to make pupils think. Teachers' management of pupils is good so that there is a good working atmosphere, with clear expectations for work and behaviour. However, the opening session is sometimes too long and this results in pupils spending a long period listening and becoming restless, and having too short a time working on the main activity. For minor incidents, teachers use effective behaviour strategies that are clear and understood, with the result that pupils concentrate well. The choice of task is usually designed well to interest pupils.

123 All pupils now have a target for improvement in mathematics, although the use of these is only just becoming established as a consideration in teachers' weekly planning. Teachers note pupils' answers and respond well to them, as lessons progress to build on their understanding. However, weekly planning does not give sufficient attention to highlighting pupils' performance against what they were intended to learn. Thus the information gained about pupils' performance in one lesson is not used enough when planning future work. Learning objectives for lessons are usually shared with the pupils, but the practice of having all pupils write them down should be reviewed since so much time is taken up in doing so, to the detriment of the amount of real work accomplished.

124 The subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of their roles and support colleagues well. They monitor teachers' planning and look at samples of pupils' work although arrangements are not yet in place to monitor or observe lessons in order to enable co-ordinators to give more specific guidance on improving teaching strategies. The school administers the national optional tests as a form of assessment and is beginning to use the information effectively to track performance and to target future improvement. The use of computers is developing in the suite, but they are under-used in the classrooms.

SCIENCE

125 The school's improved curriculum planning and focus on teaching science through the process of investigations linked to a determined effort to help pupils become more familiar with scientific language has begun to make a difference to pupils' achievements. The improving trend in the school's performance in the national tests at the age of eleven was greater than the national trend from the time of the last inspection in 1997 until 2000 but the lower standards in 2001 produced a trend that is in line with the national. In 2001 the pupils' results were in the lowest five percent nationally and well below average for similar schools. However, in this group of pupils a considerable number had significant special educational needs, several had poor attendance and many pupils had joined the school part way through their primary education with very little knowledge of the English language. An analysis of the test results showed that pupils who had been at the school from the reception class had achieved the standard expected nationally and had made good progress. Currently the pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve the standard expected nationally at this age and their progress has been good. There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls.

126 Teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2001 showed that pupils' attainment was below national expectations, although it was above the standards attained by pupils in similar schools. Pupils come into the school with low attainment and many are in the early stages of learning the English language. Work seen during the inspection indicates that attainment is still below the national average, although progress is often good. Pupils can carry out simple investigations, most needing support, though higher attaining pupils show confidence in their activities. They find difficulty in making simple predictions but they understand the need to devise a fair test. More able pupils can explain their activities well in their own words but do not have sufficient experience of investigative work to enable them to achieve at the higher level expected. Those of average and lower attainment find it difficult to express their ideas due to their limited command of the English language. Year 1 pupils were able to investigate light by comparing the intensity of light from a wide variety of sources and recording their findings pictorially. When pupils in Year 2 were investigating how materials change when they are heated, the teacher moved the class to the parents' room so that she could use the school's cooker to show pupils what happened to an egg when it was fried and

chocolate when it was heated in a pan. This gave pupils the opportunity to predict what might happen and helped them to understand the idea behind devising a fair test. The teacher used worksheets to help pupils record their findings but these did not present enough challenge or encourage pupils to write using their own words.

127 The majority of pupils in the infants have a sensible approach to their scientific activities, co-operating well with their teachers. Those with special educational needs have full access to the learning experiences of the class and have a satisfactory grasp of scientific concepts, although their recording skills are poor.

128 Standards in the work seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection are in line with national expectations. Pupils develop their skills in investigation so that the more able pupils record their experimental work confidently by Year 6. However, pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning the English language still find difficulty with recording in spite of help that they receive from learning support assistants.

129 Pupils in Year 3 carried out an investigation to classify rocks into permeable and impermeable groups. They watched very carefully as the small piece of rock was placed on a tray and a few drops of water were added to see if the rock absorbed the water. They talked quietly to each other about the results. Less able pupils received very good support from a student teacher working with the class. In Year 5 the focus of the lesson was to help pupils turn ideas into a form that could be investigated scientifically. Pupils made very good progress in their learning by planning to investigate how temperature affects evaporation. This led to a lively discussion when the more able pupils suggested several lines of possible investigation that would help determine the results. In one Year 6 lesson the teacher had identified the problems that pupils had experienced in the previous lesson and spent some time revising the work and again concentrating on the development of scientific language. This enabled the pupils to make good progress. The more able pupils in Year 6 can apply the principles of a fair test well to their own investigations. They identify a range of variables, and are able to predict outcomes, but lower attaining pupils still find this difficult. Higher attaining pupils consider strategies for increasing reliability, such as repeating procedures, and can use their scientific understanding well to explain different results, for example they can explain their observations of different light intensities in their bulbs when they change the electrical circuit. Pupils are aware of the school's system for planning an experiment and follow the pattern of predicting what might happen, deciding on a fair test and checking if their results match their predictions.

130 Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Year 6 was at least good and in one class it was very good. In a Year 4 class it was poor because of the teacher's lack of interaction with pupils when they were working individually to help them to develop their understanding, which was in part due to weak management of pupils' behaviour. Most teachers understand the requirements of science national curriculum. Their good scientific knowledge enables them to teach the subject effectively and to extend and broaden pupils' understanding of science. In particular, the strong emphasis on the use of correct scientific terminology in most lessons is embedding the language of science in pupils' work, although many pupils still find this very difficult because they are in the early stages of acquiring English. Teachers' planning is clearly focused on well-defined learning objectives, with an emphasis on scientific enquiry. This ensures progression in pupils' investigative skills. However, expectations of higher attaining pupils are sometimes limited. In Year 6 pupils write reports of experiments and this helps them to develop their independent writing. Teachers use opportunities to link science lessons with mathematics well by presenting results in tables and graphs but the use of information and communication technology is under-developed. Teachers use questions very well to challenge pupils and to encourage them to link their scientific understanding to real life situations. For example while studying materials changing state, pupils in a Year 2 class could tell their teacher how food changes

when mum cooks it at home. The marking of pupils' work is variable in quality. On the whole it is not sufficiently diagnostic or challenging to move pupils' thinking forward and tends to focus on general praise and encouragement. Teachers make good use of on-going assessment such as in Year 6 when the teacher realised pupils had not understood the work fully in the previous lesson and therefore repeated it at the beginning of the next one.

131 The pupils' attitude to science and their interest in the subject is good on the whole but there is a small number of pupils in some classes who find difficulty in concentrating and affect the work of other pupils adversely. Although pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons, the needs of boys with serious behavioural problems are not met fully enough. This is mainly because the help they so urgently need has not yet been provided by the school's system for identifying pupils with serious behavioural problems and seeking help from the appropriate outside agencies.

132 Two experienced teachers lead the subject with enthusiasm. They monitor all teachers' medium- and short-term plans and pupils' books effectively to maintain a good overview of pupils' work. They do not have the opportunity to observe and evaluate lessons to enable them to give specific advice to improve teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

133 Pupil's standards are just in line with those expected nationally for seven- and eleven-year-old pupils, based on the work that pupils did this year and in previous school years. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school. This is the same judgement as that made in the previous inspection.

134 Little art and design work was available in Year 1 to enable a judgement to be made about pupils' progress. In one lesson in Year 2, pupils looked at patterns in nature when they went for a walk in the park, collecting items they would like to study further. They found spirals in snail shells, networks in veins of leaves and circles on twigs to use in future work and were able to observe carefully the patterns seen. Pupils in Year 4 make sound observational drawings of chairs, paying attention to detail and some are developing good perspective in their work. Year 6 pupils record the human form carefully, firstly sketching models in a stick form to get a flow of movement in the limbs. Good improvement in their attempts was observed when supported well by confident teaching.

135 In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils studied different containers from many cultures. Pupils' attention was brought to the basic shapes and patterns and the teacher demonstrated clearly what qualities he would be looking for in the pupils' work. As a result pupils worked hard, looking carefully at proportion and details of the weaving or patterns that decorated the individual containers. The pupils' work was of a satisfactory standard overall.

136 Pupils look at work produced by famous artists trying faithfully to reproduce their paintings. Year 3 use different media to show colourful work of Gauguin, Bruno and O'Keefe. They were able to use pencil paint and pastels with appropriate control and were beginning to explain the effects that they were trying to create. This shows satisfactory appreciation of the work of artists and its affect upon the pupils' work.

137 Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall, with good teaching observed in the juniors. The features that made these lessons good were the good demonstration of work to be done, the clear explanation of the skills that pupils would develop and the use of teacher's questioning to promote discussion. The teachers were well prepared and pupils knew the class routines well, so that no time was lost. The pupils enjoyed the teacher's explanations and wanted to experiment for

themselves. Where teaching was satisfactory, teachers' subject knowledge was not as secure and they were not as confident in teaching the skills, with the result that pupils did not build on their prior learning as effectively as when the teaching was good. Pupils were on the whole well behaved and thoroughly enjoyed their creative work. They concentrated very hard and generally were extremely pleased with their results. They were keen to show what they had done and were genuinely impressed by other pupils' work.

138 The art and design co-ordinator has recently been appointed. He is fully aware that art and design should have a far higher profile in the school than it does at the present time. The policy is only in draft form and the present scheme of work reflects the position of art and design being planned and timetabled with design and technology. The topics covered mean that pupils in Year 1 and Year 3 miss art and design lessons for more than a term whilst they concentrate on design and technology. This results in a lack of progression in the development of skills as pupils move through the school. The teachers offer the pupils too few opportunities to use information technology within art and design. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the weaknesses in situation and has plans to implement the national scheme of work to support teachers in their planning and delivery of appropriate art and design work. Teachers make limited use of assessment of pupils' achievement but are beginning to gain evidence of progress through the recent introduction of sketchbooks throughout the school. The school has a large art and design and pottery room, which has a very good range of resources, which are readily available. In addition, each classroom has a wet area for artwork. The school also makes very good use of the galleries in London and artists in residence to encourage pupils to understand their own art culture and that of others.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

139 It was only possible to see one lesson during the period of the inspection because of the way the subject is planned within the timetable. Judgements are based on the lesson observed, a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, photographs, teachers planning and discussion with the subject co-ordinator. From this evidence, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.

140 Curriculum planning shows that the teachers offer a good balance of experiences to pupils. However, the way in which the curriculum is organised results in some classes not studying design and technology in some terms. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall but do not have sufficiently regular support in the subject to ensure better gains in their learning. Pupils study structures, mechanisms, textiles and food technology and their work involves them in using a range of materials and a variety of tools. The design element is incorporated fully into the process and skills are taught systematically over a series of lessons. However, there is insufficient attention given to pupils' recording their initial planning and final evaluation that would help them reflect on the effectiveness of their designs, particularly in the junior classes.

141 Pupils in Year 1 have looked at different fruits in order to make fruit salad and developed their understanding of food hygiene and the safe use of tools satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 have considered the purpose of different vehicles in order to make their own vehicles with axles and wheels. Year 5 pupils have designed and made a moving toy using a cam mechanism. In Year 6 pupils have investigated a range of shelters with consideration given to the different materials used and what techniques are necessary to reinforce and strengthen these before constructing their own shelters. The work undertaken in design and technology enables pupils to make sound use of knowledge and skills from other subjects, particularly mathematics and science but insufficient use is made of information and communication technology.

142 Teaching was satisfactory in the one Year 3 lesson seen. Work was well planned and the teacher made clear to the pupils what they were expected to learn in the lessons, which promoted a purposeful approach. Good use was made of resources, for example the pupils were given a range of sandwiches with different fillings to taste and had to make decisions about the taste and texture of each sample. Most worked enthusiastically and eagerly discussed and debated their opinions with each other. The teacher gave appropriate support to both individuals and groups of pupils so that they were able to record their opinions using a worksheet. The same worksheet was given to all pupils and some higher attaining pupils could have been stretched more at this stage.

143 The co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the subject and monitors teachers' planning regularly to ensure that the planned programme is implemented. A satisfactory action plan is in place to guide the development of the subject and the co-ordinator is aware of the issues that need to be addressed. A good range of materials and tools to support the planned curriculum, including resource packs for each project, are readily available in the specialist design and technology classroom. The school works with a range of outside agencies and projects, such as that jointly carried out with the Armourers and Braziers to design and construct the school's Millennium Gates. These links make a good contribution to the subject, as does the after-school design and technology club.

GEOGRAPHY

144 The school teaches a mixed humanities programme with geography and history often interchanging each term. As a result there were few opportunities to observe teaching during the inspection. Judgements are based on a range of collected evidence that include discussions with pupils and an analysis of work in books and on display, as well as a careful scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. The evidence indicates that standards of attainment in geography match the standards expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous report and pupils' progress is satisfactory overall.

145 By the age of seven pupils are familiar with the geography of the local area and know their route to school. They compare houses in different countries and can recognise many countries on the world map, often having first-hand knowledge of them, which they share with other pupils in the class. They compare different styles of dress people use and know the reason why in hot countries people wear lighter clothing. Many excellent displays of clothes worn by people in different parts of the world stimulate pupils to find out more about how people live in different countries. In a Year 2 lesson pupils find out what it is like to go to the seaside and why people want to go there. They are able to compare aspects of Hackney with Southend. They discuss different modes of transport and estimate how long it would take to get to Southend by bus and train, which helps their mathematical development. Looking at posters and books, the teacher builds up a picture of the seaside, which is quite new to some of the pupils. For example, one boy believes a picture of a sandcastle is a mountain. Using the pupils' suggestions, the teacher writes a list of things they would see at the seaside to extend their vocabulary and understanding, making an effort to include as many pupils as possible in the discussion. She often hesitates to allow pupils who have English as an additional language to think of the right words to describe what they mean. The work is matched to pupils' different needs when the higher and average attaining pupils are asked to write a list of things they would see at the seaside and others with less well developed literacy skills to draw them. Pupils also compare Hackney with the fictitious island of Struay. They know what an island is and think about the problems people have because they live on an island.

146 Pupils in Year 5 debate whether the High Street in Hackney should be closed to traffic. This work is well chosen to motivate and interest them and they realise the advantages and disadvantages that this project would offer to the community. They carry out a survey of traffic and pedestrians and write a letter to the local council, which helps their development of mathematics and literacy. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 use their research skills well when studying mountains of the world. They use a variety of sources of evidence to arrange the mountains in height order and identify in which country they are situated. They are able to write interesting accounts of the life of a river and explain the benefits that towns gain from a nearby river. but make insufficient use of information and communication technology in their research.

147 It was only possible to observe one lesson in geography but from scrutiny of pupils' work the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. In the one lesson seen the teacher asked questions well to stimulate discussion. She had good control of the class and pupils responded well to her positive approach. She sustained their interest in the subject by telling them of her experiences when she used to go to the seaside at their age and about all the things she saw and enjoyed. They listened well, responded to questions and made suggestions as to possible answers. They completed their tasks conscientiously but these were insufficiently challenging for the most able pupils who could have achieved more.

148 Due to the problems with the recruitment of teachers the deputy headteacher took responsibility for leadership of the subject three weeks before the inspection began. She has already reorganised the resources and carried out an audit to ascertain which new resources are needed to improve opportunities in geography for pupils to develop their research skills. She has plans to extend visits for pupils, although the school usually organises one visit for each class every half-term. Year 6 enjoy a residential visit to a castle on the Welsh borders which gives them a further opportunity to contrast another locality with their own. Assessment is still at an early stage of development and is not used enough by teachers to help them to match the work closely to the needs of all the pupils.

HISTORY

149 Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. This maintains the position at the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but pupils with English as an additional language sometimes find the work quite difficult due to a lack of a structured approach to their acquisition of English. In most classes history is taught in blocks of study in alternate terms.

150 Pupils in Year 1 look at toys that children played with in the past and are able to contrast these with their own. Year 2 pupils study the lives of famous people in the past such as Florence Nightingale and combine their history and geography studies by finding out how she travelled to the Crimea to help the soldiers in the war. They study the development of telephones and cars over the years. These activities give pupils a satisfactory understanding of 'then' and 'now'.

151 Pupils in Year 3 after watching a video recording about the evacuation of children from London during the Second World War, showed appropriate understanding of what a blitz was and why it was essential to escape the bombing. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the great civilisations in the past such as the ancient Egyptians. Pupils in Year 6 use artefacts well to find out at first hand about the past and their knowledge and understanding of the past is

satisfactory. From an analysis of previous work it is obvious that many pupils find recording their work difficult.

152 The teaching in the lessons observed was at least satisfactory and in one lesson it was good. In this lesson the teacher gave a very lively presentation at the beginning of the lesson using three cameras from different periods, including the old manual type to the modern electronic camera. This captured the pupils' interest and attention and most pupils listened and watched carefully and tried to answer the teacher's questions. She challenged the pupils to find the differences between the cameras. Pupils enjoyed this part of the lesson and most pupils rose to the challenge well. It gave an opportunity for the teacher to visit the groups giving help and advice and making sure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English in the early stages of development, were included in the discussions. The teacher promoted pupils' observation skills well by using a large photograph of a wedding party taken in different decades of the past century. The pupils soon discovered that such clues as clothes, the quality and colour of the photographs and how people grouped themselves helped to identify the time they were taken. The teacher managed a few challenging pupils very well and the pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the past.

153 Generally, teachers plan lessons effectively and provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their research skills but give pupils too few opportunities to use information and communication technology. Lessons move with good pace, which sustains the pupils' interest. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that they often make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning.

154 The deputy headteacher has very recently taken responsibility for the subject. Resources are now well organised and a system of assessment is being developed. The work in history has a positive effect on pupils' cultural development and provides pupils with a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the culture and traditions of others.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

155 Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectation at both ages seven and 11. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection, although the school has made good improvements in curricular provision and in teaching since then. The improvement in the information and communication technology facilities has enabled the school to give the pupils access to the full curriculum so that it meets statutory requirements. Overall pupils make satisfactory gains in skills and are achieving appropriately. Few pupils have access to computers outside of school at present, and their lack of familiarity shows in the low levels of skill most pupils bring to lessons.

156 In Years 1 and 2, pupils know about a range of information and communication technology equipment, such as computers and telephones, which allow access to the internet. They are beginning to understand the purpose of the equipment and its influence on people's lives. There are a few examples of children's word-processing which indicate a developing skill to prepare text, but there are very few examples overall of children's text work linked either to English or to other subjects. In Year 2 pupils know the single commands to make a floor turtle move forwards a certain amount, or to turn. Through the teachers' careful instructions and questioning, they are beginning to understand how to enter a sequence of commands so that the turtle will follow a simple route. The approach tends to be firmly directed by the teacher so that pupils have limited opportunity to use problem-solving skills, such as estimating lengths or turns, and using trial and error to improve methods to track a route. Whilst the

pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge about the commands, this is not matched so well by their improvements in practical skills.

157 In the junior years, in one lesson pupils were introduced to the steps required to enter information into a database. The teacher made good use of the screen projector to explain the procedure, giving careful attention to the icons and commands. The pupils used a prepared card to enter the field names and a few pupils began to enter the names of animals, showing good interest and application. When working with a spreadsheet, the teacher's clear explanation of how to enter a simple formula into a cell enabled pupils in Year 5 to enter data and work out values and costs for a holiday. The pupils had good focus and concentration, with several good interactions between the pupils that helped their learning by working out together what steps to take, such as '=B2+B3' when adding the values of two cells. The teacher demonstrated satisfactory subject knowledge, particularly in correcting several pupils' mistakes as he moved around the class. Pupils in Year 6 are making good gains in understanding and skills through the use of the equipment that has been provided by funding through the Education Action Zone. Each pupil has an allocated palm-top computer and several pupils show good understanding in its use. Most pupils make good gains in skill as they become familiar with its operation. However, they had much leeway to make up at the beginning of the year and despite current good progress their attainment remains below the expectation for the age group.

158 In a well-prepared lesson in the juniors pupils passed a prepared text to each computer through the infra-red port and were able to edit the text. Most pupils demonstrated early skills to copy, cut and paste high-lighted phrases. They were beginning to use the mouse or cursor to delete incorrect punctuation or spelling, for example and to inset the correct characters. The task was linked well to pupils' literacy skills, requiring an understanding of correct grammar. Most pupils made good progress in learning how to edit text but several pupils were still not ready for more formal use of the computer. Their attitudes are good and pupils take great pleasure in fulfilling the opportunities these facilities provide.

159 Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1-6 as teachers become familiar with managing the computer suite and with the programs for pupils. They have worked hard to improve their subject knowledge and are making a good choice of tasks for the pupils. Lesson planning is done carefully with appropriate learning objectives. These are shared with the pupils sensibly to help pupils learn. Teachers' demonstrations using the program facilities and screen projector are delivered carefully and with an emphasis on learning new skills. In the information and communication technology suite pupils focus well on the tasks, work together co-operatively, with a good sense of enjoyment.

160 Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard with colleagues to establish the subject in a well-structured way across the school, using national guidance. She monitors the implementation of the subject through daily support and teachers' planning but does not have the opportunity to observe lessons to give her an overview of teaching and learning. She has appropriate plans to develop information and communication technology and is well-informed about staff training needs. The school is not making enough use of the computers in the classrooms to link information and communication technology with other subjects, and this aspect is unsatisfactory. The governors support the school in making improvements and initiatives being undertaken to promote the development of the subject are good, including having the benefit of the skills of a knowledgeable information technology engineer as a part of the Education Action Zone initiative.

MUSIC

161 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress in their learning throughout the school. In Year 6 they make good progress and pupils taught by the visiting music teacher make excellent progress. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Whole-school singing is good. Pupils sing with appropriate attention to pitch, rhythm and dynamics. In assemblies pupils in Year 6 give a very good lead to the singing, maintaining their part well in two-part singing. Pupils often continue to sing confidently to the taped songs as they leave assemblies and return to their classes. The use of music in assemblies helps to create a good ethos at the beginning of the day.

162 Pupils in Year 1 enjoy putting actions to songs using their body parts and clapping the rhythms with enthusiasm. Year 2 pupils know a wide variety of songs and have a good memory for words. This helps their development of speech in English. Some pupils volunteer to sing in their own language whilst all pupils listen respectfully. They add actions to the songs they are singing, almost without thinking. To many pupils rhythm comes naturally and they are most enthusiastic.

163 Pupils in Year 3 quickly learn to sing a new song and decide which instruments are best suited to provide accompaniment. They work together in small groups to plan their accompaniment and perform their pieces for the rest of the class. Two of the groups sing as well as accompany the song and the whole effect is good. Pupils enjoy the lesson and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Year 5 pupils were observed being taught by the visiting music teacher who is exceptionally talented and enthusiastic. This provision is very good and helps to raise pupils' attainment and to improve the class teachers' own expertise in music as they assist in the lessons.

164 Year 6 pupils learn to play untuned musical instruments with control. Each of four small groups of pupils is challenged to compose a tune to a verse of a song they know well. All pupils work diligently and with boundless enthusiasm to fit the instruments and the mood of the music to the meaning of the words in their verse. Each group performs confidently for the remainder of the class and receives well-deserved applause for its efforts.

165 Pupils say they enjoy music, especially in assemblies and when they take part in school concerts and perform for parents and other pupils. In lessons, even the youngest pupils work with enthusiasm and interest. Older pupils co-operate well with each other as they compose and practise to perform their pieces.

166 The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. In two-thirds of lessons it was good, with one lesson taught by the visiting music teacher, being excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and effective planning ensures that the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered. In the lessons seen, teachers managed pupils well. Support assistants are used effectively to help pupils with special educational needs so that they are included fully in lessons and make satisfactory progress.

167 The school has been unable to appoint a teacher to manage the subject due to the severe shortage of teachers in the area. The headteacher is providing very good leadership in the subject on a temporary basis. She is an accomplished musician and her leading of singing in assemblies gives added interest and enjoyment to all pupils. Her clear voice helps pupils with English as an additional language to sing the words in the hymns and songs and this is useful support to their English language development. Assessment is in an early stage of development. Information and communication technology is not yet used enough in music lessons. Music is having a significant influence on the

pupils' attitude to the school. It helps raise their self-esteem and makes them proud of their musical traditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

168 It was only possible to observe lessons in gymnastics during the inspection and standards of attainment are satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6 in this aspect of physical education. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning across the school. The satisfactory standards found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

169 Planning shows that the teachers offer a good balance of experiences to pupils. However the way in which the curriculum is organised means that pupils experience gymnastics and games in alternate terms. For example, during the period of the inspection all year groups studied gymnastics and traditional dance; games and creative/contemporary dance had been taught during the previous term. This approach does not support the systematic development of the particular skills of each of the aspects of pupils' physical development. Swimming instruction is provided for pupils in the juniors, although at the time of the inspection the programme for swimming was temporarily interrupted because of a lack of local facilities.

170 By the time they are seven, pupils understand the purpose and importance of warming up before engaging in physical exercise. They take care whilst moving apparatus and generally listen well in lessons. For example, when learning a country dance, pupils in Year 2 listened carefully to both the music and the teacher's instructions and, as a result, were able to perform the dance correctly and with improved agility.

171 Pupils in Year 6 worked in pairs and were able to create a short sequence of gymnastic movements combining shapes and balance. The teacher's use of technical language, the regular support that she gave to individual pupils with movements and the opportunities that she provided for them to observe each others' work promoted their evaluative skills.

172 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1-6. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. They give clear instructions to pupils, which help to ensure the smooth organisation of activities. Lessons are planned effectively to build up skills over a sequence of lessons, and teaching methods are effective overall, with practical suggestions for improving techniques and levels of performance. Classes are generally well managed and teachers make good use of the space available. They ensure that all pupils change quickly and quietly at the beginning and end of lessons.

173 The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and manages the subject effectively. She monitors teachers' planning and teaching and learning and also talks informally to pupils. As a result she has a good view of standards and what needs to be done to raise levels of attainment. She has given lesson demonstrations and also led in-service training for colleagues, which has helped to ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching. Pupils have good opportunities outside class to practise skills in football, swimming and athletics, with equality of opportunity for girls and boys. They use these skills as they take part in competitions against other local schools. Teachers make little use of information and communication technology, for example for pupils to plot pulse rates after exercise. The school has a large hard surface area but there is no grassed area for games. Good use is made of the local park for activities such as sports days.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

174 The school has made good improvements in standards in religious education and in the

provision for the subject since the time of the last inspection when it was not meeting statutory requirements. Teachers now give appropriate time to the subject and plan lessons that are linked closely to the locally Agreed Syllabus.

175 At the age of seven and 11 pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and this improvement since the last inspection is due to the emphasis that has been given to the subject in recent years. Some pupils' attainment in Years 3 and 4 is currently unsatisfactory and teachers in Years 5 and 6 have to work hard to fill some gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress but progress for some pupils with special educational needs or in an early stage of English language acquisition is unsatisfactory, because the work is not matched closely enough to their individual needs. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls.

176 The quality of teaching is predominantly satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Lessons address the leading world faiths through presentation of stories and artefacts. In Year 2, pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Muslim practices through a visit to a mosque. In Year 1 pupils are able to show satisfactory recall of a story involving Krishna and are developing an awareness of his significance within the Hindu faith. Teachers help to promote this knowledge and understanding through planning a series of lessons on an area of study, which builds progressively on pupils' learning. During lessons, they often refer to pupils' previous experiences, as when a teacher used the story of Krishna told in one lesson to lead into the importance of forgiveness in another.

177 Teachers in Key Stage 1 place much emphasis on discussion and try to involve as many pupils as possible in sharing their ideas. Most pupils listen attentively and are keen to answer, although the time spent in discussion is sometimes too long. A few pupils find difficulty in taking turns and teachers generally manage their behaviour well. Some pupils do not take part in the whole-class discussion and the teacher's question and answer approach does not promote their involvement fully enough. These are mainly pupils whose English language acquisition is in an early stage. Teachers use discussions well to relate stories to pupils' everyday lives, to bring out moral issues and to help pupils to understand the importance of symbols in different faiths. For example in one Year 2 class the pupils were guided to deeper understanding of sadness in bereavement through the use of a video and subsequent discussion. In another class in that year group the teacher shared her personal experiences to help the pupils to make satisfactory progress in appreciating the importance of artefacts in recalling memories of past events. Pupils generally concentrate better in the whole-class discussions than when writing or drawing individually. This is sometimes because the teacher does not explain the task clearly enough or does not make explicit to the pupils that work has to be completed in the time available. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen pupils completed very little work in this part of the lesson.

178 The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory in the juniors. However, in Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching is predominantly unsatisfactory. This is often due to insecure teacher subject knowledge that is reflected in a lack of clarity in what pupils are to learn. This results in inadequate explanations to pupils and limited discussion of ideas such as the importance of symbols in baptism. Insufficient use is made of resources to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the vocabulary through practical experiences. In one unsatisfactory lesson, the pupils were given a worksheet, which many of them were unable to read or understand. As a result many pupils, including Turkish/ Kurdish pupils who had little knowledge of English, completed very little work. By contrast, in Years 5 and 6 the teaching is often good or very good. Lessons are well organised and purposeful. Pupils are expected to think for themselves, for example in making comparisons between religions. Teachers often ask probing questions to encourage pupils to consider why they think as they do or for example why the Koran or the Bible is important to them. In this way pupils were able to explore the importance of past events such as the Israelites' exodus from Egypt in the Jewish celebration of

Seder. In these lessons pupils understand the classroom routines and are keen to participate. They are able to work independently in pairs to share ideas and support each other's development of spoken and written English.

179 In all year groups there is variation in the approach to writing in religious education. Some teachers give pupils opportunities to explore and express their ideas independently. When this happens, pupils use their time well to develop their literacy skills. Others give pupils too many texts to copy that are in language that is not appropriate for them to understand or tasks that are too complex for them. On these occasions many pupils' work is unfinished or is poorly presented. The presentation of work is most often good in Years 5 and 6.

180 Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that teachers' planning corresponds to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The experiences planned are linked to the Agreed Syllabus but not always presented in a way that is relevant to the needs of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language and this is an important area for improvement. Assessment procedures are not in place to assist teachers in planning more appropriate work for these pupils.