

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Our Lady's RC Primary School**

Camden Town

LEA area: Camden

Unique Reference Number: 100048

Headteacher: Deirdre Finan

Reporting inspector: Michael Buckley  
30517

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706505

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pratt Street, Camden Town, London NW1 0DP
Telephone number:	0171-485 7997
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Dominic McKenna
Date of previous inspection:	29 April – 2 May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Michael Buckley, Registered Inspector	Mathematics; Art; Music; Physical education.	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Leadership and management.
Elizabeth Cooke, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community
Raminder Arora	Under fives; English; Geography; English as an additional language; Equality of opportunity.	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Margaret Hart	Science; Design technology; Information technology; History; Special educational needs.	Curriculum and assessment; Efficiency.

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London WC2B 6SE

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Excellent leadership by the head teacher and good overall management. A good standard of efficiency.
- Significant improvements in attainment, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- A very good ethos which stresses the need to raise standards in a good learning environment which fosters good relationships between all members of the school's community and provides equality of opportunity.
- Very good arrangements for monitoring teaching and curriculum development.
- Very good links with parents and with the community which support learning. Parents support the school strongly.
- Good teaching overall.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the school and to their work.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good provision for moral and spiritual development.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is improving but the majority of pupils are not yet at the levels expected nationally.
- II. The provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory.
- III. When pupils are working in small groups, noise levels can rise and hinder progress and not all the teachers have developed successful methods of dealing with this.
- IV. Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- V. The nursery does not offer a stimulating or welcoming environment and the fabric and fittings are in urgent need of attention.

**This school is improving rapidly. It has many more strengths than weaknesses and the weaknesses will form the basis for the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the parents or guardians of all the pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made considerable progress since the last inspection. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has improved greatly, particularly in Key Stage 2. The strong educational direction provided by the senior management has raised the quality of teaching and improved planning for the curriculum and for the school's development overall. There are now co-ordinators, curriculum maps and action plans for all subjects and all aspects of the National Curriculum's programmes of study are being covered in information and communications technology and physical education. The governors have a clear role and they are playing a key part in the school's improvement. Parents are closely involved with the school.

The school has made good progress on all fronts since the last inspection, particularly in the last year, and the quality of its leadership and management and the commitment and ability of its teaching and non-teaching staff mean that it is very well placed to make further progress.

**Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999, based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
English	C	A	<i>well above average</i>	A
Mathematics	E	C	<i>above average</i>	B
Science	D	B	<i>Average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E

This table shows that, in 1999, the school’s performance in English was in line with the average for all primary schools in England and well above that for schools with a similar intake of pupils. Although it was well below the national average in mathematics, it was in line with the results of similar schools. In science, attainment was below the national average but above that for similar schools.

Religious education was not inspected, as it was the subject of a separate inspection under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

**Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Satisfactory
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		N/a	N/a
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching was satisfactory in 92 per cent of the lessons seen. It was good or better in 51 per cent. It was most consistently good in the reception class and at the end of Key Stage 2 but good teaching was seen in all classes. Teaching that was good or better occurred most frequently in English, mathematics, information and communications technology and physical education. Most of the eight per cent of unsatisfactory teaching took place on the first day of the inspection, during guided reading sessions.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. ‘Satisfactory’ means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.*



**Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Satisfactory overall. Behaviour around the school is good but, in some classes, pupils can sometimes become too noisy and slow the rate of progress for everyone.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Very good. A strong commitment to raising standards of attainment and to equality of opportunity. Relationships are good between all members of the school's community.
Leadership and management	Very good. Excellent leadership from the head teacher, very well supported by the governors and the senior management team. The governors play an important part in guiding the school towards its targets.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met and planning and assessment have improved significantly.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Particularly for spiritual and moral development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers. Good staff development and resources. Satisfactory accommodation.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

**The parents' views of the school**

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
VI. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in school life. VII. It provides a clear picture of what is being taught and of the progress their children are making. VIII. Staff are very approachable. IX. The school is enabling children to achieve good standards of work. X. Extra-curricular provision is good. XI. The school's values have a very positive effect and standards of behaviour are good. XII. Their children are happy at the school. XIII. Homework is regularly set and marked.	XIV. Only one negative view was expressed in to the questionnaire, at the parents' meeting and

Inspectors support the views of the parents. Attainment is improving and progress is always satisfactory and often good. Homework is set regularly in English, mathematics and science but there are occasions when it is not adequately marked.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue the school's improvement and raise standards still higher in English, mathematics and science, the head teacher, senior management team and the governors need to:

- XV. extend potentially higher-attaining pupils by monitoring their progress carefully and providing them with increasingly challenging tasks (see paragraphs **28, 32, 35**);
- XVI. improve the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language by using the records of their levels of language acquisition to set them personal targets (see paragraph **30**);
- XVII. review the deployment of the teachers and support staff involved with supporting these pupils so that their work is more closely focused (see paragraphs **30, 66, 67**);
- XVIII. create an expectation that work in the classrooms will normally proceed in reasonable silence (see paragraphs **21, 28**);
- XIX. provide relevant staff-development so that teachers acquire a wider range of effective strategies for dealing with noisy and off-task behaviour and maintaining the pace of lessons (see paragraph **28**);
- XX. as and when resources permit, refurbish the nursery, particularly the flooring and the guard rails on the ramp, and create a more lively, stimulating and welcoming mood by the quality of the décor and display (see paragraphs **61, 83**).

## · INTRODUCTION

### · Characteristics of the school

1. Our Lady's is a small, voluntary-aided Roman Catholic primary school which serves the community of the parish of Our Lady of Hal in Camden Town, in north-west London. It shares premises with St Michael's, a Church of England primary school, and the two schools also share the costs of a nursery unit on the same site.
2. The nursery offers fifty-two part-time places to three and four year-old children who attend for either the morning or the afternoon sessions each day. These places are shared equally by Our Lady's and Saint Michael's primary schools. There were only thirty children attending the nursery during the inspection, fifteen of whom were being educated by the provision made by Our Lady's school. Children transfer to the reception class in the September or the January of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, the great majority of the children in the reception class were under five years old.
3. The school had one hundred and sixty-four pupils on roll at the time of the inspection, aged from five to eleven years, with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. The school's community is racially mixed but the great majority are from a white European background. Many of these are Portuguese or Spanish in origin and approximately forty per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language. A similar proportion are receiving support under the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant project. These figures are very high when compared with the national average although they are quite typical for Camden. There are a few pupils from a small local community of Travellers.
4. The St Pancras ward, where most of the pupils come from, has a comparatively low percentage of higher social classes or adults with higher education qualifications and a high proportion of children in overcrowded households. A significant number of pupils are from homes where no adult is in full-time employment and almost half of the pupils in the school are eligible for free school meals. This is a very high proportion when compared with the national average. Fifty-nine pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this proportion is also very high. Two of these pupils are the subjects of statements identifying the nature of support they require from external agencies and from the school.
5. The school's aims are set out in the prospectus as follows:

'The school aims to provide the best possible education for all children, where the teachings of Christ inform all our actions and the way in which we treat one another. We provide a well-ordered and stimulating environment in which effort is rewarded, special needs are met and children's gifts are recognised and developed. We fulfil these ideals through the living of our Mission Statement.'
6. The Mission Statement declares:

'Respect, respect, respect,  
We will do our best to be like Jesus  
We will respect ourselves  
We will respect others  
We will respect the world around us.'
7. The school's immediate targets are:
  - to continue to raise attainment;
  - to extend higher-attaining pupils by monitoring their progress carefully and providing them with increasingly challenging tasks;

- to improve the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language;
- to develop the teaching and learning of mathematics so that pupils achieve greater success.

8. **Key indicators**

**Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	11	16	27
	(12)	(16)	(28)

8. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	10 (8)	11(10)	9 (10)
	Girls	12 (14)	12 (14)	11 (10)
	Total	22 (22)	23 (24)	20 (20)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (79)	85 (86)	74 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

8. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	7 (9)	9 (11)	10 (11)
	Girls	11 (11)	11 (10)	10 (11)
	Total	18 (20)	20 (21)	20 (22)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	67 (71)	74 (75)	74 (79)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15 (15)	15 (11)	30 (26)

8. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	12 (7)	9 (8)	11 (8)
	Girls	13 (6)	12 (6)	13 (3)
	Total	25 (13)	21 (14)	24 (11)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (50)	70 (54)	80 (42)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

8. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11(8)	9 (8)	11 (8)
	Girls	13 (8)	11 (6)	13 (7)
	Total	24 (16)	20 (14)	24 (15)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	80 (62)	67 (54)	80 (58)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

.....  
<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

8. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.5
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.8
	National comparative data	0.5

8. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	4
Permanent	0

8. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	11
Satisfactory or better	92
Less than satisfactory	8

NB Teaching was good or better in 51 per cent of lessons

## 8. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 8. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 8. Attainment and progress

1. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is considerably below that expected nationally. Many are learning English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning the language. By the age of five, the majority are still below the expected standards in language and literacy, mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, most do reach the expected standards in their personal and social, physical and creative development.
2. The percentage of seven year-olds who reached the expected levels in the 1999 standard tests was in line with the national averages in reading and writing but well below the national average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments were that attainment was below the nationally expected level in English, mathematics and science. When the school's results are compared with those of other schools with a similar intake of pupils, the percentages of pupils reaching the expected levels are above average in reading, well above average in writing but below average in mathematics. These results are an improvement on results at the time of the last inspection. When the school's average points score is calculated for each subject, the results in reading, writing and mathematics are well below the national average points score. However, the average points score is in line with the average points score for similar schools in reading and writing and below the average in mathematics. This indicates that there were comparatively fewer pupils reaching higher grades in any of the subjects.
3. The results in the 1999 tests for eleven year-olds show significant improvements on those of previous years, from the last inspection onwards, particularly in English and science. The percentages of pupils reaching the expected levels were above the national average in English and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. When compared with the results of similar schools, they were very high in English and well above the average in the other two subjects. The school's average points scores are in line with national average points score in English but below the national average in science and well below that in mathematics. The average score was well above that for similar schools in English, above the average in science and in line in mathematics. These results show an even more significant improvement than the percentage results, indicating that attainment across the ability range has been raised and that a bigger proportion of pupils is reaching higher levels.
4. The inspection findings indicate that, in English, mathematics and science, a significant proportion of seven and eleven year-olds are on target to attain the levels expected for their age but that this is not yet quite the majority and that overall attainment is below the expected levels at the end of both key stages. In aspects of English, such as speaking and listening across the school and in writing at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with national expectations. Older pupils plan their writing well and write clearly and at length. The weaknesses in English are mainly in reading at both key stages and in writing in Key Stage 1 where pupils have not developed adequate skills in spelling, punctuation or presentation. In mathematics, the majority of pupils in Year 2 are secure with number bonds up to twenty and they are confident and accurate with place values up to three figures. Higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 can solve written problems involving all four operations with money and many can explain their solutions. They understand percentages and most can calculate co-ordinates and vectors, using positive and negative numbers accurately. By the end of the key stage, pupils can calculate the circumference of circles and work with simple and compound fractions and with decimals.
5. In science, pupils in Year 2 can use simple classifications and they understand that some materials occur naturally and some are man-made. They know about growth in plants and animals and can observe changes in their bodies after a physical education lesson. They are able to record observations on simple charts by writing or drawing and tell the rest of the class what they have done and seen. Pupils in Year 6 are learning about the life cycles of plants and can describe and name the different parts of plants



involved in reproduction. They know which foods are beneficial to them and which ones can be harmful in excess. They are able to carry out investigations of different forces and they can use bar charts and line graphs to record their findings, sometimes making use of information and communications technology. They are able to make and test predictions and understand fair testing.

6. Children make satisfactory progress over their time in the nursery and progress improves in the reception class. However, the progress of children learning English as an additional language is hampered by the rate at which they acquire basic knowledge of the language and no additional support is provided for them. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
7. Progress in English and mathematics is good in the reception class and in Years 5 and 6 and it is good in both key stages in information and communications technology and physical education. It is satisfactory in the other subjects at both key stages except in singing in Key Stage 2 and geography in both key stages. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive from the co-ordinator, from their classroom assistants and from outside services, such as the sensory support advisory teachers. Other pupils on the register of special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are helped in this by the good quality individual education plans and the realistic targets set for them. The attainment of pupils learning English as an additional language is generally at the expected levels in mathematics but below this standard in reading and writing at the end of both key stages. The majority of these pupils make satisfactory progress over time.
8. The attainment of seven and eleven year-olds in information and communications technology is at the levels expected for their age nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can control a programmable toy, use the computer's mouse and keyboard and complete simple word-processing. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can use text graphics and sound and they are familiar with menus and screen commands. They can log-on to the computer and they know how to close it down safely without losing information. They are familiar with databases and they can use appropriate programmes to model and simulate different circumstances and use a desk-top publishing package to produce a well laid out newsletter.
9. In art, pupils in Year 5 know some technical language, such as 'textile' and 'motif' and produce creative patterns in the style of William Morris, with imaginative development of the stalk and leaf patterns. Drawings on display show some good observation and growing control of pencils and charcoal. In design and technology, pupils in Key Stage 1 can research and complete a topic, drawing their own designs and making puppets, with paper fasteners, glue and sewing. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can use their knowledge of science to design and make a torch and investigate the use of different materials and techniques in the construction of bridges. In geography, pupils in Key Stage 1 can use an appropriate vocabulary, understand about different seasons and most can map out their route from home to school. In Key Stage 2, however, geographical skills and knowledge are under-developed. They are not sure about how rivers are formed or which direction they flow in and they are not familiar with terms such as 'source' or 'estuary'. In history, pupils in Year 2 understand time lines and they know about the Great Fire of London and Florence Nightingale. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know something about the myths and civilisation of the Ancient Greeks and have examined clothing and everyday items from Victorian times.
10. Children in the reception class recognise familiar songs and join in with the words and actions. The quality of singing in lessons in Key Stage 2 is below the expected standard. Pupils have poorly developed vocal tone and pitch and their breathing and voice production are not well developed. However, pupils in Year 6 can identify and clap complex rhythms and recognise, describe and differentiate between different styles of rock music. Singing in assemblies and in the hymn practice is better than it was in the two lessons seen. Pupils enjoy singing in this setting and they are looking forward to performing in the Camden Festival. In physical education, pupils are working at the levels expected for their ages. At the end of Key Stage 1, they can move in a variety of ways over fixed apparatus, using different parts of their bodies and balancing safely. They pay careful attention to safety and they understand the effects of exercise on their bodies. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show good

concentration and awareness of their body movements. Their posture and rhythm are good. Attainment in swimming is good and most pupils leave the school able to swim at least twenty-five metres.

18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

11. The school has successfully maintained the good standards previously reported. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall. They are welcoming to visitors, polite and keen to show their work. From the youngest children in the nursery to those preparing to move on to secondary school, the great majority spend the school day purposefully.
12. Children under five years old develop confidence and independence and they enjoy first-hand experiences and purposeful play. They are attentive and eager to learn and most are able to co-operate and take turns. The children behave well at all times and show consideration and respect for property and for each other. They form positive relationships and show respect for one another's different cultural backgrounds. They participate enthusiastically in teacher-led and self-initiated activities and they are happy and secure at school.
13. Older pupils show interest in their lessons, try hard and get on well with each other. In most classes, they work well when directly taught or supervised by an adult. However, a significant number of pupils find working independently or in groups without close adult supervision very difficult. In classes where this happens, teachers do not always employ effective strategies to keep pupils on task and, consequently, the pace of these lessons is slowed and expectations are lowered. In successful classes, teachers take care to settle pupils, insist on quiet and set a brisk pace. These teachers also have high expectations of the quantity and quality of the work pupils will produce.
14. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. They behave well around the school and in the playground and they are courteous and trustworthy. They treat the property of other pupils with respect and look after the school's property, buildings and grounds well. There are no graffiti and little litter and pupils look after the many interesting displays and plants around the school. Pupils generally adhere to the school rules which are clearly stated and widely displayed throughout the building. There were four exclusions for fixed periods last year which were dealt with in accordance with school procedures and parents report that behaviour has improved significantly recently. Relationships throughout the school community are good and the atmosphere in the school is friendly and busy. Pupils usually get on well together in lessons and at play. They feel secure in the school and expect their contributions and ideas to be received positively by adults and peers. Adults in school provide good role models and the daily life of the school is pervaded by this very positive ethos. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both in and outside lessons. They form good relationships and are well integrated into the life of the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They take responsibility during the course of the day for returning registers to the office, carrying messages and tidying away after sessions. Older pupils act as monitors on the stairs to help maintain safety and they undertake tasks in assemblies. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential school journey and in competitive sports and performances at the school. Pupils have many opportunities to consider their place in the world through personal and social education and religious education. However, a significant minority of pupils have not developed good powers of concentration or the capacity for independent study.

23. **Attendance**

16. Attendance at the school is satisfactory as the great majority of pupils attend punctually and regularly. Lessons start on time. Rates of attendance for the school are slightly below national averages but are better than those recorded in the last inspection report. The sound overall attendance has a beneficial effect on attainment because most pupils miss few sessions.

## 24. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### 24. **Teaching**

17. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons seen was good or better. It was most consistently good in the reception class and at the end of Key Stage 2 but good teaching was seen in all classes. Teaching that was good or better occurred most frequently in English, mathematics, information and communications technology and physical education. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching took place on the first day of the inspection, during guided reading sessions. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
18. Teachers have at least a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Where the school has provided some professional development, for example, in literacy, numeracy, science, information and communications technology and physical education, then knowledge and understanding are good. This enables teachers to adjust the pattern of their lessons and to pitch their questions to match the progress being made by individuals and groups of pupils. However, teachers' expectations are not always high enough and potentially higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Additional activities are planned for some lessons so that higher-attaining pupils are given additional tasks but this is not standard practice in the school. Questions are generally used well, not only to check pupils' understanding but also to challenge them to form hypotheses. Pupils are often pressed to explain their answers or conclusions. Teachers insist on the correct vocabulary being used and they encourage the use of skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology across the curriculum. In physical education and information and communications technology lessons, teachers give good practical demonstrations.
19. Teachers plan their lessons consistently well. Resources and other materials are prepared in advance. For example, books are prepared for literacy sessions, scientific apparatus for investigations and gymnastic apparatus is set out beforehand, when possible. Computers and printers are ready for use and leaves, flower stems and photocopied prints were brought to an art lesson. Resources are used appropriately. Planning is usually detailed and identifies tasks for pupils with different needs and abilities. Learning intentions are clear and conveyed to the class at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers provide good, clear explanations. Lessons are well organised and conducted with good pace and a sense of purpose. Teachers have adapted well to the styles of teaching demanded by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the use of some of the methods, such as a plenary session at the end of each lesson, is being successfully introduced across the curriculum. However, at the beginning of some lessons, pupils are seated on the carpet for too long.
20. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and teachers generally manage their classes well. Plenary sessions and periods when the whole class is being taught together are successful. However, most teachers experience occasional difficulties when the class splits into small groups as pupils talk to one another loudly and the noise levels rise to an unacceptable level. This pattern of behaviour was seen in most classes at some point during the inspection and teachers did not always have the appropriate strategies to deal with it. Distracting behaviour is sometimes made worse when the pace of lessons slows as teachers try to deal with pupils who are not on task. Day-to-day assessment is completed well in most cases. However, the approach adopted by the school of 'assessment by omission' means that pupils are identified where they have not met the learning objectives. This is satisfactory where it is backed up by further detailed work, such as the target-setting in the core subjects. However, in the remaining subjects, pupils who reach the learning objectives easily and who would therefore benefit from more challenging work are not always identified. Homework is set regularly in the core subjects but the amount and the quality of marking are not consistent.
21. The quality of teaching in the nursery is satisfactory and teaching in the reception class is consistently good. Teachers and assistants work effectively as a team and support one another. They have high expectations of children's work and behaviour and the different areas of the classrooms are well prepared. They manage children very skilfully and support their play activities well. Teaching in the

reception class is purposeful and well focused and interventions in children's activities are well timed and effective. Teachers are familiar with the areas of learning and understand the needs of young children. They adapt the learning activities to children's interests and abilities. Generally, the opportunities provided for children to initiate some of their own activities are satisfactory in the nursery and in the reception class.

22. Teachers are generally sensitive to the needs of pupils with special educational needs but they do not always plan carefully enough to ensure that these pupils can engage with the tasks set for each lesson or deploy the available support to the best advantage. The quality of teaching for pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. The specialist teacher does not pay enough attention to the stages that individual pupils have reached in learning English and she is not aware of the full range of language needs of the identified pupils. Consequently, she cannot plan clear learning objectives, provide tasks that are well matched to pupils' needs or make good use of resources. However, pupils' home languages are used to help them learn English. Literacy and numeracy lessons are planned jointly with the class teacher and key words are often identified on their plans. The arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress made by these pupils are not backed up by the setting of individual learning plans with carefully defined and specific learning targets. The teaching of music in Key Stage 2 is only satisfactory when the peripatetic teacher is strongly supported by the class teacher and they have planned the lesson carefully beforehand.

30. **The curriculum and assessment**

23. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum which covers the areas of learning for children under five, all the required subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and appropriate sex, drugs and health education. The balance of the curriculum is appropriate. Although more time than usual is spent on English, mathematics and science, this emphasis is justified by the need to raise standards in these subjects. The coverage of information and communications technology and physical education has improved since the last inspection. Good links with literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology are planned across the whole curriculum and different subjects are appropriately linked through topics. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements, and pupils for whom English is a second language have good access to the curriculum. Boys and girls have equality of access.

24. At the time of the last inspection, there were few schemes of work and therefore long-term planning was not satisfactory. The school has since adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and devised appropriate schemes of work for science, history, geography, design and technology, information and communications technology and music. Long-term planning is now significantly improved. There are clear 'curriculum maps' which specify when units of study are to be taught. These and the schemes of work are helping to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are built up systematically. Short-term lesson planning is done according to a set format which requires learning objectives to be clearly stated - a significant improvement since the last inspection. Planning is monitored well by curriculum leaders and by the head teacher. Teachers plan different work for pupils who are in the same class but at different stages of learning. However, these plans are too often concerned with the support the pupil will need or the quantity or quality of work expected rather than being focused on differences in the nature of the work set. Higher-attaining pupils are not challenged often enough by extension activities. There is good provision after school and at lunch times for activities which supplement the taught curriculum, such as boys' and girls' football, music, chess, arts and crafts. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum with the help of the support they receive in the classroom alongside their peers. Teachers make good use of microphones for the benefit of pupils with impaired hearing.

25. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers in the nursery and reception classes make careful observations and assessments of children's attainment measured against the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes for five year-olds and they are able to pass on useful information to the next teacher when the children move up a

class. Baseline assessments are conducted effectively when pupils enter the school at five years old. The rest of the school uses well-designed 'hand-over' proformas when pupils move up at the end of the school year. When these are fully completed, they form a valuable part of pupils' assessment. Written work is often marked with helpful and constructive comments but homework is not consistently marked.

26. In both key stages, there are very good arrangements for assessment in mathematics, English and science, where teachers' day-to-day informal assessments are combined with careful assessments in literacy and numeracy, individually set targets and the regular collection of samples of work, assessed against National Curriculum levels. This represents an improvement since the inspection of 1996. All pupils are aware of their individual targets in mathematics and English and they are helped to work towards them. Teachers share their learning intentions with their pupils at the beginning of each lesson. These are very good practices which involve pupils in the assessment of their own learning and progress but, on occasions, pupils do not fully understand the learning intentions and this limits their value.
27. Assessment is inconsistent in other subjects. While there are examples of good practice, in which the results of informal assessments lead to a review or to the repetition of areas of work, this is not always followed through across the school. Potentially higher-attaining pupils, for whom the learning objectives are too easy, are not consistently identified. Consequently, pupils who have finished a piece of work sometimes waste time, unnoticed by the teacher. The assessment of pupils who may have special educational needs is good. All the guidance in the Code of Practice is closely followed. Individual education plans are of good quality and they are reviewed at least once a term and more often when the targets are achieved quickly. Often, teachers adopt the sensible approach of drawing up plans and targets for groups of pupils in the class when they are all experiencing similar difficulties.
28. There is very good practice on the part of the head teacher and senior management team in collating, analysing and acting on the results of assessment across the whole school. They monitor curriculum development carefully through scrutinising assessments, teachers' planning and pupils' work and they adopt successful strategies to tackle identified difficulties. For example, they have directed time and resources to English, mathematics and science and the school has achieved significant improvements in the end of key stage tests and assessments. Past discrepancies between teachers' assessments and results in these tests have been identified and addressed through in-service training and teachers' assessments are now generally accurate in respect of National Curriculum levels.
36. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
29. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's supportive Christian ethos makes a significant contribution to learning. These strengths were also highlighted in the previous inspection report. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision of the school.
30. The provision for spiritual development is good. Music, art, religious education programmes and some lessons in poetry and literature, such as the study of Macbeth, effectively encourage pupils' spiritual awareness. However, this does not occur so frequently in other subjects, such as science and physical education. The assemblies are used well to promote a sense of community and shared values. Assemblies provide a good setting for pupils to reflect on their own and others' lives. The stories and talks in assemblies are interesting, and pupils are given suitable opportunities for a spiritual thought and a prayer. Collective worship offers pupils opportunities for reflection on their own experiences of sharing and friendship and for recognising a sense of pride in their achievements.
31. Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school strongly emphasises the importance of showing care and respect for others and teachers ensure that all pupils feel valued. The difference between right and wrong is effectively taught and most children have a good understanding of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour. The school actively promotes positive values and the pupils

respond constructively, enjoying their work. Moral values are well taught through stories, songs and discussions and a number of fund-raising activities for various charities help to make these issues more real. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide good role models and encourage pupils to relate well to each other and to behave courteously.

32. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' social development through the daily life and routines of the school. The planned opportunities for working co-operatively, the programme of personal and social education, the good range of after-school clubs and local educational visits all contribute to this development. The school provides a secure environment. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves is good. Children under five settle quickly into school life and are encouraged to become self-confident. When provided with appropriate opportunities, most pupils carry out responsibilities, such as looking after the younger pupils and preparing the hall for assemblies and lunch times. However, there are only limited opportunities for pupils to take initiatives and develop independence.

33. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are helped to understand their own cultural heritage through special occasions, such as the celebrations of Christian festivals, and they learn about the cultures of other European countries, such as Portugal. Visitors from other cultures, such as an African storyteller and an Irish poetry reader, attend the annual book week. Pupils' cultural interests and achievements are brought to the attention of the wider school community in assemblies. A visitor is invited to highlight the Hindu festival of Diwali, involving drama and artwork from the Indian sub-continent. The school effectively prepares its pupils for life in a multicultural society. However, there are few good multicultural artefacts or books of range and quality. As a result, pupils' appreciation of the richness of art, dance, music and literature of other cultures is limited. Pupils visit the local Greek Orthodox Church but they have only limited opportunities to listen to visitors speaking about other religions, in order to broaden their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity.

#### 41. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

34. The overall provision for the pupils' support, guidance and welfare is good. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and gives parents confidence that their children are happy and safe in school. The previously reported good standards have been successfully maintained by the school. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory and the teachers know their pupils well. Relationships throughout the school are good and this, combined with the teachers' good communication and teamwork, creates a secure environment where all are well cared for. Parents value this aspect of the school's provision very highly. Targets set for pupils are noted in the annual reports to parents. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and their progress is similar to and in some cases better than that made by the rest of the pupils. The school receives good support from outside professionals, including the social services, a support worker for Traveller families and the police.

35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. There is clear guidance for staff on recording and monitoring attendance and parents understand the requirements well. Registers are kept efficiently and comply with requirements. The school's expectations for attendance are noted in the prospectus and rates are correctly reported to parents in annual reports and the school's documentation. The school does not have an attendance policy but procedures are systematic and monitoring is efficiently carried out by the administrative assistant, the head teacher and the educational social worker. Rates of attendance have improved since the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and discipline are very good. The teachers' consistently positive approach to the management of pupils' behaviour is firmly underpinned by the school's policies. Incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents are contacted promptly if there are problems and serious incidents are appropriately recorded by the head teacher. Parents express clear approval for the way the school approaches these issues.

36. The school's procedures for child protection and for promoting pupils' well being, health and safety are

satisfactory. There are suitable, well understood procedures for child protection, co-ordinated by the headteacher and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The school has sound procedures for dealing with illness, accidents and emergencies. Fire safety procedures are up to-date, equipment and notices are in place and health and safety matters are overseen effectively by the governing body. The current health and safety policy is concerned mainly with housekeeping matters but is due to be revised shortly. The school is aware of the broken railings on the ramp to the nursery and the disintegrating flooring inside and is seeking the means to replace them.

37. There is satisfactory provision for lunchtimes, hot lunches are appetising and pupils eating packed lunches share the dining room. Playtimes are well supervised by friendly staff and pupils are provided with games and equipment to encourage purposeful play. The school maintains appropriate links with educational and other services which benefit pupils with special educational needs and it monitors their progress and personal development well. The objectives in their individual education plans are regularly and carefully updated.



45. **Partnership with parents and the community**

38. The school successfully encourages parents to become involved in its life and work. The current good provision is better than that noted in the previous report. Parents find the school welcoming and the staff open and approachable. Relationships between parents and staff are friendly and constructive. Many parents actively contribute to the education of pupils through work in the classrooms, accompanying children on trips and visits and providing support for the school's activities in the community. Parents give good support to the work their children do at home. They share books, ensure homework is returned on time and offer support with planned topic work. Parents are satisfied with the homework set and understand the school's provision. The parent-teacher association is active and provides effective support for the school through fundraising events which are open to the whole community. The links that are made in these ways greatly enrich pupil's learning.
39. Parents receive very good information about the school and the way it is run. A regularly issued newsletter, called 'The Dove', is friendly and informative and appreciated by parents and carers. The prospectus is clearly written and gives a good overview of the school's ethos and work. Special evening meetings were held to explain the school's approach to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these were well attended. These arrangements have improved since the last inspection. Procedures for reporting on pupils' progress are very good and families are provided with a wealth of information on their children's progress. The school regularly seeks parents' views on issues affecting school life, such as new policies, the introduction of school uniform and the home/school agreement. Reports to parents are consistently well written and identify what pupils know and can do, the targets that have been set for them and their results in tests, when appropriate. They also provide a means of recording parents' and pupils' responses to this information. The arrangements for involving the parents of pupils with special educational needs are particularly effective, with good early discussion of emerging concerns. These arrangements have greatly improved since the last inspection. In addition, the school has an open door policy towards all parents, which enables any queries or worries to be communicated quickly. Families for whom English is an additional language are supported with language classes and this provision is greatly appreciated. This is a strength of the school.
40. The school has very good links with the local community. Pupils visit local amenities and those in central London to enrich their learning. The school has a group of well-organised Community Service Volunteers who regularly come into school to help in lessons and with other activities. The school's Book Week is an important event when authors are invited to visit and the whole school celebrates learning through books. Parents are made welcome at assemblies and celebrations and families are invited to share Mass. Police representatives, the school nurse, and road safety officers all attend to support the personal and social education programme. The chair of the governors is the parish priest who knows the whole school community well and the school has very close links with the parish church and its congregation. Pupils raise money for a range of local and national charities, such as 'Help the Aged', and they have participated in sponsored events. They participate successfully in competitive sports locally and co-operate well with pupils from St Michael's Church of England School, which shares the same premises.
41. Pupils from the school transfer to a number of secondary schools when they are eleven years old and there are good arrangements to ensure that families understand the transfer arrangements and the pupils have opportunities to visit the schools before they move on. Most children attending the shared nursery transfer to Our Lady's or to St. Michael's and the two schools co-operate well in running the nursery and sharing the playgrounds, fire escapes and access to the site.
42. Overall, the school makes very good provision in this aspect of its work and the arrangements make a strong contribution to pupil's learning.

## 50. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 50. Leadership and management

43. The head teacher has been in post since September 1998. Her priorities have been to raise attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science, through ensuring that teachers have clear learning intentions for each lesson and that their planning and assessment are consistent. She has established extremely thorough systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and curriculum development. Her excellent leadership has provided the school with clear educational goals which focus on raising attainment. All the core subjects are now systematically monitored by the co-ordinators and the head teacher herself makes formal recorded observations in each class every term.
44. Changes in planning and organisation include amendments to the targets in the school's follow-up to the previous inspection, the appointment of a new co-ordinator for science and the setting of Years 5 and 6 together for mathematics. There are now co-ordinators for each subject who have all produced action plans and curriculum maps to provide better continuity and progression in learning across the school. Systems for planning the curriculum have been restructured. Every pupil has short-term targets in English and mathematics which they have helped to set. These are kept in the backs of their books and referred to frequently and they are reviewed each term. Tests are held in the core subjects at the end of every year. One of the targets in the action plans for the core subjects is the compilation of portfolios of pupils' work as exemplars, with National Curriculum levels against them. All elements of information and communications technology have been introduced into the curriculum, resources have been improved for the subject and the school is now connected to the Internet. These have proved to be effective measures.
45. Teachers have had relevant opportunities for professional development in key functions, such as assessment and monitoring, and the whole staff are united in creating a very positive learning environment in which pupils can make progress. The head teacher has been well supported in implementing these goals by the senior management team and by the governors and the quality of leadership overall is very good. The distinct improvements in the results of the 1999 standard tests, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that the policies and the educational strategies which underpin them are beginning to take effect in all three subjects.
46. A new school development plan had to be drawn up, as there was no plan when the new head teacher took post. This was the subject of considerable consultation. The present document is brief and businesslike and the priorities in it are clearly linked to the school's educational priorities and to financial planning. Progress towards the targets identified is regularly monitored. A new mission statement has been drawn up after extensive consultation with parents and pupils, as well as with all staff and the governors. This is often repeated and it is well known to pupils and parents. There is a range of policies which cover all essential activities and these are successfully built into the school's daily life. Other improvements made in the past year include the reinforcement of positive attitudes and behaviour around the school, the introduction of a school uniform, some refurbishments to the accommodation and tighter systems for planning the school's development and managing its finances. All of these initiatives have combined to create a school with very good morale which staff and pupils are proud to belong to and which parents value greatly.
47. The governors are very supportive and act effectively to guide the school's development and to act as custodians of the budget. They have a very good relationship with the new head teacher and they feel that they are much better informed and have a clear role. Minutes of meetings show that they are usually well attended, that they are well managed and businesslike and that they address relevant and important issues. The new arrangements for clerking have led to greater efficiency. A 'Standards Committee' has now been established which concerns itself with attainment, progress, teaching and the curriculum. The Finance Committee now receives very good information and advice from the independent consultants and is in a strong position to make strategic decisions. Every governor is linked to a class and they all visit the school so that they can form relationships with pupils and teachers

and understand better what the main issues are for future planning. All statutory requirements are being met.

48. The school fully meets statutory requirements in respect of pupils with special educational needs, maintaining the register efficiently and carrying out correctly procedures for annual reviews of statements, reviews of individual education plans and the identification and assessment of pupils' needs. The support for these pupils is generally well deployed and effective. However, the quality of provision under the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant is unsatisfactory. Pupils learning English as an additional language are not targeted effectively and those with the greatest need are achieving less than their potential. The teacher and the available support staff are not deployed efficiently.
49. The school's very positive ethos shows a strong commitment to equality of opportunity which is reflected in its policies and in all aspects of its daily life. Boys and girls are given equal access to resources and teachers are aware of gender issues in lessons and how to deal with them when they arise. Incidents of harassment, such as racial bullying or name-calling, are carefully attended to, following agreed procedures. There are some resources that reflect a multicultural society but few displays of positive images although there are examples of greetings and notices in different languages on display around classrooms.
50. The school has made good progress on all fronts since the last inspection, particularly in the last year, and the quality of its leadership and management and the commitment and ability of its teaching and non-teaching staff mean that it is very well placed to make further progress.

58. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

51. The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet all the requirements of the curriculum, including the provision for children under the age of five, for those with special educational needs and for those who are learning English as an additional language. Support staff are well qualified and have appropriate expertise to support teachers and pupils in classrooms. The support staff for special educational needs are suitably qualified. The number of staff available to support pupils learning English as an additional language is adequate. Welfare and ancillary staff give satisfactory support in the classrooms. All staff work hard, show a high level of commitment to the school and are dedicated to the pupils in their care. All staff have current job descriptions defining their roles and responsibilities. All teachers, including the newly qualified, have responsibility for one or more areas of the curriculum. Administrative and secretarial provision is good.
52. There are good arrangements for newly qualified teachers to receive appropriate induction and support from a mentor and good induction for experienced teachers who are new to the school. A useful staff handbook provides comprehensive information. Teaching and support staff avail themselves of opportunities for in-service training. All staff have had appropriate opportunities to be involved in training in order to respond to the school's initiatives. The school has an effective system of staff appraisal. The arrangements for staff development are good, meet individual and corporate needs and positively influence the quality of education provided by the school. Training needs are identified and directly linked to the school development plan and to the outcomes of the appraisal of teachers. Other systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and identifying strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice are sufficiently rigorous to inform the programme for staff development effectively.
53. The school's buildings and grounds offer satisfactory accommodation which allows the planned curriculum to be taught. The main school is clean, safe and welcoming and the high quality of display helps to create a stimulating learning environment. The staff toilets on the second floor are not appropriate for use by both male and female staff. The nursery provides an unsatisfactory environment because the accommodation is old and worn. The floor surface is damaged and patched, the main sink surround is rotting and the handrail on the ramp is broken and unstable. Although the nursery is spacious and allows a good range of activities to be constantly available, the displays and décor are

unexciting. The playground has a damaged surface and the outside fixed equipment is unsuitable. The school has well advanced plans to relocate and refurbish the outside play area which will then provide a good resource for learning.

54. The overall quality and range of resources to support teaching and learning across the curriculum are good. Resources are good in mathematics and information technology. The school has an adequate number of computers, which are easily accessible, and a suitable range of software but these resources are not fully used in all subjects. Resources for English are very good and the school has recently bought more big books and extensive sets of books for guided reading. The resources are generally organised well in the classrooms and centrally and used effectively. Commercially produced resources and those made by the teachers themselves are of good quality and appropriately used. Resources are satisfactory in science, music, physical education and design and technology but they are unsatisfactory for geography and history. The nursery is suitably resourced for indoor activities. There are good resources to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The libraries for both key stages are well organised and clearly set out with sufficient stocks of fiction and non-fiction. However, timetabled visits to borrow books and to learn how to use the classification system had been temporarily suspended during the inspection, owing to a leaking roof. Pupils' experience is enriched by the school's use of external events, facilities and places of interest.

62. **The efficiency of the school**

55. Arrangements for the school's administration and day-to-day financial procedures are good, clear and very efficiently carried out by the school secretary. The financial support services purchased by the school are of good quality. The high standards noted in the last inspection have been improved. The premises manager works effectively as a member of the staff team and there is good support from cleaning and catering staff. All these factors contribute to the smooth functioning of the school and effectively support the governing body and senior management team in carrying out the developments embodied in the school development plan.

56. Since the inspection of 1996, the school has greatly improved the quality of its financial planning. The governing body has secured advice and training which has enabled it to improve the relevance and efficiency of its financial monitoring. Financial reports are now linked to the school development plan which, in turn, is relevant to the needs of the school and accurately costed. Progress made towards the targets set out in the plan is well monitored. There are separate development plans for each curriculum area, teachers are fully involved in decisions and there is a high level of commitment to achieving planned developments.

57. The school has reduced the excessive balances of previous years to a level which is appropriate as a contingency sum. Decisions to make a one-year appointment of a co-ordinator for special educational needs who was not a class teacher and to target support in such a way as to raise attainment levels in Year 2 and Year 6 have been clearly justified by the results of standard tests in 1999. The school has produced a forecast budget for the next financial year, taking account of likely costs and developments, and a minimum costs budget which takes into account possible reductions in funding which may come about as a result of the Government's new "Fair Funding" arrangements. The governing body is also investigating possibilities for marketing the school to try to bring the numbers of pupils on roll back to the optimum agreed figure. Senior management and governors work very effectively together in the interests of the pupils.

58. The school generally deploys its teachers well and curriculum leaders provide good support to colleagues with less extensive knowledge of their subjects. Funds allocated for the benefit of pupils with special educational needs are well used. The special educational needs co-ordinator has spent time profitably in setting up systems, including computerised systems, for tracking the progress of pupils on the special educational needs register. However, continuation of her time without a class is unlikely to be efficient in the longer term. The role of the deputy head teacher is not fully developed and the co-ordinator for the 'Ethnic Minority Achievement Project' is not effectively used to support pupils learning English as

an additional language.

59. The contribution of classroom support assistants is greatly valued by the teachers and they are generally effective in class. However, their deployment is not always efficient and there are times when assistants are in a classroom but not active for sessions when the teacher is teaching the whole class. At other times, when immature pupils are working in groups, a lack of adult supervision leads them to become noisy and disrupt the learning of others. There is sometimes insufficient advance planning between teachers and classroom assistants. Similarly, the deployment of additional staffing to support pupils with special educational needs is not always cost-effective. Some of the support provided by teachers for these pupils could be given by classroom assistants with appropriate planning, training and guidance from the special educational needs co-ordinator.
60. Good use is made of the school's accommodation and the hall is efficiently timetabled for a wide range of activities. Learning resources are well stored, accessible and well used. Resources for information and communications technology are well used across the curriculum. As pupils' first experience of education, the nursery is a valued resource for both the schools it serves but the accommodation is depressing rather than exciting, cheerful and stimulating. In its current state, the nursery is not attracting its full complement of children.
61. The main school provides a pleasant and secure environment. Attitudes and relationships are good and provision for pupils' moral and spiritual development is good. Pupils make clear progress during the time they are in the school and levels of attainment in the end of key stage tests and assessments are improving. There has been clear progress on most fronts since the last inspection. Taking these factors into account and balancing them against a comparatively high cost per pupil, the school offers satisfactory value for money.

69. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

69. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

62. The nursery offers fifty-two part-time places to three and four year-old children who attend for either the morning or the afternoon sessions each day. These places are shared equally by Our Lady's and Saint Michael's primary schools. Owing to falling rolls, there were only thirty children attending the nursery during the inspection.
63. The attainment of children on entry is well below that expected nationally. Many are learning English as an additional language and many of these are at an early stage of learning the language. By the age of five, most of the children have not reached the expected standards in language and literacy, mathematics or in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The majority do reach the expected standards in their personal and social, physical and creative development. They are slowly acquiring a broad range of learning experiences within the nationally recommended areas of learning and most children make satisfactory progress over their time in the nursery. However, the progress of children learning English as an additional language is hampered by the rate at which they acquire basic knowledge of the language and no additional support is provided for them. Children with special educational needs receive satisfactory support.
64. By the age of five, most children reach the expected standards in their *personal and social* development. They work in groups and independently and they use their initiative to solve problems, seeking help only when it is needed. The children in reception develop confidence, knowledge and independence through a variety of learning situations. Children in the nursery and in the reception class enjoy first-hand experiences and purposeful play. They are attentive and eager to learn. Most are able to co-operate, share and take turns. The children behave well at all times and show consideration and respect for property and for each other. They form positive relationships and show respect for their different cultural backgrounds. They participate enthusiastically in teacher-led and self-initiated activities. Overall, the children are happy and secure at school.
65. Few children reach the expected standard in *language and literacy* by the time they are five. In the nursery and the reception class, they listen attentively and respond appropriately to stories, songs and instructions. They are beginning to talk about their experiences and to learn new words, such as 'straw', 'sticks' and 'bricks', through acting out the story of the three little pigs. They willingly talk about aspects of their work but many find it difficult to speak clearly and in full sentences. Some older children in the reception class are gaining satisfactory control of pencils and are developing early writing skills. They can draw and paint with increasing control and some produce strings of signs which resemble letters. Most children in the reception class can write their own names unaided and a few can copy short and simple sentences. Good progress is made when adults work with small groups or give children individual attention. The introduction of the literacy strategy is making a significant impact in the reception class. The children enjoy using the big books and writing letters. For example, after reading the story of Goldilocks and the three bears, they composed a simple letter with the teacher, telling Goldilocks how naughty she had been. This was duly 'posted' by one of the assistants. Ten minutes later, Goldilocks entered the classroom with her reply, which the whole class read together.
66. Children handle books carefully and treat them with respect. They listen to stories regularly and enjoy them but most do not yet associate sounds with words and letters. Older children undertake a range of activities related to literacy, such as home-made word recognition games, and they listen to taped stories. These activities effectively promote the development of early reading and writing skills. Teachers familiarise children with written vocabulary through stimulating activities which focus on key words. Reception children can remember the sequence of events in a story and use the key words confidently. There are good procedures for assessing and recording children's day-to-day progress and teachers try to build on what has already been achieved.

67. Children's progress in *mathematics* is satisfactory overall but most do not reach the expected standards by the time they are five. Most children in the nursery and reception can match, sort and count, using everyday objects. A few are beginning to count and order numbers accurately up to ten. Others, although they can count to ten, do not yet associate the figures with the numbers they represent. Opportunities for practical activities are generally well planned but they do not occur frequently enough for children to become secure and accurate in their handling of number, especially the oldest in the group. A few recognise basic shapes and gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water and some of the older children can describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity. All the children enjoy working with large and small construction equipment and jigsaws which help to develop their awareness of size, shape and space. Most older children demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction and they use phrases, such as, 'add one more' or 'take one more away', 'how many altogether?' and 'how many left?'
68. Adults are effectively involved in mathematical activities and they make useful timely assessments of individual children's progress. The teacher in the reception class successfully uses the baseline assessments to help plan suitable activities. Children in this class are constantly challenged and helped to move forward. Teachers plan a variety of activities to consolidate the correct use of the language involved, including number rhymes and songs.
69. Although few children attain the expected standards in their *knowledge and understanding* of the world, they are making good progress in this area by the time they are five. Children are interested in the world in which they live and explore their senses through activities such as investigations. Role play in the 'nursery shop corner' supports the youngest children's growing understanding of themselves and their families. These children work with sand and freely explore the properties of malleable materials. A few confidently use plasticine to make different letter shapes. They use paint to mix different colours but cannot yet explain clearly what they are doing. There are opportunities for children to explore different ways of using everyday objects, as well as to select a variety of reclaimed materials to make imaginative models. They develop skills, such as cutting, joining, folding and building. However, few have developed sufficient confidence to ask questions about how things work. Most of the older children make good progress in developing the skills in using computers that are expected for their age. For example, they show increasing control in using the mouse to move items around the screen.
70. The teachers and support workers in the reception class skilfully encourage children to explore new ideas and this results in good progress by the majority. The scientific elements of this area of learning are suitably emphasised. Children are effectively supported in their understanding through stimulating displays and regular local nature walks. Staff respond positively to children's questions and ideas and their good support, timely interventions and appropriate explanations reinforce understanding.
71. All the children in the nursery and the reception class make satisfactory progress in their *physical development* and they are on course to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. They use construction toys and malleable materials with appropriate tools and demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination and manipulative skills. They are developing confidence and co-ordination by using floor apparatus and climbing apparatus in the school hall and improve their ability to balance, swing, climb and jump. They demonstrate increasing control of their bodies and awareness of space. The teachers plan effectively to match tasks to their own expectations and to the children's skills and abilities. They provide calm and sensitive support and show a good understanding of how young children learn. The outdoor provision for the nursery enables the youngest children to develop skills and strength through using riding equipment, such as bicycles, and climbing equipment. However, the children in the reception class do not have access to such equipment and they miss some important learning experiences.
72. Most children in the reception class show good progress in all areas of *creative learning* and they are on course to attain the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. They experiment with paint and use their observations, imagination and feelings to create pleasing and vivid results. They are given

opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form through working with a wide range of materials to create collages and make models, such as houses for the three little pigs. Children sing and clap rhythms and express enjoyment in music. All the under-fives have opportunities to explore sound and express ideas and feelings through using percussion instruments. The teaching of all creative learning is skilful, particularly in music. Activities in art are well adapted to children's interests and abilities and children are praised and encouraged to good effect.

73. The quality of teaching in the nursery is satisfactory overall. Teaching in the reception class is consistently good and teachers and assistants work effectively as a team and support one another. Teachers and support staff in the nursery and the reception class share consistently high expectations of children's work and behaviour. Different areas of the classrooms are always well prepared and organised with a good range of interesting activities. All adults manage children very skilfully and keep them working happily. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively. The teaching in the reception class is characterised by purposeful activities, with a clear focus, set in imaginative and stimulating contexts. Adult involvement and intervention in children's activities are well timed and effective. Sessions proceed at a suitable pace and the learning activities are appropriately adapted to children's interests and abilities. Teachers are familiar with the areas of learning and understand the needs of young children. The procedures for assessment and recording children's day-to-day progress are used satisfactorily to build on what has already been achieved.
74. The four year-olds from the nursery are admitted to the reception class at the start of the academic year. At the time of the inspection, all except one of the twelve children on roll in the reception class were still under the age of five and following a broad range of learning experiences within the nationally recommended areas of learning, successfully incorporated into the National Curriculum's programmes of study. On their arrival in the reception class, pupils' skills are still well below average when compared with children of a similar age nationally. The baseline assessments carried out during the first few weeks confirm this judgement. However, most children in the reception class make rapid progress although their attainment by the age of five is still below the expected levels in language and literacy and mathematics. In all other areas of learning, their attainment is close to standards expected.
75. Resources for the under-fives are generally adequate and accessible. The available indoor resources are well organised and used effectively to support progress in all areas of learning. There are plans to improve the outdoor provision. The nursery classroom is spacious but it is not organised into logically defined and visually attractive and stimulating areas. This accommodation, although spacious, is dull and uninspiring, with its grey, uneven floor, dirty cream walls and empty wall spaces. The displays are not interactive and are not used as learning resources. By contrast, the reception class is well organised, bright and welcoming, with a wealth of stimulating materials, resources and displays.



83. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

83. **English**

76. In the national test results of 1998, attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 was close to the national average and there was an improvement in writing, compared with the national test results of 1997. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was well below the national average and showed little improvement over the 1997 results. When compared with those of similar schools, the overall results were close to the average for eleven year-olds and well above the average in reading and writing for seven year-olds. The percentages of pupils who reached standards higher than those expected of seven and eleven year-olds were below the national figures, although better than those achieved in similar schools. The 1999 test results were similar to those in 1998 for seven year-olds but there was a significant improvement in the results for eleven year-olds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was above the national average and very high compared with the average for similar schools. The school's average points score was in line with the national average, indicating improvement across the whole ability band. The school has successfully achieved its targets for both key stages. The improvements in standards are a direct result of the successful implementation of the literacy strategy and careful target-setting for individual pupils.
77. The inspection findings confirm that the overall attainment in English at the end of both key stages is below the expected levels. In aspects of English, such as speaking and listening, attainment is in line with what is expected nationally and standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are close to the national expectations. Many pupils plan their writing well and write at length, imaginatively and clearly. The weaknesses in English are mainly in reading standards at both key stages and writing standards in Key Stage 1. Pupils' writing shows many of the technical inaccuracies generally associated with underdeveloped skills in spelling, punctuation and presentation. By the end of Key Stage 2, the presentation of work shows a marked improvement and this is an improvement on the standards reported after the last inspection. The evidence indicates that a significant number of seven and eleven year-olds are on target to attain the levels expected for their age but that this is not yet quite the majority.
78. Pupils in both key stages successfully attain standards close to the national average in speaking and listening. This is an improvement in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Pupils respond readily to questions and listen carefully when explanations are made. Most pupils listen carefully to the views of others and confidently put forward their own points of view. However, they do not have enough opportunities to speak at length, especially at Key Stage 2, where questions sometimes require more detailed responses and pupils need encouragement to substantiate their opinions with examples or reasons.
79. Attainment in reading is below the expected levels at the end of both key stages. Most pupils learn that reading can provide both enjoyment and information and they are beginning to appreciate the qualities of different texts. Pupils make independent choices from the range of fiction available. However, very few can locate books in the library and few are familiar with a good range of popular authors or series of books. Younger pupils are systematically taught sounds represented by individual letters or combinations of letters and they are given confidence at an early stage to combine these to make words. Pupils read from a range of books and develop strategies to read unknown words but most read only to take in facts and they are not good at exploring the deeper messages that the author is trying to convey. Pupils make regular use of dictionaries and thesauri but their skills in using reference books to obtain information are limited. A few pupils are able to use non-fiction books to locate and retrieve information within the classroom but the majority have not developed adequate skills in independent research and study. Most pupils make satisfactory use of their reading skills in work across the curriculum. Pupils make frequent references to reading at home. The practice of taking books home to read is well established and has a positive effect on pupils' interest and attainment. Additionally, a book club for parents and pupils promotes the love and enjoyment of books. The guided reading sessions, when they are skilfully structured, help pupils to make progress. Teachers keep satisfactory reading

records to identify weaknesses and target pupils' learning.

80. Attainment in writing is below the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1 but close to the level expected by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' ability to write in a variety of styles increases as they move up the school. Many seven year-olds confidently produce short pieces of creative writing with well constructed sentences. By the end of Key Stage 2, some pupils can produce interesting writing for different purposes in a range of forms, such as letters, stories, poems and descriptions. The writing by some higher-attaining pupils is well-organised, imaginative and clear with appropriate attention to the structure of sentences, punctuation and spelling. The majority lack fluency in their writing and are unaware of grammatical mistakes in their work. Their spelling strategies, proof-reading skills and choice of vocabulary are insufficiently developed. The use of information and communications technology to word-process, re-draft and edit is limited. Where handwriting lessons are progressively structured, standards of presentation and handwriting are generally satisfactory.
81. When pupils enter school, their attainment in literacy is well below what is expected nationally. The majority make satisfactory progress over their time in school. However, good progress is made in the lower end of Key Stage 1 and the upper end of Key Stage 2, where activities are well designed to promote the development of literacy, and to be enjoyable, so that pupils are well motivated to learn. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress when they are challenged by the work set. Lower-attaining pupils make better progress than expected when they are given tasks suitable for their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in working towards the targets set in their individual educational plans and make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils learning English as an additional language make less than satisfactory progress because the support provided from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is not well planned or based on their specific needs.
82. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are well motivated and hard working. They show interest in a range of language activities and enjoy reading and writing. Pupils are mostly attentive and conscientious in lessons. They respond positively to their teachers' instructions and explanations and apply their language skills appropriately across the curriculum.
83. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and it is good overall in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, teachers prepare work with care and use questions skilfully to develop understanding and knowledge. Most teachers plan effectively, identifying clear learning intentions for the full range of ability and setting appropriate levels of challenge. In these lessons, teachers use an appropriate range of teaching strategies and approaches and develop lessons in well-managed stages at a suitable pace. Pupils are well organised and managed with good control. Teachers are aware of pupils' needs and use praise and encouragement to good effect. The learning targets for individuals are based on very thorough assessments which inform teachers' planning. The major weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 2 are that short-term lesson plans do not always have explicit details of learning objectives or assessment strategies for the lessons. In Key Stage 1, work is sometimes inappropriately matched to pupils' needs and abilities and the management of pupils is sometimes not secure. The lack of thorough knowledge of the subject and of appropriate strategies for maintaining good control contributed to the few unsatisfactory lessons. Written work is generally regularly marked, with a helpful analysis of pupils' progress. The variety of procedures for assessment is used effectively to inform planning. However, teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to appraise their own work, to identify their own errors or to seek ways of correcting them.
84. The early preparations for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy have ensured that all staff have a consistent approach to the planning and the teaching of English. The school has adopted realistic targets for literacy. The literacy hour has been thoughtfully planned and it is contributing towards raising attainment. Activities are generally well designed to promote the development of literacy. In most classes, pupils are given tasks suitable for their abilities. Literacy is also taught satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, due emphasis is placed on discussion, listening attentively and speaking with growing confidence and fluency. The effective questioning techniques used by many teachers encourage pupils to think clearly and develop their use of language.

85. The English curriculum is taught both as a separate subject and as a component of other activities. The policy and the schemes of work for all aspects of the subject are comprehensive. The co-ordinator has a very clear view of how the subject should be developed and has been able to monitor teaching and curriculum development quite regularly while the strategy was being introduced. The school is adequately resourced for the subject. The central libraries and those in the classrooms are well organised and sufficiently stocked with fiction and non-fiction. Most classes have suitably equipped listening stations with a collection of story tapes. There is a satisfactory collection of books covering all subjects but the range and quality of dual-language texts is limited.
93. **Mathematics**
86. The proportion of seven year-olds who reached the expected level or higher in the 1998 standard tests and assessments for mathematics was well below the national average and it was below the average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. When an average level score is calculated for the school, this shows the same pattern. The results of the 1999 tests show little improvement. At the end of Key Stage 2, however, the results of the 1998 tests were close to the national average, although a lower proportion of pupils obtained higher levels, and they were above the average for similar schools. The school's average points score was below the national average but above that for similar schools. The results for 1999 show an improvement and the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level in the tests was in line with the national average and above the average for similar schools. The school's average level score was slightly below the national average but above the average for similar schools. These results show an improvement across the whole ability range and they are much better than the ones reported at the last inspection. The improvement in mathematics is not as great as the improvements in English and science but this reflects the focus on those two subjects in the last school year. Mathematics is the focus for the current year.
87. Evidence from observation of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' books and from talking to pupils shows that the majority of pupils have not yet reached the nationally expected levels at the end of either key stage although a significant minority are working securely at or above these levels. Most pupils enter the school with attainment well below what is normally expected for their age but they make good progress in the reception class and, by the time they reach Year 1, the majority can count on and back to twenty with confidence. The higher attainers are beginning to recognise patterns and are able to identify numbers missing from a sequence. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the key stage and the majority of pupils in Year 2 are secure with number bonds up to twenty and can count on and back in tens up to a hundred. They are confident and accurate with place values up to three figures but, although higher-attaining pupils can identify patterns in number squares, the majority are struggling to complete written calculations of missing numbers, leading to basic subtraction. Pupils are becoming familiar with mathematical language and are starting to use it appropriately but a few are still not forming numbers correctly.
88. Progress in Key Stage 2 is always satisfactory and often good. In Years 5 and 6, it is assisted by the school's policy of setting pupils from both year groups together according to ability and of providing all pupils with personal targets. Higher-attaining pupils are able to devise strategies for accurately solving written problems involving all four operations with money. Many of them can explain their solutions clearly. They have a good understanding of percentages and can make mental calculations of five, ten, fifteen and twenty per cent of numbers up to a thousand. Most can calculate co-ordinates and vectors in all four quadrants, using positive and negative numbers accurately. Evidence from written work indicates that, by the end of the key stage, pupils can calculate the circumference of circles and work with simple and compound fractions and with decimals. There is a wide range of ability in the middle set but the majority can identify and name different sorts of triangles and quadrilateral shapes and they are confident and accurate with place values up to a thousand and measure accurately in centimetres. Some older pupils with special educational needs are struggling to count on in tens but most can recognise and name different quadrilateral shapes but generally pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their personal targets. Those learning English as an additional

language make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 but many experience increasing difficulty with some of the mathematical concepts in Key Stage 2.

89. Pupils' response is always satisfactory and sometimes better in Key Stage 1 and it is often good in Key Stage 2, particularly in the higher-attaining groups. When they are directly engaged with adults, the great majority listen well, pay attention and are keen to respond. When they are working as a whole class, they are generally quiet, interested and put their hands up to answer questions. However, when working in groups, many pupils become noisy and talk loudly to one another. Although the talk is generally about the work, noise levels sometimes become very high and interfere with progress.
90. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good across the school and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers know the subject well and they have adapted well to the format of the National Numeracy Strategy and they generally have high expectations. This enables them to ask good, challenging questions that invite pupils to think for themselves, to form hypotheses and to explain their thinking. Lessons are well planned, well organised and teachers provide clear explanations of the planned learning outcomes. Most lessons are conducted at a good pace and are well structured and teachers use time and resources well. Relationships are good and teachers generally manage classes well. Work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils and, in the most successful lessons, additional tasks are prepared beforehand for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers make accurate day-to-day assessments of pupils' progress and they sometimes set homework which is matched to their assessments, although this is not done often enough. Homework is set across the school but, although it is often well marked, there are pages of unmarked work in some books. Occasionally, teachers allow noise levels to rise too high and some have a limited range of strategies for managing pupils' behaviour. As a consequence, the pace of lessons slows and pupils become restless. In a few lessons, the higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently extended by the work set.
91. The policy and scheme of work are satisfactory documents but they have been appropriately superseded by the Framework for the National Numeracy Strategy. The school prepared well for this, conducted a thorough numeracy audit and prepared detailed plans. Curricular provision is good and all the requirements of the National Curriculum are being addressed through the planning for numeracy. With the targeted support of the local education authority, teachers have received appropriate in-service training which, in turn, has helped to produce consistently good teaching in this subject. It has also helped to ensure that numeracy is well developed across the curriculum. These developments have been well managed by the co-ordinator who has been able to monitor planning and the quality of teaching thoroughly. Teachers' day-to-day assessment is good and the overall arrangements for assessment and target-setting for each pupil are very good. However, pupils who need to be stretched further are not always identified. Resources are good and effectively support learning in both key stages.
99. **Science**
92. Over the past four years up to and including 1998, attainment in the standard tests and assessments was well below the national average at the end of both key stages. There was a marked improvement in the 1999 results. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels was close to the national average for seven year-olds and in line with the national average for eleven year-olds. The average score for Key Stage 2 has risen although it is still below the national average score. This indicates that there has been a substantial improvement across all ability levels, not just better performance by higher-attaining pupils. The school has made raising attainment in science a priority. It has taken effective action in the light of advice from the local education authority and is continuing to monitor and support science teaching well.
93. Observation of lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' written work indicate that attainment in science is close to but still slightly below the standards expected for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. This indicates a rise in standards over the last year. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls or between the performance of pupils from different cultural backgrounds.

94. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use simple classifications and they understand that some materials occur naturally and some are man-made. They know about growth in plants and animals and can observe changes in their bodies after a physical education lesson. They are able to record observations on simple charts by writing or drawing and tell the rest of the class what they have done and seen. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the life cycles of plants and can describe and name the different parts of plants involved in reproduction. They know which foods are beneficial to them and which ones can be harmful in excess. They are able to carry out investigations of different forces and they can use bar charts and line graphs to record their findings, sometimes making use of information and communications technology. They are able to make and test predictions and understand fair testing.
95. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in lessons and in both key stages, associated with good teaching. Where progress is good, lessons are well structured, with a balance of practical activity and written work and teachers have high expectations. Boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic groups make comparable progress and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress owing to the support they receive.
96. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally good in science. They enjoy the activities, particularly exploration out-of-doors and practical work. However, pupils in the youngest classes often find it difficult to co-operate with each other and to work well when not being actually taught as a group. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can work well in pairs and, when teachers encourage pupils to find out information from each other, some good and lively oral work takes place. Pupils in both key stages work quite willingly but are not particularly motivated to work quickly and only occasionally are pupils excited or inspired by the subject matter.
97. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. It was good in the majority of lessons seen in Key Stage 1 and in a quarter of the lessons seen in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally satisfactory and there are teachers in both key stages whose knowledge is very good who can and do offer support to their colleagues. Lessons are usually effectively planned with clearly stated learning objectives and they are well structured, with an introduction, some group or individual work and a summing-up session. Planning for pupils with special educational needs and for higher and lower-attaining pupils is not always sufficiently specific and tasks are not always well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow and teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.
98. Teachers make good use of practical activities and provide good displays which reinforce the topic being studied. Their management of pupils is generally satisfactory although there are occasions when the flow of the lesson is interrupted by pauses which are intended to re-establish silence. Marking is generally good and helpful but, although homework is appropriately set, there are occasions when it is not marked. Teachers make satisfactory day-to-day observations and good assessments of selected pieces of work against National Curriculum levels. There is good practice in sharing learning objectives and targets with pupils. In the most successful science lessons, teachers use scientific language with precision and require pupils to do so as well. In these lessons, pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and are given strategies to help them do so. For example, they are told that, if they don't know the answer, they should talk to someone nearby who has their hand up. Pupils are given clear messages about how long a task should take and the lesson is moved forward by regular reminders. In less successful lessons, teachers' own use of scientific language is imprecise, ill-chosen strategies for managing pupils interrupt the flow of the lesson and tasks are quickly finished by a few pupils who are not then offered further challenges. Opportunities are missed for generating the excitement, awe and wonder which pupils can experience through conducting experimental and investigative science.
99. Science is strongly led by the co-ordinator and well monitored by senior management and there is good support for teachers who are less experienced in teaching science. The policy, scheme of work and medium-term planning are all satisfactory and the scheme of work is adapted sensibly where pupils lack

the basic knowledge to work at levels appropriate to their age. Assessment is thorough and gives the school accurate information about individual pupils and about year groups to enable pupils to progress and to fill gaps in their knowledge and skills. Coverage of the science curriculum is generally satisfactory but there is insufficient attention to experimental and investigative science and expectations of pupils in this respect are not sufficiently high. Resources for science are satisfactory.

## OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 107. **Information technology**

100. The attainment of seven and eleven year-olds in information technology meets national expectations. At the last inspection, attainment was below expected levels but progress was judged to be good and the school has maintained and consolidated this upward trend.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to give instructions to a programmable toy so that it moves a given distance in a given direction. They are familiar with the computer mouse and keyboard and can word-process their work, make pictures with graphics programmes, load, save and print their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can put together a programme using text graphics and sound and they are familiar with menus and screen commands. They can log-on to the computer, load a CD-ROM and access the information on it and they know how to close down the computer safely without losing information. They can represent information graphically and are familiar with the use of databases. Pupils are able to model and simulate different combinations of circumstances using appropriate programmes and they can use a desk-top publishing package to produce a well laid out newsletter.
102. Progress in information technology was good in almost all lessons in both key stages. Progress is best where teachers have most knowledge of the subject and greatest confidence and enthusiasm. The school's very good resources also contribute to the good progress. Where progress is satisfactory but not good, it is due to the unsatisfactory pace and timing of some lessons, which lead to tasks being unfinished. Boys and girls and pupils from all backgrounds make comparable progress and pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. Pupils enjoy activities in this subject and particularly enjoy their 'hands on' experience with computers and programmable toys. They show spontaneous enthusiasm. For example, pupils in Year 1 demanded that the teacher should print out the teddy bear they had just dressed during an exercise in controlling the mouse. Pupils of all ages handle equipment with care and with good regard to health and safety.
103. Teaching in information technology is generally good in both key stages and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers' knowledge of the subject ranges from adequate to very good but sound planning and good support from the co-ordinator ensure that all teachers are equipped with the necessary skills for each lesson. The methods used are usually appropriate and teachers make some use of teaching aids, such as enlarged pictures of icons and menus, to enable pupils to see clearly what the teacher is pointing to during demonstrations. However, not all teachers adopt this useful approach. Lessons are usually well planned with direct teaching of skills and knowledge and opportunities built in at other times during the week for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills. Day-to-day assessment is adequate and there is a satisfactory individual sheet for pupils at the end of the year. Classes are usually well managed because the pupils are actively interested in the lessons and motivated to attend and behave well. Information and communications technology offers good opportunities for paired work and small group collaboration.
104. Since the inspection of 1996, the curriculum coverage for this subject has improved in breadth and balance and it is now good. All pupils now have access to all strands of the curriculum, including modelling and control technology. Resources and accommodation, including a dedicated computer room, are very good and well used and the school is ready to develop its expertise in the use of the Internet. The subject is well co-ordinated and arrangements for the further training of teaching staff are satisfactory. Support staff need to develop their expertise further if they are to make the best possible contribution in this area. Information technology makes a very valuable contribution to work across the curriculum, being used for processing text, illustration, decoration, data handling and the retrieval of information.

105. Owing to the timetabling of lessons, it was possible to see only one art lesson during the inspection and there was very little work available for formal scrutiny. Evidence was obtained from discussions with teachers and pupils and a scrutiny of the displays of pupils' work around the school. In the circumstances, it was not possible to arrive at secure judgements about attainment, progress or the quality of teaching in the subject. It is clear that art plays an appropriate part in the school's curriculum and that a number of exciting initiatives have been taken in the past. A mosaic in the playground and a mural in the lower corridor were completed by pupils working with teachers and artists in residence.
106. The one lesson seen, in Year 5, was based on the work of William Morris and was linked to the theme of the Victorians which the class was studying in history. Pupils were fascinated by the intricate designs and were able to talk about the floral motifs and to speculate about different ways they could be used in a Victorian home, for example as designs for textiles or for wallpaper. They remembered some technical language, such as 'textile' and 'motif', and some of the pupils used it appropriately. They worked well and enthusiastically to produce their own designs, based on the photocopied samples distributed by the teacher. They each had large leaves and the plant stems and flowers of Chinese lanterns which the teacher had brought to the lesson to provide some further inspiration. By the end of the lesson, many of the pupils had produced creative patterns, recognisably in the style of the artist, with imaginative development of the stalk and leaf patterns. They conducted a good evaluation, showing some insight and sensitivity towards the work of their classmates. The mosaic in the playground shows imaginative designs and the jungle mural depicts realistically drawn animals, well painted in vivid colours. Other work on display is mainly observational drawing which indicates some good observation and growing control of pencils and charcoal.
107. The lesson, which was taught by the former art co-ordinator, was well planned, prepared and structured. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject enabled her to pitch her exposition and the work she set at appropriate levels. Questions were well judged to elicit some creative thinking and good support was provided to individuals while they were working. The class teacher and a classroom assistant also made helpful contributions and one pupil was enabled to find information about William Morris on the computer and to tell the class what he had found.
108. Art is timetabled in alternate blocks of time with design and technology. There is no scheme of work for art and curriculum planning is based on cross-curricular topics and on two teachers' course books. The previous co-ordinator was able to monitor colleagues' planning and, in that way, to ensure that the main themes in the National Curriculum's programme of study were being covered. She has also provided advice and support to her colleagues and some in-service training on the use of different sorts of prints. The recently-appointed co-ordinator is planning to follow the same policy but is unlikely to have enough time to monitor teaching. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the previous co-ordinator runs a popular weekly after-school art club, supported by other teachers. During the inspection, well over thirty pupils attended this session in which they were preparing a large collage depicting a Nativity scene which they hope will be displayed in the Millennium Dome.

109. Only two design and technology lessons could be observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on these, on scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic records and discussions with pupils. On this basis, attainment in design and technology is in line with the levels expected for seven and eleven year-olds, as it was in the 1996 inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to research and complete a topic. For example, they visited a museum to look at different types of puppets, wrote and drew their own designs back at school and then made and finished the puppets, using templates, paper fasteners, glue, sewing and colouring media. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can incorporate their knowledge of science into the design and making of a torch and they are able to investigate the use of different materials and techniques in the construction of bridges.



110. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology and improve their skills in designing and making. They discuss their work and their difficulties, follow and write instructions. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils enjoy their work in design and technology, use materials and tools responsibly and take pride in their finished products. They develop their ability to work together and to appreciate aspects of their own and others' work objectively.
111. Teaching in the two lessons seen was satisfactory. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subject and are careful to emphasise the design and planning aspects of projects rather than simply the process of making things. They choose appropriate materials and techniques and plan lessons well, incorporating visits outside school and links with other curriculum areas in their planning. They provide clear explanations of what has to be done and make good plans for recording pupils' progress. They make good observations and give immediate feedback to pupils but formal assessment procedures are not fully developed.
112. Responsibility for the co-ordination of design and technology has only recently been allocated but long and medium-term planning are satisfactory. Design and technology teaching is usually done in blocks and this ensures some continuity within individual projects. Resources are satisfactory, well stored and accessible, and good use is made of resources outside the school, such as the Museum of Childhood.
120. **Geography**
113. Owing to the arrangement of the timetables, no geography was seen in Year 6 and there was little written work in pupils' books. Evidence for progress is therefore derived from interviews with pupils and from teachers' planning.
114. In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop a sound understanding of the local area. They begin to understand the influence of climate on the clothes people wear by following Barnaby Bear as he visits different parts of the world. Standards of attainment are generally at the levels expected for their age. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and they build effectively on their previous learning. They begin to answer questions about geographical topics and use appropriate vocabulary such as 'hill', 'river', 'map' and 'route'. They develop an adequate understanding of different seasons and types of weather. Most seven year-olds can map out their route from home to school and mark main features on a plan of their own classroom. Year 3 pupils know how to prepare and read maps and Year 4 pupils learn why people go on holiday and identify places on a map of the world. Pupils' knowledge of the continents and seas or oceans of the world is limited. Overall, in both key stages, pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory and better where the work provides appropriate challenge. They are eager, work with enthusiasm and collaborate. They apply themselves well to practical tasks.
115. The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2, and therefore progress over time through the school, is unsatisfactory. Pupils' geographical skills and knowledge, for example in using co-ordinates and appropriate geographical vocabulary, are under-developed. Pupils have some knowledge and understanding of keys and symbols when using atlases and maps. A few pupils use sources of information, such books and photographs, to inform their learning and understand about bearings on a compass but they do not have a sound understanding of the subject. They are not sure about how rivers are formed or the direction of their flow. They are not familiar with terms, such as 'source' or 'estuary'. Most of those pupils learning English as an additional language find it difficult to explain a familiar route. This is mainly because they receive inadequate support. Their inability to express themselves clearly, orally and in writing, or to use sources of information, such as books, maps and plans, hampers their progress.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have adequate geographical knowledge and

understanding. They plan well, their lessons are based on clear objectives and they use appropriate methods and effective questioning. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect in lessons. The teaching of geography makes sound contributions to the development of skills in literacy. Effective questioning and encouragement to use appropriate terminology improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and extend their vocabulary. However, information and communications technology is not sufficiently used to promote learning.

117. Teachers' long and medium-term planning indicates that the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. However, some of the uneven progress across the school is caused by variation in the implementation of the schemes of work, especially in Key Stage 2. Some gaps in the one-year curriculum cycle are too long. There is no formalised assessment in the subject and the monitoring role of the co-ordinator is not fully developed. The school has some reference books and materials, including suitable atlases, globes and large maps. Resources are well maintained and centrally organised but the range and quantity of them are not adequate to support learning across the curriculum. The local area is studied in detail and pupils are able to benefit from visits to local places.

125. **History**

118. Only two lessons could be observed during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on these, on scrutiny of pupils' work and on discussions with staff and pupils. On this basis, pupils' work at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with national expectations. This is consistent with judgements made in 1996. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have gained an understanding of time lines and have compared their toys and homes with those of past times. They know stories about the Great Fire of London and Florence Nightingale and have some idea of how we know about the past. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know something about the writing, buildings, myths and civilisation of the Ancient Greeks and have examined clothing and everyday items from Victorian times. They are able to derive information about the Tudors from looking at portraits and they can explain what characteristics Henry VIII was looking for in his wives.

119. From the evidence available, progress is satisfactory in both key stages although pupils cannot always record their ideas adequately in writing. They retain facts and ideas from their work and can retell the stories they learned some weeks previously but their investigative skills do not always progress in line with their knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, especially in oral work, but those who are in the earlier stages of learning English sometimes have difficulty in framing questions correctly and this slows their progress. Pupils enjoy stories from history and like handling artefacts from former times. They particularly enjoy role-play and listen well to each other in this activity. They show interest and behave well.

120. Teaching in history is satisfactory in both key stages. Lessons are appropriately planned with clear learning intentions and teachers use interesting methods and strategies which include handling artefacts from other times, analysing Tudor paintings, role-play and visits to museums. Teachers all have at least satisfactory knowledge of the subject. Teachers assess progress lesson by lesson against their learning intentions but longer-term assessment to ensure the systematic building of research skills and knowledge is not fully established. There is not enough emphasis on helping pupils to find information for themselves from pictures, artefacts and text or on developing pupils' curiosity about the past. Homework is appropriately used and there is evidence of some pupils doing personal research in information books and on the Internet. There is a sound history policy and satisfactory long and medium-term planning. While the school does have access to information books and some artefacts, resources in history are not fully adequate to cover the whole of the scheme of work. Good use is made of resources, such as museums, outside the school.

128. **Music**

121. Four music lessons were seen during the inspection and pupils were heard singing in assemblies.

Children in the reception class can recognise small percussion instruments and describe the sound they make. They recognise familiar songs and join in with the words and actions and tapping, clapping and shaking in rhythm. They know the sounds made by everyday objects and point to pictures of them, saying what sounds they make. They clearly enjoy music, respond well to the teacher and they are making satisfactory progress.

122. Music in Key Stage 1 is taught by the co-ordinator but most music in Key Stage 2 is taught by a peripatetic teacher, supported by the class teacher. In two of the lessons in this key stage, pupils were observed learning new songs. Progress was unsatisfactory in one of these lessons and poor in the other and, in both, pupils were performing at well below the levels expected for their age. Although they have a satisfactory sense of rhythm, pupils have poorly developed vocal tone and pitch and their breathing and voice production are not well developed. Pupils in the Year 3 class were restless and did not listen well to the tunes being taught or to the teachers but Year 5 pupils stayed on task and were able to complete a three-part round successfully. Pupils in Year 6 responded very well to the material and the work in their lesson. They could identify and clap to the five-four rhythm in Dave Brubeck's 'Take Five' and they could recognise, describe and differentiate between different styles of rock music from the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Most could offer a brief appreciation of these different sounds. As a finale to the lesson, they learned to dance a version of 'The Locomotion' and performed this successfully as a whole class and in small groups.
123. Singing in assemblies and in the hymn practice was generally better than it was in the two lessons. Pupils enjoy singing in this setting and they are looking forward to performing in the Camden Festival. They respond well to their teachers and their enunciation and pitch are satisfactory. They listen well, learn new songs quickly and show real enthusiasm for the activity. Two of the lessons seen were led by the class teacher. In one of these, the quality of teaching was good and it was very good in the other. The lessons were conducted with pace, timing and purpose. Appropriate questioning tested pupils' knowledge and understanding and a good variety of approaches and activities kept pupils involved. In one of the other two lessons, teaching was satisfactory but it was unsatisfactory in the other. The material selected was not always appropriate for the age and abilities of the classes and the pace was slow, allowing pupils to become restless. In one lesson, the combination of inappropriate material, the teacher's inexperience and the high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties led to poor progress and attainment.
124. The school has a policy for music and has adopted a commercially produced scheme which satisfactorily follows the National Curriculum's programme of study. The present co-ordinator has been in post for four terms but, before that, music had been in the hands of a peripatetic teacher and had not been successfully co-ordinated. The present co-ordinator has some time to monitor planning but little opportunity to observe teaching. The school's approach to the subject is to be reviewed with a view to closer co-ordination of teaching programmes and more systematic assessment. Resources are adequate for the curriculum being offered.
132. **Physical education**
125. Inspectors observed two lessons in gymnastics, one lesson in dance and one swimming session. Pupils are working at the levels expected for their ages. At the end of Key Stage 1, they can devise a variety of ways of moving over fixed apparatus, using different parts of their bodies and balancing safely. They pay careful attention to safety and they understand the effects of exercise on their bodies. They put the equipment away sensibly. In Key Stage 2, these skills are further developed as the balances and the patterns of movement become more difficult and activities are built into sequences. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show good concentration and awareness of their body movements. Their posture and rhythm are good. Progress in gymnastics and dance are good although a small number of pupils with special educational needs are less confident in balancing. Progress in swimming is also good, as about eighty per cent of the pupils are expected to achieve the national target of swimming at least twenty-five metres by the time they are eleven years old. The great majority of the pupils in Year 6 can swim at least two different strokes effectively and are confident in the water.

126. Pupils respond well to physical education. Most are keen, attentive and try hard in gymnastics. They concentrate well and work in reasonable silence, although younger pupils easily break into chatter. They approach dance with equal concentration and great enthusiasm and they are happy to demonstrate their work. They observe others' performances in dance and gymnastics attentively and make good evaluations of them. Most pupils are appropriately dressed but nine of the Year 6 group, nearly all of them girls, failed to take the appropriate kit to school.
127. All the teaching seen was good and, in one lesson, it was very good. Teachers know about the importance of warming up and warming down. Their knowledge of the subject is good and they approach it with an infectious enthusiasm. They provide clear explanations of their objectives for the lesson and give good demonstrations. The work is set at an appropriate level and lessons are conducted with good pace, variety and direction. They assess well and use praise effectively. They involve pupils in evaluations at the end of each lesson and ask questions which test pupils' memory of previous learning and their understanding. The swimming instructor is very well qualified and experienced and he has worked with the school for many years. His session was carefully structured to ensure that all pupils gained the maximum benefit from their time in the water. His instruction was clear and he gave pupils confidence.
128. The school has adopted a policy and scheme of work from another education authority and this ensures that the programmes of study set out in the National Curriculum are being followed. The time allowed for the subject is generally adequate. However, the amount of swimming has been reduced in the last year and it is now at a minimum if the school's success in meeting national targets is to be maintained. There are numerous after-school sports clubs, including girls' football, and the school has been successful in local sports and athletics competitions. The subject is well established in the school and well led. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but not the quality of their teaching. The fixed and the movable apparatus in the hall are in good condition and resources overall are satisfactory.

136. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

136. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

129. Four inspectors spent a total of fifteen days inspecting the work of the school. They made sixty-one observations of lessons or parts of lessons, over a total of forty-one hours ten minutes. They scrutinised a complete sample of the work of about twenty per cent of the pupils, heard a similar number read and spoke to many more about their work. Discussions were held with members of the teaching staff, members of the non-teaching staff and governors. All school policies, registers and teachers' plans and records were examined, as were governing body minutes and reports to parents. A meeting attended by nine parents was held to receive their views about the work of the school and twenty families returned a questionnaire on the same subject.

138. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

138. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	164	2	59	74
Nursery Unit	7.5	0	1	0

138. **Teachers and classes**

138. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.8

138. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	148.5

138. **Qualified teachers (Nursery unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17

138. **Education support staff (Nursery unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	0.5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	14.2

Average class size:	23.4
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138. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	482,464.00
Total Expenditure	495,721.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,441.98
Balance brought forward from previous year	103,661.00
Balance carried forward to next year	90,404.00

138. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	124
Number of questionnaires returned:	20

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	65	35	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	45	55	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	30	55	5	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	45	50	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	55	40	0	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	45	45	5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	45	35	15	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	35	50	10	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	45	0	0	5
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	55	40	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	25	0	0	0