

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **COLHAM MANOR INFANT SCHOOL**

Hillingdon

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102373

Headteacher: Mrs R Smyth

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Nelson  
20991

Dates of inspection: 17-20 January 2000

Inspection number: 196773

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Violet Avenue  
Hillingdon  
Middlesex  
Postcode: UB8 3PT

Telephone number: 01895 442301

Fax number: 01895 432840

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Russell

Date of previous inspection: July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Nelson	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr J Vischer	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs A Cogher	Team inspector	English History Under-fives	
Mrs G Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr G Stephens	Team inspector	Geography Religious education Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

**Full Circle**  
The Brow  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Pages
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	6-10
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	11-13
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	13-15
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	15-17
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	17
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	17-18
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	18-20
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	20-21
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	22-26
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	27-38

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Colham Manor Infants School serves its local community, which is an area of private and local authority housing. It is a large infant school, which has 231 full-time pupils and 82 children who attend part-time in the nursery. When pupils start full-time schooling most have average language and social skills. Almost a third of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the average nationally. Just under a fifth of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, and 17 pupils have English as an additional language. A fifth of pupils have special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. These are mainly speech, learning and behavioural difficulties.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school makes good provision for its pupils and its care for their welfare is an important strength. The generally good teaching in English and mathematics enables most pupils to reach the expected standards at the end of Year 2. Those leading and managing the school understand what needs to be done for it to improve further and are working together well to achieve this. The school provides sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Teaching is at least good in over half the lessons.
- Pupils behave well, have very good attitudes to their work, and very good relationships with staff and each other.
- The pastoral care for children is a major strength of the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils are well supported.
- It cultivates pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- It successfully strives for close links with parents.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in information technology of Year 2 pupils are below average as they have gaps in their knowledge.
- The pupils capable of the highest attainment in mathematics are not always challenged with harder tasks.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to investigate in science.
- Pupils' work in books is not organised and presented tidily enough.
- The subject co-ordinators' roles in monitoring the curriculum and promoting improvement are not sufficiently developed, and they have too little non-contact time to undertake this effectively.
- The governing body's role is not strong enough in shaping the school's long-term goals, and producing a coherent school development plan with carefully costed priorities and clear principles for evaluation.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

When it was inspected last, in July 1996, weaknesses were identified in the standards pupils achieved in English, history, information technology and design and technology. The school's initiative on raising reading and writing attainment has been successful. For the

past two years most pupils have achieved the expected standards. Curriculum improvements for the other subjects have led to better teaching and greater progress by pupils in history. Not enough evidence was gathered to judge the impact of these changes on design and technology standards. The oldest pupils still have some gaps in their information technology knowledge so are not yet reaching the expected standards in all aspects of the subject. The quality of teaching has substantially improved since 1996. The school has developed effective new procedures for assessing pupils. A start has been made on monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching, but further work is needed. Most points for action from the last inspection have been tackled successfully and the school has made a good improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds, based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	C	C	A
Writing	E	C	C	A
Mathematics	E	B	C	B

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

Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in nearly all subjects by the time they reach seven years of age. The youngest children in the nursery and reception develop their early reading, writing, number and creative skills soundly, and their physical development is better than expected. Over the past four years there has been an improving trend in reading, writing and mathematics standards in the national tests for seven-year-olds. Pupils are performing better than those in similar types of school. The improvement made by boys in reading and writing has been particularly marked and is a result of the school's focus on teaching phonic skills, and the provision of new books that appeal to boys. Pupils' spelling skills have improved and are now good. The school has not yet set annual targets for national tests by which it can measure pupils' success. In mathematics, the pupils capable of higher attainment are not fully challenged to produce this. Similarly in science, where standards are average, pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate so do not reach higher standards. Pupils in Year 2 have not followed a wide-ranging information technology curriculum in the past so, although they reach the average standards in word-processing, other aspects of the subject are below average. Generally, pupils are not guided sufficiently on how to present and organise their written work and this is affecting their achievement. Pupils' are achieving well in physical education and art, and their knowledge of religious education is good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are attentive and keen to work in lessons. Most show good concentration and independence in learning for their age.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils understand and follow the school rules well. They are usually sensible in class and their behaviour at playtime is lively but amicable. The small minority of pupils with challenging behaviour are helped to overcome this by fair and positive guidance from staff.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are suitably involved in the school's daily routines and on several occasions were observed helping one another in a mature, caring way.
Attendance	Below the national average as a minority of parents allow their children to take unauthorised absences. The school makes rigorous efforts to remind parents that regular school attendance is important. For example, a welcoming and encouraging start is made to the school day when parents bring their children into the classrooms and may stay for a short while reading with them.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall – 69	Satisfactory	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.*

Taken overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. Ninety three per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better; over half was good or better, with 14 per cent judged very good or excellent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in five lessons, mainly in one class, where teaching was slow paced and uninspiring. The teaching of literacy skills for the under-fives is sound and the mathematics teaching is good. English and mathematics teaching is good overall, for Key Stage 1 pupils. Teachers have successfully developed the new approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing pupils' speaking skills and the new vocabulary needed for various subjects is carefully taught. The way teachers manage pupils in class is an important strength. It enables a calm working atmosphere to prevail and results in pupils learning at a good rate. Usually teachers prepare interesting activities for pupils and present new ideas in lively, varied ways. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with suitable work, but in mathematics pupils capable of higher attainment are not expected to attempt really challenging work.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum for the under-fives is still developing to take account of the borough's new admission arrangements. In the nursery it is not clear enough how the curriculum for the three and four-year-olds differs. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is suitably broad and well organised.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils make good progress as the systems for identifying difficulties, and establishing individual action plans to guide teaching, are well organised and followed through effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school has no additional budget to assist its work with these pupils. The stages of English which they are at have been identified and teachers focus on widening individuals' vocabularies.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. There are regular lessons to develop pupils' personal, social and moral education. Spiritual provision is good and collective worship offers meaningful experiences. The development of moral, social and cultural aspects is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. This is a major strength of the school; for example a welfare assistant is available during the school day. Individuals and their needs are well understood and problems are dealt with swiftly. The school has good arrangements to track pupils' progress in most subjects.

The school is striving to involve parents as partners in their children's school life. This is a strength and the effort has a positive effect as a small core of parents help in classrooms. There are regular informal gatherings and events for parents, as well as meetings about children's progress and curriculum fairs. A further strength is the way the headteacher and governing body have consulted parents to establish their views on aspects of the school's work.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to these roles but are already making a strong impact on the school's educational provision. They are motivating a staff team, which is willing to make the changes that will improve standards. The subject co-ordinators' roles are not yet fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable chair-person. Governors are keen to help the school improve, but as most are quite new to the role some

	aspects of their responsibilities are not well developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Teaching is monitored and evaluated soundly by the senior managers. However, formal approaches to monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's performance are not sufficiently well identified or wide-ranging.
The strategic use of resources	Resources targeted at strategic initiatives, such as that for 'Raising Achievement', have been well spent as English standards have risen. Generally, in the school development plan the priorities are not clear or adequately linked to budget planning.

The school has sufficient well-qualified permanent teachers. The deputy headteacher's non-class-based role is valuable to support the 'Raising Achievement' initiative. The support staff make an important contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those with special educational needs. The school has good accommodation, which is spacious, well cared for and bright with attractive displays. There is a good range of learning resources for children under five. Elsewhere, resources are mainly adequate with some strengths; for example, the physical education equipment. There is not enough variety in the art and design and technology resources and the library stock is quite sparse. The school is starting to analyse and compare its data from tests; it canvasses parents' views on its work. It has not yet established systems to apply fully all the best value principles.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching and how it helps children to make progress; several parents wrote separately to praise teachers' skills.</li> <li>• Staff are very approachable and take good care of pupils; for example, those with special educational needs.</li> <li>• Staff work closely with parents.</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about what is happening at school and their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several parents feel there is too much homework.</li> <li>• A number of parents are concerned that activities outside lessons have been curtailed. For example, a few school visits have been cancelled because some parents have refused to sign permission slips.</li> </ul>

Inspectors confirm all the positive views that parents expressed about the school, both in the parents survey and at the parents' meeting held to discuss their views.

Regarding matters of concern: the amount of homework given to pupils is very similar to that expected by many schools; the school is searching for ways to make it possible for visits to go ahead more regularly and this was commented on in the Annual Governors' Report.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. When children start in the nursery most have reasonable spoken language and social skills. A minority of children have more limited speech and require additional support to develop conversational skills. The reception teachers carefully undertake the borough's baseline assessments. However, it is difficult for them to draw conclusions about children's achievement in the various elements as there is no benchmarking information at present. Inspection evidence suggests that, by the time children move to Year 1, almost all will have achieved the expected learning outcomes for five-year-olds in literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They are already exceeding the expectations for physical development.
2. Analysis of the end of Key Stage 1 national tests reveals a marked improvement in pupils' achievement since 1997. Then standards were low in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with those in schools nationally. A sharp improvement occurred in 1998 and was generally maintained in 1999. Pupils reached the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They performed much better in reading and writing than pupils in schools with similar social circumstances, and better in mathematics.
3. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in 1999 was also close to the national averages in reading and writing. It was above average in mathematics where almost a quarter of the pupils gained the higher level. Very high performance was achieved in spelling where over double the percentage of pupils gained the higher Level 3 than was the case nationally. The school attributes much of this improvement to a change in methods of teaching reading; using a more structured reading scheme and placing a greater emphasis on teaching phonic skills. Further evidence of improvement in writing is noted when the Level 2 achievement bands are analysed. In 1998 a third of the pupils achieved in the two higher bands in this level and in 1999 this increased to half.
4. A significant area of improvement has been the performance of boys in reading and writing. With the boys starting from a much lower base than girls, the gap in performance has narrowed substantially over four years. Boys' performance is only slightly lower than that of girls overall. Boys in this school are also now achieving better than boys nationally in English tests. This improvement has been brought about by the school's recognition of boys' underachievement, and through finding new ways to tackle this, such as providing books that will interest them.
5. Inspection evidence confirms that, at the end of the key stage, standards in English and mathematics are broadly average. For English this is a major improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. The school has been successful in its drive to improve reading and writing standards in response to a key issue. Pupils' spelling is a particular strength. An example of good writing achievement and progress was noted in the work of an average Year 1 pupil, and others had made similar progress. He started at the school full-time from the nursery in September able to form some letters correctly, but mainly at an early mark-making stage. Five months on he writes in a

quite well formed script, in simple sentences with good attempts at spelling. In mathematics, most pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of two-digit numbers and their place value. They use estimation strategies and are able to solve simple problems through the support of apparatus such as a number line or square. They experience maths games but opportunities for applying mathematics are not extensive. In some classes the work provided for pupils capable of higher attainment is not sufficiently demanding and this will make it difficult for them to achieve the higher Level 3.

6. Science standards by the end of the key stage are close to expectations. Teachers' assessments in 1999 showed that pupils achieved standards close to the national average. However, no pupils gained the higher Level 3 standard as compared with a fifth of pupils nationally. This points to a measure of underachievement that was also noted at the last inspection. Discussion with pupils shows they are building up their scientific knowledge steadily, with strengths in their understanding of life and living things. However, they have less experience of investigative science and this is limiting achievement, particularly for potentially higher attainers. In information technology, pupils in Year 2 are not achieving the expected standard in all elements of the subject.
7. They are competent in using word-processing and art applications for communication, but they know too little about gathering and analysing information using the computer, or controlling devices such as programmable robots. At the last inspection, pupils did not reach the expected standards. While this is still the case there is evidence that Year 1 pupils are working at the correct level across all the strands of the subject and standards are closer to those expected than in 1996.
8. In other subjects, pupils are generally achieving at least as expected for their age. In physical education, religious education and art, pupils' achievements by the end of the key stage are higher than is usually the case. Improvement is apparent in history: in 1996 the pupils' work and knowledge were below average and their progress was unsatisfactory. In response to a key issue, a more challenging curriculum and better teaching have led to improved standards. Design and technology standards were below expectations at the last inspection. It was not possible to judge how much these had improved as too few lessons were seen in the subject.
9. As part of the school's initiative to raise achievement, teachers keep class registers of individuals with special talents. This strategy is at an early stage and it is unclear how the school intends to use the register, or how well it is contributing to extending these pupils' skills. The additional reading activities with higher-attaining pupils pay dividends, as these pupils are capable and expressive readers. Also, the setting of pupils in Year 2 for creative writing means that more is being demanded of the most able pupils.
10. Pupils with special educational needs in learning are making good progress over time and improving their reading and writing skills at a reasonable rate. Their individual education plans have precise targets that provide a good basis to support their needs. These plans are being well monitored to check their progress and this is contributing to pupils' success. The pupils, who have English as an additional language, are making steady progress in acquiring literacy skills as teachers pay attention to developing pupils' vocabularies. However, it is only recently that these

pupils' levels of language acquisition have been fully assessed against the 'stages of language'. Further monitoring of these pupils' progress has yet to be organised.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. These are very good overall, which is a further improvement since the last inspection when they were good. This has a positive impact on standards and is a strength of the school.
12. Almost all pupils enter their classrooms sensibly and settle quickly to their tasks. They are usually very attentive when listening to their teachers and capable of quite lengthy periods of concentration on individual tasks. Even pupils who have challenging behaviour mainly understand what is expected of them and, with close support try to conform. Pupils are genuinely pleased by each other's success. On several occasions pupils applauded when a pupil had given a good answer or displayed work of a high standard, an example of which was when a pupil gave an excellent demonstration and explanation of how to change the font on the computer.
13. Pupils behave well in the playground and around the school. They enjoy using the equipment – hoops, ropes and balls – and have plenty to be involved in at playtime, which allows them to be lively but amiable to each other. The football rota was considered excellent by all pupils spoken with: "It gives us more space", "It's fair". On several occasions pupils in the lunch hall were observed helping without being asked, for instance, picking up a tray in the dining room. They were quietly praised for this by supervisors and received a sticker. There have been no exclusions from school in the recent past.
14. The very good relationships existing between pupils and staff pervade all aspects of the school. Staff provide good role models, treat pupils with respect valuing their efforts and celebrating success whenever possible and this is reflected in the positive responses from pupils. Their attitudes and behaviour show growing understanding as they mature. The Golden Rules, and the expectation of the staff with regard to pupils always telling the truth and distinguishing right from wrong, do much to ensure their very good personal development. Pupils are considerate of the needs of others; for example in the practical support they give to individuals with physical special educational needs. All pupils are given plenty of opportunities to help around the school and respond eagerly to this, such as carrying registers and messages and in classrooms where groups clear up efficiently and sensibly.
15. The attendance rate is below the national average. Registers are taken promptly and efficiently in all classes in both morning and afternoon. Latecomers are strictly marked as such. Unauthorised absences are above the national average due to a minority of parents allowing their children to take occasional days off. The school has a policy of rigorously marking these holidays as unauthorised absences in its drive to reduce them.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching is good overall. Fifty two per cent of lessons had good or better teaching that led to a good rate of learning for pupils. Almost all teachers taught several high-quality lessons. Six staff taught at least one very good or excellent lesson, amounting to 14 per cent overall. Of the rest, 41 per cent, were satisfactory and seven per cent (five lessons), were unsatisfactory. Most of the unsatisfactory lessons were in one class where the teaching was unchallenging and

slow paced. Teaching quality has improved substantially since the previous inspection when a third was unsatisfactory.

17. Teaching for the children under five is satisfactory in the nursery and over half the teaching in the reception classes was good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in these four classes. The teachers and support assistants work effectively in teams. They show a well-developed awareness of the needs of young children, to which the support is well matched. This enables the children to learn productively, as seen when some were investigating how ink moved on wet paper; a reception teacher allowed free exploration but guided the children with questions to notice the visual changes. In the nursery, numerous activities are planned and children are helped to develop independence in choosing what to do. Staff do not always sufficiently challenge the four-year-olds, for example in getting them to concentrate on activities in groups with an adult for increasing amounts of time. This hinders learning initially when children move to the more structured environments of the reception classes. Teachers' expectations are often high. They use a range of strategies to effectively teach basic skills and this is resulting in some good learning in literacy. For example, in an introduction to a design lesson the names of the 'joining materials' were reinforced and the children realised that several had the initial sound 's' in common. Long-term and day-to-day assessment records are built up steadily to give a comprehensive picture of children's development. Relationships are warm, which results in the nursery and reception classes being busy places where children feel secure and able to learn.
18. At Key Stage 1, overall the teaching of English, mathematics and information technology is good. Teachers are using the new strategies effectively and most teach lively, purposeful introductory parts to these lessons. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson the teacher shared the learning objective with pupils at its start, then used questions and brief explanations to probe and extend pupils' mental addition and subtraction skills. She prompted their responses with very good use of a soft toy to keep their attention and interest. After 15 minutes the pupils were vying to answer questions that were harder than those they attempted initially. Planning for the literacy and mathematics hours is usually at least sound and in some examples good. A good feature is the way teachers are planning for pupils to develop their information technology skills in most literacy and mathematics lessons, as seen in the use of a program on Venn diagrams by Year 1 pupils. Almost all teachers are skilled at introducing new phonic sounds and blends; for example, in a Year 1 class many pupils responded with quick understanding by offering lots of words beginning with 'sl', 'st' and 'sk'. A strength is the attention which teachers pay to developing pupils' speaking skills, not just in English but through developing the technical vocabularies of the wider curriculum. This is contributing strongly to pupils' learning. Pupils are expected to be independent when they work in literacy and mathematics groups, which provides challenge in its own right. In one instance pupils were uninterested in their tasks because the teaching was ineffective.
19. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are successfully integrated into lessons and provided with activities that support their learning needs, particularly in English. For example, with good, close support from the deputy headteacher, two pupils with high level needs practised blending sounds; they tackled the activity enthusiastically, as it was made into an enjoyable game, and consolidated their knowledge well. The learning support assistants play a useful role in ensuring that pupils focus on tasks, and make suitable progress in their learning. Pupils with emotional and behaviour needs are well catered for.

- Teachers and assistants use appropriate strategies to manage challenging behaviour well so that these pupils are usually focused in whole-class activities and do not slow the rate of learning for others. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is sound. Teachers make opportunities to extend these pupils' vocabularies and place them in groups that have extra support.
20. Almost all the teaching observed in religious education and history was good. In these lessons teachers provided very interesting books and artefacts to stimulate pupils' interest in the topics, and promoted high-quality learning. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum, which is reflected in their teaching. This is much better than the findings of the last inspection when teachers' knowledge of several subjects was criticised. For example, the links which teachers make between different subjects produce worthwhile cross-curricular activities, such as linking directional work in geography with activities in mathematics and information technology. However, planning for science is not focusing sufficiently on teaching the skills and processes of science.
  21. The short-term planning for non-core subjects is generally secure. Teachers usually write well-focused learning objectives for lessons. It is a new strategy to share these with pupils and this is improving pupils' learning by helping them to understand the purpose of their work. Planning formats are still evolving; recently written evaluations of the outcomes from lessons have been introduced. The quality of these comments is still varied, but they are providing a tool to aid the planning of future work.
  22. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. The very high-quality management and consistently applied behaviour strategies are contributing extensively to the pupils' rate of learning. Teachers offer appropriate praise and encouragement. There are productive working atmospheres in almost all classes and good use of resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils are usually expected to record work for themselves. This is a strength, which is developing their literacy skills in the wider curriculum. However, not all teachers are guiding pupils to organise and present this work neatly, on suitable paper, which is hindering learning. Too often work for different topics is muddled together so no sense of progression is apparent.
  23. Assessments, using informal strategies to gauge pupils' understanding, are evident in most lessons. Individual pupils have targets for improvement and instances of teachers talking to pupils about these were heard. Some teachers write assessment comments beside pupils' work, which is a useful strategy but others are not following the school's policy properly. Teachers provide a good range of homework, mainly linked to literacy and mathematics class-work. All pupils are expected to read at home and older pupils are guided to undertake other activities.

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

24. The school meets statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum subjects and religious education, and offers a broad, well-balanced curriculum. Children under five experience a wide-ranging and stimulating curriculum. A high, but appropriate amount, of time is spent teaching literacy, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully and effectively implemented at Key Stage 1 and modified appropriately for younger children in reception. The science curriculum is based on a good model but does



not focus sufficiently on investigative activities. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in the planning for weak subjects such as history, design and technology and information technology. The guidance to teachers is much better now.

25. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided for all pupils are satisfactory. Weekly 'Circle Time' sessions develop pupils' personal and social understanding appropriately, giving them an insight into the needs of others and the effects of their actions and words. The school has a programme for early drug awareness, for example pupils are taught about the care that must be taken with medicines. However, there is no formal programme for sex education. Additional opportunities for learning are provided in a weekly lunchtime Reading Club involving employees from a local firm and pupils in Year 6 from the partner junior school. Pupils respond to this good initiative in a very positive way. Visits to the National Gallery and also to a butterfly centre have provided some extra-curricular experience but after-school clubs are not a feature of school life.
26. The school maintains close links with its partner junior school through joint training days and some co-ordinators' meetings. There are also regular discussions between co-ordinators for special educational needs from both schools. Staff from outside agencies visit frequently, especially to support pupils with special educational needs. There are often visiting speakers, and representatives from 'Time Travellers', who are members of the community over the age of 55, support pupils' reading. The community policeman makes regular visits to schools as part of raising awareness of personal safety. The school has constructive links with a local secondary school for pupils with severe learning difficulties.
27. It makes a strong effort to ensure that the principle of equal opportunities is carried out in practice. For example, in purchasing resources for the literacy hour some books of specific interest to boys were chosen, a factor that contributed to the improvement in boys' standards. The accommodation features toilets for the disabled. The school is taking steps to target the needs of the more able with the introduction of a register of special talents.
28. At the last inspection the school made good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Now it is very good overall and a major strength of the school. Spiritual provision is good. The assemblies feature acts of worship which not only comply with statutory requirements but evoke a calm spiritual atmosphere. Pupils have been learning about naming ceremonies; one assembly explaining baptism was a moving experience enhanced by candle-lit surroundings, realistic artefacts and simple role-play. The pupils responded to the atmosphere with hushed, absorbed silence. The well-planned assembly themes allow pupils to reflect on their own experiences and the values and beliefs of others. These themes are further developed through 'circle time', religious education lessons and visits to places of worship of other religions. During an art lesson on Batik, the pupils' sense of wonder was clearly evident.
29. Moral teaching is very good. Staff expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. The school's behaviour policy is well organised, well understood and consistently applied. Pupils are developing an understanding of right and wrong, and are fully aware of the school's Golden Rules. The need for rules when playing games is clearly understood by the older pupils. Pupils' achievements in learning and behaviour are regularly celebrated with stickers and certificates. The entrance hall

'tree' display, of pupils' own thoughts on 'New Beginnings' is both attractive and meaningful.

30. The school provides very good opportunities for social development. Staff act as very positive role models, and relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are encouraged to play well together in the playground through the direct involvement of staff in their games. All classrooms are organised to foster pupils' independence. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible. They take registers and dinner money to the office, and give demonstrations and offer explanations in their class activities.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. History, art and geography are all successfully providing insights for pupils into their own and other cultures. The diverse cultural backgrounds of pupils are explored in a range of curriculum activities that are well displayed in the school. The special times of many cultures are celebrated, and artefacts are used well to enhance the pupils' learning. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully supports the school's aim which is to develop its pupils' thinking so that they can fully contribute to a multicultural society.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

32. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are a major strength that has improved further since the last inspection. Teachers know their pupils very well, especially those with special educational needs, and respond to them in a purposeful and supportive manner. The recent formalisation of pupils' progress into comprehensive Pupil Profiles has effectively sharpened the focus on monitoring academic and personal development. These records are used soundly by teachers to develop and modify their approach to pupils' welfare and guidance, as well as academic performance. There are regular assessments of each subject for each pupil. These comments are sometimes too broad, and less writing with sharper analysis is needed. Generally there has been a good improvement in the use of assessment, which was judged to be weak at the last inspection. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are well organised and have precise targets that are regularly updated. Targets are explained to parents at termly consultations. The provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is very good.
33. Pupils' sense of belonging and confidence is enhanced by the various cross-campus curricular or fund-raising events organised by the joint Infant and Junior 'Friends of Colham Manor'; for example, the May Fair. The role played by the welfare assistant, based in the medical room, is pivotal in offering pupils the opportunity to form and sustain a sense of security and well being. It is also significant that pupils return the attendance registers here. The welfare assistant efficiently monitors these registers although detailed statistical analysis is still in the process of development. The award of 100 per cent attendance certificates in assemblies helps promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school continues to operate an effective child protection policy in accordance with statutory requirements. At the meeting for parents, and in responses to the survey, parents praised the school for the good care it took of their children.

34. Both the classroom and corridor procedures for pupils' safety are well practised and all members of staff make good provision for potentially hazardous situations. Lunchtime routines in the dining hall are efficient and staff use this time to promote personal development. For example, through the use of rewards for help given to others, or good behaviour. Playground supervision is very good in the morning. Routines for stopping play, lining-up and filing-in are well practised and safe. They reflect the school's very effective procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. At lunchtimes there are sufficient supervisors overall to care for pupils but occasionally more staff are supporting in the lunch hall and corridors than in the playground.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

35. The school has very effective links with parents and carers that allow them to take an active part in their children's learning and progress. This strength has been maintained since the last inspection. Feedback from parents is valued. For example, the nursery staff have always offered an induction for new parents into the life of the school and their involvement in their child's development. The admissions procedure for children in the nursery is good, allowing them time to settle quickly in small groups. Both this and the transition arrangements to the partner junior school formed the subject of parent questionnaires. Parents come into the school every morning to help with their children's coats and bags and many go on through to the classroom where they can assist in the choice of a new reading book or speak to the teacher about any matter. Parents feel welcome in the school and feel that there is a genuine open-door policy, not only in the classroom, but also with the headteacher. Parents also have confidence in the long-serving welfare assistant who presides over first aid and medical matters. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.
36. Parents feel generally well informed about how their children are getting on. Curriculum events are well attended. These and the recent trial of the Family Literacy Project help generate positive attitudes to school life and boost parental confidence in how they may help their children to learn. The setting of individual pupil's targets also helps parents as the format includes a direction on how parents can help at home with the target in question. Reports are formally structured, succinct and easy-to-read. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in the discussion of their children's individual programme of work. The school is aware that a few parents speak little English and ensure that, should another family member not be available, the local translation service is called upon. The parents' questionnaires and meeting affirmed that parents are generally pleased with all the school does for their children and the education that it provides. A few parents questioned the amount of homework pupils received, believing it to be too much. Inspectors find that homework is no more extensive than in many other schools. Some parents were displeased that school trips had been cancelled because not enough parents returned the permission slips. The school is actively seeking ways to remedy this situation.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

37. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in these posts for under a year. They are already successfully influencing the school's educational provision and building an effective senior management team. A strength is the growing teamwork and the way senior managers are motivating staff to make the changes that will improve standards. Together, senior managers have identified several

practical improvements that will raise achievement. For example, through an analysis of pupils' books they highlighted weaknesses in the organisation of work. This is now being addressed with staff.

38. Teaching is monitored satisfactorily. At present formal appraisal procedures are in abeyance while the school waits for advice on new procedures. There are regular observations of teaching, and discussions are held with individual teachers on strengths and points for improvement. Also, from this, general development points have been made to all staff, such as the importance of sharing lesson objectives with pupils; this is now incorporated into the teachers' practice. As part of the school's initiative to raise achievement, the skilled deputy headteacher is used appropriately to provide support and demonstration lessons for other staff. Previously subject co-ordinators had a limited management role. Consequently delegation to middle managers is at an early stage and, for some, too little non-contact time is made available. Several are still insecure about the role and the range of activities it encompasses. Senior managers guided these co-ordinators in writing action plans, but in some the analysis of development is haphazard and the methods to judge success unclear. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection and the key issue related to monitoring has only been partially addressed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is highly organised and this aspect of the school's work is effectively managed.
39. The senior managers, and the efficient and knowledgeable chair of governors, are building a useful partnership, and gradually involving other staff and governors. There are link governors for key subjects and special educational needs. To varying degrees they meet with co-ordinators, visit classes, gather information and ask pertinent questions. Most governors are quite new to the role but are beginning to use personal expertise to assist the school. For example, the information technology governor has helped with auditing resources. She works with pupils in class, and is involved in an information and communications technology working party on raising achievement; the literacy governor has closely monitored the introduction of the literacy hour and regularly reads with the higher-attaining pupils; the chair of the premises committee has raised funds from local businesses to repair part of an annex building.
40. The governing body has several appropriate committees to assist with its work. The curriculum committee receives useful reports from teachers; for example on the assessment of performance data. This is suitably analysed to promote improvement, but the governing body has not required the school to set performance targets for national tests and this is a weakness. It has agreed performance targets for the senior managers. A good feature has been the strategic development to raise achievement. A working party has overseen this development to improve English performance and identify talented pupils. This has paid dividends in improved reading and writing standards but there is still work required in the other core subjects. The senior managers and chair of governors have the right priorities for improvement but weaknesses in the school development plan make it difficult to track the strategies for this. Teachers contribute to the plan, but governors are not involved enough at an early stage. The plan does not focus sufficiently on linking the available budget to the priorities. The strategies for monitoring progress and evaluating success are often too general. Some members of the governing body have had recent training on how to shape the school's long-term goals but this has yet to be put into practice to ensure systematic planning for the future.

41. The governing body produces a very good annual report for parents and uses surveys to consult them on their views. It has not yet established a full range of systems to apply all the best value principles, such as comparing costs with those of similar schools. Specific grants that have been allocated to the school, for books and pupils with special educational needs, have been targeted appropriately.
42. Teachers are suitably qualified in the primary phase of education, although their areas of expertise favour the arts. Administrative, and support staff are experienced and well briefed and they complement the work of the teaching staff well. The administrative staff use new technologies very competently to provide the school with financial and other information. Staff training needs are clearly identified and co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher. All staff have been well trained in the literacy and numeracy strategies, and the senior management team is aware that future training is best linked to priorities identified in the school development plan. Newly qualified teachers are well supported. They have mentors, attend relevant courses and are able to visit other classes and schools to observe teaching.
43. Accommodation is spacious, and bright with displays. It includes a well-equipped nursery and outdoor play area. The school is well maintained and the caretaker has a firm grasp of building-related issues and priorities. Resources are well organised and accessible – an improvement since the last inspection, when this became a key issue. While provision is broadly satisfactory, the range and quality of equipment for design and technology and art are relatively limited and the non-fiction book stock in the library is quite sparse. There is a good range of learning resources for children under five, many newly purchased from special local authority grants, to support the change in admission arrangements. The good-quality physical education equipment and large hall contribute to the high standards in the subject.
44. Overall, those leading and managing the school are committed to providing an effective education for pupils and to striving for higher standards. All the school's key aims are being focused on and fulfilled well.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

45. In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:
  - (1) monitor information technology teaching and learning, closely, to ensure that standards are improving across all its elements;  
*Paragraphs (6, 87-92)*
  - (2) provide more demanding tasks in mathematics for more-able pupils;  
*Paragraphs (5, 62-68)*
  - (3) plan tasks that involve pupils in investigative approaches to learning science;  
*Paragraphs (6, 20, 24, 69-72)*
  - (4) ensure that pupils' work in books is better organised and presented;  
*Paragraphs (22, 37, 70, 71)*

- (5) provide more training for subject co-ordinators so that they may monitor and evaluate more effectively, and ensure that there is sufficient time for them to do this;  
*Paragraphs (38, 72, 82, 92)*
- (6) strengthen the governing body's role in shaping the school's long-term goals;  
- also in assisting senior managers to produce a coherent development plan, with carefully budgeted priorities and clear principles for evaluation.  
*Paragraphs (40, 41)*

Issue 1 is already a focus of school improvement. Issue 1 and Issue 5 were parts of key issues at the last inspection.

**Other issues which should be considered by the school are to:**

- clarify the curriculum and expectations for four-year-olds in the nursery so they are ready to make an easy transition to the reception classes;  
*Paragraphs (17, 53, 100)*
- ensure that all teachers use the marking guidance consistently to make the best of on-going assessment;  
*Paragraphs (23, 60, 67, 71)*
- establish specific targets for end-of-key-stage-tests and assessments;  
*Paragraphs (40, 61)*
- improve the resources for art, design and technology and the non-fiction book-stock in the library.  
*Paragraphs (43, 61, 76, 79, 82)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### **Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	13	39	41	7	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	YR– Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	41	231
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		52

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	48

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	50	40	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	44	45
	Girls	36	38	38
	Total	76	82	83
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (81)	91(89)	92 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	44	43
	Girls	37	37	37
	Total	78	81	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (89)	90 (94)	89 (95)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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



**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	0
Indian	8
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	0
White	135
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	20

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

**Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	559,838
Total expenditure	552,137
Expenditure per pupil	1,952
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,994
Balance carried forward to next year	38,695

**Qualified teachers and support staff:  
nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	35

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
--------------------------------	----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	236
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	47	4	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	48	9	9	6
The teaching is good.	57	41	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	51	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	45	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	40	56	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	49	13	6	13

### Other issues raised by parents

Several parents wrote to commend the quality of the teaching and the help children received.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

46. Provision for children under five is good and generally mirrors that described at the last inspection. The school has successfully implemented the recent change in the borough's admissions procedure. Children are admitted into the nursery when they are three and now transfer into a reception class in the term before they are five. When they start in the nursery children generally have language and social skills similar to those usually seen, but their physical development is better. A minority of pupils have more limited speech and require additional support to develop conversational skills. Most children are likely to meet, or exceed, the learning outcomes for five-year-olds, in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Physical development is already better than expected for children of this age. All are learning steadily and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
47. When they start in the nursery, children's spoken language is variable. A substantial minority talk confidently and clearly, using complete sentences; most speak in short phrases and a few have unclear speech. A wide range of activities is provided for language and literacy skills in nursery and reception. Most of the children will achieve the expected outcomes. Children are keen to talk to each other and adults. They use their imagination in role-play and explain their actions in a variety of situations. For example, in the nursery a group of children enjoyed using puppets to perform nursery rhymes. The teacher assessed their knowledge of the words effectively by singing incorrect ones to check whether they recognised the errors. Children's listening skills develop well. Reception children listen attentively to each other and adults. They enjoy books and know that these have titles and are written by authors. They know the difference between words and pictures, and can follow the teachers' reading and join in enthusiastically with repetitive phrases. Children's use of language develops well. Some are able to suggest words such as 'huge' as an alternative to 'big' when describing the size of a bear. Children have the opportunity to practise writing and most can write at least their own name by the time they are five. They are beginning to recognise letters by shape and sound; for example, in one class children pointed out that the words 'sellotape' and 'staples' had the initial sound 's' in common.
48. In the nursery, children experience activities to help them recognise numbers; for example with the guidance of a nursery assistant, groups of children printed numbers using paint. Most were recognising one or two numerals and a few children could sequence several correctly. Reception year children count, order and record numbers up to ten, are likely to achieve the expected learning outcomes for mathematics. They identify basic shapes by name, and can describe position, size and weight. They can give realistic estimates when asked questions starting with "How many". They understand the meaning of 'more', 'less', 'biggest' and 'smallest' when dealing with numbers.
49. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world soundly. They use magnifying lenses to look closely at objects. When cooking they talk about how cake mixture will change when it is cooked. They use construction toys to build models. Children develop the skills of cutting, sticking and joining materials when

making model bears with moving parts. They can name farm animals. Children use information technology competently for their age, as seen in the reception classes when they were freely using a computer drawing program and independently enjoying stories on a listening centre.

50. Teachers organise a wide range of creative experiences and children reach the expected level by five years of age. They enjoy listening and moving to music and know nursery rhymes and songs by heart. They use their imaginations in role-play settings. Drawing, painting and modelling activities are used well to support children's learning, for example, shape sponges used to print repeating patterns.
51. Children demonstrate good standards of physical development. They use pencils, scissors, paint brushes and a computer mouse with confidence and increasing precision. Children climb and balance with enthusiasm and agility on large apparatus. They pedal and steer tricycles around a curved roadway with ease.
52. Children's personal and social skills develop well by the time they are five. They form good relationships with each other and adults. They learn to make choices, concentrate and persevere, and work independently and co-operatively in small groups. They are excited by their learning and approach all activities with energy and enthusiasm; for example they were fascinated how ink drops moved and changed on wet paper.
53. Teaching of the under-fives is sound overall in all areas of learning and has several good features. Planning is satisfactory. Teaching is most effective when activities are focused on a specific learning goal. In the nursery, the activities planned are numerous. However, they do not always sufficiently challenge the four-year-olds, and offer them longer focused teaching sessions, in a way that provides for a smooth transition into the reception classes. Teachers' expectations are often high particularly in the reception classes. Basic skills are taught well. Suitable long-term and day-to-day assessments of the children's personal and academic development are kept. Baseline assessment is completed thoroughly when children enter the reception classes. Support staff are well deployed and make an important contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships are good, which results in the nursery and reception classes being busy places where children feel secure and able to learn. The early years' co-ordinator is clear about the future developments for this part of the school.

## **ENGLISH**

54. The last inspection was highly critical of English teaching, which was unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' standards were below average and they made too little progress. It became an important key issue for the school. There has been a marked improvement in all aspects of English since then. There has been a significant rise in the standards boys achieve in reading and writing, and for all pupils in spelling standards. Progress in lessons is now good. Pupils use their literacy skills soundly in all subjects. The school's focus on developing speaking and listening, phonic and handwriting skills has been effective in raising attainment. The setting of Year 2 pupils has also been effective in raising the standard of writing. Information technology is now used regularly to good purpose in English lessons.
55. National test results for Year 2 pupils reveal an improvement in reading and writing for all pupils over the last three years. The school's improvement is more than the

national improvement. Boys' attainment has improved significantly in reading and writing. Teachers' assessments suggest that pupils attain broadly average levels for speaking and listening when compared with all schools nationally. Results for reading and writing are above average when compared with schools of a similar social context. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are well supported by teachers and assistants and are given work that suits their needs. More able pupils make satisfactory progress overall with better progress in reading. The school has fully and successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy.

56. Standards in speaking and listening are at the expected level for most pupils by the end of the key stage. They have good attitudes to their work, and learn to listen carefully to adults and each other as they share ideas during the literacy hour. They listen attentively to instructions and stories, and use appropriate vocabulary, which develops soundly throughout the key stage. They ask and answer questions successfully and discuss issues at a simple level. The clarity and articulation of pupils' speech improves as they gain confidence with age. Staff take every opportunity to enrich the pupils' vocabularies. This focus has a positive effect on the words pupils use, and sentence structure when they are writing.
57. Reading standards are broadly average by the end of the key stage, and pupils learn how books work from an early age. The school places considerable emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills and this is paying dividends in gradually rising standards. Pupils experience guided reading in literacy hour, and can choose books from carefully organised selections to share with their parents at home. They are learning to appreciate and discuss a variety of texts and practise different strategies for reading print. For example, they linked 'bolder writing' with the author's intention of making the book exciting and the need to read that section with more emphasis. The pupils read lists and instructions, and know how to use dictionaries and other reference materials. The regular support of parents at the early morning 'read ins' and at home makes a good contribution to pupils' progress.
58. The emphasis on letter formation, phonic understanding and sentence structure early in the key stage helps all pupils to make sound progress in writing. For example, a Year 2 pupil was able to explain clearly the purpose of 'magic e'. Pupils' handwriting develops well, becoming more evenly sized and cursive in style. By the end of the key stage most pupils write in cursive script. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the presentation of work is still too varied as one or two teachers do not expect enough from pupils. Average Year 2 pupils are able to write stories using a storyboard. They choose characters and are learning to invent interesting openings and endings to the stories. Most of these pupils can spell simple words accurately and use basic punctuation. More-able pupils spell well and spelling skills are generally better than usually seen for this age group. The setting of pupils in Year 2 for writing has a positive effect on the standards achieved by all pupils. They write in several styles including giving instructions, poetry and factual accounts. The work is often word-processed for display.
59. The teaching of English is good overall, although a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The best lessons are planned and prepared thoroughly with learning objectives clearly identified and shared with pupils. These objectives are constantly referred to as a focus for learning in lessons. In the majority of lessons the basic skills of English are effectively taught. The use of skilful open questioning challenges pupils' thinking, and imaginative activities make learning meaningful for

pupils. Co-operative planning, effective use of a variety of teaching strategies, and the very good management of pupils, support staff and resources all contribute to pupils' learning. Thus, in most lessons pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils are eager to participate in the whole-class activities and concentrate well when they work individually. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the lessons moved forward too slowly and pupils were not focused on their individual tasks. The work covered by pupils is generally well matched to their ability and enables them to make steady and often good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. For example, with good, close support from the deputy headteacher, two pupils with high level needs practised blending sounds; they tackled the activity enthusiastically, as it was made into an enjoyable game, and consolidated their knowledge well. Teachers' day-to-day assessments are accurate and are beginning to be used to inform future planning.

60. Teachers provide many useful word banks, displayed in classes, and lists which pupils use to gain independence in their English work. Those linked to topics help pupils to transfer their literacy skills to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are set homework regularly and this is having useful impact to consolidate and extend their learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked and praise is used frequently to motivate them. However, marking is not consistent between classes. Comments relating to pupils' successes appear reasonably regularly but are not used enough to set targets for future development.
61. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. There are clear aims, and a good range of initiatives has been designed to raise standards. There is a shared commitment to improve. The school has started to monitor the effectiveness of its decisions through the analysis of data and evaluation of teaching. However, no targets have yet been set for national assessment tests. Resources are appropriate and money has been sensibly spent on reading books and new texts for literacy. The library is appropriately organised but is not well stocked and lacks breadth in some topic areas. Each classroom has a comfortable area where pupils can enjoy fiction and non-fiction books.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 tests, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 was close to the national average, and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 exceeded the national average. In comparison with similar schools these results are above average. Inspection evidence confirms that most Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve expected standards later this year. This is a similar achievement to that noted at the last inspection; however there was a dip in standards in 1997 when pupils attained only low standards compared with national figures.
63. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well and it is followed successfully throughout Key Stage 1. Pupils are generally achieving well, learning at a good rate and covering the work that is recommended at the appropriate levels. In oral sessions, pupils in Year 1 are able to add and subtract numbers to ten, and count on in single digits from different starting points; also to count in twos into the teens, recognising odd and even numbers. Pupils are learning the appropriate language to explain their strategies for addition, such as retaining the largest number mentally and adding on the smaller number. In class and group work the good quality teaching means they are making good progress in understanding of

the attributes of shapes. The more-able pupils are confident about setting their own criteria to sort objects. Pupils have the opportunity to use the computer, for example, to sort into sets and this is integrated well into mathematics lessons. The increased use of information technology is an improvement since the previous inspection.

64. By Year 2, scrutiny of work shows pupils have experienced a suitable range of work. Most pupils can add three digits together mentally quite quickly and explain the strategies they use. The more-able pupils are able to do this with numbers to 20. They have a secure knowledge of two digit numbers and basic place value. They use their knowledge of ordinal numbers to solve their own problems through the support of apparatus such as a number line or 'hundred' square. Pupils are acquiring good skills in using estimation as a tool in mathematics.
65. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics lessons are nearly always good or very good. They listen attentively and respond eagerly to questions. In most instances they are well behaved and concentrate closely for their ages on individual tasks. Some lively co-operation was seen when they were playing mathematics games.
66. The quality of teaching is good overall, and better than found at the last inspection. It promotes high-quality learning through effective, targeted questioning. Teachers plan co-operatively in year groups and this is supportive. It enables an overview of the mathematics curriculum and introduces an assessment focus through evaluation and discussion. Staff have started to adapt and review planning to suit their needs, however there is little evidence of investigative activities in the planning. Mathematics is used in the wider curriculum, for example when pupils use measuring skills to build Tudor houses and bar charts linked to favourite types of books. Lessons provide activities that match pupils' levels of learning, but particularly at Year 2 these are not always demanding enough for those capable of the highest achievement. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils and evaluate these in the plenary sessions. They target their questions effectively to encourage maximum involvement of all pupils and probe individual's answers to develop logical thinking. This was done outstandingly well in a Year 2 lesson on mental addition and subtraction skills. The teacher prompted pupils to respond quickly and used a soft toy to keep their attention and interest. After 15 minutes the pupils were vying to answer questions that were harder than those they attempted initially, demonstrating very good progress. This teacher then used a good variety of mathematics games so pupils could consolidate what they had learned in the class activity.
67. Management of groups within classes is usually effective when teachers circulate and support pupils to set clear targets for improvement. Support assistants or parents provide valuable help in discussing activities with pupils. In one instance where the teacher was without support and focused exclusively on one group, other pupils' rate of learning dipped. In one lesson that was taught unsatisfactorily, time was not used constructively and the pace of the lesson was slow so pupils became bored and learned little. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated effectively in mathematics activities, through mathematics games and appropriately directed activities. Teachers provide guidance through discussion to help classroom assistants support pupils. Teachers mark work regularly but there is too much variation in how it is done and it rarely identifies points for improvement.



68. The co-ordinator for mathematics is clear about her responsibilities relating to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. She supports colleagues through training and monitors planning. There is target setting in Year 1, but these are not formalised throughout the school. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development but secure. Homework activities are planned according to the pupils' needs. Teachers have provided a useful numeracy vocabulary book for parents to assist them. The governor with responsibility for numeracy regularly supports the teachers and pupils in the classroom. The most recent annual governors' meeting with parents had a numeracy focus to raise the profile of mathematics.

## SCIENCE

69. Standards in the past two years, based on teachers' assessments, were above the national average in 1998 and similar to it in 1999. When compared with the performance of pupils in schools of a similar type, standards are above average at Level 2. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is well below national figures. For example, last year no pupils reached this level, compared with a fifth of pupils nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 2 pupils are achieving standards that are close to average. This is similar to the findings at the 1996 inspection. However, the curriculum, particularly in experimental and investigative science, is not sufficiently challenging. This is limiting the possibility of pupils gaining the higher Level 3. It is resulting in underachievement for those with the most potential. This criticism of underachievement was also noted in the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out simple tests, and are relating their knowledge to the world around them. They are developing satisfactory investigative skills and starting to make scientific predictions and conclusions. For example, in a Year 2 class, they considered whether children who were tall would have larger feet and followed this with an investigation that disproved the prediction. In conversation though, pupils found difficulty in identifying any features that would make tests fair. They record results with reasonable accuracy for their age, as seen in tallying and simple graphs undertaken as part of the study of favourite foods. However, pupils are not using mathematical skills widely in science activities and they use information technology infrequently.
70. Pupils have acquired new knowledge satisfactorily in the activities undertaken so far this year. However, within this broad judgement there are some inconsistencies between year groups and parallel classes that are preventing maximum progress. In Year 1, pupils experience a reasonable variety of ways to record activities, such as writing lists, but work tends to be interspersed with that from other subjects and lacks a coherent pattern. In Year 2, the work produced by one class is more extensive and of better quality than from the other two. For instance, pupils write predictions and investigations about melting in their own words. In other classes pupils are given less opportunity to practise their literacy skills or write independently. In conversation, Year 2 pupils are eager to share what they know about the work they have done so far this year. They recall their learning about plants and animals very well; for example they can name a large number of land and sea animals, know some features of reptiles, and can explain the terms 'fossils' and 'extinct' in relation to dinosaurs. Year 1 pupils are excited by their science activities, and showed keen curiosity when exploring the materials that were attracted to magnets. Their collaboration with each other on the investigations was better than expected for such young pupils. Learning assistants, or parents, in practical activities sometimes support pupils with special educational needs and this helps them to focus on the tasks.
71. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are soundly planned and well resourced. For example, there was a plentiful supply of magnets and materials so all pupils in a class could investigate, and a carousel of different activities to sustain pupils' interest. Teachers mainly have satisfactory subject knowledge, however, in the Year 2 lessons observed, not enough thought had been given to how best to use the time available. Too much time was devoted to whole-class discussion and recording rather than investigating. Scientific terms are explained well and teachers are thorough in their questioning. A Year 1 teacher made good

use of pupils' ideas for testing magnets and formed these into the focus for the next lesson. Year 1 teachers mark pupils' work thoughtfully with comments that assess pupils' understanding, but this quality of marking is less apparent in other classes. Teachers generally do not make enough use of display in ensuring that science has a high profile.

72. The school has a science policy that is due to be updated. It uses national guidance as the basis for the scheme of work and has recently increased the time allocation. This has the potential to extend the curriculum and offer higher-attaining pupils more challenging work, which will enable them to gain higher standards. At present science is not making sufficient impact as a core subject. For example, too little weight is given to the processes of scientific investigation. There are sound assessment notes that show the progress made by individual pupils, although some comments are too general. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has substantial other management obligations with insufficient time to devote to monitoring this core subject effectively and completing points in the action plan.

## **ART**

73. The school has maintained the high standards identified in the last inspection. Observation of three lessons, discussion with pupils and examination of work on display provide sufficient evidence to judge that standards at the end of the key stage are higher than seen in most schools. There is a strong commitment to art and pupils' enjoyment, and this is supported by a clear scheme of work and a knowledgeable co-ordinator who leads effective staff development.
74. Pupils' attitudes to art are good and they work at tasks with enjoyment and concentration, developing an awareness of texture through different techniques, paper collage, ink and water mixing and painting. Pupils in Year 2 observe and record accurately the patterns on natural objects. They used a stimulating range of resources such as shells and stones to create wax-resist pictures. A small group were closely guided by a teacher and helped to develop their ideas in batik on fabric. Pupils were excited at using a new medium and made good observations, adapting and trying out new ideas. Art also makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development, which was evident during a demonstration on wax resist techniques. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to show appreciation of works by famous artists and these are used to promote cultural awareness, as in the high-quality work based on Aboriginal design.
75. Some very good teaching was seen which promoted high standards as the teacher demonstrated good practice through the use of wax resist techniques, and suggestions for improvement strategies. Conversely in an unsatisfactory lesson planned to the same format, the teacher's limited subject knowledge meant pupils were not given the correct resources and so were disappointed that their efforts were unsuccessful. Classroom and corridor displays are vibrant and illustrate that art is valued within the school. Two and three-dimensional displays are of high quality and reflect the success and enjoyment of the pupils in this subject. For example, scraffito work and art to reflect feelings, as well as computer-generated art.
76. There is a good art policy that aids continuity and progression through the development of skills, targets and assessment. Monitoring attainment and progress

through assessment for pupils' portfolios are at an early stage, but a start has been made on collecting photographs of pupils' work using a digital camera. Resources are satisfactory, but do not include the broad range of media necessary to provide a diversity of work for pottery, sculpture, weaving, printing and dyeing.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

77. At the last inspection, standards were below average and teaching and pupils' progress were found to be unsatisfactory. These weaknesses became part of a key issue for improvement. Since then a co-ordinator has been appointed, and recently national guidance has been used as the basis for the scheme of work.
78. Just one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection. Pupils were designing a 'slider' toy using simple paper engineering techniques. The teaching was satisfactory as the teacher carefully demonstrated the mechanism for a slider toy and pupils learned new skills soundly. She supported the pupils' learning by making suggestions for improvement. Evidence gained from viewing work on display shows that by the end of the key stage pupils choose materials, and have the skills, to make a simple puppet at a standard similar to that seen in most schools. Older pupils also made attractive box models of half-timbered houses linked to their study of history. In Year 1, pupils use joining skills appropriately to make a cup and ball toy as part of their history work; also, simple paper folding techniques when making wide mouth frogs. They are able to cut, join and shape materials, exploring the sensory quality when they were making models of their teddies.
79. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of materials, beyond paper and card, are too limited, with little experience of using wood or fabric. There is limited evidence of food technology investigation, or use of tools and work with hard materials. The development since the last inspection has only been partially successful. There has been no major thrust to improve this subject and some weaknesses, particularly in resources remain.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

80. No lessons were observed during the inspection and evidence is taken from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of work and display. Achievements in Year 2 are appropriate for the age of the pupils and the standards have been maintained from the last inspection. They have worked on mapping skills, for example, mapping their journey to school. They recognise and name the various parts of the United Kingdom. They can talk about the weather and know that countries near the equator are hot. They can compare Hillingdon with the Isle of Struay in the Outer Hebrides and identify several differences.
81. The curriculum organisation ensures the skills of the subject are taught progressively. Mapping is a recurring theme and pupils' work demonstrates a refinement of skills, knowledge and understanding. The quality of teachers' marking varies too much, from a tick to challenging comments, such as "Why did you dress him in these clothes?" Also, pupils' work in geography is interspersed with that of other subjects, which makes it difficult to monitor the progress of their learning. The best examples of work were well matched to the different skills of the pupils. For example, during a study of weather, some pupils were asked to describe in writing, the effect of the weather whilst others were asked to draw a picture to show types.
82. Resources are adequate although the co-ordinator is aware that more books have yet to be provided for teachers. All classes have access to atlases, globes and maps which is an improvement from the last inspection. Little systematic monitoring

of geography takes place, although the co-ordinator has scrutinised books, and this limits the evaluation and improvement of standards.

## **HISTORY**

83. At the last inspection history standards were below expectations and pupils' progress and the quality of teaching were unsatisfactory. These weaknesses formed part of a key issue. There has been good improvement in the teaching and learning of history. All the teaching observed was good and, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards that are similar to those found in other schools.
84. Year 1 pupils talk confidently about the passage of time in relation to their own family tree, but record a limited amount of work. Year 2 pupils record work soundly in a variety of ways, including using literacy skills in extended writing and art. Pupils enjoy history, and the majority talk confidently about what they have learned. They are able to make comparisons between the near and distant past, and the present. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to discuss in detail why the great fire of London spread so quickly, and how the response to a fire today would be different. A good proportion of pupils volunteered sensible ideas on how information about the event had been passed down through time. Pupils' interest in the subject and very good behaviour in lessons contributes significantly to the good rate of learning they achieve.
85. Teachers' intentions for lessons are clearly communicated to pupils and this aids learning. Lessons are well organised and well paced leading to good acquisition of knowledge and understanding in all the lessons seen. Pupils are taught about the lives of famous people in history. Teachers wisely plan for some of this work to be completed through English so pupils study non-fiction texts and different genres of writing. Good use is made of visits and external speakers as seen during the inspection. Year 1 pupils were able to play with, and on, a wide selection of Victorian toys. This 'hands on' experience significantly improved their learning, and ability to make direct comparisons between the toys of today and those of 100 years ago. They were also able to talk about what it was like to live then, as compared to now. Resources are satisfactory and teachers make good use of a range of artefacts and reference materials to support pupil learning.
86. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role. In response to the key issue, teachers' knowledge and understanding of history, and effective ways of teaching the subject, have been developed through training at whole staff and year group meetings. Long, medium and short-term plans show coverage of the full range of National Curriculum requirements and this is much better than the weak planning described in 1996. Planning meetings ensure consistency between classes and that progress is made through the key stage. Previously there was no assessment, now pupils' attainment is assessed twice a year and entered into the pupil's profiles.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

87. A priority for the school at present is to improve pupils' information technology skills. At the last inspection, pupils did not reach the expected standards as they had too few opportunities to use different sorts of information technology applications. The oldest pupils in Year 2 are still not achieving the expected standard in all elements of the subject. They are competent in using word-processing and art applications for communication, but they know too little about gathering and analysing information using the computer, or controlling devices such as programmable robots. A new curriculum, based on national guidance, has been in place for

several months. This has allowed teachers to plan more effectively and pupils are now building up their skills systematically week by week, across the full range of information technology activities.

88. Year 1 pupils are quickly gaining skills in all strands of the subject. They were observed learning to program a 'robot' toy. Most recalled well the simple instructions that they had been taught the previous week, and practised applying these to make the toy move forward and backwards. Good learning took place and by the end of the session pupils were starting to understand how they might make the robot change direction. They worked enthusiastically in small groups and co-operation was generally good with pupils taking turns fairly. However, the girls in one group were not fully involved because the boys dominated the activity.
89. Conversations with Year 2 pupils show they know the basic principles of using a computer and can name its main parts and functions. They have a good understanding of how to use a complex word-processing package. For example, they have learned to use the mouse and appropriate icons to change the size, style and colour of fonts. They are positive about using information technology, can recall a few programs they have used, and enjoy using the computer. Work on display demonstrates that pupils are using these skills to write stories and poems in English, and convey information in religious education.
90. Information technology is now timetabled regularly and six taught sessions were seen at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching is good overall and is leading to effective learning. This is an improvement on the unsatisfactory teaching in 1996. Now teachers plan to use information technology on a regular basis. Teachers have to cluster pupils around a single machine to explain new ideas, which is not an ideal situation as it is difficult for those at the back to see the screen icons clearly. A strength is the way teachers build up the new vocabulary associated with the different applications. They constantly check that pupils understand the meanings of words such as format and font. As far as is possible pupils are involved in demonstrating the new techniques, and are expected to use these at a later stage in literacy or other lessons. Pupils responded to these sessions positively and were keen to take a turn to show their knowledge.
91. Teachers are successfully planning ways to link essential information technology skills with other subjects. For example, the directional work with a programmable toy is linked with the geography and mathematics curriculum. Information technology is being used appropriately in most English and mathematics lessons to improve skills in these subjects, as seen when Year 1 pupils were learning about Venn diagrams. Sometimes data-handling applications are used in science, for example to establish favourite fruits, but this use is quite limited.
92. The school benefits from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic link governor for information technology who is helping to raise the profile of the subject in the school. She has assisted the new co-ordinator with an audit of hardware and software and as a result some appropriate rationalisation has taken place. The school has at least two computers in each class but these do not always run similar software, which complicates planning for teachers. The co-ordinator and senior managers are clear about the areas for improvement, for example the need to train staff so that they are confident about using a wider range of applications. However, the co-ordinator has little time available to find out what is happening in other classes. The school has been provided with a new system which links it to the



Internet but at present this is not being used to best advantage. More staff training has yet to be organised to get the best value from this expensive resource.

## MUSIC

93. Just one music lesson was observed during the inspection, but some further evidence was gained from assemblies. Consequently, no precise judgements on the standards that the oldest pupils reach may be made. However, the comments made below reflect the generally satisfactory picture noted in the 1996 inspection.
94. Pupils use their voices expressively to sing songs and also to represent characters, actions, and animal sounds. In the Year 1 lesson seen, the teacher shared the learning objectives with the pupils clearly and discussed the ways in which these might be applied. These pupils responded to the challenge sensibly, co-operated well in small groups, and as a class, to tell the story of 'Good Night Owl' with accompaniment. They played the untuned instruments appropriately, demonstrating control and appreciating the value of silence in a group composition. They are able to create a variety of sounds, and gained satisfaction from listening to their recorded performance. However, the opportunity was missed for pupils to appraise and improve their 'music', which they heard on the tape. The teacher encouraged good links with literacy development by getting pupils to match verbs to the sound of instruments. Pupils are taught the vocabulary of music such as dynamics and are encouraged to discover the qualities of dynamics in their own composition.
95. In assemblies, pupils listen with concentration and sing together with a good sense of pitch and rhythm. They know the words of a good range of songs by heart. Pupils listen quietly to music at the start and end of assembly. They have experience of performing in celebrations of major festivals such as Christmas. The co-ordinator is well qualified to support other teachers, but has no systematic way to check on pupils' music experience. This limits the evaluation and improvement of standards and a similar comment was made at the last inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. During the inspection it was not possible to see all aspects of the physical education curriculum. The recently revised scheme of work and accompanying guidelines ensure that an appropriate range of activities, that is, dance, games and gymnastics are followed during the course of the year. Standards in dance are higher than usually seen at the end of Key Stage 1. This level of attainment is an improvement since the last inspection.
97. Pupils understand the importance of warming up/cooling down and the effect exercise has on their bodies, as noted in one child's comment, "it stops us pulling muscles." They express themselves appropriately through a range of well-controlled movements. These are often related to the exploration of feelings – apprehension, happiness, excitement, described in a familiar story - 'Tilley's Special Day.' They are able to link several movements together, such as 'clouds', 'rain', 'raindrops', 'puddles'. Several very agile pupils achieved a very high level of success in this activity.
98. Teachers introduce routines well in the reception classes; for example, changing, moving to and from the hall quietly, finding a space and listening. All these routines are emphasised appropriately throughout Key Stage 1. Consequently, by Year 2, pupils listen well and demonstrate confidence in their uninhibited movements, and the suggestions they make; for example, "I think happy is fast and sad is slow."

99. Pupils enjoy the subject and their positive attitudes and their good behaviour is a strength. They change quickly and quietly and move sensibly to the hall where they move to a space and wait quietly. They are eager to please and respond quickly to praise. They readily volunteer to demonstrate a particular movement and show pride in their achievements. Pupils remained attentive and patient even in an instance where there was unsatisfactory, slow paced teaching with long breaks between activities.
100. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In most lessons teachers exercise excellent control and are quick to encourage and praise the pupils. The children who have just begun in reception are not familiar with routines and the attention given to this aspect in the nursery requires clarification. There were several well-taught lessons with brisk pace, well-linked tasks, where teachers led by example and enabled the pupils opportunities to make suggestions and give demonstrations. For instance when a pupil suggested, "I think a thunderstorm would look spikey." Objectives are clearly explained at the beginning of all lessons and referred to throughout – this helps ensure the pupils remain focused. The school has a large hall and is well equipped for physical education which is very beneficial for the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

101. Standards in religious education are higher than expected by the locally agreed syllabus. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the subject fully meets the requirements of the syllabus. By the end of the key stage pupils are aware of the major world religions and have studied Christianity and Islam in some depth. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding and support each other well. For example, the co-ordinator assisted a group of pupils in one lesson and this enabled some monitoring of the curriculum.
102. The quality of teaching was good overall. A strength is the effective use of resources, such as a copy of the Qur'an and its stand, a prayer mat and examples of Islamic patterns. These items are treated with reverence and respect – reflected by the rapt attention and concentration of the pupils when these artefacts were displayed and discussed. Occasionally a teacher spoke for too long, so missed opportunities to question pupils and involve them in practical activities.
103. The pupils' rate of learning is good and they showed very positive attitudes to their work in religious education. Teachers ensure lessons start with questions so pupils may reflect on previous learning. Stories are told supported with visual aids. This is helping pupils to ask relevant questions. It highlighted how that they were trying hard to come to terms with difficult concepts, and make links with the knowledge they already had. For example, after hearing about how the Angel Gabriel visited Mohammed, one boy suggested, that "if the message came from Gabriel then Jesus must have been a Muslim" Teachers make good cross-curricular links that stimulate pupils' learning and interest. For instance, with art, some pupils make model angels, draw artefacts and copy symmetrical Islamic patterns.
104. Teachers also draw well on the experience, knowledge and faith of the pupils to make lessons more relevant and interesting. Recently revised schemes of work are helping focus the teachers' good-quality planning. The school has a good range of resources including artefacts, which are used most effectively in a display in the

corridor on Ramadan. Some books in the teachers' resource cupboard could be given wider prominence in the school library.