

INSPECTION REPORT

FORSTER PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lewisham

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100683

Headteacher: Mrs A. Simmons

Reporting inspector: Mr A. Portlock
21411

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 5th July, 2001

Inspection number: 197222

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, infant and junior

School category: County

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Boundfield Road
Catford
London

Postcode: SE6 1PQ

Telephone number: 0208 698 5686

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr C. Yardley

Date of previous inspection: 6th - 9th May, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21411	A. PORTLOCK	Registered inspector	Design and technology	What sort of school is it?
			Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
				How well pupils are taught.
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
19692	R. FOLKS	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11472	M. BEALE	Team inspector	English	
			History	
			Information and communication technology	
18642	J. BERRY	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum	
			Physical education	
			Religious education	
29989	P. GOODSSELL	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Music	
			Special educational needs	
			Equal opportunities.	
			English as an additional language.	
31615	E. RADLEY	Team inspector	Science	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Forster Park is situated in Catford and most pupils come from the local area. The school has pupils from 3 to 11 years of age and is bigger than most schools with 361 pupils on roll. The nursery admits three-year-olds part-time and most of these transfer to the two reception classes in the September or January following their fourth birthday. The attainment of children on entry overall is very low. Just over half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and a third of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, both of which are well above the national average. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. The pupils come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Just over one fifth of pupils speak English as an additional language. Besides English, there are 21 different languages spoken, mainly Yoruba, Turkish and Tamil. Last year, about a quarter of the pupils joined or left other than at the usual times.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils and makes good provision for its ethnically varied community. Whilst the pupils' achievements are low on entry, the school is helping the pupils to make satisfactory progress. The overall good quality of teaching is bringing about improvements in standards, as is the good leadership of the school, which is developing more effective procedures to evaluate its work and the pupils' progress. The school is aware, however, that there is a need for further improvement if all pupils are to reach their full potential. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The good teaching overall, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, is supporting the sound progress made by most pupils.
- The very good start to school provided in the foundation stage.
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language ensures that they make similar progress to other pupils.
- The teachers' planning, especially in English and mathematics, and the procedures for monitoring the pupils' progress are effectively helping the needs of all children.
- The school provides effectively for the pupils' cultural development.

What could be improved

- The standards in English and mathematics.
- The pupils' attendance.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 to match that in the other key stages.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in May 1997, found the school to be a caring school but with considerable weaknesses. Since then it has, with the support of the local authority, improved in all aspects of its work and has become part of the Education Action Zone, and in many aspects there have been significant improvements. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved, although the standards achieved by boys, especially in the infants, are behind those of the girls. Teaching is now good overall. The greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy is supporting the pupils' progress. All the issues from the last inspection have been tackled well. Four of these related to management issues, that are now securely in place. Effective assessment procedures have been established and the National Curriculum requirements in science, design and technology, information technology, physical education and music are now secure. There is now a daily Collective Act of Worship.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E*	E	E	C	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E*	E	E	D	
Science	E	D	E	C	

The 2000 national tests results for 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. In English and science they were close to the average for similar schools but below average in mathematics. The results for 7-year-olds showed the school's performance in English and mathematics were very low in comparison with the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Results in the more recent 2001 tests show a continued improvement for seven and 11-year-olds. On entry to the nursery, the children display very low attainment generally; in particular their language and mathematical skills. The standards of pupils aged seven and 11 in English and mathematics have improved year-on-year since the last inspection but they continue to be well below average. In English, mathematics and science there has been a steady improvement in standards similar to that of most schools.

Inspection evidence indicates in the foundation stage, many children are working towards achieving the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception year. Although they make good progress in developing learning and personal skills, their standards overall are still low by the time that they are five in most areas. Standards in English and mathematics are well below average for 7-year-olds and need to improve further. Standards are below average for 11-year-olds, except in writing which is well below average. Standards in science are close to that expected for 7 and 11-year-olds. More pupils are achieving the expected level in national tests. The pupils with special educational needs, those pupils with English as an additional language and the few higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. The targets set for this year are higher than for last year and are suitably challenging and they have been exceeded.

In other subjects, standards are mostly in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. In religious education standards are above expectations for 11-year-olds. Standards have improved in history, design technology, music, physical education and religious education for both seven and 11-year-olds. Whilst standards have remained in line with expectations in information and communication technology overall, they have improved in some aspects because of better teaching, resources and the management of the subject.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. Before school, at playtimes and lunchtimes the pupils are friendly and courteous.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour, including the incidence of exclusions, is satisfactory. In a very small number of lessons poor behaviour mars the pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school and the pupils' personal development are good.
Attendance	Attendance rates are well below the national average.

The pupils enjoy coming to school. Most pupils are well behaved both in lessons and in playground. They take responsibility and respond reasonably well to the opportunities provided. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and the pupils with English as an additional language have good relationships with adults. The number of exclusions has reduced significantly during this academic year. Levels of attendance have been a problem in the school for some years and remains well below average, mostly because pupils leave without notifying the school, a very high number of absences for medical reasons and parents taking their children for holidays. The number of unauthorised absences has improved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	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.

The quality of teaching is good overall. The pupils maintain high levels of interest in their work because the teaching provides a good balance of activities that are relevant to their needs. The teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, with 4 per cent unsatisfactory; 64 per cent were good or better and 19 per cent very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good and very good teaching. The teaching in the foundation stage is very good. As a result, the children demonstrate very positive attitudes to school and relate well to each other and to adults. The teaching is good overall in junior classes and in some infant classes and for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. However, teaching in the infant classes, whilst satisfactory overall, is not as strong as the other two key stages, particularly in one class where the management of pupils is not as secure. The teaching in English and mathematics, including, literacy and numeracy lessons, is good, but insufficient emphasis is placed on improving the pupils' speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in science and history. Through improved planning, assessment and curriculum the staff ensure that the school is meeting the needs of all pupils. Most pupils respond well to the work and apply themselves in the effort that they make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities, which is relevant to pupils' interests and aptitudes.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The special educational needs teaching and support staff are committed to helping the pupils achieve their personal targets and there are good procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' academic progress and personal development.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The teachers and support staff have good procedures in place for identifying and meeting the needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. The provision made for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The pupils' social skills and moral and cultural awareness are well developed throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school and supports the pupils' progress and personal development well. The school has effective arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare and for child protection.

The curriculum is well balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. There is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school has effective systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in the foundation stage, English and mathematics. The extra-curricular activities provided at the school

are very limited and so make little impact on the pupils' personal development. Links with the parents are satisfactory but there is insufficient involvement by parents in the life of the school and with their children's learning overall.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, provide good leadership. They work as an effective team and are supported by the other members of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has improved the evaluation of its performance and it is now good.
The strategic use of resources	Overall there is effective management of the school's finances and the strategic use of its resources.

The school has established effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and the quality of teaching has improved. In English, mathematics and science the subject co-ordinators have opportunities to monitor standards and pupils' achievements. The governors are keen to ensure that the school receives best value for the spending decisions it makes. Such principles are rigorously applied when obtaining tenders and in comparing the school's performance with that of similar schools. The learning resources and staffing are satisfactory and the school's accommodation is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable. • The children like school. • The children are expected to work hard. • The teaching is good. • The school helps the children to become more mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are not sufficient out of lesson activities. • The behaviour is not good. • Some concerns about homework. • The way the school works with parents.

The inspection findings agree with most of the parents' positive views. Overall teaching is good and there has been a significant improvement. The inspection team agrees that there are too few activities out of lesson time. Most pupils' behaviour is good but there is some inappropriate behaviour in lessons. Links with the parents are satisfactory but there is insufficient involvement by parents in the life of the school and with their children's learning overall. Homework is supporting the pupils' learning in most classes, particularly in English in junior classes. However in some classes, the setting of homework is inconsistent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the nursery, the children display very poor attainment generally; in particular they exhibit underdeveloped language and mathematical skills. The standards of pupils aged seven and 11 in English and mathematics have improved year-on-year since the last inspection but they continue to be well below average. In English, mathematics and science there has been a steady improvement in standards similar to that of most schools. The attainment of seven-year-old girls is better than that of the boys.
2. The results of the 2000 national tests for pupils aged 11 showed that standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. In English and science they were close to the average for similar schools but below average in mathematics. The results of the 2000 national tests for 7 year olds showed the school's performance in English and mathematics were very low in comparison with the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Results in the more recent 2001 tests show a continued improvement for seven and 11-year-olds.
3. Inspection evidence indicates that in the foundation stage, whilst few children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in the six areas of learning by the end of the reception year, the numbers are increasing. Whilst they make good progress in developing learning and personal skills, their standards overall are still low. Standards in English and mathematics are well below average for seven -year-olds and below average for 11-year-olds, except in writing which is well below average. Standards in science are close to that expected for both seven and 11-year-olds. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. The pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to the other pupils in the school. Most achieve a reasonable degree of competency in English by the time they are seven and for juniors their rate of progress improves as they move through the key stage. By the time they are 11, the pupils who have attended the school for a number of years are competent in English and able to take a full part in the lessons speaking with fluency and confidence and reading appropriate texts with understanding.
4. Overall in English, mathematics and science, the pupils make satisfactory progress, including higher attaining pupils, those pupils with special educational needs and English an additional language but the standards, although improving, are not high enough. The large proportion of the pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, and the significant level of mobility of pupils throughout the school, are factors that contribute to the overall level of standards of work achieved and have a limiting effect on the progress that pupils make. The improved quality of teaching and the more effective pupil records allow the teachers to monitor individual pupils' achievements and to set clear targets for improvement. Targets set for this year are higher than for last year and have been exceeded.
5. In English, standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation but better in junior classes than in the infants, where some pupils do not listen attentively to adults and many find it difficult to listen to one another responsively. The pupils gain in concentration and confidence as they move through the school. Standards in reading are well below average for seven-year-olds and below average for 11-year-olds. Higher attaining seven-year-olds read accurately, and although fluency varies, their understanding is often affected by a limited vocabulary. Lower attaining pupils recognise few words and letters, relying strongly on picture cues and adult support. Higher attaining 11-year-olds read fluently and with reasonable expression. About half the pupils in Year 6 are skilful in analysing texts. The majority of lower attaining pupils are not aware of the errors they make and have very limited strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Standards in writing are well below average for seven and 11-year-olds but efforts made to address this are having a positive effect. The National Literacy Strategy is gradually raising standards for infant pupils. By age seven, a few higher attaining pupils produce clear descriptive and imaginative writing, which is appropriately punctuated. For a significant

number of pupils, however, spelling is unsatisfactory and they use a limited vocabulary when they write. Most pupils use their phonic knowledge reasonably well and a few are beginning to use simple punctuation in sentences.

6. In mathematics, the work seen during the inspection shows that the pupils' attainment remains below the national average for pupils aged seven and 11. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The school is aware that these standards are not as high as they should be. In recent years there has been a marked difference in the performance of boys and girls by the end of the year in which they are seven, with the girls' attainment better than that of the boys. The school has recognised this and has started to address the problem by targeting the boys in lessons and ensuring that they are fully involved in the learning activities. By the time they are seven, the pupils have some understanding of place value, most are able to count in 2s, 5s and 10s and the most able can divide by 2, 5, and 10. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and can identify the properties that each one has. By the age of 11, the pupils work out problems to do with weight, time and temperature, and they use negative numbers with confidence to work out the differences in temperature. They are able to work out mentally and speedily the equivalent value of fractions and decimals and they understand the use of brackets.
7. In science, on the basis of the work seen during the inspection, the pupils attain standards close to that expected of seven and 11 year-olds. Standards are significantly higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection, particularly by the time that they leave the school. The standards have improved largely because the school has made sure that the teachers have a better understanding of how to teach the subject. This has given them the confidence to provide more opportunities for pupils to do practical and investigative work.
8. In other subjects, standards are in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. Standards have improved in history, design technology, music, physical education and religious education for both seven and 11-year-olds since the last inspection. In some aspects of information and communication technology, standards have improved because of better teaching and resources and the management of the subject, but have remained in line with expectations overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Overall the pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour, including the incidence of exclusions are satisfactory. Relationships within the school and personal development are good but attendance, although improving, is well below the national average.
10. The pupils enjoy coming to school and show an interest in what they do. Although there are few activities outside lessons, the ones that are available are very well supported. The school choir is a good example of this. The enthusiasm and the time spent practising are a credit to the school. The school is planning to start design technology, computer and sport for all clubs from September.
11. In one-to-one situations, small groups and in whole class situations, the pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to volunteer answers to questions and to take part in school activities. They have good relationships with adults who support them individually, when working in small groups and in whole class activities. The pupils with English as an additional language quickly develop positive attitudes and are well supported not just by the staff but by other pupils. In a geography lesson, for example, an older junior pupil very new to the school and with very little English worked with confidence and interest with a support teacher and two boys, which benefited all three pupils.
12. Most of the pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well in lessons. There is a small minority of pupils whose behaviour is less than satisfactory which mars a small number of lessons. This was particularly evident in the few unsatisfactory lessons where the school's principles of behaviour management were not as effectively applied or the lessons were too slow or less interesting. The pupils are well-behaved in playground and there were no instances of harassment or bullying seen during the inspection. The pupils observed before school, at

playtimes and lunchtimes are friendly and courteous. They are trustworthy and respectful of the school property. The parents indicate that they are happy with their children's behaviour at school overall and the inspection's findings support this view in most instances. A very small number of pupils accounted for the high number of exclusions for 1999/2000. The number of exclusions has reduced significantly during the current academic year.

13. The pupils willingly take responsibility and respond reasonably well to the opportunities provided. An effective example for older junior pupils is their role in the School Council where each Year 6 pupil is given the opportunity to be involved. The School Council considers issues responsibly, such as healthy eating, by asking each class a series of agreed questions about these issues and they try to suggest improvements. Another responsibility is the part the older pupils play in supporting the school's anti-bullying procedures, which have been worked out with Year 6 pupils. They endeavour to resolve cases of bullying before referring them to the appropriate members of staff. The diverse school community with pupils from a wide variety of home backgrounds mixes well together. During lessons and assemblies, the pupils explore their own feelings, how their actions may affect others and respecting other people's values and beliefs. The positive pupils' attitudes and behaviour are well supported by the school through the development of an environment, which aims, successfully, to be free from oppression, bullying, sexism and racism.
14. Levels of attendance have been a problem in the school for some years and remain well below the national average. They are very similar to the figures that existed at the time of the last inspection and are just below 90 per cent. The only improvement has been to improve the number of unauthorised absences. This is in spite of additional funding being allocated to enable one of the office administration staff to spend an hour each day to monitor absences on the first day and the best efforts of the school. The school has moved on to a computerised registration system, which is working well but its use could be extended further. It is apparent from the school's own analysis that the problem lies more with the younger pupils than the older ones. The main problems are the pupils leaving without notifying the school, a very high number of absences for medical reasons and parents taking the pupils away for holidays during the school term.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, with 4 per cent unsatisfactory; 64 per cent were good or better and 19 per cent very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good and very good teaching. The teaching in the foundation stage is very good. It is good overall in junior classes and in some infant classes. However, teaching in the infant classes, whilst satisfactory overall, is not as strong as the other two key stages, particularly in one class where the teacher's expectations and management of pupils are not as secure. Homework is supporting the pupils' learning in most classes, particularly in English in junior classes. However in some classes, the setting of homework is inconsistent.
16. The very good quality teaching in the foundation stage encourages the children's very positive attitudes to school and relate well to each other and to adults.. The teachers' planning is of a high standard and includes outdoor plans. Clear objectives are identified for children's learning and there is a good balance of directed and spontaneous tasks that relate to the six areas of learning. As a result, the children learn quickly and are willing to persevere with tasks. The teachers meet regularly to review and evaluate their short term planning. Assessment procedures are a strength of the foundation stage as frequent observations of children are administered systematically and utilised to inform the next stage of learning and identify targets for individual children. The teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how very young children learn. The children, therefore, quickly and confidently settle into school and begin to voice their likes and dislikes, to share and to take turns. The teachers use a wide range of effective strategies and have developed the ability to judge the appropriate moment to intervene in the children's learning. This promotes the children's ability to think and talk effectively about the world around them.
17. The teaching in English and mathematics lessons is good. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy are good but insufficient emphasis is placed on improving the pupils' reading and writing

skills in other subjects, for instance history. There are satisfactory opportunities for the pupils to use numeracy skills in most other subjects, but these need to be improved if standards are to be raised, for instance, numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed in science. The work of the support staff, especially in supporting literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and English as an additional language, is effective. Good relationships are formed, which are seen in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils. This helps the pupils to gain in confidence and self-esteem. Through this they respond with interest, for example when talking about their work they mostly give accurate or sensible answers. Whilst nearly all the teachers manage and control the pupils well, some of the pupils present challenging behaviour, which can be disruptive, and a minority of the teachers need to develop a greater range of management strategies in order to deal more effectively with such incidents. The teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and are beginning to more effectively help them to see what they need to do to improve. The pupils respond well to this and apply themselves in the effort that they make.

18. The school is working to meet the needs of all pupils effectively, including those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The work is generally well matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to make sound progress; the plans are carried out with close liaison between the class teachers, the support staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The gains towards targets are regularly recorded and the plans are reviewed on a termly basis. The support assistants manage pupils well, they maintain good standards of behaviour, and effectively use a range of teaching methods. This enables the pupils with special educational needs to make consistently satisfactory progress, and to make good progress on the occasions when the work is particularly well matched to their needs. In some lessons the support assistants are not given a positive role in the introductory part of the lesson and the pupils with special educational needs do not have planned opportunities to allow them to participate fully in these whole class sessions.
19. Overall the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good. The specialist teachers plan together with the class teachers the work that will be covered both in individual lessons and over time. They have a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils and match the work to them. They teach the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in English well and provide effective models of spoken and written language. All of the teachers create a welcoming environment in which the bilingual pupils feel confident to contribute. A good example of this was when a Year 1 pupil read a story in English with fluency and expression and then translated it for a classmate into Urdu. A particular strength is the good induction procedures that are in place to enable newly arrived pupils to begin to speak English and participate in the whole curriculum as their English develops.
20. In English, teaching is good overall, particularly in junior classes where there were examples of very good teaching. The teaching in infant classes is more variable with mostly satisfactory lessons. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Most teachers plan effectively and make it clear what the pupils are going to learn, what they have to do and what the teacher expects of them. This results in the pupils producing work of quality, such as the poems written in a Year 6 lesson which were thoughtful and accurately constructed and paid very close attention to the poetic devices illustrated by their teacher. The teachers ensure through marking and encouraging remarks that the pupils know how well they have done, although they are not always told how to improve their work. The teachers need to develop further methods for extending and improving the pupils' writing skills, not only in literacy lessons but also in other subjects such as history. The teachers use information technology very effectively to support learning in English.
21. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good with particular strengths seen in junior classes, with only limited unsatisfactory teaching seen in both infant and junior lessons. Most teachers had good class management skills and high expectations and this ensures that the pupils concentrate well, can recall and apply their knowledge of number facts and explain how they had solved number problems. The teachers challenged the pupils to extend their understanding and learn new numeracy skills and this enabled the pupils to make good progress. The unsatisfactory aspects of some lessons arose mostly because the teachers had less successful class management skills, or low expectations of what could be achieved by the pupils.
22. In science, teaching is satisfactory overall but varies from very good to satisfactory. The quality of teaching in junior classes is most often good or better. Most teachers help the pupils to think carefully

about what they observe and how they are going to find out the information that they need for their investigation. The teachers use a good range of methods to help the pupils acquire the skills and knowledge they need. They make the work interesting, which encourages the pupils to get actively involved, such as using the Internet to find out more about woodlice. The teachers are good at organising the pupils to help them learn effectively. All teachers have useful ways of recording what it is the pupils know, understand and can do. Where lessons are less successful, teachers plan tasks that are not challenging enough, resulting in pupils losing concentration and at times behaving inappropriately.

23. The teaching was good in Key Stage 2 religious education and design technology. In music, the teaching was good in infant and junior classes. In other subjects, the teaching was satisfactory overall.. In one music lesson and physical education lesson, low expectation of what pupils could achieve resulted in some inappropriate behaviour that slowed the pace of the lessons.

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

24. The school provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum, which is relevant to pupils' interests and aptitudes. The curriculum is well balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Schemes of work are in place for each subject. The school has adopted the national guidelines for all subjects with the exception of religious education where the school uses the local agreed syllabus. Subject co-ordinators have recently begun to adapt the schemes of work in order to ensure they are effectively meeting the needs of the children. The senior management team monitors the teachers' medium-term and daily lesson plans and helps to improve the quality of teaching.
25. Provision within the foundation stage is very good. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection when provision was judged to be good. The school has satisfactory strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and in some lessons these basic skills are reinforced well. For example, in one Year 4 science lesson, the special educational needs co-ordinator supported a group of the least able children to write up their scientific experiment, in doing this she effectively developed their use of phonic strategies to spell unknown words and their ability to construct accurate sentences. However, the pupils' writing skills need to be more effectively planned for in other subjects. The school has introduced the numeracy strategy and most teachers develop these skills satisfactorily, however, a small number are still not secure in teaching the basic skills of numeracy. Numeracy skills are also not reinforced sufficiently in science.
26. The extra-curricular activities provided at the school are very limited so make little impact on the pupils' personal development. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities or in creative art activities. There is a high quality singing group that meets once a week and has recently produced its own compact disc. This group is led by a teacher and is extremely popular and has performed at outside events. In addition to this the school invites a number of visitors to take part in events it holds throughout the year, such as the annual Black History Week. The school also runs a number of trips throughout the year to places within the local community and further afield. These have included trips to the local church, the Hindu temple, Dulwich Picture Gallery and places such as Horton Kirby to develop the pupils' historical and geographical skills and understanding. It uses visitors to the school, such as poets, musicians and artists, who enrich the taught curriculum and contribute to the quality of the pupils' learning.
27. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school routinely monitors all test results for any differences between boys and girls and the achievement of different ethnic groups. All policy statements contain an equal opportunities statement. There are good procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for the assessment of their progress against the targets set in the individual education plans. Their individual education plans are reviewed each term and targets set; these are generally well focussed and in small enough steps to enable sound progress to be made. The class teachers, learning support assistants and special educational needs co-ordinator work closely together to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met.

28. There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. The pupils in the youngest classes are very well provided for in establishing them in the school environment. The policy for sex education is appropriately carried out and the school has implemented a clear policy for drug education. By the age of 11, the pupils have a clear understanding of what substances may be harmful and how they might effect their bodies. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle, healthy eating is emphasised in school meals and in science lessons. The pupils' School Council is currently conducting a survey to identify popular but healthy eating options to appear on the lunchtime menu.
29. The school has close links with two local community organisations. The school is used by students from the North Downham Training centre to carry out work experience placements and several pupils from the school attend the after school club run by the Goldsmiths Community Centre. There is a small core of dedicated parent helpers who come into school regularly and support the work in classrooms. The school is connected to the Internet and in some classes good use is made of this to enhance the curriculum. In one Year 6 science lesson looking at adaptations to habitat, the pupils were guided to a web site looking at woodlice and a research project to discover the number of different varieties of woodlice currently living in the United Kingdom.
30. The school has constructive relationships with partner institutions and these are being further developed within the Education Action Zone. Annual induction days are arranged for Year 6 pupils to visit the local secondary school and students from three local secondary schools take part in work experience at the school. The pupils from the school regularly use the ICT facilities at the local library.
31. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral and development is satisfactory. Social skills and cultural awareness are well developed throughout the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection. It is now satisfactory overall with some good features. There are weekly assembly themes that provide the pupils with opportunities for reflection. The teachers encourage the sharing of ideas and experience as they arise and through circle time. Sensitive areas like feelings and emotions are discussed. They are given the opportunity to think about other religions through their religious education lessons, for example, Judaism was being explored. Some of the assemblies during the inspection created a feeling of awe and wonder, such as the inspiring piano playing of a young Korean pupil and the rousing singing of the school choir.
32. The school teaches the pupils right from wrong from the time they start in the nursery. It provides a moral code through the school, which forms a basis of behaviour for the pupils. Opportunities to reinforce this are taken during lessons and assemblies. The school's personal, health and social education programme also supports this in specific lessons.
33. The school makes good provision for the social development of pupils and relationships are satisfactory. There are positive routines to help pupils to work and play together well. In the foundation stage, it is a key feature of their work to develop effective social skills. There is scope for the pupils to take part in tasks to help with the smooth running of the school, for example helping with organising overhead projectors and screens. During many lessons, such as physical education, music and geography, the pupils are offered the opportunity to work together in groups or pairs. Teachers provide good role models. The school supports a variety of charities and performs for outside groups. The pupils' School Council gives older pupils the opportunity to extend their social awareness. The older pupils are involved in the anti-bullying procedures when they attempt to resolve the cases of bullying.
34. The school ensures that the curriculum offered to all the pupils is culturally diverse. It values the diverse traditions, religions, and cultures of all the pupils who attend the school. It promotes mutual understanding by such events as *Turkish Children's Day* and extends the community *Black History Week* to be a celebration of all the cultures represented in the school. The school ensures that the resources used in lessons reflect the multi-cultural characteristics of the school and of the whole of society. For example, there are sets of bi-lingual books in a number of

languages. Posters and murals support the work done in history and in personal and social education. A different language is used each week to greet the pupils and to take the register.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. This is a caring school and supports the pupils' progress and personal development well. The school has effective arrangements for ensuring pupils welfare and for child protection. The satisfactory procedures in place for health and safety are confirmed by a recent audit undertaken by the local authority. The school provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils. All statutory requirements are met. The school has developed good procedures for child protection and staff awareness is of a high standard. There is close liaison with social services and the Educational Social Worker.
36. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, although much improved since the last inspection, needs to be improved still further. The school uses a computer database to analyse the attendance of different groups of pupils but its use could be extended further. Whilst rewards are given to those pupils who achieve full attendance, no incentives are offered to others, such as poorer attendees who make significant improvements.
37. The school's behaviour procedures are mostly effectively and consistently implemented by the staff. However, in a small number of lessons, it was not consistently or effectively applied. The procedures are, however, consistently used at all times outside lessons and this contributed considerably to the overall behaviour of pupils in the school. The procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour and bullying work effectively.
38. The pupils' records are kept efficiently and provide a good account of the pupils in the school and their achievements. Annual pupil reports are very well presented, identifying the pupils' strengths for each subject and areas of weakness, which are then linked to specific targets. The procedures for monitoring and supporting new arrivals during term-time, for example, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs, are effectively in place and work well.
39. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive appropriate support from staff within the school. The teachers and support staff are committed to helping the pupils achieve their personal targets and there are good procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' academic progress and personal development. All statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out. As part of the annual reviews the pupils are encouraged to express their own feelings about their progress and what they need to do to improve further. There are good arrangements in place to make effective use of support from external agencies, for example, an art therapist works with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and additional support is provided for some pupils with behavioural problems.
40. The school has effective systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in the foundation stage, English and mathematics. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, which has been led by the deputy-headteacher and all staff have worked very hard to implement the changes. The comprehensive baseline assessment for children in the reception year gives detailed information on each child's attainment and is appropriately used to identify, at an early stage, each child's learning needs. Throughout the school, a comprehensive process of target setting has been developed by the co-ordinator, which sets out clear targets for individual pupils in mathematics, reading and writing based on prior attainment. Less clear is what teachers need to do in the classroom to help pupils achieve their targets. A learning mentor works with pupils who need their self-esteem and confidence developed.
41. Detailed analysis of assessment data has identified where differences in performance exist in ability, gender or ethnic group. The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are recorded and rigorously analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in curricular or in individual and group attainment. The information is being used effectively to improve teaching and learning. For example, it has helped teachers to identify the gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy knowledge

and understanding and has partly formed the basis for the booster lessons. The teachers know their pupils well and make satisfactory assessments of their work. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and there is the opportunity for the pupils to record their own assessment against the objective. The best marking seen, for instance in English, complements this and pupils are well informed of their achievements. However, in some classes, there is inconsistency in how well daily marking is used to recognise attainment and provide targets for future development. The pupils are assessed every half-term to measure progress so intervention programmes can be planned for those who are underachieving and for target groups of pupils with special educational needs. The success of these programmes is always satisfactory, being well supported by the effectiveness of the classroom support. In non-core subjects assessment procedures are less well developed, so teachers often do not have a sufficiently clear picture of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to plan as well as they could. Assessment results are used very well to form ability groups in classrooms and sets in mathematics. The teachers are compiling very useful individual pupil profiles, containing samples of work, showing progress made. The school has recently invested in computer software to help extend the systems for tracking individual pupil progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Links with the parents are satisfactory but there is insufficient involvement by parents in the life of the school and with their children's learning overall. The parents are satisfied with the standards that the school achieves overall. The parents were mostly happy with standards overall and how the school supported their children. Most liked the fact that the school is approachable, their children like school and are expected to work hard. They felt that the teaching is good and that the school helps the children to become more mature. Some parents felt that another opportunity to meet teachers to discuss their children's progress would be useful and that there are insufficient out of lesson activities. Some felt that behaviour is not good and were concerned about the amount of homework.
43. The inspection findings agree with most of the parents' positive views. Overall teaching is good and there has been a significant improvement. The inspection team agrees that there are not sufficient activities out of lesson time. Most pupils' behaviour is good but there is a minority of pupils that use inappropriate behaviour in lessons. The links with the parents are satisfactory but there is insufficient involvement by them in the life of the school and with their children's learning overall.
44. The school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are invited to the regular reviews of the progress their children are making and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children. Although suggestions are given to parents by the school staff about support that can be given at home to extend the work being done in school these are not always carried out by the parents and in some cases this limits the progress of the pupils. The school works well with the parents of pupils with English as an additional language. They are asked to come into school and support the various activities arranged to reflect the school's diverse cultural mix which many do with enthusiasm and commitment. A member of the EMAS (Ethnic Minority Achievement Strategy) team has the responsibility for organising the weekly Family Literacy session which provides opportunities for parents to learn to speak English and make visits together to such places as the Tate Modern.
45. The school provides the parents with a well presented and informative school prospectus. This is supplemented by the Annual Governors' Report to Parents. Each term, further information is sent to the parents to keep them in touch with events and life in the school and this includes curricular information. The school regularly contributes to two local community newsletters, the Downham Pride Community Newsletter and the Downham and Catford Gazette. Annual pupil reports are of a high standard. They are very well presented with informative comments for all subjects.
46. There is a small group of parents and some grandparents who are actively very supportive of the school. They help with raffles and with other social events in the school. Some also help in the school during the day. Courses have been arranged for parents, for example, computer courses held at Goldsmith's Community Centre and more recently one to teach parenting skills. These

have been well supported and one of the governors who is also a member of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme is very much involved and this is an indication of the school's efforts to improve and the improving relationship with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, provide good leadership that has effectively led and managed the many improvements that have taken place since the last inspection. They work as an effective team and are supported by the other members of staff. The school has clear aims and has a commitment to raising standards. These aims are now more attainable since the school has established effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and the quality of teaching has improved. These monitoring procedures, particularly in English and mathematics, allow the management team, the governors and the teachers to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate and more challenging targets for improvement. All of the key issues from the last inspection, most of which related to the weaknesses in the procedures for managing the school, have been effectively dealt with.
48. The governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well. They continue to improve their knowledge of how well the school is achieving and have appropriate management procedures in place. The headteacher and governors use their results of the monitoring to set clear targets for development. The chair of the governors meets with the headteacher regularly and some governors visit the school. This is helping them to gain a better understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has agreed a Performance Management policy for appraising the work of the headteacher and other teachers and has set performance targets for her. The school has for a number of years set termly targets for teachers and these have been monitored and evaluated. The setting of targets linked to the policy will begin in September.
49. Overall the management of the school's finances is good. Financial planning, administration and control are satisfactory and the recommendations of the last auditor's report have been acted upon. Management of the school's finances is the responsibility of the headteacher and a strong finance committee and there is prudent management of the resources available to the school. The committee has a key role in financial planning, monitoring the budget and reviewing expenditure. Budget setting processes are good and are well linked to the priorities of the school development plan. The school also makes good use of specific grants, for example funding for pupils with English as an additional language is well spent. The governors are keen to ensure that the school receives best value for the spending decisions it makes. Such principles are rigorously applied when obtaining tenders and in comparing the school's performance with that of similar schools.
50. The development planning identifies the school's priorities and the means of achieving them are appropriate to the needs of the school. The school's improvement planning is clear about raising standards and this is leading to an improvement in the quality of teaching and has a positive impact on pupils' standards and achievements. Links with financial planning needs to be clearer in the School Management Plan. The day-to-day administration is carried out well and satisfactory use is made of new technology. As well as effective procedures for teachers new to the school, there are effective induction procedures to support the newly qualified teacher, allowing her to make a very good start to her career.
51. The Early Years and Key Stage 2 managers provide effective leadership, although at present there is not a Key Stage 1 manager. The subject managers and co-ordinators are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hard working.. The English, mathematics and science subject managers play a prominent role in developing their subjects across the school. They are actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, setting targets for pupils and in scrutinising and improving teachers' planning. In other subjects, the co-ordinators are establishing appropriate policies and schemes of work, linked to national guidelines. The school is providing support and guidance for colleagues and in some cases they monitor the teachers' planning. In some subjects, including English and mathematics, the co-ordinators have opportunities to evaluate pupils' progress by scrutinising the pupils' workbooks and discussing with the pupils their work.

52. The present special educational needs co-ordinator effectively works in the school full-time, although because of financial constraints cannot spend all her time on special educational needs. The school's overall approach to review procedures and documentation for the pupils' individual education plans is well organised, it ensures consistency in the recording, reviewing and reporting of special educational needs. All members of staff are made aware of the procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for the pupils with special educational needs and the parents know who to contact in the school. The governing body is supportive of, and has a good overview of the work done by the school with the pupils with special educational needs.
53. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified staff to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and to meet the needs of all pupils. The number of teachers means that the pupils are taught in small classes, whilst the number of support staff is good. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience. Support staff are also suitably qualified and they work well with the teachers to provide good support for the pupils, although in some cases, their contribution could be more effectively planned to support the needs of the pupils. The school has satisfactory arrangements for meeting the professional needs of the staff in English, mathematics and science and the training is linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan, although less so in other subjects.
54. Overall, learning resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects. They are good in mathematics, music, religious education and physical education and very good in the nursery and English. Resources in science, music, art and religious education have improved since the last inspection. The school is situated on a large site and the well-maintained premises and grounds are more than sufficient to deliver the full range of the National Curriculum. A new computer suite is nearly ready for use and is situated in the school library. A new community-use Art Studio is in the planning stage. The school has two spacious halls with good quality flooring and large apparatus for the teaching of dance, gymnastics and games skills but there is no grassed area for games. The school employs its own cleaning staff and they, overseen by the Premises Manager, keep the school in a clean and tidy condition. Accommodation for the foundation stage is very good and this makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to raise standards, the headteacher, governors and teachers need to:

- (1) Improve standards in English by:
 - improving the teaching of basic skills in Key Stage 1;
 - providing opportunities for developing and using speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in subjects such as history.(paragraphs 25, 78-85)
- (2) Improve standards in mathematics by:
 - improving the opportunities for developing and using mathematics skills in subjects, such as science.(paragraphs 90-93)
- (3) Improve the pupils' attendance by:
 - extending the involvement of the parents further;
 - extending the analysis of the attendance information and using this to identify and monitor further the attendance of the different groups of pupils.(paragraphs 14, 36)
- (4) Raise the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 to match that in other key stages by:
 - improving the monitoring of teaching and learning;
 - providing support and training where necessary to improve pupil management in lessons.(paragraph 20)

Minor issues

Improve the opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities (paragraph 26)

Improve the inconsistencies in homework and marking between classes. (paragraph 15, 41)

Improve the pupils' presentation and handwriting (paragraph 85)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	19	45	33	4	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	41	320
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	199

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	132

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	50

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	63
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	94

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	27	19	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	14	17
	Girls	17	16	14
	Total	28	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (68)	65 (60)	67 (72)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	23
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	30	31	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (64)	67 (72)	87 (87)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	33	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	12
	Girls	16	16	19
	Total	22	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (45)	47 (45)	61 (66)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	15	20	21
	Total	23	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (40)	59 (45)	59 (53)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	40
Black – African heritage	26
Black – other	2
Indian	3
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	2
White	172
Any other minority ethnic group	31

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	23	
Black – African heritage	1	
Black – other	2	
Indian	0	
Pakistani	0	
Bangladeshi	0	
Chinese	0	
White	11	
Other minority ethnic groups	1	

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	22.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31.2

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15.8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	1125938
Total expenditure	1117658
Expenditure per pupil	2896
Balance brought forward from previous year	39062
Balance carried forward to next year	47342

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	361
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	34	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	0	6	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	38	15	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	33	11	4	4
The teaching is good.	71	23	2	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	43	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	35	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	46	8	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	48	38	6	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	37	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	27	19	8	21

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

56. Provision within the foundation stage in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection when provision was judged to be good. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning and the planning is of a high standard. The teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how very young children learn. They use a wide range of effective strategies and have developed the ability to judge the appropriate moment to intervene in the children's learning. Clear objectives are identified for children's learning and there is a good balance of directed and spontaneous tasks that relate to the six areas of learning. The teachers meet regularly to review and evaluate their short term planning. Assessment procedures are a strength as frequent observations of children are administered systematically and utilised to inform the next stage of learning and identify targets for individual children.
57. On entry to the nursery classes many children have been exposed to a limited range of learning experiences. They display poor attainment generally; in particular they have underdeveloped language and mathematical skills. The very good provision ensures that all of the children across the foundation stage are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities. However, by the end of reception stage, despite having made good progress overall in developing learning and personal skills, the standards attained by the majority of children including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well below what might be expected for their age. An exception is in the children's physical development as they are course to meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. By the end of the foundation stage the children are beginning to show care and concern for others but are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals within this area of learning. The teaching is very good and the staff have established trusting relationships with all the children. They act as positive role models for acceptable behaviours. For example, four-year-olds involved in a dispute were helped to think about their actions, and to say sorry – within a short time they were co-operating in a construction activity together.
59. There is an emphasis on developing the children's skills to interact and socialise with others. Three-year-olds in the imaginative play area are shown how to show sensitivity and concern for others in responding to danger from the "wolf". Three and four-year-olds are developing their social skills and some are able to ask others for assistance when putting on aprons in the creative area. In an adult-led activity the children showed their increasing willingness to take turns as ingredients were added and stirred to make play dough.
60. The teachers' daily plans include a range of different experiences with clearly defined intended outcomes that promote this area of learning. Four and five-year-olds exhibit a high level of involvement in all structured and spontaneous activities and some display an awareness of expectations for their behaviour and can adapt to work alone, in pairs or in groups of differing sizes. Many three-year-olds are beginning to develop their concentration span, can sit quietly at story time and are slowly increasing their confidence to talk with others.
61. Through very good teaching, the children are becoming more independent. For example, at the daily snack table three and four-year-olds choose when to take refreshment, select items as required and take responsibility for their own refuse. They behave appropriately and display politeness towards adults and to each other. Their independent skills are developing and in the graphics and creative areas they can choose the materials and tools they require. Many can operate technological equipment such as the audio cassette player.

Communication, language and literacy

62. By the end of the Reception stage the standards attained by the children in communication, language and literacy are well below what might be expected for their age. The teachers motivate the children to talk openly about what they are doing, what they understand and can do. The children listen attentively to stories, sustain their interest and engage well with the storyline; for example, when listening to the “Billy Goats Gruff” story the children were able to anticipate key events and join in repeated language. Four-year-olds understand that “authors” are the writers of books; they can ‘talk’ about the characters in the story and respond with enthusiasm. Their ability to use more complex sentences is underdeveloped. Three-year-olds are able to talk about pictures and put them in order, some more able children can recognise their name in print and can talk about the marks they make on paper, in sand and in paint.
63. The teachers provide effective examples of printed language and a wide range of tools and materials. The staff intervene appropriately to support the children writing their name in a sand tray and provide stimulus for the children writing in their “special book”. Through drawings, making marks and writing, the children realise that they can communicate their ideas and write for different purposes. The children know many favourite rhymes and songs and delight in repeating favourite phrases, using gestures and varying the tone of their voice. In the imaginative play area a limited group of three and four-year-olds carefully arrange Goldilock's cottage and act out and talk openly about the story. By the end of the reception class, the higher attaining children can identify all letter names. Some can use their phonic knowledge to write simple words and are exposed to all elements of the Literacy Hour.

Mathematical development

64. By the end of the Reception stage the standards attained by the majority of the children in mathematics are well below what might be expected for their age. The teachers plan a range of mathematical opportunities, whilst others arise from normal daily activities. The children say and use number names in order and enjoy joining in with number rhymes and sounds. An adult-led activity with three-year-olds singing, “How many currant buns in a baker’s shop” displayed their ability to recite number names in order one to six and showed a developing understanding of the concept of “more” and “less”. A few four-year-olds count reliably up to ten and are able to find one more or one less than a number from one to ten. When challenged by a teacher to count along a number line a group of more able four-year-olds confidently counted aloud from zero to ten and two children moved swiftly along the floor counting pointed dinosaur feet using number names in order even when challenged to reverse their movements.
65. In a teacher directed activity of the Goldilocks story, the children compared sizes of chairs, spoons and bowls accurately and used mathematical vocabulary such as “smallest”, “middle-sized” and “largest” with confidence and understanding. When making play dough in the outside area the children demonstrated their increasing knowledge and understanding of how to measure liquids and solids by observing carefully and comparing sizes and quantities. The children also demonstrated an awareness of how to accurately measure a required amount of water and of play dough required to create matching shapes.
66. Whilst a group of four-year-olds built a model house with geometric shapes and were able to describe and compare the size of blocks with “smaller” or “larger” terminology, a group of three-year-olds matched the sizes of plates, bowls and spoons in Goldilock's cottage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. By the end of the Reception stage, the standards attained by the majority of the children in their knowledge and understanding of the world are well below what might be expected for their age. Classroom environments display a range of problem solving, practical, observational and exploration opportunities that motivate the children’s curiosity to engage in first-hand experiences. The children play with dinosaurs, identifying several by name and talk about how these animals lived a long time ago, demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of past and present. Whilst making play dough the children show curiosity about the changing colours as

ingredients are added. The children working at the water tray make comparisons about the movement of water and what it does. The staff have established a study area for frogs where the children talk freely of the changes they have been observing over time; they understand, for example, that tadpoles take time to grow into frogs and can explain changes in growth and differences that have occurred.

68. Learning is enhanced through planned experiences both indoors and outdoors. For example, the children have found caterpillars in the outside play area, established a “home” and monitored the process of caterpillars turning into butterflies. Four-year-olds demonstrate their understanding of how the caterpillars have built a cocoon as a home and know that they will soon change into butterflies. The children independently access the computer to communicate their ideas and demonstrate good skill in using the mouse and the keyboard. Three-year-olds are beginning to show an interest in their local area; for example, they play with models of vehicles and create journeys, on simple maps, to home and school.
69. The children are deepening their awareness of other cultures and beliefs. A study of Chinese New Year exposed the children to a variety of experiences; they used chopsticks, wrote Chinese numbers in paint, and cooked stir-fry vegetables.

Physical development

70. There are good facilities and resources, both indoor and outdoor, to support teachers’ work in promoting the physical development of three and four-year-olds. The children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception stage. They play actively in the outside area and display satisfactory skill and control when moving. They explore and refine movements and actions; for example, four-year-olds display sound co-ordination between hands and feet when moving on stilts. Three-year-olds show large-scale movements on the climbing frame, moving with increasing confidence and independence as they climb, balance and travel. The children show an acceptable level of awareness of their own space and that of others when travelling on tricycles and other wheeled toys.
71. The children demonstrate actions to songs and rhymes with increasing control and co-ordination. In organised games they listen well to instructions, are keen to participate and comply well with the game’s rules. Four-year-olds display are controlling their movements, such as, running, whilst three-year-olds can sit in a still shape and lie quietly waiting their turn. Four-year-olds are becoming more ambitious and experimenting with their movements.
72. The children are able to manipulate materials to achieve a planned effect. They demonstrate a sound level of fine motor skills when handling “small world” toys and are beginning to use tools to roll and cut up play dough.
73. Reception classes have allocated time in the hall where the children are beginning to increasing control of their bodies. For example, in response to music, the children responded positively to the challenge of linking some high and low movements together. The children are also beginning to understand the effect of exercise on their bodies.

Creative development

74. The teachers’ planning offers a variety of materials and experiences for the children to develop their creativity and use their imagination across different areas of learning. The children make steady progress in both the nursery classes and reception classes but few are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception stage. Three-year-olds use a variety of percussion instruments and are learning to make soft and loud noises. Four-year-olds are beginning to recognise repeated sounds and match their movements to music.
75. The children are encouraged to explore their ideas using different materials and techniques. Within the creative area, the children experience paint, create on fabric using shapes and colours, cut out and stick a variety of materials to create three-dimensional models and are given time to

work at their ideas and finish their tasks. The teachers value the children's ideas and interact with them to develop their confidence and skills.

76. Within the reception classes the children are given opportunities to develop their creativity by using all of their senses. For example, through dance they express themselves by creating a series of movements to the music of "Carnival of Animals".

ENGLISH

77. The standards have improved year-on-year since the last inspection but continue to be well below average, although the pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. The results of the 2000 national tests for pupils aged 11 show standards are well below the national average but close to the average for similar schools. Since 1997, the school's results have risen at a rate above the national trend. However, only marginal improvements have been made in Year 2 results, which remain very low. Since 1997, standards of seven year-olds have risen generally in line with the national trend, except for 2000 when they achieved relatively badly. Overall the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and they achieve satisfactorily, although this is uneven with accelerated learning taking place as pupils get older and particularly in Year 6. Girls generally outperform boys. The standards achieved in the tests for seven and 11 year-olds taken in 2001 represent a further improvement.
78. The previous inspection report indicated that standards in reading were improving and this improvement has continued. The school is a leading literacy school in the local authority and has three leading literacy teachers. The literacy levels of most pupils entering the school are very poor and from this low base they make satisfactory progress. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in writing, whilst still well below the national average, are also improving. The main reasons for these improvements are the effectiveness of the Literacy Hour and the additional literacy support in both key stages to extend guided reading groups and a scheme to raise teachers' skills. There is a difference in the attainment of boys and girls but this lessens as pupils move through the school. The school is aware of the differences and has implemented a series of appropriate measures to improve the performance of boys. For example, reading material likely to be of particular interest to boys has been purchased and boys have been targeted to use specific computer programs designed to improve literacy skills. The pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make sound progress in literacy
79. The pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to the other pupils in the school. Most achieve a reasonable degree of competency in English by the time they are seven and in Key Stage Two their rate of progress improves as they move through the key stage. By the time they are eleven the pupils who have attended the school for a number of years are competent in English and able to take a full part in the lessons speaking with fluency and confidence and reading appropriate texts with understanding.
80. Standards in speaking and listening are below the national expectation but more secure by the age of 11 than by the age of seven, where some pupils do not listen attentively to adults and many find it difficult to listen to one another responsively. Some pupils, often boys, are so anxious to contribute that they launch into speech before they have heard and understood the question. Many others listen passively and do not participate actively in responding to questions or in discussion. The pupils gain in concentration and confidence as they move through the school. Older pupils sometimes engage in debate and argument and teachers of these pupils use questioning very well to extend their responses in lessons. Guided reading groups are very effective in promoting speaking and listening because teachers and skilled support staff pose questions that require reflection and inference. Currently, there is no formal means of assessing pupils' progress in speaking and listening. The school has recognised that speaking and listening can be improved and plans to tackle it as a priority.
81. Standards in reading of seven-year-olds are well below average and below average for eleven-year-olds. Higher attaining seven-year-olds read accurately, although fluency varies,

understanding often being affected by a limited vocabulary. Some technically competent readers do not have the skills to explore meaning to an appropriate depth. Most pupils enjoy books and teachers work hard to develop oral language in group reading. Lower attaining pupils recognise few words and letters, relying strongly on picture cues and adult support. Their limited knowledge of English is affecting their ability to apply knowledge of syntax and comprehension to their reading. Most pupils understand terms such as 'author' 'illustrator' and 'title' and enjoy sharing texts during the Literacy Hour. Higher attaining 11-year-olds read fluently and with reasonable expression. They are able to discuss their reading preferences and talk about their favourite authors. About half the pupils in Year 6 are skilful in analysing texts. This was demonstrated in a good lesson when they read and explored the poem 'Playing a Dazzler' by James Berry. They recognised the use of various poetic techniques such as alliteration and repetition and explained the purpose of different similes and metaphors. Average pupils do not have a wide range of strategies to help them establish meaning and do not often self-correct words that they have not understood. The majority of lower attaining pupils are not aware of errors and have very limited strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Most pupils use dictionaries confidently because teachers consistently reinforce these skills. However, library and research skills are not as strong as they should be. The recently altered library does not contribute to the development of such skills. Few pupils read regularly to an adult at home. Although the pupils have reading diaries, these are not well developed as few have regular comments from parents.

82. Standards in writing are well below average for seven and 11 year olds but efforts made to address this are having a positive effect. The National Literacy Strategy is gradually raising standards for infant pupils. The pupils write for an increasing range of purposes and audiences and teachers present generally interesting and purposeful tasks. These include letters, stories, notices and labelling. By age seven, a few higher attaining pupils produce clear descriptive and imaginative writing, which is appropriately punctuated. Some are beginning to use connecting words effectively to join ideas. For a significant number of pupils, however, spelling is unsatisfactory and the content of stories is distinguished by limited vocabulary, and little depth of imagination. Most use their phonic knowledge reasonably well and a few are beginning to use simple punctuation in sentences.
83. The Literacy Hour is having a significant impact on the development of junior pupils' grammatical knowledge and their understanding of language. The school has identified the need to improve writing as a top priority. The resulting highly focused teaching has been effective in raising attainment. The most able pupils have a good understanding of how to write narrative, factual pieces and poetry. They write on such diverse subjects as biography, bias in journalism and structure arguments on whether David Beckham is a 'good or bad guy.' When they enter Year 6 many pupils find it difficult to produce a sustained piece of writing with the variety of language and the accuracy expected at this age. At the end of the year, however, many can produce writing with clear sentence structure, good presentation, punctuation and reasonable spelling. This represents good progress. The use of 'booster' groups is having a marked impact on attainment towards the end of the key stage. Younger pupils, who receive additional literacy support in small groups, make good progress. Other pupils also make good progress towards their individual targets. Junior pupils write formal and informal letters, reports, stories and persuasive writing such as whether school uniform should be worn. They have a good understanding of the purpose of re-drafting writing and many are developing skills such as note-taking to good effect. Additional time provided for extended writing is having a positive effect on improving standards, particularly for older junior pupils.
84. By the time they are seven many pupils are still printing and presentational skills are not secure for a significant minority of pupils. Only around half of the pupils in Year 6 write regularly in a neat, joined script. The style of handwriting is often undeveloped and the presentation of work is sometimes poor. Work in drafting books is frequently difficult to read. Whilst all classes have regular handwriting lessons and teachers emphasise direct letter joins and general points of neatness, the pupils' handwriting does not show the effort put in.
85. Overall the quality of teaching is sound. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in English. Teaching in infant classes is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is frequently good in junior classes. Humour is used to good effect and relationships are warm and encouraging. Routines are well established and pupils move from one activity to the next without fuss. The teachers use

information technology very effectively to support learning in English. Where lessons are most effective teachers plan them very well, give a clear explanation of the ideas being taught and use a good structure so that pupils model their work on the strategy given to meet the targets of the lesson. This was evident in a good Year 6 literacy lesson where the teacher modelled the writing of a 'repugnant' poem. She articulated her thoughts, explained the creative processes she was working through and shared an amusing and effective poem. The poems written subsequently by the pupils were equally thoughtful and accurately constructed, paying very close attention to the poetic devices illustrated by their teacher. The best lessons are characterised by strong relationships between teachers and pupils ensuring that pupils are valued and that they know very well what is expected of them for both behaviour and attainment. Teachers involve pupils actively in their learning so they have a clear understanding of the focus of lessons. Teachers almost invariably mark the pupil's work and often offer very encouraging remarks, on occasions rather more flattering than the work deserves. Frequently these comments are not accompanied by any suggestions as to how the work could be improved. Whilst this approach does much to build the self-confidence of pupils and helps in creating a positive atmosphere it is not so successful in continually raising standards in writing. The system that allows pupils to gauge their own success against the objectives for individual lessons and to indicate how well they feel they have mastered a theme is particularly useful.

86. Overall the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. The class and specialist teachers plan well and have a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils and match the work to them. They teach the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in English well and provide effective models of spoken and written language.
87. There are limited opportunities for pupils to practise the use of their developing literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they do not maximise opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills in history.
88. The co-ordinator has worked hard to raise standards with the introduction of the Literacy Hour and a focus on reading and writing, with clear targets set for pupils in order that they begin to take responsibility for their own learning. She has worked closely with the Local Authority's literacy advisory teacher and has a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards. Assessment in English is thorough and rigorous and the results of national tests are analysed carefully. The data is used effectively to plan learning and to formulate targets for pupils. When teachers set pupils specific, personal targets such as 'consolidate the use of paragraphs and use speech marks consistently' pupils understand what they need to do to improve. The teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress in reading and writing but there are no effective records for speaking and listening. Targets are set for groups of pupils and individuals and pupil's progress is now tracked both by the completion of nationally recognised tests at the end of each school year from Year 2 to Year 6 and by the completion of portfolios of individual pupil's work. Resources in English are very good with an excellent range of high quality books for use within the Literacy Hour

MATHEMATICS

89. Seven and 11-year-old pupils attain below average standards in numeracy and all areas of mathematics. They enter the school with well below average attainment in mathematics. The results of the 2000 national tests for 7-year-olds show the school's performance in mathematics was very low in comparison with the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The results of tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 show that standards were well below average when compared to all schools, and when compared to similar schools they were below average. Overall standards are improving and, since 1998 there has been a steady improvement similar to that of most schools. However, in recent years there has been a marked difference in the performance of boys and girls by the end of the year in which they are seven, with the girls' attainment better than that of the boys. The school has recognised this and has started to address the problem by targeting the boys in lessons and ensuring that they are fully involved in the learning activities. The work seen during the inspection shows that the pupils' attainment remains below national averages at the end of both key stages and the pupils,

including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The school is aware that these standards are not as high as they should be but now have in place monitoring procedures to support this development.

90. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement because the school has securely put in place the National Numeracy Strategy together with a consistent system to check how well the pupils are doing in mathematics and teaching has improved. The results of standardised tests are being carefully analysed and from the information gained, the pupils are grouped according to their abilities so that the work can be better matched to their needs. Targets are set for groups of pupils, and the school has set a whole school target to improve the pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. A system to track the pupils' progress in mathematics throughout the school has been put in place, this is helping the school to recognise the levels the pupils could achieve. However, the school does not yet make it clear to all the pupils what they need to do to improve, neither do the pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next level of the National Curriculum. In addition, the teachers' expectations of what the pupils achieve are sometimes too low.
91. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, they are happy to offer answers to questions and to try to explain how and why they have reached an answer. They work well both independently and in small groups. The pupils are given opportunities to use skills of estimation, and to solve problems using all four numerical operations. They count and calculate accurately and are able to use calculators to check their answers.
92. By the time they are seven, the pupils have some understanding of place value, most are able to count in 2s, 5s and 10s and the most able can divide by 2,5, and 10. The pupils work out halves and quarters of two digit numbers in practical situations using money, although they do not all understand that a coin can be worth more than one pence. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and can identify the properties that each one has. They understand how to use a Venn diagram to sort shapes that are blue, triangular or have both attributes. By the age of 11, the pupils work out problems to do with weight time and temperature, and they use negative numbers with confidence to work out the differences in temperature. They know the names and properties of different sorts of triangles, such as isosceles and scalene. The pupils find and justify probabilities in simple situations and calculate the mean, mode and median averages of groups of numbers. They are beginning to understand and use ratios in calculations. The pupils can measure the perimeter of shapes, and some can apply a formula to calculate the perimeter and area of regular shapes. The most able can plot co-ordinates using all four quadrants. They are able to work out mentally and speedily the equivalent value of fractions and decimals and they understand the use of brackets.
93. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good, with particular strengths seen in junior classes, with only limited unsatisfactory teaching seen in both infant and junior lessons. Where the best teaching was seen the teachers had good class management skills and high expectations and this ensures that the pupils concentrate well, can recall and apply their knowledge of number facts and explain how they had solved number problems. The teachers challenged the pupils to extend their understanding and learn new numeracy skills and this enabled the pupils to make good progress. However, the unsatisfactory aspects of the teaching were seen in both key stages. In these lessons the rate of progress slowed because the teachers had insufficient knowledge of mathematics and how to teach it, poor class management skills, or low expectations of what could be achieved by the pupils. The teachers plan homework for the pupils and it is given regularly but only some pupils are encouraged by their parents to do it and consequently it does not support the pupils' learning as effectively as it could. The good teaching allows the pupils to enjoy their mathematics lessons. It gives them confidence to offer answers to questions and to try to explain how and why they have reached an answer. The pupils are given opportunities to work both independently and in small groups, which they respond to well. The pupils are given opportunities to use skills of estimation, and to solve problems using all four numerical operations. They count and calculate accurately and are able to use calculators to check their answers.

94. The school has put in place good procedures to check how well the pupils are learning and whether they are making progress. The teachers then match the work to the needs of different groups of pupils; this enables the pupils to make progress in learning new numeracy skills and in gaining mathematical vocabulary and understanding. However, the school needs to extend this further so that all pupils have a sufficiently clear idea of what they need to do to improve. In some lessons, the work of the support assistants is appropriately planned but in others this is not in enough detail and they are not always given a positive role in the mental and oral part of the lesson. In the main part of the lesson when they work with groups, the support assistants use good questioning skills, ensure that the pupils concentrate and work consistently and the rate of progress improves. The quality of the presentation of written work in mathematics is inconsistent between classes.
95. The improvements made since the last inspection are largely due to the school, ably led by the subject manager, having securely put in place the National Numeracy Strategy together with a consistent system to check how well the pupils are doing in mathematics. At the time of the last report, significant problems were found with the planning and assessment of mathematics and there was insufficient challenge for the majority of the pupils. These have improved and the results of standardised tests are being carefully analysed and from the information gained, the pupils are grouped according to their abilities so that the work can be better matched to their needs. Targets are set for groups of pupils, and the school has set a whole school target to improve the pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. Recently a system to track the pupils' progress in mathematics throughout the school has been put in place; this is helping the school to recognise the levels the pupils could achieve. However, the school does not yet make it clear to all the pupils what they need to do to improve.
96. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed; she has had opportunities to check how well other teachers are teaching and to decide what needs improving. The co-ordinator ensures that the school is making use of the information from analysing the results of the national and other tests and setting targets for improving the learning. However, the tracking of individual pupils is at an early stage and its real effectiveness is yet to be seen. Mathematics is being given a high profile in the school and the co-ordinator is establishing ways of more effectively involving parents in their children's learning through homework and meetings for parents about what is being taught in mathematics and how they can help their children. In all the classes, and around the school there are interesting and interactive displays, they are used to support the teaching and learning together with an adequate range of resources.

SCIENCE

97. On the basis of the work seen during the inspection, the pupils attain standards close to the national average by the end of both key stages. Standards are significantly higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection, particularly by the time that they leave the school. The standards have improved largely because the school has made sure that the teachers have a better understanding of how to teach the subject. This has given them the confidence to provide more opportunities for pupils to do practical and investigative work. The attainment of the pupils, aged eleven, in the 2000 national tests was well below average in relation to all schools but in line with the attainment of pupils in similar schools. The standard of work seen in the pupils' books and in their lessons during the inspection is now close to that expected of seven and 11-year-olds. However, numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed in science. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make sound progress.
98. By the age of seven, most of the pupils understand how to construct a simple electrical circuit that includes bulbs and buzzers. During their work on electricity they explore how electrical power can be stored in batteries, and how electricity is delivered to their homes by means of cables. They understand the need for safety when using electrical appliances. Most of the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the basic structure of a flowering plant and they can talk about the conditions needed for plant growth. Nearly all of the pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of forces, such as friction and gravity, when they investigated the effects of rolling model cars down ramps. They found, for example, that the steeper the ramp, the faster and

further the cars travelled. By the time the pupils are eleven, they have a good understanding of the terms 'soluble' and 'insoluble'. They talk confidently about evaporation, and use the process to remove salt from a salt-water solution. When carrying out investigations they understand the conditions needed for fair tests, however, they are less confident in the use of tally charts, tables and graphs to record their observations. The pupils successfully carry out practical investigations as part of their learning. For example, they devise ways of testing which surfaces woodlice can move over easily. Some of the higher attaining pupils use their knowledge and understanding to describe how woodlice are adapted to their habitat.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but varies from very good to satisfactory. To date there has been little monitoring of teaching in order to raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best. The quality of teaching in junior classes is most often good or better. The strengths of the teaching lie in the way the teachers organise and manage their pupils, They help the pupils to think carefully about what they observe and what they do when they carry out investigations. Some teachers provide their own carefully designed worksheets to help their pupils think clearly about the investigations they do and what they can learn from them. The teachers use a good range of methods to help the pupils acquire the skills and knowledge they need. For example, they plan practical activities that are interesting, and they use questions and demonstrations well. The pupils, therefore, quickly become interested in their work and strive to do well. In one Year 6 lesson, the teacher used the Internet to inspire pupils to do further investigation on woodlice habitats. The teachers are good at organising the pupils to help them learn effectively. They plan tasks that involve the pupils in individual work, in paired work and in group and whole class activities. They make sure that the pupils always have a clear idea of what it is they are doing. At the beginning of each new topic, the teachers find out what the pupils already know and at the end they retest them to find out how much they have learnt. All teachers have useful ways of recording what it is the pupils know understand and can do. The teachers use concept maps to effectively assess and record what it is pupils know and understand. Where lessons were less successful, teachers had planned tasks that were not challenging enough and pupils became bored.
100. The leadership of the subject has been successful in supporting the teachers' development of their subject knowledge and in promoting more effective ways of using practical investigations to promote the pupils' learning. The scheme of work is well covered although pupils have greater difficulty with the recording and interpretation of scientific data. The school has made good use of booster classes led by the co-ordinator and as a result the standards being achieved are rising, particularly among the higher attaining pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

101. The pupils achieve nationally expected levels by the ages of seven and 11. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, however there has been little work done to agree acceptable standards of achievement or to ensure a progression in the skills development of the pupils. Because of this the pupils make more progress in some classes than in others.
102. A wide range of techniques are taught throughout the school and evidence was seen of work using a variety of media including pencils, pastels, paint, printing and collage work. The pupils are also given the opportunity to study the work of well known artists such as Lowry and Paul Klee and to work with local artists. One example of this was when Year 5 pupils worked with artist Oliver Budd to create the mosaic at the school entrance. The pupils are taught a variety of skills, such as how to apply a colour wash and using tone or shade. They are given opportunities to select and experiment with different media however there is little evidence of the pupils reviewing their work or developing ideas. The use made of sketchbooks varies between classes. The quality of work seen across classes was variable and this largely reflects the level of teachers' knowledge, which also varies considerably.
103. The quality of the teaching observed in lessons was satisfactory overall. In one good lesson observed in a Year 4 class, the teacher's skilful questioning and good subject knowledge enabled the pupils to develop a fabric design, choose the appropriate tools and media and decorate the fabric to make a purse. The teacher's clear organisation and careful preparation of resources

ensured that the pupils remained focused on the task and worked with creative effort to an end product. In a less successful lesson, the teacher failed to sustain the pupils' interest in the tasks provided and the level of the work produced was subsequently of a lower standard.

104. The subject has an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. At present the school uses national guidelines as their scheme of work for art. The co-ordinator has recognised the need to adapt the scheme in order to ensure that it reflects an appropriate range of experiences for the pupils. There are currently too few opportunities for looking at art from a range of cultures and the use of ICT is under developed. The school is aware of these issues and plans are already in place to develop these areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. The pupils' work seen in lessons indicates that they are achieving standards in line with national expectations at seven and eleven. This is supported by the discussions with teachers and pupils about their work, and an examination of a range of pupils' previous work. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the pupils' work in designing and making were unsatisfactory. The school has adopted the national guidelines as their scheme of work and this has helped in raising standards, through the improved curriculum and through much improved teacher knowledge. Aspects of control technology are not as well developed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.
106. Year 1 pupils were researching the materials and techniques that they could use to decorate the money holder they were designing and making. They experimented with three different forms of decoration and they developed their skills well and through discussion and practical activity improved their knowledge of the techniques. Year 4 pupils were investigating and researching materials and techniques, which will lead them to constructing a musical instrument of their own. They consider such aspects as which materials provide the best structure and how the function of the instrument determines the materials and construction required. They had a satisfactory grasp of the construction involved but were not as confident in the design process, although this improved as the teacher carefully developed this with them.
107. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers are now more confident and plan effectively. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was said to be unsatisfactory for both infants and juniors. The teachers now have a much more secure subject knowledge, plan the work well and ensure that the pupils clearly understand what they have to do and what is expected of them. In an initial discussion a Year 4 pupil said that they needed to consider '*the suitability for purpose*' when planning their work. The tasks set are interesting and appropriate for the pupils; the pupils enjoy the tasks and persevere to complete them within the given time. The teachers set high standards, including behaviour. Some planning and designs indicate that teachers are structuring the work too much and so the pupils have too few opportunities to explore and follow up their own ideas. The teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their completed work. Year 4 pupils discussed the decoration techniques they had been trying. One said, '*You could use tie-dye for the background colour.*' Another thought that you could combine some of the techniques. Although there is a reasonably broad curriculum, there are only limited opportunities to develop work using resistant materials and control.
108. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and reasonably knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take a pride in their work.
109. The subject manager is enthusiastic and informed and has had opportunities to monitor other teachers' planning. This has ensured that the learning opportunities have been well developed. The scheme of work ensures that planning is consistent across the classes. Effective planning exists in all classes. Individual teachers have worked hard to use the national guidelines to improve their understanding and the pupils' performance. The subject makes a satisfactory

contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but these are not planned for and the pupils' specialist subject vocabulary is not sufficiently well developed.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

110. Standards in both subjects are in line with those expected of seven and 11-year-old pupils. A variety of initiatives ensure that the subject has a suitable priority in the curriculum, for example, outings to museums and places of historical interest, such as Lullingstone Roman Villa and the village of Horton Kirby for comparative studies with their own locality. Whilst geographical standards are similar, this represents an improvement in history since the last inspection report when attainment was below national expectations in Year 2. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make sound progress.
111. In geography, Year 2 pupils used aerial photographs of the school and local area. Most pupils sensibly discussed each photograph, listened well to the teachers and from their comments they showed their interest in finding features that they recognised. When using photographs of their own locality and Horton Kirby they investigated the differences and similarities between them. One girl pointed out that there were more fields, less people, fewer shops, houses and other buildings in Horton Kirby than where he lived. Two boys discussed a picture of the fire station in the village, which they said was small and probably held only one fire-engine. The local fire station was much bigger because there were many more people and buildings.
112. In history, the infant pupils follow an appropriate scheme of work and by the age of seven, Year 2 pupils have studied many aspects of the lives of people in the past. They know about the lives of famous people such as Louis Braille and know that Florence Nightingale helped soldiers who were injured in the Crimea war. Written work shows that pupils can construct timelines and describe the passage of time. Insufficient links are made with literacy and the teachers do not exploit the opportunity for pupils to communicate their findings in a range of different ways. In Year 2 there is too much copying of sentences written by the teacher.
113. In geography, Year 6 pupils used atlases to locate places and reference materials to find out more about them. Two girls had located a place in South America but found that there was very limited information available to them. They described the ways in which they could gather information from different sources and had a good understanding of using the atlas to locate places. This was reinforced by some other groups but some pupils had more limited skills in using the atlas and they were supported well by the teacher. A new pupil to the school with very limited use of English was effectively supported by a support teacher and two pupils who worked with him to begin to look at the place that he had moved from. The other two pupils developed their own study skills well by having to find different ways to communicate the questions and ideas they wanted to pursue.
114. In junior classes, the pupils were encouraged to ask more questions about why historical events happened and some could draw conclusions from the evidence they collected. Higher attaining pupils combined evidence from different secondary sources, such as posters, photographs and books to find out about the past. By Year 6 some pupils have acquired the skills of collecting, synthesising and communicating key pieces of historical information as demonstrated by their written presentations of life in Victorian times.
115. During lessons, both infant and junior pupils were encouraged to ask questions about the investigations that they were doing and to draw conclusions from the information they gathered. Higher attaining pupils combined evidence from different secondary sources, such as texts, photographs and atlases to find out about the past. By Year 6 some pupils have acquired a satisfactory range of skills that allow them to investigate different places and environments. They were able to use both primary and secondary sources of information and draw appropriate conclusions. They had greater difficulty in recording their ideas both in written and graphical form and their presentation of work is unsatisfactory at times.

116. The teaching was satisfactory overall in the lessons observed. The teachers ensured that the pupils had a clear idea of what they are going to learn. The work was made interesting and was appropriate for the pupils. Lessons built on previous learning and teaching strategies were appropriately varied according to the needs of the pupils. The teachers' plans followed an appropriate scheme of work based upon the national guidelines but which has been effectively developed to meet the needs of the pupils and the resources available. In history, a Year 3 teacher posed appropriate questions about the Roman invasion of Britain to enable pupils to extend their historical knowledge before undertaking a practical activity to consolidate their learning about the appearance of Boudica. In geography, a Year 2 teacher similarly posed appropriate questions about the places that they were finding out about to enable pupils to extend their geographical knowledge before learning to use photographs and other resources to compare two places. The pupils used source material sensibly and many drew sensible conclusions about the reliability of such sources. In history, a Year 5 teacher set the scene skilfully for the lesson by revising elements of a local visit from the previous week. The pupils could recall factual information, for example identifying the types of windows made in Victorian times and went on to explain the effects of particular inventions upon the daily lives of ordinary people. In geography, a Year 6 teacher ensured that all pupils understood the ways in which they could find information and the framework in which it should be recorded. Although many pupils found recording difficult this helped them to structure their ideas. The teachers extended the pupils' thinking and challenged their ideas. Resources are sufficient and were used effectively to add meaning to the situations.
117. The co-ordination of the subjects shows interest and enthusiasm. National guidance for planning and assessment was adopted in both key stages in September 2000. The policy and schemes of work for history and geography are being implemented by the staff but are not being formally monitored and evaluated by the co-ordinators. The monitoring, assessment and evaluation aspect of the co-ordinators' role needs to be developed further to enable them to have greater insight into what has actually been taught and learned by pupils. In history, the standard of marking is inconsistent and there are few instances throughout the school of marking providing constructive comments or showing pupils how they might improve their written work. Both subjects make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development, for instance, Black History week is an exciting, stimulating and imaginative approach in this area and its implementation has been a real success for the school. Also the annual Geography Week raises the pupils' interest and understanding in this subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards of pupils' attainment are in line with those expected for seven and 11-year-olds. This judgement is similar to that made at the time of the last inspection but there have been improvements in some areas. The improvements have resulted from recent upgrading of resources, the development of teachers' skills in teaching the subject and the systematic and determined management of curriculum development. In some aspects of their work in information and communication technology, the pupils' skills are better than those expected, for example in their ability to use the Internet for research purposes. In some other aspects of their work however, progress has not been so rapid and pupils have more limited opportunities to use the computers in their work in other subjects. Overall the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
119. In infant classes, the majority of pupils acquire satisfactory basic skills and are achieving well. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are provided with well-structured opportunities to use the computers and become familiar with a range of information and communication technology (ICT). Consequently, they make satisfactory progress and they achieve standards expected of seven-year-olds. Many load programs and close them down when they have finished. They learn to use the keyboard and mouse with control and understanding and operate a range of programs effectively. Younger pupils develop basic keyboard skills, showing they can operate the caps lock and spacebar and they learn to use a word processing program to revise text and construct sentences. By Year 2, the pupils' developing mouse control enables them to use a program to create delightful pictures of 'Bear in a Dark Wood.'

120. In junior classes, the pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of ICT and they have the skills expected of pupils of their age. Younger pupils can use the computer to organise and reorganise text. They begin to develop the skills of redrafting and are able to replace selected words in a given text with synonyms. Some can use cut and paste and move text using drag and drop techniques. Year 3 pupils learn to access the Internet, logging on and successfully searching for information. They can send and receive electronic mail. In Year 4 pupils show great expertise when using the 'Decisions' program to produce a branching database. They enter accurate information and pose appropriate questions to devise a successful and informative database about subjects such as minibeasts or sports. Other pupils in the class use the databases very well. Year 4 pupils can enter, sort and classify data to present their findings, about themes such as shoe sizes, using a satisfactory range of graphical representations. The pupils are also able to search a given database for information and Year 6 pupils have a very good knowledge of how ICT is used in the home and the environment. These skills are successfully developed through Years 5 and 6. By the age of 11, the pupils use spreadsheets successfully. The pupils use a word processing program to write their own stories and show they can combine text and graphics to produce multimedia presentations.
121. Overall the teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers use regular ICT lessons to good effect to teach and demonstrate appropriate skills. This is systematically followed up during the time before the next lesson. While there is evidence of teachers providing opportunities for pupils to use the computers in other subjects, as yet this is not as extensive as it could be. When this done it is usually very effective. In mathematics, for example, some younger pupils had the opportunity to use the computer as an extension activity providing further addition practice, while some others' understanding of different animals was extended in a science lesson. In a good lesson with younger junior pupils, the teacher made very good use of the computers to support the pupils' learning in literacy. She provided opportunities for pupils to redraft questions into statements providing quality support and feedback as necessary.
122. The pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are positive. When working in pairs at the computer they collaborate well, treat equipment with respect and are very well behaved. This was evident when pupils in Year 6 used the Hyperstudio' program in a computer suite at the local library to produce a sound and vision presentation for other class members.
123. Curriculum leadership in ICT is very good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has successfully managed the rapid development of the subject since her appointment in January. The new computer suite, which is very nearly ready for use, should provide a very good resource. A clear policy and scheme of work inform teaching and learning in the subject effectively. A good programme of professional development has already improved teachers' skills and this is enabling them to manage pupils' learning more effectively. The co-ordinator has also contributed to the improvement of teachers' skills by working alongside colleagues and demonstrating new approaches. At the present time, assessment and record keeping systems need further development to be effective.

MUSIC

124. The standards of attainment by ages seven and 11 are in line with those expected nationally and the pupils have access to a good range of musical activities. Music, and especially singing, are positive features of the school and are enjoyed by all of the pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development and all pupils make satisfactory progress.
125. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below national expectations, and the music curriculum was found to be, 'incomplete and inconsistently delivered'. The school is using national guidelines together with a commercial scheme of work to plan what should be taught in each year group and to make sure that the pupils build on what they have learned previously. These plans include opportunities for the pupils to create and develop musical ideas for themselves. Singing is a strength of the school and the co-ordinator who runs the popular after school choir ensures that the learning opportunities for pupils are very well extended in the junior 'singing assembly'.

126. The pupils' response to music is generally good, they are eager to become involved in the singing and instrumental activities and overall they remain focussed and attentive throughout the lessons. They handle the instruments well and treat them with care and respect. Throughout school, the pupils have opportunities to play a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They listen to a variety of pieces of music and can identify different instruments and evaluate the effect they produce, for example, when they listen to a lullaby. The pupils know, understand and correctly use a good range of musical vocabulary, for example they understand tempo, dynamics, rhythm and lyrics. The pupils often sing together and sing enthusiastically, tunefully and with expression. They can sing a good variety of songs from memory, and hold a melody while the choir sings in harmony. This term the older pupils have been learning a range of gospel songs and their performance of *Amazing Grace* was outstanding.
127. The overall quality of the teaching in music is good. The teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, they are well supported by the clear guidelines of what they are to teach and a good range of resources. They explain the objectives of the lessons clearly and expect the pupils to participate fully. However, there are limited opportunities for the pupils to learn to play instruments individually or to participate in instrumental groups outside of the lessons. The pupils can learn to play the keyboard; the parents pay for these lessons. In one less successful lesson, the teacher had low expectations of what the pupils could achieve during the lesson.
128. The co-ordinator is an accomplished musician and he enthusiastically promotes the pupils' musical learning through the singing group. He also involves parents in the musical experiences provided for the pupils, for example a number of parents have been concerned in the production of a good quality music CD, which includes the pupils' singing group who make a good contribution. The pupils have some opportunities to listen to professional musicians from a range of musical traditions and cultures. There is a pupil who is an accomplished piano player and the school makes good use of his talents; he extends the musical experiences of the pupils by beautifully playing a range of classical pieces for them to listen to, which they do with concentration and enjoyment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards are in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when the attainment of 11-year-olds was judged to be below, and sometimes well below, the national average. Progress is satisfactory for both infant and junior pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
130. In lessons, the infant pupils demonstrated satisfactory levels of co-ordination and spatial awareness. For example, in one lesson, infant pupils were beginning to refine their gymnastic movements, such as balances and jumps. They built on these skills by transferring them to work on large apparatus by changing speed, level and direction. The pupils responded well to music whilst performing their movements. In a games lesson, Year 1 pupils were developing their striking and controlling ball skills. The pupils demonstrated good levels of skill of hitting and catching. They work well together in pairs and listened effectively to the teacher's clear instructions.
131. Junior pupils are making sound progress in developing the control and quality of their games skills. Improvement has been made since the time of the last inspection when older pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory to poor progress in games. In a games lesson, Year 4 pupils, were building on the skills learnt in previous lessons to develop their racquet skills sufficiently to take part in simple rallies with a partner. By observing other pupils and evaluating their own performance, they were able to improve upon their skills. In a Year 6 dance lesson, the pupils became fully involved and displayed sound standards when performing a range of dance movements. They rose well to the high level of physical challenge asked of them by the teacher and showed good concentration throughout the session. Year 3 pupils attend swimming lessons. As at the last inspection, most pupils become confident in the water and are able to swim short

distances. Junior pupils display an increasing ability to link skills and actions when performing a range of movement patterns.

132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching in junior classes has shown significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good there is a high level of physical challenge for pupils and the sharp pace of lessons is maintained, allowing the pupils to respond to lessons with enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment. Lessons are well planned, providing the pupils with appropriate opportunities for developing a variety of skills, and there are opportunities for pupils to evaluate their performance and that of others. The teachers make frequent use of pupils to demonstrate, which reinforces the pupils' understanding of their tasks and related skills. The teachers challenge the pupils to improve their performance and the pupils mostly apply themselves well. The teachers provide suitable opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate good levels of co-operation when working in groups and collaborate well when given paired activities.
133. The co-ordinator is relatively new in post and is aware of the need to engage in further professional development in order to increase subject knowledge and lead the subject effectively. At present the role is underdeveloped in that the subject is not monitored to evaluate standards within and between year groups and to establish targets to improve the level of pupil attainment. There is a good range and quantity of resources to support all elements of physical education. The school has two spacious halls with good quality flooring and large apparatus for the teaching of dance, gymnastics and games skills. However, there is no area for pupils to apply their skills and develop their tactical awareness of games on grass. The school provides no extra curricular activities to support the development of physical education, a situation that has failed to improve since the time of the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards for seven and 11-year-olds are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Improvement has been made since the time of the last inspection when attainment was reported to be below the expected level for all pupils. The infant pupils demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of Christian festivals and are increasing their understanding of Christian practices and symbolism. For example, following a visit to their local church, the pupils were able to explain the significance of religious items within a Christian church and the importance of baptism within the faith. Junior pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of other world religions; for example, they know why holy books such as the "Torah" and the "Qur'an" are important respectively to Jews and Muslims, where they are kept and how they should be handled. Older pupils extended their knowledge and understanding by visiting a local synagogue and could explain the roles of the Rabbi and the Scribe and the importance within Judaism of religious ceremonies, such as the Barmitzva. Junior pupils are also able to make comparisons between religions concerning different beliefs about key events such as death in people's lives.
135. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory throughout the school. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory progress. The scrutiny of work previously produced together with pupils' responses observed during lessons, indicate that pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious traditions, concepts and symbolism is progressing at a satisfactory rate.
136. Insufficient lessons were observed to offer a judgement on the quality of teaching in infant classes overall, although scrutiny of teachers' plans and the judgement of the single lesson observed indicate that teaching within this key stage is at least satisfactory. The teaching in junior classes is good. These judgements form a marked improvement since the last inspection when the teaching in both key stages was unsatisfactory. The planning is based upon the school's framework for the subject, which is closely allied to the local Agreed Syllabus; plans have clear objectives and ensure progress within and between year groups. The teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils and differentiate tasks to suit pupils' needs. They demonstrate good knowledge of the subject matter. They use appropriately an effective balance of whole

class, group and individual teaching strategies. With the exception of adopting clear assessment procedures, the school has improved upon the unsatisfactory features of teaching commented upon in the previous inspection report. The teachers' effective classroom management helps to ensure that the pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning and that their behaviour is good during lessons. The pupils listen carefully and maintain their concentration. When appropriate, pupils contribute knowledge about the religious practices of their own faith.

137. In recent times the school has increased its resources to support the teaching and learning of religious education. The range and quality of resources is good and includes artefacts and sacred books of the world religions to be studied.
138. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who has revised the policy for religious education, established a coherent scheme of work and raised the profile of the subject since the last inspection. The introduction of systematic procedures for monitoring the quality of learning together with an effective system of assessing pupils' progress would further improve provision.