

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTHBURY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Barking, Essex

LEA area: Barking

Unique reference number: 101196

Headteacher: Mrs. M. Lopez-Stewart

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Thompson
25372

Dates of inspection: 05/03/01 – 08/03/01

Inspection number: 196711

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	North Street Barking Essex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. B. Cooper
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9352	Malcolm Weaver	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22452	Mary Farman	Team inspector	English Geography History Music	
30853	Susan Betts	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
16408	Chris Rhodes	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
3588	Kuldip Rai	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Northbury Junior School is a large school, with 345 pupils on roll. It is situated in an area with a high level of deprivation, close to the centre of Barking. The premises date from 1895 and are shared with Northbury Infant School. Pupils are taught in 12 classes, three for each year group from Year 3 to Year 6. Almost a half of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is a much higher proportion than is found in most primary schools. Just over a quarter of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is above the national average. Two pupils have statements of special need, which entitle them to extra help. Almost two-thirds of pupils are from homes in which English is not the first language spoken. Owing to the transient nature of the population within the area, the numbers of pupils leaving or joining the school during the course of each year is above average. For example, a quarter of pupils currently in Year 6 joined the school during the course of Key Stage 2. Results of the national tests, administered to seven year olds shortly before they transfer from the infant school, show that attainment on entry to the junior school is well below average in reading, writing and mathematics.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school, which provides good value for money. The headteacher provides very clear direction for its work, and has brought about a significant improvement since her appointment. As a result of good teaching, the proportions of pupils attaining nationally expected levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are about average. This is a considerable achievement, given the high proportion of pupils for whom English is not the principal language spoken at home, and the fact that attainment on entry to the school is well below average.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good or better in over three quarters of lessons. One lesson in ten is of the highest quality. The teaching of basic skills in English is a particular strength.
- Pupils make good progress.
- The school gives very clear moral guidance to its pupils and is very good at helping them to develop social skills. Its provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
- All pupils are very well integrated. They have very positive attitudes to their work and behave very well.
- The headteacher, deputy and senior staff provide good leadership.
- The school provides effective help for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is not their first language.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and music.
- Attendance.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop skills in independent learning, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made very good progress since its last inspection in 1997. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science because of better use of assessment and significantly improved teaching. The guidance provided by the local authority has been an important factor in these improvements. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are better, and the school has developed a very good partnership with parents. Key issues from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. Particularly noteworthy is the

improvement made in pupils' skills in speaking. The school has a very good capacity for continued improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	C
Science	E	E	E	D

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

The information shows, for example, that standards achieved in English in the national tests in the year 2000 were well below average in English, but were average in comparison with standards achieved by similar schools, with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Although the grades allocated for the average points scored have not risen, the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 has considerably increased since 1998. For example, in English, the proportion has risen from 37 per cent in 1998, to 70 per cent in 2000. In mathematics, results have risen from 36 per cent at Level 4 in 1998, to 63 per cent in 2000. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is well below average, and this is the reason for the continued low overall grading.

Inspection findings show that the improving trend of the past three years is set to continue. Overall, pupils are making good progress, and the school is well on course to achieve the challenging targets set for English and mathematics for 2001. By the age of 11, standards in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and physical education are in line with what is expected nationally. Attainment in information and communication technology is below average because the lack of some of equipment means that the full breadth of the curriculum cannot be effectively taught. Attainment in art and design and music is also below average and, in design and technology, attainment is well below that expected of 11 year olds. In these three subjects, the low standards are due to the lack of time available for teaching and, in art and design, the lack of a clear curriculum plan. Standards in design and technology are also affected by the fact that teachers sometimes spend too much time on teaching the science work associated with the subject and do not always concentrate on developing pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluating their work. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work very hard and are interested and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved within the school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. When given jobs to do, pupils take responsibility very well, but they do not always have opportunities to show initiative. Relationships within the school are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory overall, and below the national average. Extended holidays taken in term time are the main reason for this, and affect pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when one third of lessons were unsatisfactory. Very few lessons now fall into this category. Over three quarters of lessons are good or better, and one lesson in ten is of the highest quality. Teachers are especially good at managing the behaviour of their pupils and teaching basic skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The best teaching is to be found in Year 6, where eight out of every ten lessons are very good or better, and three out of ten are excellent. Teaching is very good in English and science, and is good in mathematics, information and communication technology, history, music, physical education and religious education. It is satisfactory in art. No geography lessons were observed, and only one lesson in design and technology was seen. In these subjects, no judgements about the quality of teaching can be made. As a result of the good teaching, pupils work very hard and have a real understanding of what they are learning. However, pupils are sometimes directed too much by their teachers and do not always have enough opportunities to take initiative in their work. This particularly applies to higher attaining pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and relevant. However, there is not enough time for some of the foundation subjects ¹ . The curriculum is enriched through a good range of additional activities. The planned curriculum in information and communication technology cannot be fully taught because of the lack of some equipment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Teachers and support staff provide good quality help and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are very well integrated. They receive good teaching, and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Arrangements for pupils' moral and social development are very good and provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Although arrangements for spiritual development are satisfactory, not enough opportunities are given for pupils to reflect on their learning in sessions at the end of lessons, when teachers review what has been done.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils flourish within the school's caring environment.

The school works closely in partnership with parents, and helps them to develop their own skills so that they are more able to help their own children at home.

¹ The foundation subjects are those other than the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads very strongly and effectively. The school is well managed by the headteacher, her deputy and her senior colleagues, who share her commitment to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is committed and hard working. Governors fulfil all their statutory duties efficiently.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning systematically and, in particular, have taken very effective steps to raise standards in English and mathematics.
The strategic use of resources	Money is very well spent, particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The school development plan is of good quality and identifies the school's priorities for improvement very clearly. There are variations in the quality of leadership provided by the year group coordinators. Governors apply the principles of best value satisfactorily when comparing the school's performance against its cost. There are enough teachers and resources to meet the needs of the curriculum, and the accommodation is well used.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school • Teachers have high expectations of their children • Their children make good progress • The quality of teaching • Standards of behaviour • Teachers are approachable • Their children get the right amount of homework • The school is well led and managed • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant negative views were expressed, either through the inspection questionnaires or in the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector

Inspectors' judgements fully support all of the parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Results of the national tests for the year 2000, based on the average points scored by pupils, show that the attainment of 11 year olds was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The average scores achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and science have been well below the national average for the past three years. This is because not enough pupils have achieved the higher Level 5.
- 2 In comparison with similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, results are much better. Using this comparison, standards were average in English and mathematics, but below average in science.
- 3 An analysis of test results shows that there are no significant differences between the standards achieved by boys and girls. This analysis is confirmed by inspection findings.
- 4 Although the overall results have been well below average, there has been a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 and above over the past three years. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 in English has risen by 33 percentage points to 70 per cent in the most recent tests. In mathematics there has been a rise of 29 percentage points, to 63 per cent and in science an increase of 28 percentage points to 75 per cent. This level of improvement is even more commendable, given the fact that about two-thirds of pupils are from homes in which English is not the principal language spoken. There are also high numbers of pupils moving into and out of the school during the course of each year, many from other countries. For example, a quarter of the current Year 6 did not join the school at the normal point of admission, at the start of Year 3.
- 5 Inspection findings show that the improvement in the proportions of pupils achieving Level 4 in the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science is likely to continue. The school is on course to achieve the challenging targets of 75 per cent of pupils at Level 4 in English, and 80 per cent at Level 4 in mathematics, set for this year's national tests. The continued improvement in the standards achieved in the core subjects is the result of the good quality of teaching provided in many classes, and in particular the high quality of teaching in Year 6. A further contributory factor in English and mathematics is the clear curriculum structure provided by the schemes of work in these subjects. Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and physical education are in line with what is expected nationally. In art and design, information and communication technology and music, standards are below average and in design and technology standards are well below average. Standards achieved in religious education are broadly in line with what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
- 6 Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history are better than those reported at the time of the previous inspection in 1997. However, standards in art and design and information and communication technology have declined.
- 7 All pupils entering the school at the start of Year 3 come from the infant school, which shares the premises. Data from the national tests taken by these pupils at the end Year 2 in the infant school shows that the attainment of pupils transferring to Year 3 is well below what is normally expected nationally.
- 8 From this low starting point, pupils make very good progress in English and mathematics, good progress in science, history and physical education and satisfactory progress in geography and religious education. In art and design, design and technology and music, pupils make slow progress because they are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. In both art and design and design and technology progress is also inhibited

because of weaknesses associated with the curriculum. In art and design, there is no whole-school scheme of work to guide teachers' planning by setting out the step by step development of pupils' skills, and the range of media experienced by pupils is rather limited. In design and technology, the scheme of work is of good quality, but teachers sometimes focus too much on the associated science work at the expense of design and technology. In consequence, pupils' skills in design, making and evaluation are poor. In information and communication technology, pupils make satisfactory progress over time in most elements of the subject; and in lessons their progress is good as a result of good teaching. However, pupils are unable to make any progress in monitoring or control technology because the school does not have the necessary equipment. Opportunities to practice skills learned are limited to visits to the computer suite because there are no computers in the classrooms. The amount of time available for teaching art, design and technology and music is below what is recommended nationally. This is a consequence of the school's drive to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, and the increased time spent on English and mathematics.

- 9 Pupils make very good progress in developing skills in speaking and listening. This is because the school has placed particular emphasis on improving these key skills. In all classes, in all lessons, teachers insist that pupils speak clearly and answer in full sentences. When necessary, pupils are helped to phrase their replies using the correct grammar. All pupils are expected to listen carefully to what their classmates and teachers have to say. Teachers' skills in checking that their instructions have been understood before allowing pupils to start on the tasks planned for them ensure that good listening takes place. Pupils make rapid progress in reading. Basic skills are systematically taught and regularly practised. Through direct teaching, using attractive and interesting books, pupils develop good levels of technical competence, for example when deciphering unfamiliar words. However, younger pupils in particular sometimes do not understand what they are reading because their vocabulary is limited. This situation not only applies to pupils who are learning English as an additional language but also to pupils of white, UK heritage. Pupils are also taught how to use dictionaries and reference books and how to use the library, and apply these skills to help them in their work in other subjects. Progress in writing is also very good. Pupils have many opportunities to use increasingly complex sentence structures and produce interesting and imaginative short stories. Most pupils write in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes. The school has placed a strong emphasis on the teaching of handwriting skills. Pupils use ink from the beginning of Year 3 and, through regular practice, achieve good standards of handwriting and presentation by the time they are in Year 6.
- 10 Overall, pupils make very good progress in developing skills in numeracy. They develop basic competence in manipulating numbers, and use these skills well in subjects such as geography and science. Regular practice in mental arithmetic improves pupils' speed in recalling number facts. The clear structure provided by the local authority scheme of work ensures that skills are systematically developed and regularly practised. However, when teachers do not use their professional judgement and follow the scheme in every detail, the result can sometimes be a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Teachers take considerable care to make sure that all pupils understand their lessons. They are aware that pupils whose first language is not English might not understand the written text in their books, and therefore check carefully to make sure that they understand the language of the questions.
- 11 Pupils make good progress in developing scientific skills. By Year 6 they have a sound understanding of the principles of 'fair testing' and are able to make simple predictions about the outcome before an experiment. However, although the school teaches the elements of scientific enquiry, teaching is generally too heavily directed and pupils do not have enough opportunities for independent personal investigation. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, would benefit from such opportunities. A significant factor in the good progress made is the use of the marking style, recently introduced by the coordinator. This involves the teacher in a written dialogue with pupils, with pupils writing their response to teachers' comments.
- 12 Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive direct and skilful teaching within the classroom. This enables them to develop good speech patterns such as the correct inflection of

their voice at the end of a sentence. All pupils in the early stages of learning English are targeted for additional help and make good progress.

- 13 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is as a result of a number of factors. The specific needs of these pupils are identified at an early stage, good support is provided by teachers and special needs support assistants (SSAs) both in class, and when pupils are withdrawn from lessons for extra help. Provision for these pupils is well managed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 14 Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are very good. This is an improvement on the findings at the previous inspection. In the majority of lessons, pupils' behaviour is very good, and sometimes excellent. Pupils are polite, respectful and friendly. They are keen to obtain the school's green merit cards that signify both good behaviour and good work, which are celebrated in whole-school assemblies.
- 15 The school is a very orderly community. Pupils move around the buildings very sensibly without pushing or running and stand still in the playground when it is time to line up for lessons. Pupils' behaviour in the playground is very good. They play together well and, during the course of the inspection, there was no evidence of bullying, or of oppressive or racist behaviour. This was a concern raised by a few parents during the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector, but is not supported by inspection findings. When any inappropriate behaviour does occur, it is dealt with quickly. There have been seven exclusions during the last year, the majority of which have been for unacceptable behaviour.
- 16 Relationships throughout the school are very good, both between pupils, and with adults. Although pupils come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, they integrate very well. Adults provide good role models and treat pupils with respect, consequently pupils respond well to adults throughout the school. Pupils are keen to undertake responsible tasks, such as older ones sharing reading tasks with younger pupils, and higher attaining pupils helping the less able in the use of computers. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning or to carry out independent research.
- 17 Mealtimes are important social occasions. Pupils eat their meals sensibly, and although adequately supervised, the level of noise they generate is high.
- 18 Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory, and is below the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is also unsatisfactory, and is higher than the average found nationally. Attendance has not significantly improved since the previous inspection. The high level of absence is partly due to the number of pupils taking extended holidays during the school terms. This has a detrimental impact upon the learning of these pupils. The school monitors the attendance of each class and identifies where the concerns lie, and the number of pupils involved. Consistently higher levels of attendance are seen in Year 6. Close links are maintained with the educational social worker, but, despite the efforts pursued, the attendance level continues to be unsatisfactory. The introduction of the lateness recording systems is having a very effective impact in improving pupils' punctuality in arriving at the school. During the course of the inspection lessons started promptly and registration was conducted efficiently and quickly.
- 19 Pupils for whom English is an additional language have very good attitudes to school and learning. Their relationships with each other and adults are very good. They listen to their teachers with attention and concentrate well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs also have very good attitudes to learning and to the school generally. Their relationships with teachers and other pupils are very good. They mix well with other pupils during lunch and break times, and take a full part in extra curricular activities. This occurs because the school has been very successful in putting into practice its clear intentions on the inclusion of these pupils in lessons and other aspects of school life.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 20 The overall quality of teaching is good, and represents a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in almost three out of every ten lessons. This significant improvement in the quality of teaching is due to the combination of staff changes since the last inspection and improvements in teachers' professional development. Teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all lessons and good, very good, and occasionally excellent in almost eight out of ten lessons. One lesson in ten is of excellent quality. The best teaching is to be found in Year 6, where eight out of ten lessons are very good or better, and three out of ten are excellent. Teaching is unsatisfactory in very few lessons. Of the 68 lessons observed, teaching was only unsatisfactory in two.
- 21 Teaching is very good in English and science, and is good in mathematics, information and communication technology, history, music, physical education and religious education. No geography lessons were seen and only one lesson in design and technology lesson was observed, therefore no judgements about the quality of teaching can be made in these subjects. In art and design, teaching is satisfactory.
- 22 Teachers' knowledge of the subjects that they teach is generally good, and basic skills are well taught. Secure subject knowledge results in teachers enthusing their pupils and using methods and strategies that are very well suited to their needs and which provide achievable challenges. A very good example of such teaching was observed in a Year 6 lesson in observational drawing. During the introduction to the lesson, the teacher heightened pupils' awareness of composition and techniques used to give the impression of depth. This was achieved through the quality of his commentary about an example of the work of Van Gogh, which was used as a stimulus for pupils. He then carefully focused pupils' attention on the flowers that they were to draw, using separate timed segments of the lesson for them to concentrate first on proportion, then on shape, texture and pattern. The result was that pupils made significant gains in their understanding of still life composition, and produced some examples of high quality. Where subject knowledge is not always secure, teachers are not always clear about precisely what skills they are teaching.
- 23 Teachers' planning is good and provides a clear structure to lessons. Learning objectives are usually shared with pupils so that they know precisely what is to be expected of them. Many teachers are good at giving clear explanations of what pupils have to do, and then checking that everyone clearly understands before setting pupils to work. Essential materials are often well prepared and easily accessible, and therefore pupils start on their tasks without wasting any time. Lessons often build on pupils' previous learning, and as a result pupils have increased confidence to tackle new work.
- 24 Teaching methods are good, and are effective in developing good learning habits. Teachers use a good range of strategies to interest pupils, and as a result pupils try hard and make good progress. For example, in a design and technology lesson in Year 3, the teacher challenged pupils to find different ways of attaching wheels to a wooden chassis. The introduction to the lesson, and the demonstration given by the teacher, provided just enough information for pupils to feel confident in attempting the challenge without giving away too much information about which methods would work and which would not. Pupils worked very well in pairs to try to solve the problem, helped by well timed interventions by the teacher to provide further useful information and to heighten pupils' interest. However, in some lessons, particularly in mathematics and science, teachers sometimes over direct the lessons and do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop skills of independent learning.
- 25 Teachers' time management is not always as good as other aspects of their teaching. Sometimes lessons do not keep to time, possibly because teachers do not usually indicate in their planning the amount of time that they are going to spend on different elements of each lesson. Consequently, some lessons do not achieve a good balance between time for direct

teaching, time for pupils to work on their assignments, and time for pupils to reflect on what they have achieved, as the teacher reviews what has been learned. Sometimes the impact of good teaching is lost through shortcomings in time management. For example, in a Year 5 gymnastics lesson, the teacher made very good use of pupils to provide good assessments of the sequences of movements performed by their classmates. However, at this point in the lesson apparatus had to be cleared away and pupils had no opportunity to develop their sequences further by incorporating the useful suggestions made about their work.

- 26 Teachers' management of pupils is very good, and class routines are secure. As a result, no time is wasted through inappropriate behaviour, and pupils know precisely where to find necessary equipment.
- 27 A particularly good feature of all lessons is the strong emphasis placed by teachers on pupils' clarity and structure of speech, and on good listening habits. Pupils' progress in using language correctly has been rapid as a result of this consistent approach in all classes.
- 28 The specialist teaching provided by the teacher funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement and Travellers' Grant (EMTAG) is of good quality. She is effectively deployed, and her specialist help is well integrated into class lessons. In collaborative teaching, the EMTAG teacher takes on both a lead and support role, and makes a significant contribution to the progress made by pupils learning English as an additional language, as well as the progress of others. In lessons where specialist language support is not available, class teachers plan their lessons carefully, bearing in mind the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. They explain new ideas in a way that makes sense to all pupils.
- 29 The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs, both during class lessons, and when pupils are withdrawn for individual or group work, is good. A significant number of lessons provided for special needs pupils are very good. Some of the teaching provided for pupils in Year 6 withdrawn from classes for extra help in literacy and numeracy is excellent. Teachers have detailed knowledge of pupils and the targets in their individual education plans. They use this knowledge well to plan lessons in which tasks and resources are matched carefully to the specific needs of the individual pupils. They also provide very good opportunities to pupils in lessons to answer questions and offer ideas. There is very good liaison between teachers and SSAs, who are very clear about their roles. Through good quality questions and explanations, the SSAs ensure that pupils know what they are doing. They also provide the right balance between help and challenge, so that pupils do not become too dependent on them. They are particularly good at helping pupils to build their confidence and self-esteem.

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

- 30 The curriculum is broad and relevant, with a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils' academic and personal development. However, a satisfactory balance between the amounts of time allocated for different subjects has not been achieved. Time for religious education and music is about half that recommended nationally. Standards in music in particular are suffering as a consequence. Most foundation subjects also have a limited amount of time because of the strong emphasis placed by the school on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and the large amount of time devoted to teaching English and mathematics. Part of the reason for the shortage of teaching time lies in the layout of the building, since it can sometimes take several minutes to get pupils into their classrooms at the start of the day and at the end of each break. All pupils have to enter through one corridor and some have to climb two storeys to reach their classrooms.
- 31 All subjects, with the exception of art and design, have schemes of work and policies to guide teaching. The lack of a scheme of work in art means there is no clear guidance as to the ways

in which pupils' skills are to be developed in the various elements of the subject, and results in unnecessary repetition of work. The school bases its curriculum for religious education on the locally agreed syllabus. Curriculum planning for religious education is of good quality, as is that for English and design and technology. A particular strength of the English curriculum is the strong emphasis placed by the school on developing pupils' skills in speaking and listening in all subjects. In all other subjects, with the exception of art and design, the planned curriculum is sound. In design and technology, the curriculum is closely linked to science, since work in the two subjects is complementary. However, the planned curriculum is not always taught to its intended depth because too much of the curriculum time allocated for the subject is sometimes spent on teaching the associated science rather than the design and technology element of the planning. In information and communication technology, the planned curriculum cannot be fully taught because some of the essential hardware and some software programs are not yet available.

- 32 Opportunities for independent learning or research are sometimes limited, particularly in subjects such as science and music. Improved opportunities for independent learning would particularly benefit higher attaining pupils. The continued planning of the curriculum to raise standards, and the improvements that have been made to lesson plans so far have contributed to the very good improvement the school has made since the last inspection.
- 33 There is a good range of extra-curricular activities to broaden the experiences of pupils. These include a sports club, a book club for pupils with English as an additional language and homework clubs. In addition there are lunchtime clubs for recorders and small games and dance. In all these involve about fifty pupils. A cross-country club is organised at the weekends. There is also an Easter Club, which is a 'booster' class to help raise standards of pupils in Year 6.
- 34 The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from carefully drafted individual education plans. They have full access to the range of learning opportunities offered in the school through careful modification of work to meet their specific needs. When they are withdrawn from lessons for extra help, support staff ensure that these pupils generally cover the same work as other pupils, but at an appropriate level, and do not miss the same aspects of the curriculum regularly. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have full access both to the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. Soon after arrival at the school they are assessed in their own language to identify their needs. This helps teachers to provide a suitable level of work, and is important in a school where many pupils join and leave the school during the year. Most of these pupils are well supported in class. Withdrawal from lessons takes place only for beginners in English during the first few weeks of their joining the school.
- 35 The provision for pupils' personal and health education is good. Pupils' receive sound teaching in developing their awareness of the dangers and misuse of drugs, personal hygiene and sex education, through the science curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 receive good teaching in sex education in conjunction with the school nurse. More recent moves have been taken to develop pupils' awareness of their role in citizenship in Year 6, including work in emergency first aid skills. Good initiatives such as the introduction of a school council are to be pursued, but are still at an early stage of development.
- 36 The contribution of the community to the school is good. The school's partnership with its local secondary school, which has 'sports college' status, is of particular benefit to pupils. The secondary school provides some specialist teaching, and also gives practical help and guidance to teachers to help them with their planning. During the course of the inspection, a pupil from the secondary school made a significant contribution to the school's celebration of Eid, by intoning a passage from the Qu'ran. Arrangements have recently been made for teachers in Years 6 to liaise more closely with teachers in Year 7 at the secondary school. The purpose of these links is to share expertise in teaching and to ensure that the curriculum planned in each of these year groups enables pupils to transfer more smoothly from one school to the other.

Close links have also been established to help pupils with special educational needs during their transfer to the secondary school.

- 37 There are few links with local businesses. However, volunteers from local firms provide useful help to pupils by hearing them read. The school enjoys good support from the local education authority. For example, the school closely follows the local strategies for numeracy and literacy, and teachers feel that the use of these strategies has contributed strongly to the improvement in standards in English and mathematics. Strong links have been established with the adviser for special educational needs. This has resulted in useful guidance being provided in strategies for managing the behaviour of pupils and help for classroom assistants in developing their skills in working with these pupils. Support is also given in the review and development of school policies and programmes of work. A wide range of support is given by other services such as the police, fire, railway and canal authorities, including focuses on the teaching of personal safety.
- 38 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This situation is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- 39 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Acts of daily worship are held in 'floor groups' of classes for three days per week and for the whole school on the other two days. A calm and peaceful atmosphere is established in these assemblies, which generally provide a good link between religious stories and features of everyday life, such as friendship. Pupils of all religious upbringings sing choruses of a religious nature, and all pupils sing with enthusiasm. Prayers are said by the teacher, but not all acts of worship allow pupils time for further reflection. Eid celebrations were attended by all pupils, irrespective of religious upbringing, and contributed well to the awareness and respect for the faith of many of the pupils and their friends. There are some good opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their work in lessons, such as when drawing flowers in art and segmenting flowers in science. However, in general, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect upon their own learning. As a result, pupils' spiritual awareness of the everyday things around them is underdeveloped. The school is aware of this need and is to consider plans to address this shortcoming.
- 40 The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils show respect for one another and for the differences in their religious upbringing and listen carefully to others when they are speaking. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and understand the value of good behaviour. This awareness is enhanced through the school's partnership with the police, which helps to improve pupils' understanding of crime prevention, vandalism and theft. 'Golden rules' are displayed in all classrooms. Pupils respond positively to them and are keen to obtain 'green cards' reflecting their good behaviour.
- 41 The ways in which pupils' social skills are developed are very good, and permeate all aspects of the life of the school. Staff work well together and provide good role models for pupils to emulate. Pupils are encouraged to show respect and courtesy towards visitors, and show this through actions such as holding doors open for them. A wide range of extracurricular clubs and visits contribute strongly to pupils' social development. These clubs are well attended by both boys and girls.
- 42 Arrangements for developing pupils' cultural awareness are good. The school has recently been supported by a theatre company in providing teaching and insights into aspects of black peoples' cultural traditions in history lessons. Apart from this, teaching focuses principally European history. Many artefacts displayed around the school relate to the wide range of pupils' backgrounds. However, resources in art relate principally to western culture, with few posters or pictures from other cultural traditions. Visits to places of worship contribute well to pupils' cultural development with pupils learning about the religious traditions of Christians, Jews, Sikh and Muslim people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 43 Overall, the school provides effective care for its pupils. Inspection findings are similar to those of the previous inspection in 1997.
- 44 The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are generally good. The educational social worker provides effective support in identifying trends in the patterns of absence by classes, ethnic groups and individual pupils. Planned visits are made following discussion with the school, to contact particular parents when their children show recurring patterns of absence. The school has been working to improve attendance over recent years. While this has resulted in a small increase in attendance rates, the number of pupils taking extended holidays during the school terms remains a problem. Data shows that more boys are absent than girls, although inspection evidence and national test results do not show any significant differences between the performances of boys and girls.
- 45 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school's focus is on recognising and rewarding good behaviour. 'Golden rules' for improving behaviour have been agreed by pupils and rules, displayed in all classrooms, are upheld readily as pupils are keen to achieve 'golden' points. Rewards are regularly given, and these are celebrated in weekly assemblies. The strong focus on improving behaviour has resulted in classroom behaviour now being judged to be very good and, in some cases, exemplary.
- 46 There is an appropriate child protection policy, and the designated person has received the necessary training. All teaching staff are aware of the school's procedures, and new staff receive guidance, which is clearly detailed in the staff handbook, when they join the school. The school maintains good child protection records, appropriate links are held with the social services and confidential records are stored securely. The school's health and safety policy is satisfactory and supplements the curricular focus in science lessons and personal hygiene. The headteacher, in conjunction with the infant school headteacher, conducts safety checks throughout the building each term. These checks are supported well by the risk assessments, with all potential issues recorded fully and prioritised for action. Safety checks have been conducted on the building and mains electrical supply, each item also recorded and prioritised for attention. Fire drills are held each term and first aid procedures are well organised by the school administrator, with support from three staff also fully trained in first aid. The school's care for its pupils is further enhanced through the useful breakfast facility provided by the adjacent Family Centre.
- 47 Procedures for monitoring, promoting and supporting pupils' personal development are good. This judgement is largely in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their listening skills in 'circle time' and to respect the feelings and beliefs of other classmates. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 'circle time', when pupils shared with the whole class the feelings they have when adults do not listen to them. The teachers are fully aware of pupils' willingness to carry out tasks given to them, though these are few in practice. There is not yet a school council; plans for implementing a school council are in place, but have yet to be introduced. Pupils do not receive many opportunities to carry out their own research, nor are they sufficiently encouraged by staff to take responsibility for their own learning. This is largely due to the 'over directed' teaching evident in some classes. Greater opportunities to develop independent learning skills would particularly benefit higher-attaining pupils. Good links are maintained with outside agencies for supporting pupils' development, particularly for example for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- 48 Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' attainment are generally good. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when assessment was considered to be weak. Optional national tests are used to monitor the attainment of pupils and are linked to teacher's assessments in other year groups. These measures enable staff to identify the progress that each pupil makes over the period of time that they are in the school. While the results are beneficial in identifying how far pupils have progressed, they are not, however, used effectively to ensure that all pupils receive work that is appropriate to their needs, particularly the

higher attainers. This is borne out by the results of national tests over recent years, where the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was low when compared to the national average. New initiatives are being trialled throughout the school, by recording pupils' progress using a profile of achievement in all subjects.

- 49 The arrangements for assessing the progress of pupils with English as an additional language are good. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly, and records of their progress are kept. Initial assessment of the newly arrived pupils is carried out in their first languages if needed, and includes information on their schooling in their home countries, general background and their attainment. Assessment information is used well to plan lessons, and to identify pupils who need additional help as well as those who do not require it any longer.
- 50 Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are well established. The good partnership between all the people involved, including class teachers and support staff contributes to good quality individual educational plans, which contain specific and manageable targets. These targets help teachers to plan their lessons well, to promote good progress. Good support is also given to individual pupils when they are withdrawn from lessons for specific help, either singly or in small groups. These measures are effective and ensure that the pupils make good progress. There is good provision for termly and annual reviews. The annual reviews of statements of special educational needs are of good quality. In addition to these reviews, the special educational needs coordinator meets each teacher once every half term to talk about all pupils on the register, evaluate results, and agree and write new targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 51 Parents value the school. The response from parents to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector, clearly indicate strong and positive support for all aspects of the school life. This is a big improvement since the previous inspection, when the school was seeking to encourage parents' support for the school and their children.
- 52 The school works hard to involve parents of pupils with English as an additional language, and has established good links with them. These links have been strengthened further through English courses for parents, which were initiated by the school in conjunction with the infant school, and are run by Barking College. Similar courses are organised in mathematics, and in using computers. This gives parents greater understanding of the work their children do, enabling them to support their children in completing homework tasks. A regular reading club is held for parents and their children. Several parents give some of their spare time to help in school and one parent helps to organise books in the library. Parents also join in with the school visits, where possible, to enable the school to provide necessary level of supervision. The parents' association is presently being reformed following a period of inactivity. The school is keen to reintroduce the association to recapture the earlier benefits of more focused parental support.
- 53 The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Regular newsletters are sent to parents informing them of a range of activities for pupils in each year group, including the focus of pupils' learning for the forthcoming term in English and mathematics. Positive comments are made to remind parents of issues such as the need for their children to change their reading books, to provide physical education kit, and when homework is to be completed. These newsletters are produced in a style that is easy to read and communicates well with parents. However, the governors' annual report to parents is much more formal, and does not take parental understanding into account, particularly those for whom English is an additional language. The prospectus is good, and is much more accessible to parents. The end of year pupils' reports are good in terms of reporting pupils' achievement and progress in the core subjects, but there are shortcomings in the reporting of progress in other subjects. While the remarks indicate what children are able to do,

the same comments are used for the majority of pupils, and are not personal enough to individual children.

- 54 Although the school is fully committed to involving parents in its work in identifying, helping and monitoring pupils with special educational needs, it recognises that this area needs to be further developed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 55 The headteacher leads very strongly and effectively. She has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done and is determined to achieve the best for the pupils and parents. The school is well managed by the headteacher, her deputy, and her senior colleagues, who share her commitment to high achievement. The good standards of leadership and management noted in the previous report have been maintained. The school's high aims and values are reflected in the improvements in standards in English, mathematics and science, and in the pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes. The drive to raise the standards of the majority to the national average occasionally results in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- 56 The new deputy headteacher carries out her various responsibilities very conscientiously and effectively, but is not yet fully involved in the overall strategic management of the school. The senior management team is larger than in many schools of a similar size, but gives the headteacher an important and valuable forum in which to plan and evaluate the school's success.
- 57 Subject coordinators carry out their roles responsibly. The English and mathematics coordinators have a good understanding of standards through paired lesson observations with the headteacher, and through the careful analysis of pupils' progress in exercise books. This has had a positive affect on standards, as they are able to use their knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses to spread good practice, or to work with colleagues to reinforce areas of uncertainty. However, if, as in the case of mathematics, they are also responsible for a year group, their ability to directly influence weekly planning across the school by attending meetings is limited as they are running their own year group meetings at the same time. There are variations in the quality of leadership provided by year group coordinators. Some of the arrangements in Year 5 are unsatisfactory.
- 58 The new governing body fulfils its statutory duties responsibly, and works hard to support the school. Work is delegated appropriately to sub-committees for detailed consideration. The governing body has separated from the infant school since the previous inspection, but has evolved an effective partnership so that matters of common interest, such as those relating to the premises, can be dealt with efficiently. The chair has this responsibility in both bodies, and has a clear overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses through regular meetings with the headteacher. Many governors are relatively new, and all rely heavily on the headteacher for information. They are starting to become more actively involved through governors' committees and through visits to the school.
- 59 The school's plans for improvement are laid out very clearly in the development plan. This is very well structured because it starts with the school's aims and a review of how well things have gone in the past. The five main priorities for improvement are very clearly expressed within a long-term plan covering all aspects of the school's development. This makes it very much easier for governors and senior staff to measure progress, and make sure that the budget is allocated in the most effective way. The plan contains challenging targets for improvement. The steady rise in standards shows that the school has been very successful in reaching its past goals for consistent improvement. The detailed action plans are very clear, and contain success criteria expressed in terms of higher pupil achievement, and reflect the school's commitment to raising standards. Statutory requirements are fully met.

- 60 The arrangements for the management of English as an additional language are good, with the specialist teacher being effectively deployed. The school and the head of the local authority's Language Support Service jointly monitor her work. The provision for in-service training for staff in English as an additional language is good. There is a good range of resources to support pupils in the early stages of learning English. The linguistic diversity within the school is celebrated well through welcome notices and resources in different languages.
- 61 The role of the special educational needs coordinator is well developed, and she manages the provision for special education needs effectively. She has established good links with outside professional agencies. Where appropriate, these agencies work alongside teachers and other staff in setting and reviewing targets for pupils' individual education plans. She is given enough time to carry out her responsibilities effectively in relation to the management of pupils' individual educational plans, record keeping, and the maintenance of pupils' files.
- 62 The provision for special educational needs has a high profile in the school development plan, with a list of targets to be achieved within a sensible timescale. There are good arrangements for in-service training. This has increased staff's confidence in this aspect of their work. Consequently provision for special educational needs is now good.
- 63 The budget for special educational needs is used mostly for staff, but an appropriate amount is also spent on resources and training. There are enough staff to help identified pupils in class, small groups and individually. This support is effective in helping these pupils to make good progress overall, and very good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- 64 The school is adequately staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum, with appropriately qualified teachers overall, including three newly qualified teachers. The school benefits from the skilled help provided by six classroom assistants, two of whom are well qualified. All teachers have job descriptions that refer well to their teaching and management responsibilities, where appropriate. The turnover in teaching staff over the past few years has been slightly higher than the national average. However, good new appointments have been made, and these have contributed to the significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The school has drawn up its Performance Management policy, and is well placed to implement this national requirement.
- 65 The arrangements for the induction of newly qualified staff, and staff new to the school, are good. Each newly qualified teacher has the deputy headteacher as mentor/tutor, and the deputy carries out her responsibilities well. Plans for the new teachers' professional development are good and all appropriate records are kept.
- 66 The most recent audit of accounts for the school in December 2000 identified that the school's financial controls are well organised and maintained. Most of the recommendations for further improving the school's control systems have now been implemented. The governors are adequately involved in monitoring the school's spending and are kept well informed about planned initiatives such as the purchase of the 'Improving Primary Mathematics' books used by all pupils. Representatives of the governing body interviewed during the course of the inspection demonstrated that governors are keen to ensure that spending provides the best support for pupils. They look for value for money when agreeing expenditure, and apply the principles of 'best value' satisfactorily when comparing the school's performance against its cost.
- 67 The educational priorities of the school are very well promoted through the school's financial planning. The headteacher and chair of governors are given good help and advice by the local education authority finance officer when plans are being made, and budgetary commitments are based on clear targets. The schools use of computer technology is satisfactory. Specific grants are used well by the school and as a result, support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language effectively.
- 68 The school's accommodation is very good and is used very effectively. Although the building is very old, it is decorated with colourful posters and displays, which celebrate pupils' achievement. The premises are kept clean and are well maintained. There is a good-sized hall

for assemblies and physical education. The playground is large and is supplemented by a grassed area for use in the summer. Kitchen staff are committed to the welfare of the pupils, and provide a good range of food, encouraging pupils to develop their independent choice.

69 The school's learning resources are satisfactory overall. They are good in science and religious education, but weaknesses exist in art, design and technology and information and communication technology. The library is generally sufficiently stocked. The computer suite is a very good resource for direct whole-class teaching of information and communication technology skills, but the lack of computers in classrooms means that opportunities for pupils to practice their skills, or use computers for work in other curriculum areas are limited.

70 A wide range of indicators, including the good quality of teaching, the quality of leadership and the significant improvements made in standards of literacy and numeracy despite the language difficulties experienced by a high proportion of pupils show that the school is very effective. In relation to its income, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71 The school should now:

1. Raise attainment in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and music by:

In information and communication technology:

- providing equipment for monitoring and control technology, together with relevant staff training, so that the planned curriculum can be properly taught;
- giving pupils more opportunities to practise their information and communication technology skills in their work in other subjects.

(Paragraphs 8, 31, 91, 97, 113, 118, 119, 125, 129)

In art and design:

- developing and agreeing a policy to guide the way in which art and design is taught;
- devising a scheme of work which clearly sets out the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed year by year, in all elements of the subject;
- reviewing the time allocated for teaching the subject.

(Paragraphs 8, 30, 31, 99, 100, 101)

In design and technology:

- reviewing the amount of time available for teaching the subject, and the way in which the current time allocation is used for DT;
- ensuring that all elements of the planned curriculum are taught.

(Paragraphs 8, 30, 31, 104, 106)

In music:

- ensuring that pupils have more time to develop skills in performing and composing;
- planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of critical appraisal of a range of music.

(Paragraphs 8, 30, 32, 126, 127, 130)

2. Improve attendance by:

- continuing to encourage parents to take their holidays during the school holiday periods;
- analysing and evaluating attendance data even more closely;
- investigating ways of improving boys' attendance.

(Paragraphs 44, 181)

3. Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop skills in independent learning, particularly higher-attaining pupils.

(Paragraphs 24, 32, 47, 55, 77, 81, 86, 90, 92, 94, 110, 114, 117, 121, 129, 140)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	29	38	19	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	Not applicable	345
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Not applicable	156

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Not applicable	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	Not applicable	94

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	209

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	58
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	60

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	39	37	76

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	27	31
	Girls	29	21	26
	Total	53	48	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (64)	63 (54)	75 (69)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	29
	Girls	27	21	25
	Total	49	44	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (56)	55 (57)	68 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	14
Black – African heritage	39
Black – other	4
Indian	35
Pakistani	108
Bangladeshi	13
Chinese	3
White	103
Any other minority ethnic group	26

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	223

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	755,307
Total expenditure	730,479
Expenditure per pupil	2,162
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,156
Balance carried forward to next year	56,984

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	345
Number of questionnaires returned	141

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	25	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	37	5	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	34	6	3	1
The teaching is good.	69	25	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	37	8	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	30	2	4	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	23	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	29	6	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	30	6	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	28	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	30	11	4	8

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

ENGLISH

- 72 There has been a significant improvement in standards in English since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be below average in reading and writing, and pupils had poor speaking skills. Pupils are now in line to meet national expectations in all elements of the subject, including speaking. Inspection findings confirm the trend of considerable year on year improvement in the proportions of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 in the national curriculum tests. Thirty-seven per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 in the 1998 tests; this proportion rose to 64 per cent in 1999, and rose again to 70 per cent in 2000. The school is now on course to achieve its 2001 target of 75 per cent of pupils at this level. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in their learning during lessons and over time. The improvements in standards are a direct result of the improved teaching, the better use of assessment, and the successful implementation of the local education authority's scheme of work.
- 73 On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is well below average. For example, the current Year 6 had poor spelling skills, very low scores in reading, and well below average writing scores in the national tests at the age of seven.
- 74 The school's implementation of the adapted National Literacy Strategy has been very successful. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. There is a marked improvement in the quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills, and pupils demonstrate an improving ability to speak clearly and with expression. For example, pupils in Year 6 gave clear, reasoned and logical arguments in a discussion about the character of Queen Victoria. Pupils take part both in discussions and question and answer sessions very thoughtfully, and speak clearly and audibly. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive direct and skilful teaching within the classroom. This enables them to develop correct speech patterns such as not allowing their voice to rise at the end of a statement. Throughout the school, teachers insist on pupils speaking clearly and audibly, and provide many opportunities for them to speak to an audience.
- 75 Attainment in reading was below expected levels at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to use dictionaries or to use reference books. The school has addressed these issues very successfully. Pupils are taught how to use dictionaries and reference books and transfer these skills to their work in other subjects. For example, they use a wide range of reference books for research in history lessons. Throughout the school pupils have direct teaching on how to use the library to find information. This significantly improves their research skills. Even though a high number of pupils join the school during the course of each year, pupils make rapid progress as they move through the school. They experience a widening range of reading materials, and learn specific reading skills. They read with increasingly accuracy and with greater confidence and expression, and most are on course to reach the nationally expected level by the end of Year 6. Some pupils have difficulty with their understanding of what they are reading. This is not confined to pupils who have English as an additional language. All teachers are aware of this and take care to identify and explain the meaning of unfamiliar words when sharing texts with pupils. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- 76 Pupils demonstrate an improving command of skills in writing, and use an increasing range of punctuation correctly. This is also a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below those expected in all aspects of writing. The school has effective strategies in place to ensure that most pupils make very good progress in developing their skills in writing. Pupils use increasingly complex sentence structures, and produce interesting and

imaginative short stories. Most pupils write in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes. There are good examples of extended writing in English, with some pupils using paragraphs accurately to link their stories. Pupils structure their stories well, using conventions such as chapters and episodes, for example when writing stories about life in Roman times. Their writing is interesting, lively and very well organised. The school has placed a strong emphasis on the teaching of handwriting skills. The use of ink from the beginning of Year 3, and of pens with nibs higher up the school, has a positive effect on the quality of handwriting. Standards of handwriting and presentation are consistently good. Boys achieve similar standards to those of girls.

- 77 Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Their teachers give them specific tasks in reading and writing to help meet their identified educational needs. They have good and effective support. This has a positive impact on their learning and progress. The work for higher attaining pupils in Year 6 is challenging, and shows high expectation of achievement. This enhances the quality of the pupils' learning, improves their rate of progress, and raises their attainment. The carefully structured scheme of work is successful in raising pupils' attainment to nationally expected levels. However, pupils of higher attainment in younger year groups need more challenge in their work. Pupils who have English as an additional language receive skilful support within the classroom. This ensures that their learning progresses at a similar rate to their classmates. There are, on occasions, times when the dual-teaching of class teachers and the specialist support teacher for English as an additional language leads to some confusion and slows learning.
- 78 Pupils make effective use of their developing literacy skills in other subjects. They write up the results of their experiments in science, and write clear factual accounts in history. An example of this is the work about the Victorians by pupils from Year 6.
- 79 The pupils' response to work in English is outstandingly good. This is because of the high quality and enthusiastic teaching. Pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and to each other. They value and respect the contributions their classmates make. All pupils try hard to answer questions, join in discussions and work well. By Year 6, pupils concentrate very well for lengthy periods, strive to finish their work on time, and take pride in the finished product. They are proud of their work and are eager to discuss it with visitors. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, respond very well to the activities provided for them in reading and writing. They make effective contributions to the class discussions. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- 80 The quality of teaching is very good. Twenty lessons were observed during the course of the inspection. Of these, three were excellent, six were very good, nine were good and two were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
- 81 Where teaching is excellent, the enthusiasm of the teachers, and their use of very effective teaching strategies ensure that pupils have a rich language experience. This very high quality of teaching manifests itself in the improvement in standards. Hallmarks of the excellent and very good teaching are the stimulating and interesting activities that the teachers plan within the structured planning framework. These teachers ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in their work and that the level of challenge is suitable for all ability groups in the class. The management of pupils is very good, and the teachers use high quality assessments of learning and progress to inform and adjust future planning. Lessons have a brisk pace, which sustains pupils' interest and enthusiasm and ensures that the pupils make very good progress in their learning. In lessons where teaching is less than very good the challenge for more able pupils is limited. This restricts learning and progress. Often the plenary session at the end of lessons, in which learning is reviewed, is rushed. This does not give pupils time to consolidate and reflect on their learning. The school has clearly defined learning targets for pupils. These have carefully planned learning steps and the pupils work hard to achieve them. Most teachers plan work to extend pupils' skills in subjects across the curriculum. The school deploys its support assistants effectively. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, is

consistently good. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.

82 By the age of 11 most pupils have skills in literacy that meet the national expectations. Pupils are confident and competent in speaking and listening. They raise and answer questions, and join in discussions with a suitably high degree of maturity. Most pupils speak clearly and expressively, and demonstrate a suitably mature level of thought in their discussions with each other and adults. By year 6, most pupils read fluently, with understanding and expression. Pupils of all abilities know how to use the library system to find books. They understand and use the glossary, index and contents correctly. Most pupils refer to chapters when talking about books. Pupils know that a story has to have a beginning, middle and end. The quality of handwriting is mostly good. By Year 6, all pupils use joined script and ink. They use their reading and writing skills successfully across a range of subjects.

83 Management of the subject is very good. The coordinator is relatively new to the post, but is successfully implementing strategies aimed at continuing to raise standards. The school uses a range of very effective assessment procedures in English. The analysis of test answers provides a useful base for setting specific teaching targets for each year group. The previous weakness in pupils' speaking skills has been identified. A strategy to raise standards is in place, and is monitored closely. The coordinator has a very secure understanding of standards, the quality of teaching, the curriculum, and the resources needed from careful monitoring of lessons and teachers' planning. These steps are resulting in raised standards. The quality and use of assessment is consistent throughout the school. The school has a portfolio of examples of pupils' work, annotated with comments, and matched against national curriculum levels. This is a useful reference point for teachers and helps them to make accurate assessments of progress and achievement. The library is well organised and attractively presented. It has a suitable range of good quality fiction and reference books and pupils make effective use of it. It provides a calm and restful place in which to read and carry out independent research. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

84 The standards achieved by 11 year old pupils in the national tests for the year 2000 were well below average. This had been the overall picture since 1997. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 has risen steadily from 36 per cent in 1998, to 54 per cent in 1999 and to 63 per cent in 2000. The 2000 results were very close to those found in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds. Girls had been performing slightly less well than boys for some time, but caught up in 2000. The main area of concern was that the proportion of pupils who reached the higher Level 5 was approximately one-third of the national average. The school analysed all the results very thoroughly, and took rigorous steps to raise standards by extending the use of the local authority's 'Improving Primary Mathematics' (IPM) materials to all classes and setting very challenging targets for 2001. The strategy has proved to be very successful.

85 The proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 who are likely to achieve Levels 4 and 5 by the end of the school year is in line with national expectations. This is a major achievement and represents very good progress because many of these pupils started in Year 3 with overall standards that were well below average, and many have English as an additional language. Some have only arrived in the country recently, or have been absent for extended holidays. The reason for the school's particular success is the very effective use of the IPM materials, the pupils' very positive attitudes to mathematics, and the high quality of the teaching. Pupils with special educational needs, or those who have English as an additional language, are supported well and make good progress.

86 Achievement is particularly noticeable in pupils' understanding of number. Higher, middle and lower attaining pupils in Year 6 have a very secure understanding of mathematical processes. For example, they multiply and divide large numbers to 100,000 accurately, checking their

answers by reversing the process or using calculators. They are particularly good at working out answers in their heads. Higher attaining pupils do the same work as the rest of the class, but are often asked questions at a greater level of difficulty, or are moved quickly to more challenging written work once they have demonstrated their understanding of the basic principles of the lesson. All pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape, measurement and data handling. The current emphasis on number work has limited pupils' opportunities to work independently and apply their knowledge in mathematical investigations. The school recognises that this is an area for further development.

- 87 The rate of improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Standards have risen, and pupils in all classes have a much deeper understanding of mathematical tables and how to multiply and divide large numbers. The school is aware of the continuing need to extend pupils' understanding of data handling. Boys no longer dominate class discussions, and teachers take care to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and play an active part in the lesson. Levels of concentration are much higher, and pupils get to work immediately. Standards of planning have risen through the introduction of the IPM materials. Particular progress has been made in raising standards of pupils' spoken language within mathematics lessons. Teachers introduce and use accurate mathematical language consistently, but also expect a very high standard of oral response to their questions. Pupils have risen to the challenge. They speak very confidently, audibly, and in complete sentences. This has a very positive effect on the quality of learning because they have to demonstrate that they really do understand the answers or the mathematical processes. The other pupils listen attentively, and their learning is also improved. On occasions there is spontaneous applause for a particularly well argued mathematical explanation.
- 88 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Thirteen lessons were observed and in these, teaching was excellent in two lessons, very good in three, good in six and satisfactory in two. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching is particularly strong in Year 6, and this is an important reason why standards are rising. Teachers in all parts of the school are very skilled in their management of the pupils. Behaviour is consistently very good, and teachers' own rigour in their teaching is shown in the very positive ways in which pupils approach their work and in their high standards of presentation. Teachers expect the pupils to work very hard and to be successful. Planning is of a high quality and closely based on the IPM approach. No time is wasted, and lessons move forward at a brisk pace. Basic mathematical skills are taught very thoroughly, and pupils' detailed answers show that they have a clear understanding of them. The quality of learning is also good because pupils respond purposefully to the teaching, are very attentive, concentrate for considerable periods and take a pride in their achievement. The weekly homework tasks are appropriate, and help pupils to consolidate their mathematical understanding.
- 89 Teachers take considerable care to make sure that all pupils understand their lessons and make good progress. They are aware that pupils whose first language is not English might not understand the written text, and check carefully to make sure that they understand the English in the question. It was noticeable that even the pupils who had arrived from abroad relatively recently were able to take a full part in the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are either taught as a separate group, as in Year 6, or are given work at an appropriate level that reflects the main teaching points made in the lesson. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of basic mathematical facts. They know, for example, that 25×5 is the same as 5×25 , and can work out 4×635 correctly. They make good progress, especially when assisted by an adult.
- 90 While teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons, some pupils' books indicate that the school's drive to raise overall standards to the national average occasionally results in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. In a few cases, where teachers follow the exact wording in the published IPM lesson plans, the teaching lacks the zest, and the enjoyment of mathematics that is found in the many examples of good and very good teaching. This affects the quality of learning because, although the pupils reach the lesson objective, they have done so

mechanically rather than with the depth of understanding and independent mathematical reasoning that is seen in more strongly taught lessons.

- 91 The school has been especially effective in monitoring and evaluating its own performance and taking positive actions to raise standards. The IPM strategy has been implemented very successfully. It contains and extends all the elements found in the National Numeracy Strategy. The coordinator manages the subject effectively, and has a good understanding of current standards. She is aware of strengths and weaknesses throughout the school through her observations of teaching, and detailed scrutiny of the work in all classes. However, as a group leader, the current arrangements in the school for planning prevent her from attending meetings in other year groups and limit her influence. There are no computers in classrooms. This limits pupils' opportunities to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical skills. Pupils use their mathematical understanding to strengthen their learning in other subjects. For example, the use of data in science, and the links made in Year 6 between number and a time line to set out the key events in the life of Queen Victoria.

SCIENCE

- 92 Most 11 year olds attain the standards expected for their age in science, though higher attaining pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. These inspection findings reflect the trend of results in the national tests over the past three years. In 1998, 47 per cent of pupils achieved the national target of Level 4; this proportion increased to 69 per cent in 1999, and rose further to 75 per cent in 2000. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has been consistently below average. The standards now achieved represent a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. This improvement is partly the result of some very effective teaching, which has resulted in improvements in pupils' knowledge and understanding of science. It is also due to the positive attitudes of pupils to their work, and to the drive of the enthusiastic coordinator to raise standards. The lower achievement of the higher attaining pupils arises partly because there is a limited amount of work tailored to the individual needs of these pupils. The school is aware of this, and is addressing the issue. Although the school teaches the elements of scientific enquiry, there are few opportunities for independent personal investigation by pupils. Higher attaining pupils in particular would benefit from such experiences.
- 93 By the age of 11 most pupils can correctly identify the parts of a flower, such as the stamen. They can use a range of scientific vocabulary in the right context, for example '*nutrient*' and '*carbon dioxide*' in relation to plant growth. They use scientific units of measurement correctly. Pupils can make predictions, can record results in tables and charts and can draw conclusions from their results.
- 94 Over time, pupils make very good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they build on prior learning throughout the school in terms of knowledge and understanding of science. They progress, for example, from knowing the components of electrical circuits to using the correct symbols assembled in a circuit diagram. Pupils become increasingly sophisticated in experimental work, but there is a limited amount of independent investigative work in which they can show initiative. Nevertheless, pupils satisfactorily develop their skills of predicting and hypothesising, with the help of their teacher. Gradually, they develop an awareness of 'fair testing'. Pupils make a steady improvement in the way in which they record their results. For instance, they progress from drawing tables to constructing bar charts. Pupils increasingly refer to results as they realise that conclusions have to be drawn from evidence. Those with special educational needs are often well supported by staff, and make good progress during lessons, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- 95 The quality of learning in lessons in science is very good overall. In Year 6 in particular, regular assessment of pupils through the use of tests, pupil profiles, and regular planning meetings, means that teachers can target areas of weakness in learning. In other year groups, weekly planning meetings help teachers to focus their planning according to the needs of the class.

The marking style recently introduced by the coordinator has also had a positive effect on learning. This involves a dialogue with the pupil. At the end of a piece of work, pupils write their response to their teachers' comments. This helps pupils to reflect on their work. The emphasis that teachers put on speaking skills has a direct impact on learning. They always insist that pupils speak out clearly and correctly in class so that all pupils then hear scientific language used well. Numeracy skills are practised effectively in science, such as when measuring or reading scales.

- 96 Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. They enjoy science activities, and consequently steadily develop practical skills. On the occasions when pupils work in pairs, they cooperate well. For example, one pupil in Year 3, who was examining rocks, explained that she was waiting until her friend stopped writing so that they could discuss the characteristics of their sample. Pupils take great care with their written work, and the presentation of work in science throughout the school is of a high standard.
- 97 The quality of teaching is very good overall. Seven lessons were observed, and of these one was excellent, four were very good, and two were satisfactory. The best teaching is to be found in Year 6. In general, whole-class teaching occurs in most lessons, and all lessons have a common structure. For the most part teachers have very good knowledge of the topic being taught. They have high expectations of behaviour and of learning by the pupils. Teachers manage pupils very well, and usually work at a brisk pace, keeping pupils' attention and concentration. In classes where there is some group work, it is well organised, and pupils are able to discuss work with each other. In these lessons, pupils work well independently. Teachers' planning is mostly very effective, with both the learning outcomes and activities clearly identified. Plans include additional notes about pupils with a special educational need or those who need particular help with English. These pupils, often well supported by staff, make very good progress during lessons. There is little extra work designed for higher attaining pupils. Teachers make very good use of careful questioning, both at the start and during lessons, to assess pupils' progress. However, not enough time is given to the plenary session, at the end of lessons, to allow pupils to consider what they have learned. Resources are of good quality and are used well, though pupils do not regularly use information and communication technology to enhance their learning. However staff do make good use of information and communication technology mainly for display work, including the use of the digital camera, for example to record the steps taken by pupils during an experiment.
- 98 The school now has a good policy and scheme of work for science, which provides all pupils with access to the full science curriculum. It is based on the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and has been adapted by staff to reflect the needs of the pupils. The coordinator for science, appointed eighteen months ago, gives very strong leadership. He provides long and medium-term planning for year group leaders. Weekly plans are adapted to the needs of different classes, according to teachers' on-going assessments. For example, in Year 6, scientific enquiry has been identified as an area that needs to be addressed. The coordinator also monitors teaching and gives feedback to staff, provides in-service training for teachers, and runs an 'Easter Club' for pupils aimed at raising standards further. He is currently developing a means of targeting pupils attaining Level 4 to raise their attainment to Level 5. The coordinator has also organised resources very well and tailored them to the scheme of work.

ART AND DESIGN

- 99 Standards achieved by 11 year olds are below those expected nationally, and pupils make slow progress. This is mainly because the school does not have a scheme of work that provides clear guidance on how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are to be taught and developed year by year. As a result, much is left to individual teacher's expertise and understanding of what is appropriate for pupils of different ages. The consequence is that some work is taught at inappropriately low levels, and some work is unnecessarily repeated in different year groups. For example, pupils in Year 5 were working on exercises in colour mixing, which

had previously been completed at a higher level by pupils in Year 3. The amount of time allocated for the subject is below what is recommended nationally, and therefore pupils have limited opportunities to develop their skills. This shortage of time is the consequence of the school's clear and successful strategy to raise standards in the core subjects, which has meant that much of the available teaching time has been allocated to these subjects. Partly because of the shortage of time, pupils also have limited experience of the full range of media normally expected. Most of the work seen comprised of compositions in pencil, pastel or paint. Work displayed in classrooms, and in the hall, showed that pupils' skills in art are well used to illustrate work in other subjects, but that skills in working with media such as fabrics and clay are less well developed.

- 100 Standards are not as high as those observed at the time of the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be above average. This is partly due to the reduction in the amount of time allocated for teaching art and design.
- 101 In the five lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall. One of these was very good, one was good, two were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Where teaching was best, the teacher was particularly good at focusing pupils' observation of what they were to draw by first concentrating their attention on separate elements of the composition. He was also successful in developing pupils' techniques when working with individuals because of his good subject knowledge. From time to time, he used information from his assessments of their work to highlight good practice, and to discuss potential difficulties with the class. This did much to improve the quality of work for other pupils. Where teaching is weakest, the teacher's lack of subject knowledge resulted in pupils being taught incorrect facts about colour; pupils' work was 'over-directed', with too few opportunities for them to experiment, and the work provided little challenge for them.
- 102 Pupils in Year 6 achieve satisfactory standards of observational drawing. In one of the two lessons observed in this year group, pupils responded well to the stimulus provided by their discussion about the work of Vincent Van Gogh, and their observations about his composition in the painting of 'Sunflowers'. Arrangements of tulips were thoughtfully drawn in pencil, with reasonable proportion achieved and the relationship between the positions of different objects carefully observed and recreated. Pupils were familiar with terms such as 'portrait' and 'landscape' when planning how they were to set out their work. One or two higher attaining pupils responded well to the high quality of teaching, and produced finely detailed work within their own developing style. Pupils then experimented with colour, by matching samples of colouring against the petals, leaves and stems to achieve a good match before using pastels to complete their work.
- 103 The subject coordinator is working to develop a scheme of work, and is aware of the weaknesses highlighted by this inspection. There is no policy to guide the way in which the subject is to be taught, but this shortcoming is to be addressed once the scheme of work is in place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 104 Standards in design and technology are well below national expectations for 11 year olds, and have not improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make slow progress, and lack skills in the important elements of design and evaluation of their work. These skills are not regularly or systematically developed.
- 105 Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, it was only possible to observe one design and technology lesson during the course of the inspection and, therefore, no judgement about the quality of teaching has been made. Other judgements are based on evidence from the single lesson observation, a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display in the school, discussions with the subject coordinator and examination of documentation provided by the school.

- 106 The scheme of work is of good quality, and is based on material provided by the local authority. It provides clear guidance for teachers as to how pupils' skills are to be developed and suggests activities to be carried out. The scheme is closely linked to work in science, because the two subjects complement each other well. Unfortunately, the planned curriculum is not being taught fully because teachers sometimes spend too much time on the science element of the work instead of focusing on developing pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluating. As a result, very few examples of pupils' work in design and technology were seen. To some extent this occurs because the amount of curriculum time allocated for the subject is below what is recommended nationally. However, the samples of completed work scrutinised suggest that this also occurs because some teachers do not have a clear understanding of the requirements of the subject. For example, pupils in the Year 4 classes have been looking at the ways in which the working characteristics of materials affect the ways that they are used. In two of the classes, the completed work followed the requirements of the National Curriculum programme of study. In the third class the work solely focused on the scientific element of the project, with pupils predicting the changes that can occur in materials, such as clay hardening when it is left to dry. Some of the work planned for this year group, such as the task of designing an electrical circuit for a specific purpose, was found in the pupils' science books, and solely focused on the scientific element of the topic. In none of the books scrutinised in this year group was there any recorded evidence of designs being generated, or of evaluations of completed 'making' tasks. Year 5 books contained only one or two examples of recorded work, usually simple diagrams of hydraulic or pneumatic systems. In Years 3 and 6 there was no recorded work available for scrutiny. In only two classes were there any examples of completed 'making' tasks on display. These were samples of simple plaster items made from moulds produced by pupils in Year 4.
- 107 The single lesson observed in Year 3 was of good quality. This lesson challenged pupils to find the best way of attaching wheels to a pre-prepared chassis made from sections of balsa wood. The teacher clearly explained the task, checked that pupils understood what they had to do before allowing them to begin, and ensured that all necessary equipment was at hand. As a result, pupils set to work quickly and confidently because they knew precisely what was required of them. The teacher's expectations of pupils' behaviour were high, and therefore no time was wasted because of unacceptable behaviour. The topic chosen was suitably challenging for this age group, and prepared the pupils well for future work on this theme. By the end of the lesson almost half of the pupils had successfully solved the problem, and one pair found more than one solution.
- 108 Although classes have access to a small selection of tools, some aspects of this subject are under-resourced. For example, some of the work planned for Year 5 had to be deferred because the equipment required had not been delivered at the time of the inspection. This situation arose because the scheme of work is new, and some materials are being purchased as they are needed.

GEOGRAPHY

- 109 During the week of the inspection it was not possible to see any lessons in geography. This is because the focus for this term is on history. The analysis of pupils' written work indicates that standards meet those expected for most pupils by the age of 11. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average.
- 110 By Year 6, pupils have a suitable level of understanding of the differences in world climates. They contrast life in Barking with a community in Wales and a village in India. The work samples show that pupils of average and above average abilities have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the position of continents, major cities and towns. These pupils understand how climate and geographical location affects everyday lives. Their work samples also provide evidence of increasing skills in note taking and the use of secondary information sources such as reference books. This work provides strong links with work in English. There is little

difference in achievement between the higher ability and average ability pupils. This indicates a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.

- 111 The work sample gives clear evidence of the good progress in learning that pupils who have English as an additional language make. This is evident in their note taking skills. Lower attaining groups, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in understanding simple geographical concepts. Most pupils, however, make satisfactory progress in developing their geographical skills and knowledge.
- 112 There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. The quality of teachers' planning and marking indicates that teaching is generally at least satisfactory.
- 113 The management and coordination of the subject is satisfactory. A suitable range of resources is available to support pupils' learning. This is well organised into topic packs by the coordinator who also monitors planning and teaching. The planned curriculum provides clear expectations of achievement and progress. It shows that the school plans to cover all elements of the geography curriculum. The school enhances this provision through a range of visits and field trips. There are good links with other curriculum areas. For example, pupils develop their literacy skills very effectively. The samples of work show that pupils write factual accounts and label charts and maps accurately. They use their knowledge of science to explain processes of evaporation and condensation. The planned work covers a wide range of topics to provide a good understanding of mapping skills, of the local environment and knowledge of contrasting features of countries around the world. The use of information and communication technology is an area for further development in geography.

HISTORY

- 114 Standards in history are satisfactory and are consistent with national expectations for pupils aged 11. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The improvement is because of the better quality of teaching and the carefully planned curriculum. Standards are not higher because pupils of differing abilities often engage in the same learning tasks and higher attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged. This does not happen in Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning. This is a direct result of the improved teaching of how to carry out independent research. It provides strong links with work in English.
- 115 As pupils progress through the school, they increase their understanding of how past events influence the present. They learn about Egyptian, Roman and Greek civilisations. This enables them to develop an increasing understanding of why these societies were different. Their work on the Victorians in Year 6 gives pupils an in depth knowledge of Queen Victoria. They use it intelligently to draw conclusions. Pupils of all abilities understand that a range of observers can see a character differently. They evaluate different information sources carefully. This good quality work is promoted successfully by the high quality teaching in Year 6. History makes a strong contribution to pupils' literacy development. They read about and research the circumstances and events that surround famous people's lives in past times.
- 116 Pupils learn to understand the social and cultural issues of different times. They develop and awareness of the use of slavery in past civilisations and the recent past. This enables pupils to begin to understand the impact this had on people's lives. It extends their understanding, and they begin to apply this to some current issues, such as the importance of equality of opportunity. Teachers encourage pupils to be aware of history around them, at home and on holiday. An example of this is the work pupils carry out on the past fishing industry of Barking. This gives pupils valuable opportunities to examine history from primary sources of information. Pupils throughout the school make good use of their literacy skills in history. They write

accurate factual accounts as well as imaginative narratives. Work in history makes a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' moral and social awareness.

- 117 The quality of teaching is good. Four lessons were observed during the course of the inspection, one of these was of the highest quality, one was very good, one was good and one was satisfactory. Teachers base their planning firmly on the National Curriculum for history. This ensures that pupils cover a suitable range of work and make good progress in developing skills, knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is very good or better, the teachers develop and amend the planning to meet pupils' needs and challenge their thinking. The rigid adherence to the planned lesson in some classes restricts learning and progress. In these lessons teachers expect pupils of all abilities to undertake the same activities. This does not cater sufficiently for the needs of the higher and lower attaining pupils. The marking of written work is conscientious, supportive and gives clear pointers for improvement.
- 118 The scheme of work gives a good level of support to teachers. Resources, books, posters and artefacts, are good in quality. They are sufficient to meet the requirements of the planned curriculum. They are well organised and readily accessible for use. The subject coordinator has a clear overview of standards in the subject and monitors teaching and planning carefully. This ensures that all classes within a year group receive the same programme of study and that there is an extension of learning as pupils progress through the school. The coordinator is aware of the need to extend the use of information technology in history to support research and investigation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 119 Attainment in information and communication technology is below that expected nationally for pupils aged 11. At the time of the last inspection standards were satisfactory, but since then national requirements have increased significantly, and the school has not managed to keep up with these increased requirements. For example, there is no equipment in school to teach the monitoring and control elements of the subject. The school is aware of this. Pupils' attainment other elements of the subject such as word processing is otherwise satisfactory, though the use of information and communication technology in other subjects is limited.
- 120 The computer suite, installed two years ago, has made it possible for more direct teaching of information and communication technology skills to all pupils. Pupils have quickly become familiar with using the computer room. They are confident users of computers. By the age of eleven pupils demonstrate that they can amend and combine different forms of information from various sources. For example, they can load a CD-ROM, and select information from it, which they then can download into a word processing package. Similarly, pupils can readily search for information from the Internet, select that which is useful, and add it to words or pictures to make a presentation. Pupils can use a scanner to import information into a computer, and can compose a short slide show. They are aware that electronic mail can be used as a means of communication. Pupils in Year 3 are beginning to organise and edit text and pictures, to use a simple spreadsheet and save work. They can manipulate text in a word processing program. Some pupils who have computers at home, or who use the computer in the local library, have skills beyond those normally expected for their age.
- 121 Pupils make good gains in learning in the majority of lessons. For example, pupils of average ability in Year 5 learned how to copy and paste text from the Internet into a word processing document. They became more familiar in navigating around the Internet screen. In this lesson, higher attaining pupils were not given a different task, but merely consolidated their skills. Pupils with a special educational need, and those with English as an additional language, achieve well when they are well supported by the teacher, or if pairs of pupils can help each other.
- 122 Assessment of pupils is satisfactory. It depends on the teacher completing a checklist of the skills achieved by pupils. The list is directly related to the unit of work being taught.

- 123 Pupils enjoy using the computers and are very well behaved in lessons. They move from the larger demonstration screen to the computers without fuss. In a lesson seen in Year 4, pupils showed pleasure in finding new information on the Internet. If they finish a task early, they help others who have yet to complete their assignment. One higher attaining pupil in Year 5, who had already mastered the skill being taught through his use of a computer at home, willingly and competently, helped two other pupils.
- 124 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Five lessons were observed during the inspection; of these, one was very good, two were good and two were satisfactory. Teachers generally have good information and communication technology skills, and plan effectively when using the information and communication technology suite. Their planning includes clear lesson objectives and teachers prepare lessons well. However, pupils are usually given the same task, and therefore achieve according to the quality of their prior skills. Teachers frequently use the large screen for an introduction to a lesson. This makes it easier for pupils to be quite clear about what they have to do. Lessons are well structured and are usually divided into several sections. This helps to keep pupils focused on what they have to do. Pupils are well managed and very good lessons proceed at a brisk pace, providing good challenge. For example, in a lesson in which pupils had to make a short slide show they were given targets to achieve within clearly defined time scales. Pupils enjoyed looking at each other's slides, which included information and pictures about themselves. Teachers do their best to provide for pupils equally when they are using the computers, but sometimes one pupil working in a pair can dominate, leaving a partner, who is less involved, unsure of the skill being taught. Teachers sometimes put pupils into pairs according to reading ability, so that at least one of the pair is competent in reading instructions on screen.
- 125 The school has a sound policy and comprehensive scheme of work for information and communication technology. This is a combination of that written by the coordinator and the local education authority. The coordinator, who provides satisfactory leadership, delivers in-service training for staff once a term. Teachers have also received training through grants from the 'New Opportunities Fund'; ten members of staff having completed the course so far. The subject policy commits the school to the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects, in line with national requirements. Since computers are now concentrated in the computer suite, teachers need to reserve the suite for additional sessions to fulfil this policy commitment. This was not observed during the period of the inspection. Some teachers use the scheme of work in information and communication technology more creatively, for example, by developing pupils' skills through information and communication technology lessons, which are strongly linked to work in other subjects. Opportunities for using computers for independent research are limited.

MUSIC

- 126 Standards achieved by 11 year olds are below those expected nationally, and pupils' progress in developing skills and understanding is slow. This is because the school does not allocate enough time to the teaching of music. The commercially produced scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum, and provides clear support and guidance for teachers. Work in music makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
- 127 By the age of 11 pupils sing melodically, with enthusiasm, and achieve standards in this element of the subject that meet those expected for pupils of similar age. However, they have limited opportunities to develop their composing skills, or their ability to listen critically to music. This restricts their understanding of how composers create mood and limits pupils' ability to develop their own responses to music. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are improving steadily. Most pupils reach satisfactory levels of attainment in singing and composing because of the emphasis on teaching musical skills and techniques. This improvement has not yet had time to impact on standards in Year 6. The limited time available for lessons means that pupils are not

able to practise and improve their performance. The school organises recorder clubs to develop further pupils' skills of instrumental playing and ability to read music.

- 128 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy their music lessons. They listen carefully to the teacher and each other. All pupils show respect and value for each other's efforts. They have above average levels of perseverance, and work with determination to produce work of a satisfactory quality. Pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, have opportunities to consolidate their skills and understanding of music.
- 129 The use of information technology to support work in music is under developed. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use the computer to carry out independent research into musical instruments and the lives of composers.
- 130 Although only two lessons were observed, additional evidence confirms the judgement that the quality of teaching is good. One of the two lessons was very good and the other was good. This quality of teaching is having a significant effect on the quality of pupils' learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The specialist teaching shows a marked improvement in planning and the provision of a carefully balanced range of activities. These include listening to, appraising, performing and composing throughout the school year for all classes. However, the very low time allocation for the subject means that it is not possible to fulfil these plans adequately.
- 131 The school provides equality of opportunity and access to the whole music curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Resources for music are readily accessible for use by staff and pupils. They are suitable for pupils' needs and ages.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 132 Pupils' standards at the age of 11 are broadly in line with national expectations, and several individual pupils reach high standards in dance and gymnastics, and when using their skills in team games. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make good progress over time. Achievement in swimming is a particular strength, as most Year 5 pupils have already reached the standard set for the end of Year 6. Older pupils have some access to adventurous activities, starting with orienteering within the school area in Years 4 and 6. Girls and boys have the same opportunities to take part in competitive games of football and netball and to run against other local schools as members of the cross-country club.
- 133 Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Standards have been maintained, but pupils now have a much greater understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies. Year 4 pupils, for example, knew exactly why their heartbeats increase after vigorous exercise, and understand the positive effects of warming and stretching their muscles. Progress in games lessons is now satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes are much more positive. They work well together and raise the levels of their own performance by watching their friends and by talking to their work partners about how they can improve. This was very obvious in a dance lesson, when higher attaining pupils started to raise the quality of their routines by watching other pupils, discussing what they had noticed and then starting to count in eights to give a rhythm to their dance sequence. This occurred without a prompt from the teacher. All games lessons now take place outside, and pupils are appropriately dressed.
- 134 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Four lessons were observed during the inspection. One was of very good quality, two were good and one was satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of physical education, teach basic skills thoroughly, and use themselves or skilled pupils to demonstrate good practice. Planning is well structured and pupils are managed very well. No time is wasted in getting changed, and teachers expect, and get, high standards of behaviour. The best lessons have a purpose and

rigour, with a particular emphasis on the development of skills. Teachers are aware that pupils with little understanding of English might find some instructions confusing, and make sure that all pupils understand what they want them to do. A very good example was seen when the teacher explained what she meant by *'turning like a screw.'* The pupil nodded happily, and produced work of good quality. Great care is taken to make sure pupils answer questions in complete sentences. This strengthens their English and makes certain that they really do understand what is being asked. Learning is good in the majority of lessons because pupils work very hard to improve, and enjoy combining the physical and creative aspects of dance or exercise. While good overall, teaching is less effective and learning less successful on the few occasions when lessons take too long to start or when practice exercises are too repetitive. The impact of teaching is also lessened when pupils are not given time to work on a gymnastic sequence, for example when they have just heard how they might improve.

- 135 The coordinator supports her colleagues effectively, is well trained, and has started to develop systems for monitoring pupils' overall performance and progress. Her work on medium term planning is extending national guidance documents effectively to fit the particular needs of the school. Teachers pay very careful attention to health and safety, while showing great sensitivity to the dress codes of the various faiths represented within the school. Particularly good use is made of the skills of members of the specialist teaching staff from the local secondary school. They work closely with school staff, setting a very high standard through their own demonstration lessons and enthusing the pupils to higher levels of achievement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 136 Standards at the age of 11 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Many individual pupils have a considerable depth of understanding of their own faiths. Overall, progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is satisfactory.
- 137 Pupils in Year 6 know the significance of Easter for Christians, and they believe that Jesus died on the cross *'to save us all'*. They have a sound understanding of Sikhism. They know why some books are holy, how they should be respected, and explained why the Old, but not the New Testament, is of great significance to both Jews and Christians. Pupils from all religious backgrounds have a detailed knowledge of Islam. They understand the symbolism of the Five Pillars, and use the school's collection of artefacts to explain prayer and daily rituals. The inspection took place during the celebration of Eid, and many lessons were used appropriately to remind all pupils why the festival is so important for Moslems. A particular strength of the school is the tolerance between the faiths and a genuine respect for each other's customs and practices.
- 138 There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection and standards have been maintained. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, and the use of artefacts, remain as strengths. Pupils' attitudes continue to be positive and teachers make better use of the boards to focus pupils' attention in lessons.
- 139 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Four lessons were observed during the inspection. Of these, one lesson was very good, one was good, one was satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject material, and this gives credibility to their work. One non-Moslem teacher, for example, had visited the mosque before her lesson on Islam to make sure that she pronounced the vocabulary correctly. Other teachers make good use of pupils within the class, who are proud to talk about their faiths in an atmosphere of respect. Very good teaching is seen when the planning makes specific reference to the different needs of pupils with special educational needs, or English as an additional language, so that every pupil benefits equally from the learning. A particularly good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson about the Islamic

holiday of the Hajj. Staff are very skilled in managing pupils, who listen intently in lessons, and have a real interest in the subject. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory when pupils have few planned opportunities to extend their understanding, or when written tasks are limited in challenge and make little demand of the pupils, especially those capable of higher attainment.

- 140 The coordinator is knowledgeable, and very keen to see the subject develop within the school. He is developing an effective scheme of work, in partnership with the local authority advisory teacher, which reflects, respects and values the various faiths found within the school community, and includes the latest national guidance. The amount of time available for religious education over the year is half that found in many schools, and often limited to only 30 minutes a week. Although this is sufficient for teachers to cover the content of the planned lesson, it does not leave enough time for pupils to reflect in any depth on what they have heard, or for higher attaining pupils to investigate further through personal research. It also limits the quality and range of any written work.