

INSPECTION REPORT

WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wexham, Slough

LEA area: Slough

Unique reference number: 109943

Headteacher: Angela Hermon

Reporting inspector: Margaret Cooper
15175

Dates of inspection: 29th October to 2nd November 2001

Inspection number: 197358

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Lane
Wexham
Slough
Berkshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Tina Lewis

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Registered inspector	Art and design History English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) School results and pupils' achievements How well is the school managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education Foundation stage	
25778	Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography	
17456	Angela Smithers	Team inspector	English Design and technology Special educational needs	
14806	John Stevens	Team inspector	Science Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wexham Court is a large primary school, with a nursery, that serves a multicultural community on the outskirts of Slough. There are currently 416 boys and girls on role, including 78 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. On entry, children show attainment that is wide-ranging but below average overall. There is a rich cultural diversity within the school, with over half of pupils from minority ethnic groups, predominantly of Pakistani and Indian heritage. Four pupils are from refugee families. Currently 46 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high, and this percentage has increased in recent years. Eight per cent of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. First languages include Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati and Hindi. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the normal admission and transfer times is high. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. In total, 17 per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is slightly below average. Special needs include moderate learning, emotional and behavioural, and speech and communication difficulties. For a variety of reasons, there have been several changes in teaching staff in the past two years. There have been recent difficulties in appointing suitably experienced teachers as a result of the national recruitment situation.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strengths. It is well led and managed, benefiting from strong leadership from the headteacher. The school provides its pupils with a good education, although provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English needs improvement. It is a caring community in which good relationships are established at all levels, pupils are taught well and show very positive attitudes, behaviour and personal development. These factors give rise to the good progress pupils make to attain satisfactory standards by the age of eleven. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Nursery provision, which provides an excellent start to children's education
- Standards in music, which are above those expected by the age of eleven
- Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted very well
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management
- The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is very good

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching in Year 1
- Provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English
- The monitoring of provision and progress in mathematics, art and design, and history
- An outdoor area, appropriately resourced, for reception children
- The information in pupils' annual reports for parents

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been sound improvement since the last inspection in September 1997. The school has successfully addressed the areas for improvement, and many strong features have been maintained, including pupils' good attitudes, values and personal development, and very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented successfully. The quality of teaching and learning, and standards attained, do not show significant improvement but this is related to factors beyond the school's control, including

changes in the characteristics of the school population, and difficulties in recruiting suitably experienced teachers.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	B
mathematics	C	E	C	B
science	C	D	D	C

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

Pupils achieve well by the age of eleven. Standards in science in the 2001 tests at the end of Year 6 were below average overall because few pupils attained standards higher than those expected for their age. The targets set for the Year 2001 tests, which were appropriately challenging, were successfully achieved in English but not in mathematics, although pupils attained average standards in mathematics and achieved well compared to pupils in similar schools. In the 2001 tests at the end of Year 2, standards were below the national average in reading, but in line with the average in both writing and mathematics. Compared to similar schools, standards were average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. In the four years to 2000, the improvement in standards was above the national trend at age seven, and broadly in line with the national trend at age eleven. Girls have performed better than boys over this period, although the gap has now narrowed significantly.

The work seen during inspection shows children make very good progress in the nursery and, by the time they enter Year 1, attain the standards expected for their age, except in communication, language and literacy. Although wide-ranging, standards are below average in this area of learning because of the high proportion of children who are still at an early stage of learning English. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant classes and attain the levels expected for their ages by the end of Year 2. They make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school. In the junior classes they achieve well so that, by the end of Year 6, they attain at least the levels expected for their ages, despite factors which constrain the standards and achievement of some pupils. These include the proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English, the high mobility rate of pupils particularly in the junior classes, and below average attendance. Overall, pupils achieve well but those at an early stage of learning English do not make as much progress as they should because teaching methods and tasks are not always matched closely enough to their needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn, and try hard to carry out their tasks correctly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond to the school's high expectations of them and behave well both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility, and form very good relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Attendance levels are below average. Unauthorised absence is above average, due to many pupils making extended visits to the country of

	family origin. However, pupils normally arrive punctually to school and to lessons.
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A significant feature of the school is the extent to which boys and girls, and pupils of different ages and ethnic cultures establish good relationships with each other. This is seen, for example, in the 'buddy' system between nursery children and older pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Good

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

All the areas of learning for nursery children are taught very well and this promotes the very good progress made in the nursery classes. English, including literacy, is taught satisfactorily in the infant classes and well in the junior classes. Mathematics, including numeracy, is taught satisfactorily at both infant and junior stages. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all other subjects. ICT is taught well throughout the school, and science and music are both taught well in the junior classes. Satisfactory learning in the infant classes, and a good quality of learning in the junior classes, contribute to pupils' good achievement by the age of eleven.

Teachers throughout the school manage pupils well and plan lessons carefully. There are shortcomings in learning in Year 1, where teaching methods do not build effectively on pupils' earlier learning experiences. Infant and junior teachers pay careful attention to providing suitable tasks for pupils of different abilities, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs. However, teaching methods are not always appropriate for pupils at an early stage of learning English. As a result, these pupils do not make as much progress as they could. No judgement has been made about teaching in the reception year, because there were no reception classes at the time of the inspection.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides an appropriate quality and range of learning opportunities, but overall does not take sufficient account of the first languages and cultures of all its pupils. A very good curriculum is provided for nursery children, and there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for infant and junior children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is sound for pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements of special need. They make satisfactory progress towards the targets on their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is sound overall, although the needs of English language learners are not met satisfactorily in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Spiritual and cultural development are promoted well, and moral and social development are promoted very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are valued, respected and given sound support and guidance. Careful attention is paid to their health and safety. As a result, pupils feel secure and confident.

The school has successfully maintained good relationships with parents since the last inspection, and their support makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. There are very good arrangements for preparing children to enter the nursery, but the transfer to Year 1 is not managed as well and pupils find it difficult to adapt to the different class routines.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership by the headteacher is well supported by the recently established senior management team. This ensures a clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are active, well informed, and provide good support for the headteacher and the work of the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good arrangements for monitoring its performance and taking effective action to achieve improvement. However, the appropriate procedures for co-ordinators to manage their subjects are not used satisfactorily in all cases.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources effectively to provide a good standard of education for its pupils. Expenditure is carefully linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan.

The headteacher has a clear view of the ethos and educational direction she wants for the school and its pupils and a thorough understanding of current strengths and weaknesses. Very good account is taken of the principles of best value in making spending decisions. A significant feature of the school is the good relationships between all adults and their commitment to the pupils. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to succeed in improving the quality of education provided.

The school is appropriately staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum, including learning and administrative support staff who contribute well to the work of the school. The building and grounds provide good accommodation. Overall, the school has a good range and quality of learning resources, but reception children are not provided with a secure and appropriately resourced outdoor area for use on a daily basis.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school • Behaviour is good • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best • The school helps children become mature and responsible • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with their concerns • Teaching is good • Children make good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work to do at home • The extent to which the school works closely with parents • The information they receive about children's progress

The inspection agreed with the positive views of parents. It is unclear whether parents feel there is too much or too little work to do at home, but the inspection found provision to be better than in many schools. Although the inspection found the school works satisfactorily with parents, the school has recognised the need to involve parents more closely in its daily work. The inspection agreed that pupils' annual reports do not give enough information about how well they are doing.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Assessments carried out when children enter the nursery show their attainment to be wide-ranging but overall below average, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Additionally, a significant proportion are at an early stage of speaking and understanding English. By the age of eleven, pupils have achieved well and attain the standards expected in all subjects, and above the expected level in music. This is because of the good quality of education provided, including very good teaching and learning in the nursery, and good teaching and learning in the junior classes. Standards are not as high as at the time of the previous inspection in 1997, but this is linked largely to a considerably higher proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language compared to four years ago. Additionally, the percentage of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than the normal admission and transfer times is greater than that normally seen, and attendance is below average, largely because of extended visits by families to their country of ethnic origin. These factors adversely affect the progress made by some individual pupils whilst they are in the school.
2. Standards in the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in reading. The percentage of pupils who attained the expected level was in line with the national average, but the percentage who attained the higher level was below average. In both writing and mathematics pupils attained standards in line with the national average, and the percentage who attained the higher level in writing was above the national average. When results are compared to those of similar schools, pupils attained average standards in both reading and mathematics, and above average standards in writing. In the four years to 2000, the improvement in standards was above the national trend in all three tests, but results were not as high in 2001. Teachers' assessment of science shows standards were in line both with schools nationally and similar schools.
3. Results overall in the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average in both English and mathematics, but below average in science. Compared to similar schools, standards were above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Over the four years to 2000, the improvement in standards has been broadly in line with the national trend. Recent test results show that girls have performed significantly better than boys. This difference was recognised by the school and the gap narrowed this year as a result of the effective action taken.
4. The evidence from inspection shows that children at an early stage of learning English make very good progress in the nursery. However, in Years 1 to 6 they do not achieve as well as others because teachers do not consistently use teaching methods that enable these pupils to learn effectively across the curriculum, and do not always match work closely to their abilities.
5. Inspection evidence did not show variations in progress between groups related to gender, or to differing abilities. The school has identified and compiled a register of higher attaining pupils. Individual education plans are provided for these pupils to ensure they are appropriately challenged, and a recently appointed co-ordinator for

more able pupils is monitoring their progress closely. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and in learning generally, because teachers provide appropriate work for their abilities, and use classroom assistants well to support their learning.

6. Children make very good progress whilst they are in the nursery and are very well prepared for their learning in later years. No judgement is made about progress in the reception classes because there were no reception children at the time of the inspection. However, by the time children are ready to enter Year 1 they attain the levels expected in all the areas of learning for children of their age, with the exception of communication, language and literacy. This is largely because of the high proportion of children who are at an early stage of understanding and using spoken and written English.
7. Nursery children soon establish good relationships with each other, and enjoy both working and playing with a partner. They enjoy the experiences that are offered to them, and work independently when required. Most children convey their ideas clearly to others, often in their first languages. They listen attentively, respond positively to songs and to stories, and are beginning to recognise letters by sight and sound. In their mathematical work they count accurately to ten, sort objects by shape, colour and size, and show developing knowledge about shape and capacity. Children show developing knowledge and understanding of the world through their use of computers to support learning, by meeting people from a variety of cultures and exploring the foods of different traditions. They explore their sense of smell and touch, and observe the growth of bulbs they have planted. The satisfactory standards children reach in their physical development is shown in the confidence and co-ordination demonstrated when they use large toys and climbing equipment, and in the dexterity with which they use pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. They work creatively through imaginative play, exploring media and materials in their art experiences, and singing songs in a range of languages.
8. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the infant classes, and attain the levels expected in all subjects by the end of Year 2, although progress is better in Year 2 than in Year 1. The higher standards in English shown by the present Year 2 pupils, compared to the 2001 test results, are linked to differences in the characteristics of pupils in those particular year groups, particularly in the proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English. By the age of seven, pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and instructions. Most share their ideas in a large group, including those who are not yet able to develop and explain their ideas. Pupils read simple books accurately and with understanding. When writing stories, they develop their ideas in a sequence of sentences, which are marked appropriately with capital letters and full stops. In their mathematics, Year 2 pupils add and subtract numbers to 100, calculate with growing accuracy, and show sound knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and block graphs. They classify natural and man-made objects in science, and begin to explore the uses made of electricity.
9. Pupils achieve well in the junior classes, particularly in English, science, ICT and music. By the age of eleven, pupils attain the expected levels in all subjects and above the expected levels in music. Year 6 pupils continue to listen attentively and show a developing capacity to make contributions in discussion that are responsive to others' ideas and views. Most pupils read a variety of fiction, poetry and information books fluently and show understanding of significant ideas and events. They write in different forms, including stories, poems and letters, structuring their work carefully to

express their meanings clearly. They show satisfactory levels of accuracy in their spelling and use of punctuation. In their mathematics, pupils calculate accurately with both whole numbers and decimals, understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages, and show sound knowledge of different forms of measurement, including capacity, and simple statistics. They understand that some materials are soluble and others, such as sand, are insoluble, and carry out an experiment to investigate sieving, filtration and evaporation. The higher standards in science shown by the present Year 6 pupils, compared to the 2001 test results, are linked to differences in the characteristics of pupils in those particular year groups, particularly in the percentage of pupils at an early stage of learning English.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. High standards have been maintained in this area of the school's work since the last inspection. Pupils' personal development and relationships in particular are strengths of the school. Attitudes to their learning and other opportunities offered by the school are good. In lessons, they are ready to settle, listen and concentrate, and keen to have their say in discussion and get on with their tasks. Most pupils show self-restraint even when teachers talk for too long at the beginning of lessons, or when the work they are given is not well matched to their needs. In the nursery, the very good quality of the teaching the children enjoy means that their attitudes and behaviour are very good, because they are so thoroughly absorbed in their tasks. Even at the end of a session, for example, they were prepared to throw themselves wholeheartedly into practising their singing, learning their words and recognising their letters.
11. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is good, both indoors and outside. In class, they demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's expectations of behaviour, and most have the self-discipline to meet the high standards expected. In a Year 2 music lesson, for example, pupils controlled their excitement at trying out new instruments in front of an audience of adult observers, and worked hard at composing their own tunes. At break and lunchtimes, pupils take turns in sharing equipment and apparatus, and wait patiently in the dinner queue. Pupils of all ages move around the school sensibly and show an awareness of others. Bullying is rare and is handled firmly by the school. Records covering the last eighteen months show no evidence of any racist incidents, and pupils from all ethnic backgrounds say the school is a safe place to be. The headteacher has not had to exclude any pupils since she has been in post.
12. Pupils' relationships with others and their personal development are very good. Particularly striking features are their sense of community and feeling of responsibility towards others. Pupils are totally inclusive in their approach to one another. All races mix very well in a natural and matter of fact way in the playground and in class. Boys and girls get on well together, and there is an atmosphere of harmony and unity throughout the school. Pupils care about one another and respect others as individuals. A Year 4 child, for example, picked up other pupils' coats that had fallen on the floor and hung them up again. In Key Stage 2 class assemblies, pupils have the confidence to present their own work and to lead the prayers, while their classmates have the sensitivity to listen appreciatively and ask pertinent and supportive questions afterwards. Pupils thrive on taking responsibility and make the most of the many very good opportunities open to them. They are proud to act as, for example, head boy and girl, prefects, librarians, school council members or 'buddies'

to nursery children, and happy to carry out the duties their roles entail. They are also enthusiastic about the many very good extra-curricular activities the school offers, where pupils of all ages and abilities do their best to discover and develop their skills and talents. They are pleased to represent the school wherever they can, for example through music and sport, and also through more unusual ways such as the Insect Club's visit to the National Entomological Exhibition.

13. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory. It has dropped since the previous inspection and is now below the national average. Unauthorised absence continues to be above the national average because of the number of pupils who take prolonged trips abroad. Although the pupils concerned benefit from their travel experiences, they are at a disadvantage when they return because they have missed so much work and often struggle to catch up. Punctuality is satisfactory. Most pupils arrive promptly each day so that the morning session can begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of both teaching and learning are good throughout the school as a whole, although with significant variation. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 94 per cent of lessons seen. It was good or better in 53 per cent, and very good or excellent in 16 per cent. This shows a similar picture to the previous inspection, and shows that the school has maintained a good quality of teaching and learning overall.
15. Teaching in the nursery is of high quality. The nursery teacher and assistants work well together to provide a secure but stimulating learning environment in which children settle quickly and begin to make very good gains in their learning. There is a very strong emphasis on language skills and on children's personal, social and emotional development. A rich variety of exciting experiences are adapted to meet the differing needs of the children, regardless of their abilities, gender or ethnic origin. All adults manage the children with skill and sensitivity. As a result, children soon learn the nursery routines, and approach their activities confidently and with enthusiasm. Children make very good progress during their time in the nursery, and this provides an excellent foundation for their learning in later years.
16. Teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes overall and, as a result, pupils make sound progress by the end of Year 2. However, teaching in Year 1 is unsatisfactory, and pupils fail to make sufficient progress in a significant minority of lessons. This is largely because of shortcomings in teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils of this age, and their expertise in some subjects. Therefore, although lessons are carefully planned, the tasks given to pupils and the teaching methods used are often inappropriate. For example, there are too many teacher-led activities in which pupils have to concentrate carefully on teachers' explanations and instructions for lengthy periods. As a result, pupils' initial interest decreases, and they become less attentive. This slows down the pace of their learning and, by mid-afternoon, many are too tired to work productively. In an art and design lesson, the opportunity for them to work creatively and with enjoyment was missed when they were given precise instructions on how to produce a landscape in three dimensions. They were unclear about the purpose of their efforts, and the limited resources they were given reduced the extent to which they were able to produce an attractive or individual piece of work.

17. Teaching in the junior classes is good and promotes the good progress that pupils make. Lessons are planned well and teachers have high expectations of attitudes, behaviour and standards. As a result, pupils are attentive, eager to learn, and try hard to carry out their tasks correctly. Intended learning is shared with pupils at the beginning of many lessons so that pupils are clear about the purpose of their tasks. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to review and evaluate what they have learnt at the end of lessons. Characteristic strengths of good and better teaching were seen in a music lesson, in which teaching was very good. The teacher had very good knowledge and technical competence to teach music and the Year 4 pupils were inspired by her own enthusiasm for the subject. Each element of the lesson focused closely on her intentions for them to learn about the pentatonic scale and, as a result, they made very good gains in their knowledge of the scale as well as in their composing skills. Through practical work with instruments and working in collaborative mixed ability groups, all pupils had an equal opportunity to achieve, including English language learners and pupils with special educational needs. The concluding part of the lesson was used very effectively to extend learning further, through opportunities to perform, and to evaluate the work of others.
18. Overall, the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught well, although better use could be made of learning in other subjects, such as geography, to promote greater progress. A weak feature within literacy and numeracy lessons where teaching is satisfactory overall is overlong lesson introductions, which restrict the time available for pupils to work on their own tasks. Current arrangements for setting pupils for numeracy lessons result in a high proportion of English language learners, below average attainers and pupils with special educational needs being taught in the same set with insufficient adult support. This limits the progress pupils make. Recent training has increased teachers' expertise in ICT significantly, so that it is now taught well. Teachers take appropriate account of special educational needs, and adapt tasks so that pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. However, insufficient account is taken of targets on individual education plans to ensure good progress is made towards them. The effective help provided by support staff has a positive impact on the learning of pupils on the special educational needs register. Written comments made by teachers when marking work helps pupils know how to improve, and homework is used well to reinforce and extend learning.
19. There are variations in the extent to which teachers meet the needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English who, as a result, do not make as much progress as they could. Although teachers are committed to promoting the good progress of all their pupils, shortcomings in their knowledge and understanding of the needs of English language learners limit the quality of their learning in some lessons, for example in English and history. Where teachers show good expertise in this area, work is matched closely to the abilities of English language learners, rather than their skills in English, and teaching methods are carefully chosen to meet their learning needs. A strong emphasis on practical activities enables pupils to learn across the curriculum, and opportunities to work collaboratively with others also help to develop their understanding and use of English. A good example during the inspection was a history lesson in which all pupils in a Year 2 class, including those learning English as an additional language, made good gains in their knowledge of the gunpowder plot and its causes. This was because, by exploring the events through role-play and a practical sequencing activity, pupils were able to help to extend each other's understanding. In lessons where English language learners make less progress than others, there are inappropriate expectations of how much they can understand and

learn from teachers' lengthy class introductions and from working individually on tasks that require reading and writing in English. Additionally, not all teachers clearly understand the difference between special educational needs and the needs of English language learners, and how to plan effectively to meet these differing needs. As a result, pupils at an early stage of learning English are frequently given the same work as pupils with learning difficulties even when they are of average ability or higher, and this limits the progress they are able to make.

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

20. The school continues to provide a sound quality and range of learning opportunities overall, but with some variations. The nursery curriculum has improved considerably and is now very good, and the curriculum provided for junior pupils is satisfactory. However, there are shortcomings in provision for the infant classes, because the Year 1 curriculum is not matched closely enough to the needs of pupils of this age. The transition from the nursery to Year 1 is not managed well enough and insufficient attention is given to providing an appropriate balance of activities over the day.
21. Overall, the curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education (RE). The school uses nationally recommended planning guidance as a basis for a number of subjects, which are then adapted to meet the needs of the school's pupils. Subject plans for each term provide clear guidance for teachers on pupils' intended learning. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented. There is good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE), with recent improvements in the scheme of work and record keeping system. Appropriate health and sex education policies are in place, including drug awareness.
22. The school has an inclusion policy and endeavours to plan a curriculum that provides equality of opportunity for all its pupils. This is seen, for example, in the steps taken to redress the differing performance of boys and girls. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs. Those with statements receive the help specified, mostly through the provision of extra classroom support and are included fully in the life of the school. Pupils with learning difficulties receive additional help according to their needs, usually through modifying the work of the rest of the class, and through the effective support of classroom assistants. However, insufficient account is taken of the specific requirements of individual education plans when planning tasks and this constrains the rate of progress for pupils on the special educational needs register. The school has recently introduced good arrangements to ensure the curricular needs of higher attainers are identified and met.
23. There are shortcomings in the extent to which the school meets the curricular needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. In a number of lessons, the tasks given to pupils at an early stage of learning English are not challenging enough for their general abilities, and this limits their achievement. Additionally, the curriculum provided for infant and junior pupils takes insufficient account of the first languages and cultures of all its pupils. Missed opportunities during the inspection included history lessons in which pupils compared Egyptian hieroglyphs and Victorian education with modern-day experiences, but without any reference to the scripts or educational heritage of ethnic minority cultures within the school. These weaknesses

have been recognised by the school and steps taken are already showing some improvement.

24. The school provides a very good number and range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs for netball, football, tennis, cricket and athletics. The school participates successfully in a local Bobby Charlton football scheme, and there is additional coaching from Slough Football Club players as well as an external cricket coach. There are also music clubs for choir, recorders, clarinet and guitar activities, and a recently introduced percussion group to help pupils improve their concentration skills. Other clubs include art, design and technology, gardening, ICT and an insect club. Plans are in hand for the school to open a Saturday club for performing arts for music, drama and dance, with funding received from the New Opportunities Fund.
25. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good and the school provides a range of visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, Year 6 participated in the 'Delights of Science' experience, and visits are made to museums and art galleries. Each class group goes on a visit connected with the curriculum each year, but greater use could be made of nearby facilities, such as places of historical interest, to enrich the curriculum further. There is a project on 'Looking after Teeth' with a local chocolate factory, and pupils have benefited from working with musicians from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Relationships with partner institutions are also good. There are strong links with Wexham Park Secondary School to which most pupils go on leaving the primary school, and with Slough Grammar School. There are also appropriate links with the local playgroups.
26. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Moral and social development especially are strengths of the school, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The school has been successful in providing very well for pupils' personal development through a wide and exciting range of activities designed as extras to enrich and enliven the curriculum. Planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the subjects of the curriculum is inconsistent. This has been recognised, and the school is currently working on ideas for improvement.
27. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well, particularly in RE lessons. Here pupils have the chance to think about beliefs that guide the lives of others and the influence of religion on the decisions they make. Tolerance and respect for others' views are strongly encouraged. In music and science too, opportunities arise for pupils to marvel at the world around them, from the sounds made by a xylophone to the sight of daffodil bulbs emerging from the soil. Beyond the classroom, extra-curricular activities such as the art and gardening clubs make a further contribution to spiritual development. The insect club is an excellent example of this. Pupils of all ages and abilities are able to wonder at the beauty and diversity of the natural world and contemplate the lives of other creatures on the planet, and they do so with a mixture of respect and amazement. The school fully meets requirements for a daily act of collective worship, which is a time for quiet, peaceful contemplation.
28. Provision for both moral and social development is very good. These two strands of personal development are closely intertwined, and this is a real strength. The school tries to give pupils a sense of right and wrong linked with the consequences of their actions on other people, both for better and for worse. So, for example, the impact of pupils' generosity in bringing in gifts for harvest festival is made apparent to them from the gratitude of the elderly who receive the parcels. Similarly, the school's code of conduct is based on behaving well in order to create a safe and harmonious

environment for the whole community. This ethos pervades the school, and staff provide pupils with good role models in their behaviour and relationships with others. The very positive and supportive relationships within the school help pupils to flourish. The school is very skilled at developing pupils' self-esteem, boosting their confidence, and making them feel that their contribution to the school community is not only important but also valued. It not only creates opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility but also acknowledges them through the enamelled badges which pupils wear with pride. Assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development. Through presenting assemblies themselves pupils learn to be confident speakers and respectful listeners. Staff use assemblies well to reinforce moral and social themes. During the inspection week, for example, pupils in Year 3 pondered on the people and things in their lives for which they were grateful, while infant pupils discussed how to be safe during Hallowe'en and on Bonfire Night. The school's well planned and timetabled PSHE programme gives pupils structured opportunities to learn about and discuss their growth as individuals and as citizens.

29. Cultural opportunities for pupils are good, especially those which give them an insight into different cultures from around the world. This is strongly brought out through musical events where pupils have, for example, listened to Japanese musicians, tried out steel band instruments, and taken part in a project with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The nursery makes very good use of the different cultures represented in the school as part of its curriculum. Recently, for example, children performed a range of nursery rhymes for parents, including the Punjabi version of 'Head and shoulders, knees and toes'. The children who helped the nursery teacher learn this were very proud of their achievement, whilst Punjabi speakers were happy to sing something in their first language. Elsewhere in the school, some staff take advantage of the different backgrounds in the school community to support learning in the curriculum. During the inspection, for example, a Year 3 class heard about Sikhism from a member of staff who practised that faith.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The quality of pastoral care offered to pupils is a strong feature of the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school has very good, thorough policies and procedures for this area of its work, and they provide a framework to underpin good and consistent practice from all staff. Good attention is paid to pupils' welfare. Daily routines have been carefully organised and run smoothly. Staggered breaks and lunchtimes, for example, mean that the dining halls and playground are never too crowded, and this helps to ensure good behaviour. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The headteacher is responsible for this and has made thorough training and clear guidance available to all staff. Pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe through the PSHE programme and through assemblies. Health and safety issues are well managed. There are very good guidelines to cover all eventualities, together with very good systems for regular risk assessments. First aid is well administered, and the school has good facilities for treating children in its medical room.
31. Discipline is well promoted in the school. There are consistently high expectations for behaviour throughout the school, and most staff manage pupils' behaviour well. The school's code of conduct is so well known to pupils that teachers rarely have to draw attention to it. Some good initiatives have been introduced to help pupils who find it hard to concentrate in lessons. The weekly percussion sessions for a small group of

junior pupils are a particularly exciting example of this, helping to give the children involved a sense of achievement and pride in what they can accomplish. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are very well monitored and followed up. The headteacher keeps detailed records and is vigilant in watching out for any instances of bullying or racism. These are rare, and are handled firmly.

32. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Good use is made of the services of the education welfare officer to work with families who have difficulty sending their children to school regularly. The school is aware of the need to reduce its level of unauthorised absence and plans to computerise its recording systems in order to maintain a closer overview of attendance issues. At present there is insufficient emphasis on promoting the value of good attendance amongst the whole school community.
33. Personal support for pupils is good. Induction for children in the nursery is very good, and this means that they settle very quickly. Unfortunately this is not the case when children move from the nursery to Year 1, and some have trouble adapting to their new environment as a result. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to give them good informal support on a day-to-day basis. The school has recently changed its systems for recording and monitoring pupils' personal development, and is introducing new procedures linked to the targets for PSHE in each year group. This is a good initiative, although it is too early to judge its impact.
34. The school has satisfactory arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. Systems in the nursery are good. These provide a good record of progress towards the early learning goals for children by the time they enter Year 1, and assessment information is used effectively in planning. In the infant and junior classes, a range of standardised tests in English and mathematics supplement the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests. When combined, these give a satisfactory overall record of long term progress. At the end of each school year, pupils' progress in all subjects is recorded on detailed sheets that link to National Curriculum levels. These provide an appropriate record of pupils' achievements in each subject. Assessment information is used to set targets for improvement in English and mathematics, which are reviewed regularly, and adjusted as necessary. However, teachers could make better use of assessment data when setting targets for individual pupils, in preference to setting group targets, the current practice. Assessment information is not currently used satisfactorily to plan learning for all pupils at an early stage of learning English, but newly adopted arrangements have the potential to improve this situation. Teachers clearly know their pupils well, and day-to-day assessment of work is satisfactory. For pupils with special educational needs the school's regular assessment procedures are adequate to enable effective identification and tracking of progress. Where specific information is required the school carries out diagnostic tests and makes use of external specialist agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school has successfully maintained good relationships with its parent community found at the time of the last inspection. They are pleased with the school and what it offers their children. Good recent initiatives include a family literacy project. The school has sound links with parents but has not yet managed to draw in many regular parent helpers or to capitalise fully on the range of cultures and backgrounds of its parent community. The school has recognised the need to involve parents more

closely in its daily work, and has recently appointed a co-ordinator for parent and community links. However, an excellent start is being made in the nursery, where parents are made to feel truly part of the team. Every nursery family was represented at the sing-a-long during the inspection week, including brothers and sisters from other classes who wanted to be there, and nursery staff shared with them and explained to them the work that the children had been doing. Elsewhere in the school, too, staff are friendly and easily accessible to parents. A Year 3 teacher, for example, skilfully and diplomatically handled an interruption to her class assembly and quickly sorted out the parent's worry. The school has effective links with parents of children with special educational needs and keeps them fully informed as well as involving them in their children's learning through specific homework. They are invited into school regularly to discuss their children's progress.

36. Information for parents is satisfactory. There is a good range and scope of documentation available, including regular newsletters from the headteacher and topic letters from class teachers. All legal requirements are now met in the governors' annual report and prospectus. However, much of the information for parents is written in formal language and is not appealing to its readership. There are also no systematic arrangements for translating or interpreting into community languages other than English, and this means that some parents do not have full access to the information being sent out about their children's education. Translation and interpreting facilities are available for parents, but only if they approach the school specifically.
37. Reports to parents about their children's progress are not satisfactory. They are too complicated to give parents a clear picture of how well their children are doing compared with national expectations, what they need to do to improve further, and how parents can help. The school currently uses the same format for reports to parents and for teachers' record keeping, but the needs of the two groups are not the same, and this format is not suitable for the annual reports. A number of parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that they were not kept adequately informed about their children's progress.
38. Parents make a sound contribution to their children's learning and the work of the school. They are keen for their children to do well and support the efforts of the school and the teachers. Most hear their children read at home regularly, and ensure that homework is completed on time. A few are able to give a lot of time and energy to the school as governors, members of the thriving Friends' Association, and classroom helpers, and the school appreciates what they do.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The leadership and management of the school are good, and promote high standards and good quality teaching and learning. The headteacher has a clear view of the ethos and educational direction she wants for the school and its pupils, a thorough understanding of current strengths and weaknesses, and a repertoire of effective strategies to achieve school improvement. These are significant strengths, which make a positive impact on the rate of school development. This is seen, for example, in the extent to which key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. However, recent problems in recruitment have made it increasingly difficult to appoint experienced teachers when vacancies arise, and this has had an adverse effect on the pace at which the school is able to improve.

40. Although recently established, the senior management team is already achieving improvements in the quality of education provided. These include, for example, an increase in opportunities for nursery children to choose their own activities. The procedures through which the senior management team monitors the work of the school and identifies areas for development have the potential to accelerate the future rate of improvement. There are agreed arrangements for co-ordinators to manage their subjects, including procedures for monitoring pupils' standards and progress. Not all co-ordinators are using these procedures effectively and, as a result, plans for development of mathematics, art and design, and history are not based on secure knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of provision.
41. Governors are active, well informed about the work of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They are supportive of the headteacher and work well together as a team to promote the school's aims. Governors are kept fully informed, for example, about the way the school supports pupils with special educational needs.
42. Overall, the school monitors its own performance satisfactorily and takes effective action. The shortcomings in provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language, for example, have already been identified and are beginning to be addressed. A new co-ordinator was appointed in September, an external consultant has provided training for both teaching and support staff, and there is already evidence of improvements made. Arrangements for monitoring and improving school performance are securely in place and there is an appropriate programme of monitoring teaching.
43. The school makes good strategic use of its resources, including specific grants and additional funding. The EMTAG funding (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant), for example, is now used predominantly to provide and train support assistants for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Decisions on spending are linked appropriately to educational priorities, take very good account of the principles of best value, and are formalised on the school improvement plan. A large balance carried over from the last financial year was appropriately set aside for building work that has now been carried out. Day to day financial procedures are managed very efficiently by a business manager, and minor recommendations in the latest financial audit have been put into place. There has been considerable improvement in financial systems since the last inspection, and the school makes good use of new technology, including electronic mail and the Internet.
44. The school is satisfactorily provided with teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and pupils, although there are weaknesses in teachers' expertise in Year 1. There are very good levels of expertise both in the nursery and in music. The school employs a good number of classroom support staff who are effective in their roles of supporting both pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Administrative staff also contribute well to the smooth running and positive ethos of the school. A significant feature is the good relationships between all adults within the school and their commitment to the pupils. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to succeed in improving the quality of education provided.
45. The school building is well maintained and provides spacious accommodation. Although many classrooms are only of adequate size, there is a considerable amount of extra teaching space, including shared areas outside classrooms, two halls, two

library areas, and music practice rooms. Pupils have access to hard and grassed areas for recreation and physical education (PE), and also benefit from climbing equipment, seating and a wild area, including a pond. Nursery children have immediate access to a secure outdoor area which is well resourced and used daily to promote their learning. The school does not provide outdoor facilities for reception children and this constrains some aspects of their personal, social and physical development. The school has a good range, quantity and quality of resources overall, and this shows improvement since the previous inspection. Learning resources are notably good in English, science, ICT, music, PE and RE.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:-

- (1) Improve teaching in Year 1 by
 - building more effectively on children's foundation stage experiences to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1
 - increasing knowledge and understanding of how pupils of this age learn
 - ensuring tasks are matched well to clear and appropriate learning objectives, and that they meet the needs of all pupils
(Paragraph numbers 16, 20, 33)

- (2) Improve the provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language by
 - ensuring all staff clearly understand the difference between special educational needs and the needs of English language learners, and how to plan effectively to meet these differing needs
 - make greater use of the first languages and cultures of pupils from ethnic minority cultures
(Paragraph numbers 4, 19, 23, 29)

- (3) Ensure all co-ordinators, particularly those for mathematics, art and design, and history, use the agreed procedures effectively to monitor provision, standards and progress in their subjects.
(Paragraph numbers 40, 73, 81, 96)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Provide a dedicated outdoor area for reception children, appropriately resourced for use on a daily basis
- Improve the information provided in pupils' annual reports for parents
- Review the arrangements for setting pupils in mathematics lessons
- Raise the level of attendance by promoting good attendance more rigorously

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	30	33	5	0	0
Percentage	4	12	37	41	6	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31.5	353
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	69

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	191

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	42
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	27	30	27
	Total	51	57	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (96)	95 (92)	90 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	29	27
	Girls	29	30	28
	Total	56	59	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (92)	98 (96)	92 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	33	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	20
	Girls	29	21	32
	Total	45	39	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (76)	70 (54)	93 (76)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	32	27	28
	Total	51	47	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (70)	84 (74)	86 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	2
Indian	77
Pakistani	109
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	204
Any other minority ethnic group	9

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	283

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31.5
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	973755
Total expenditure	902947
Expenditure per pupil	2208
Balance brought forward from previous year	50000
Balance carried forward to next year	120808

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	416
Number of questionnaires returned	100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	57	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	51	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	43	20	3	0
The teaching is good.	47	45	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	58	11	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	45	2	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	52	3	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	43	20	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	42	47	5	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	54	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	46	6	1	10

Other issues raised by parents

A small minority of parents were concerned about classes being re-arranged at the end of the year and were unclear about the reason for this. The school is planning to make sure parents understand the reasons more clearly.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. Most children are admitted to the nursery class on a part-time basis at the age of three and a half years. They continue to attend part-time until the term following their fifth birthday, when almost all transfer to the main school. Those transferring in September go straight into a Year 1 class, whilst children whose birthdays fall after December transfer into reception classes. During the period of the inspection all children in the foundation stage were being taught in the nursery.
48. Several concerns were expressed in the last report about the need to improve the experience of children in the nursery. All these concerns have been fully addressed. The nursery teacher has excellent knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and knows the children very well. Work is now very well matched to children's individual needs. The nursery is an exciting place full of lively, stimulating and interesting pictures, books, words and letters. Combined with the provision of a wide range of exciting activities these encourage and motivate children to learn very well. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.
49. Under the leadership of an outstanding teacher the overall quality of both teaching and learning in the nursery is very good. There are particular strengths in the knowledge of young children's needs, high expectations of both progress and behaviour, and sensitive and effective teaching of children whose first language is other than English. Assessment is thorough and contributes effectively to the very good progress, particularly in speaking and listening and personal development. As part of a very strong and effective team the knowledgeable learning support assistants contribute significantly to the effectiveness of the nursery provision.
50. On entry to nursery, attainment of children is wide-ranging but below average overall. A significant number of children enter with poorly developed personal and social skills. A high proportion of children have developed appropriate communication and language skills in their first languages but are at an early stage of understanding and speaking English. The majority, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in all aspects of learning as a result of teaching that is consistently very good, and often excellent. There is a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and on communication, language and literacy. As a result, children make very good progress in developing skills in these areas of learning. Most children attain the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development by the time they enter Year 1 although communication, language and literacy skills are below average.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. On entry to the school children have limited personal and social skills, but make very good progress in this area of learning because of very good teaching. Staff maintain consistently high standards in their expectations and the children clearly understand the behaviour that is expected of them. Children work in an exciting and constantly stimulating learning environment and, as a result, they enjoy coming to the nursery and are keen to learn. Relationships are relaxed between children, and children and

adults. Children respond very well to the interesting tasks planned for them. During and after these activities, they take turns, choose resources and tidy away. For example, children work in pairs at the computer and are able to take turns without adult intervention. Children play together co-operatively as seen when two children prepare Red Riding Hood's basket with food for Grandmother through their role-play. They learn to accept and take on responsibilities. Older children are actively encouraged to look after and help younger children. When working with an adult in a whole-class activity children quickly learn to put their hand up and not call out when they wish to speak. At such times most learn to listen intently. Excellent support is on hand to explain things to and help children whose first language is other than English. As a result they make progress which is similar to that made by other children.

Communication, language and literacy

52. As a result of high quality teaching and very well planned activities all children, including English language learners, make very good progress in this area. One of the learning support assistants is bilingual, speaking Punjabi and Urdu. She provides very effective home language teaching support where appropriate and this makes a significant contribution to the very good learning of these children. All first languages are respected in the nursery and all children are encouraged to learn the words to a number of nursery rhymes using several of the local community languages.
53. The development of children's communication, language and literacy skills is given an appropriately high priority. Consequently, there are very good opportunities provided for children to learn communication skills and practise aspects of speaking, listening and early reading and writing. The quality of learning is very good in this area. Opportunities for learning are very well structured. They are also interesting and fun. For example, children thoroughly enjoy singing an alphabet song, pointing to the printed letters as they sing. Through similar activities they learn initial word sounds. They enjoy role-play, listening to stories in small groups and shaping letters on the whiteboard. One of the major factors contributing to the very good learning of children is the skill of staff in providing an environment for learning that is rich in language and in making the most of opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and use of language.

Mathematical development

54. Children make very good progress as a result of very good teaching and the imaginative curriculum that stimulates learning. Learning is effective because staff organise a wide range of activities that children enjoy. Children sort objects for shape, colour, size and texture and, through a variety of well structured practical activities in the sand, water, home corner and shop, acquire good number skills. Children are encouraged to explore mathematical concepts by the very stimulating environment within which they work. Staff are very skilled at encouraging children to initiate their own learning activities as seen, for example, when they fill and empty containers, fit shapes into slots, and mark out numbers in the sand. All staff make a very effective contribution to learning. They are good at seizing opportunities for focused questioning to reinforce children's understanding and to enable them to use mathematical language well. During activities they engage children in conversation and introduce mathematical vocabulary in a natural context. For example, a child might be asked: 'Is the container full?' or 'Which shape is needed to fit into this space?' Older children play matching shape games confidently and correctly name shapes such as squares and circles. Younger children learn about the concept of size

when role-playing the story of the three bears. They enjoy identifying the little, medium and big bowls.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. Children make very good progress in this aspect. They learn about their own and others' homes and families and their own development. They learn about how other cultures celebrate their special occasions and meet adult visitors representative of a range of cultures. Children watch as food is prepared using utensils and ingredients associated with a range of different cultures and traditions. For example, they make Chappati and have an opportunity to taste the food. In this context they discuss their likes and dislikes when touching, smelling and tasting various items of food. Children use computers to support their learning in both the nursery and in the computer suite. They are skilful in manipulating the mouse and know how to press the keys on the computer to cause a change on the screen. Children for whom English is an additional language receive good support during the time they work on the computer in the nursery, sometimes in their first language, and this contributes to their good learning. They explore in the garden, plant bulbs and watch them grow. They receive exciting visitors to the nursery including, for example, members of the local Fire Service. Teaching is lively, imaginative and challenging and children enjoy the investigative tasks in this area of learning.

Physical development

56. Children enter the nursery with skills that overall are slightly below those expected of this age group. They make very good progress in developing these skills. There is a spacious and secure play area and a good range of colourful, safe apparatus, suitable for the age group. Children have opportunities to jump, run, climb and balance and show an awareness of space. They use a good variety of wheeled toys, which help them to develop good control and co-ordination in pushing, pulling, pedalling and steering. Nursery children benefit greatly from this but reception children do not have access to similar outdoor facilities and equipment appropriate for their age. Children have many experiences in cutting, sticking, crayoning and their finer skills are developing well. In this area children respond well to very good teaching. The response to children with special educational needs is sensitive and ensures they receive the full benefit of lessons and make similar progress to all the other children.

Creative development

57. There are good opportunities for children to explore and use media and materials in art. Children experiment with colour mixing and explore colour, texture and shape on a regular basis. Informal opportunities for singing are used well. Children sing number songs, alphabet songs, action songs and nursery rhymes. A strong feature is the quality of the singing and the obvious enjoyment the children derive from it. When all the children are singing together the adults participate fully whenever possible. Such sessions contribute to the sense of real warmth that pervades the nursery. Creative activities are used well to increase the self-esteem of children new to English and to promote their learning of English through developing vocabulary for materials, shapes, colour and texture.

ENGLISH

58. The standards pupils attain overall by the ages of seven and eleven years are average. Standards are rising and, although test results vary, this is related to the differing characteristics of pupils within each year group. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
59. In the infant classes pupils sit and listen attentively for long periods but frequently the listening is a passive activity as teachers spend too long talking to the class. Standards in speaking are just below those expected as many of the pupils who speak English as an additional language do not contribute fully in class sessions. Most pupils talk and listen effectively in small group situations while talking with their friends. A significant minority, however, do not talk confidently in a larger group and make only brief responses when asked to describe an event or answer a question. At the junior stage, pupils show increasing confidence and, through the good opportunities provided such as junior and class assemblies, give an account of an event and participate in a presentation. For example, Year 6 pupils described their visit to a local science workshop to friends and teachers. In sessions where pupils talk within the class about issues relevant to their lives, they discuss a personal point of view and comment constructively on what is being discussed or experienced. Pupils continue to listen attentively in the junior classes. Where teachers have a high expectation that most pupils will raise their hands in response to their questions and respond immediately to instructions, then the standards of listening are higher.
60. Overall, the school provides good support for the teaching of reading. Pupils are heard read regularly and encouraged to take books home frequently and this enables many pupils to achieve appropriately for their abilities. There are books in the school that are written with dual language texts but these are not used sufficiently to support pupils and families who are learning English as an additional language. Most pupils attain the expected level in reading by the end of Year 2, although few attain higher standards. They read story and information books with appropriate accuracy and understanding, and use their knowledge of letters, sounds and meanings to read words that are unfamiliar to them. The current year group contains a high percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language and this has an effect on standards, as the provision for their learning is not well developed.
61. Pupils make good progress developing their reading skills in the junior classes and achieve well. They continue to read very regularly and keep reading diaries that include home and school reading information. The majority enjoy reading and read a good variety of fiction, poetry and non-fiction. Year 6 higher attaining pupils describe their own views of what they have read and support their opinions by reference to details in the text. They have preferences, which they describe with logical reasons, referring to the genre and figurative language to illustrate their ideas. The majority of pupils use the contents, index and the skills of skimming and scanning to find information and are beginning to use the Internet to pursue a line of inquiry. The development of reading skills and love of books is well supported. For example, Year 6 pupils have their own specific library area and the librarians choose to spend their own time making it a stimulating and pleasant environment. Pupils are expected to write book reviews regularly, which help them to understand inferences, make deductions and compare literature, and they are given guidance so that these skills are gradually developed over time.
62. By the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils' writing skills are at the level expected for their age. They are beginning to be aware of the differences between spoken and written language, and write simple sentences and sequence events in an interesting

order. They use full stops and capital letters appropriately and write letters that are legible. Higher attainers are beginning to use speech marks. The quality of teaching is sound overall, but there are significant weaknesses. Where it is good, teachers understand how young pupils of this age learn and use effective strategies to meet the needs of all pupils. They plan a range of varied activities with good opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their own learning throughout the session. Adults are encouraging and relationships are good. Weaknesses in teaching are evident where the tasks are unsuitable for the age and ability of the pupils and explanations are not clear.

63. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils attain the expected level for their age in writing and a significant minority attain a higher level. Pupils achieve well in the junior classes and teaching is good. Most teachers are confident and knowledgeable about the subject and choose good texts and examples to support their teaching, for example, to help pupils write a poem and an autobiography. Grammar and spelling are taught effectively. Thus, Year 4 pupils learn to use adverbs to enhance their text, and to improve their spelling of words of two syllables. In most classes there are high expectations of pupils' response, and homework is given regularly, which makes a valuable contribution to the following lesson. By the end of Year 6, pupils write appropriately for different purposes including letters of complaint, and a personal response to 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes, in which they give reasons for their opinions. Most words are spelt accurately, including those of more than one syllable, and pupils use a fluent and joined style of handwriting to present their work well.
64. The quality of both teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and make good use of ICT to develop literacy skills. They plan lessons effectively, have high expectations of achievement, and manage pupils well. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs who make sound progress. Those who have additional difficulty with language and literacy skills are given clear and specific targets to help them focus on areas for improvement. However, these are insufficiently evident in the planning and content of lessons, which limits the rate of pupils' progress towards the targets. Pupils for whom English is an additional language do not always have their needs met by the curriculum. For example, when pupils are asked to map a story highlighting the main aspects, the examples chosen are from English fairy stories. Although known to all pupils, they are less familiar to pupils from minority ethnic groups and so their task is made more difficult. In the infant classes, insufficient attention is given to making sure that examples are appropriate for pupils' vocabulary and experience. For instance, many could correctly name a picture of a chicken but none knew it as a hen and this was required to successfully complete a task. Classroom assistants provide good support by encouraging pupils to participate, asking and answering questions, and helping pupils to fully understand the intended learning.
65. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, including the successful implementation of the national literacy strategy. The school makes appropriate use of the national guidance for planning and allocates an appropriate balance of time to each element of the lessons. However, in practice, this time is not adhered to. In the majority of lessons the teacher input is too long and pupils do not have sufficient time to complete their tasks. There are sound arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and effective. She has begun to monitor teaching and learning but there are still a number of inconsistencies in practice.

MATHEMATICS

66. Pupils attain average standards in both Year 2 and Year 6, and standards have risen since the last inspection. Although there is variation between successive years, overall improvements have kept pace with the improving national trend.
67. By the age of seven, pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers up to 100. Most pupils calculate accurately, but lower-attaining pupils make mistakes when working with larger numbers and when subtracting. Pupils use their number skills in shopping and problem-solving activities. In one lesson, pupils explored a range of questions on odd and even numbers. By the end of the lesson, many had found several ways to combine three odd numbers to make a total of 11. A few pupils had begun to systematically record their work to ensure, for instance, that all possible combinations of numbers had been attempted. In another lesson, pupils used plastic coins to make up money totals to a pound. However, a few pupils are not yet clear that coins have different values, and only succeed in counting up correctly with support from an adult. Pupils know some simple properties of two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles, and they create simple block graphs to show, for instance, the different ways in which they travel to school.
68. By the time they reach eleven, most pupils calculate confidently and accurately with whole numbers and decimals, using mental and formal written methods. Pupils display good mental agility in, for example, multiplying 9 by 16 in a variety of ways using their knowledge of multiplication tables, addition and subtraction. Pupils understand how fractions, decimals and percentages are related, and they are becoming increasingly familiar with metric measurements. They express measurements in different equivalent forms such as 707 centilitres and 7.07 litres. Pupils calculate areas and perimeters of shapes made from squares and rectangles, and are developing sound understanding of simple statistics such as the mean average and range of sets of data. Higher attainers work accurately with decimals, percentages and decimals, explore the angles of regular shapes, and use a range of graphs to enter and interpret data.
69. The quality of teaching and learning are both satisfactory throughout the school and some lessons are good or very good. All teachers manage classes well and have very good relationships with their pupils. Pupils respond well. They are well-motivated and want to learn, although a few lower attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 find it hard to concentrate for long, and some lessons become rather noisy.
70. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers make effective use of practical apparatus and work is challenging. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson on probability, for instance, good use of spinners coloured in different ways aided pupils' understanding of 'likelihood' and promoted clear thinking about the principles involved. In another lesson in Year 2, lower attainers developed their understanding of odd and even numbers well through effective use of a set of dominoes and being encouraged to discuss their work with the classroom support assistant. Because this work gave pupils good opportunities for discussion, it also contributed effectively to the development of their language skills.
71. Teachers understand the requirements of the national numeracy strategy and lessons follow the recommended three-part structure. The best part of most mathematics

lessons is the whole-class teaching that takes place at the start of each lesson. Teachers explain work well, and engage pupils effectively in discussions. They ask searching questions that probe pupils' understanding and give them good opportunities to demonstrate what they know. However, lesson introductions are often too long. This restricts the time that pupils have for their own work, and prevents them from consolidating the main teaching points in the lesson as well as they could.

72. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, and they make sound progress. The setting arrangements adopted in most years help to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged appropriately by their work. Teachers and support staff are well aware of the language needs of many pupils, and arrange classroom seating so that they can give close support. These arrangements are effective, and allow all pupils to take a full part in lessons. However, the combination of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils together makes it very hard for the teacher of the lowest set to manage and organise lessons effectively. This is because all of the pupils in the group have special educational needs or need substantial help with English, or both. Analysis of their work this year so far shows that pupils in this group have covered less ground than they should. With the exception of this group, all pupils make satisfactory progress, and achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their ability, including English language learners.
73. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection, including the successful implementation of the national numeracy strategy. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress in mathematics, but these lack detail to ensure the setting of precise learning targets. The management of the subject is satisfactory but with some shortcomings. The co-ordinator monitors colleagues' planning, but does not routinely monitor pupils' work, and relies too much on other teachers to keep her informed. Consequently, areas requiring development, such as arrangements for setting in the junior classes, are not identified quickly enough. This affects the co-ordinator's capacity to make informed recommendations to promote higher standards, and constrains the pace of development in the subject. The school has sufficient learning resources for mathematics, and use of ICT is beginning to make a positive impact on learning. For example, a small group of pupils worked in one lesson in the computer suite with the ICT technician, using a teaching program related to the probability topic being taught.

SCIENCE

74. Most pupils attain the expected standards by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards have risen since the last inspection and continue to improve, with more pupils in the current Year 6 on line to attain above the expected level in the 2002 tests.
75. Pupils of all ages show appropriate knowledge and understanding of their work in science and, overall, achieve well by the age of eleven. Year 1 pupils, for example, label the main parts of the body, and recognise a range of common animals. In Year 1 lessons, pupils described materials in terms of whether they were rough or smooth, hard or soft, transparent or opaque. Pupils in Year 2 know which objects are natural and which are man-made. They know that some materials can be twisted, squashed or can change shape. In two lessons, pupils classified photographs of electrical and non-electrical items in the home and identified whether they move, light up or heat with electricity. Year 3 pupils know the importance of diet for animals. They know the

importance of teeth, including incisors, canines and molars, and devise vegetarian menus for healthy eating. They know that it is essential to have a healthy balanced diet and to take care of their teeth. In a lesson in Year 4, pupils knew that a thermometer was an instrument for measuring heat. In a lesson where teaching was good, the teacher demonstrated a variety of thermometers for air, soil, head and hand. As a result, most carried out accurate measurements and recorded their results. In Year 5, pupils carried out investigative work with the three states of solids, liquids and gases and learnt that they can be altered through temperature changes. They know, for instance, that processes can be reversed from ice to water to steam. Pupils in both Year 6 classes investigated soluble and insoluble materials. Pupils know that solids such as salt can dissolve and that sand is insoluble, and they experimented with sieving, filtration and evaporation.

76. Teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes, and good in the junior classes. Teachers take suitable account of special educational needs in their planning, and provide appropriate support to promote their learning. Weaknesses in lessons that are overall satisfactory are a lack of clear objectives, and work that is not matched closely to the abilities of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Where teaching is good, teachers use questions effectively to prompt pupils' thinking and probe their understanding. They know their subject well and have good technical competence. In a good Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher provided a range of practical group tasks that were matched well to the needs of all pupils so that all made good progress in their understanding of how insoluble materials can be separated by filtering, and how evaporation can be used to recover a dissolved solid. The lesson was managed at a good pace and there were clear and appropriate objectives so that pupils significantly improved their investigative skills. In the best lessons, pupils are well managed, they behave well, have good attitudes to the subject and learn effectively. As a result, learning by pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good.
77. The subject is well managed. There is an agreed policy, and national guidance for planning is used effectively. The curriculum is enriched through visits to the Science and National History Museums and homework is used well to extend learning. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' standards and progress, and resources are good. ICT was not seen being used during the inspection and this is an area for further development. Work in science is used to promote literacy and numeracy, through recording experiments and drawing graphs and making calculations related to experimental work. Marking of work is of a variable quality, ranging from a few ticks to good examples where useful comments inform pupils how to improve.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily in this subject. They attain the levels expected by the ages of seven and eleven, and satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Only two lessons were seen during the period of the inspection and judgements are based on the evidence from those lessons, together with scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work in sketchbooks and displayed around the school, and discussion with pupils. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about whether there are varying rates of progress between different groups, such as pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language.

79. Pupils throughout the school use sketchbooks to record their observations and improve their skills. Year 1 pupils produce observational drawings of a training shoe, and bold painted portraits of good quality. Year 2 pupils add white and black to red paint to produce different tones, and produce observational drawings of daffodils. In Year 4, pupils design and produce Egyptian-style clay tiles, and moody sea paintings. Year 5 pupils try sketching in the style of Hans Holbein, and Year 6 pupils study the work of William Morris, and create their own prints in his style, using string blocks. By the end of Year 6 pupils show sound knowledge of a number of artists and their work, and of working with a range of techniques and media in two and three dimensions. They clearly enjoy their art activities, and talk confidently and knowledgeably about the work of Picasso and Matisse, describing the artists' styles, and offering their own personal preferences. Although overall standards are satisfactory, skills in drawing and painting could be improved. There are a few examples of pupils using ICT to create designs.
80. Pupils' work shows that teaching is satisfactory over time and pupils make sound progress in this subject. In one lesson with Year 2, careful planning enabled pupils to explore colours in the natural environment in preparation for colour-mixing in the next lesson. Pupils were keen to collect materials of different colours in the school grounds and the learning of all groups was enhanced by this practical activity and by the opportunity to work in pairs, with additional support for pupils with special educational needs. In the other lesson seen, which was unsatisfactory, the task did not engage the pupils' interest, and was not planned effectively to ensure pupils increased their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject.
81. The school provides an appropriate curriculum, and there has been improvement in planning since the last inspection. It is extended by opportunities for junior pupils to attend an art club, and for infant pupils to join an art and design club. Opportunities for pupils to learn about the art of cultures other than those from Western Europe are limited. There has been a recent change in co-ordinator for this subject. She is preparing plans for improving the subject but has not yet begun monitoring standards and progress to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Pupils attain the levels expected for their ages by the end of Years 2 and 6 and, overall, satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. It was not possible to observe teaching in the infant classes and all the junior lessons were introductions to units of work and therefore mostly involved the planning element. Evidence is drawn from the good portfolio of photographs showing the work undertaken in the past, examples of pupils' work, and teachers' planning. This indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and promotes the sound progress pupils make in the subject.
83. By the age of seven pupils investigate, plan and communicate design ideas. They learn about mechanisms and make moving parts for a clown, mobiles, and vehicles with wheels and axles. They are taught to use a variety of tools and investigate which are the most suitable for the purpose. They make puppets. Year 1 enjoyed using their finger puppets in literacy sessions as a focus for their work on writing speech bubbles. Pupils look carefully at bags, consider their function and design a bag for a chosen purpose, drawing their ideas and making suggestions for the

materials they would like to use. They also learn about food technology and enjoy making faces with salad products. This is linked effectively to work in science when they experience materials that change, as when their jelly melts and sets.

84. In a Year 4 lesson pupils carefully followed instructions and made a simple lever mechanism such as those used in pop-up books. They measured accurately and used the tools provided effectively. Pupils enjoyed the task and the product was of a good standard. However, the initial session was too long and dominated by the teacher demonstration. As a result opportunities were missed for the higher attaining pupils to work more independently and for pupils at an early stage of learning English to develop their skills in speaking English. Year 5 pupils made very good progress due to very good teaching whilst learning about biscuits and their packaging. Resources were good, questioning was probing and there was a good balance of exposition by the teacher and practical tasks for pupils to undertake. Year 6 undertook a product analysis of slippers, looking at designs and their suitability. They discussed safety issues sensibly and, due to good teaching, realised the importance of this aspect to the design.
85. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection, including steps taken to make more links with ICT. The school makes good use of the national guidance in planning, and the curriculum is enhanced by an after school club. The co-ordinator supports colleagues effectively. Good links are made across the curriculum and specific whole school projects make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. For example, during Japanese week pupils made a number of items, such as fans, using paper-folding techniques.

GEOGRAPHY

86. Pupils reach the levels expected for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achieve satisfactorily. Standards are not as high as at the last inspection, when they were reported to be above the national expectation. The decline is related to changes in teaching priorities in recent years due to national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, and to changes in the characteristics of pupils within the school.
87. Much of the work covered at the infant stage is taught through discussion. This is appropriate for the needs of many pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, but it limits opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning through recording. By the age of seven, pupils compare the local Wexham area with the village of Blewbury in Oxfordshire. They use maps to identify key features such as churches and schools, and identify from photographs how the two localities differ, for example in the amount of open and built up spaces. 'Holiday postcards' further develop this work, and give pupils opportunities to develop their writing skills whilst comparing Wexham with other areas, such as seaside holiday resorts. Year 1 pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of their own locality. They know, for instance, that people live in different types of houses such as flats and bungalows, and they describe what they see on their journey to school each day.
88. By Year 6, pupils explore themes such as water, settlements, maps, and global environments. Work covers appropriate factual knowledge, but is not recorded well and too often is superficial. For example, in recent work on climatic and environmental regions, pupils know that 'hot deserts are dry lands where very little rain falls and where few plants grow' and that animals such as penguins and krill are

found in the Antarctic. This level of knowledge is satisfactory, but pupils do not go on to explain the impact of hot desert or Antarctic conditions on the way people and animals live, or relate climate to wider issues such as land use. Pupils' map skills are underdeveloped. They use atlases and other reference sources to locate features such as rivers and major population centres, but discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils shows they have insufficient understanding of how to use map scales and grid references.

89. It was possible to see only two lessons during the inspection, and it is not therefore possible to form a clear judgement on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The lessons seen were in Year 4, and teaching was satisfactory. The learning objective was clear, and work well organised to develop pupils' understanding. By the end of the lessons, pupils had learned that 'A city is enormous. It has lots of train stations and skyscrapers. It has lots of shops...' and so on, with similar descriptions of towns and villages. One lesson was organised more effectively than the other to take account of the needs of English language learners. In the less effective lesson the teacher did not involve them sufficiently in class discussions, so that at times they appeared bored. In the more effective lesson they were better involved, and engaged in good discussions with their neighbours as they developed their work. In both lessons the introduction was too long. This restricted the time available for pupils to work independently, and prevented some making as much progress as they could.
90. The co-ordinator has been in post for just over a year. In that time she has rewritten the scheme of work in line with new National Curriculum requirements, and plans to further develop the assessment and recording procedures to provide a better record of pupils' progress. She leads development in the subject well. The school has sufficient learning resources for geography, although ICT is under-used at present to support learning.

HISTORY

91. Pupils make sound progress in this subject, and attain the standards expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards above the national expectation found at the last inspection have not been maintained. However, there have been recent improvements in planning, as well as in the range and quantity of resources, and agreed procedures for managing the subject.
92. Year 1 pupils display their developing sense of chronology by illustrating themselves as a baby, toddler and in the present, and write about 'My first memory'. They identify some of the differences between schools today and in the past, and discuss their preferences. Year 2 pupils show considerable knowledge about Guy Fawkes and the gunpowder plot, including the causes and importance of the incident. They have written their own account of the Great Fire of London, compared London past and present, and studied Samuel Pepys.
93. Year 3 pupils show developing awareness of how places change over time by using maps and photographs to identify differences in the buildings, landscape, and aspects of life on the site on which their school is built. Pupils are eager to learn more about this familiar area and keen to share their own local knowledge with each other. They begin to generate and answer questions from the evidence available. Year 4 pupils use a variety of resources to identify aspects and features of Egyptian

life, and demonstrate knowledge about the pyramids and hieroglyphics. In Year 5, pupils show sound knowledge about prominent people and events during the Tudor period, and demonstrate their ability to tell the difference between fact and opinion. In Year 6, pupils further extend their knowledge about periods in the past and this is seen in their knowledge of key dates during the Victorian period, and about the different living conditions of rich and poor. Year 6 pupils also show well-developed research skills, and an understanding that not all forms of evidence are equally reliable.

94. Teaching is satisfactory and promotes the sound progress pupils make. Teachers take good account of differing abilities, including special educational needs, when planning lessons to ensure all groups achieve satisfactorily. However, work is not consistently matched well to the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils do not always make as much progress as their peers. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning about the gunpowder plot through role play and collaborative learning and these teaching methods enabled all pupils to achieve well, including English language learners. Lessons seen and work in books show a variation in the quality of planning. In some lessons, teachers show a clear understanding of the key skills and knowledge that pupils should be acquiring and plan activities that ensure pupils achieve this learning. In other examples, pupils are given tasks that are superficial and give only limited opportunities to develop historical skills.
95. Planning is based on national recommended guidance but insufficient account is taken of the cultural history of pupils from ethnic minorities within the school. Year 4 pupils enjoyed an 'Egyptian Day' event, and there have been visits to the nearby church and the Imperial War Museum to promote knowledge in history. However, more use could be made of places of historical interest beyond the school to further enrich the curriculum. Appropriate use is made of ICT to support learning.
96. The co-ordinator has been in post for a year. She audits and develops resources, and plans improvement for the subject. However, she does not monitor planning or pupils' work. As a result, planned development for the subject is not securely based on reliable evidence of standards and progress, and strengths and weaknesses within the school's provision for history. Plans are in hand for her to devote two half-days each term to monitor the subject more effectively. Although the school has a satisfactory range of resources for the subject, some are of poor quality.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

97. Standards in this subject are in line with national expectations in all years throughout the school, and pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their capabilities. Standards have risen considerably since the last inspection, when they were well below national expectations. There have been good improvements due to increased teacher expertise as a result of training, substantial investment in learning resources, good subject leadership and the adoption of a well-structured scheme of work.
98. Pupils of all ages use computers confidently and competently. They use the mouse and keyboard efficiently to load and run software. Older pupils are especially confident and work well independently. By the age of seven, pupils write poems with titles such as 'I planted some seeds in the garden today' and illustrate work with suitable pictures selected from collections held on disk. Work is attractive and pupils

take care to ensure that spellings are correct. Pupils use computer reference sources to find information, for example about frogs and toads, when they study animal life cycles in science. Pupils learn that the use of ICT is not always appropriate or as easy as using conventional methods to prepare work. For example, at the end of a lesson in which they were taught to 'paint' computer pictures, some pupils concluded that it is easier to draw with a pencil.

99. Pupils make good progress across the school. They systematically learn new skills and work with an increasingly wide range of computer software as they get older. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, many pupils are skilled users of word-processing and desktop publishing software, the Internet for research on topics such as deserts and rainforests, and control technology. They research and write on topics such as Queen Victoria and Dr Barnardo. They include text and pictures found on the Internet, adapting the information they find for their own purposes. Older pupils visit Legoland to work on control technology. This builds well on earlier work using a floor 'Roamer' in school. Photographs of the visit show they clearly enjoy the work, and discussion with pupils shows that they remember the programming techniques they have learned. Although most strands of the subject are well developed, pupils' skills in data handling are not as good as they should be. Pupils use databases to store information and plot graphs, but they do not yet understand the principles of searching and sorting data according to different criteria.
100. The quality of both teaching and learning is good throughout the school for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers demonstrate new techniques well. For example, a swift demonstration of how to include different backgrounds and borders, and how to apply a range of attractive text effects, prepared pupils well for their own work in developing title pages for their autobiographies. Teachers cater well for pupils at an early stage of speaking English. They group all pupils so that they can learn effectively from each other and, with help from the ICT technician and classroom assistants, provide good support as the need arises to correct errors and reinforce the learning of new practical skills.
101. The best lessons proceed briskly, with a good mix of demonstration and time for individual pupil work but, on occasion, demonstrations are too slow. Where this happens pupils become bored and start fidgeting. Despite this, pupils are eager to learn, and because work is practical, interesting and challenging, they behave well and work hard. Lessons are calm and orderly, with only minimal attention needed to maintain good order. Pupils' positive attitudes and motivation contribute well to the good progress they make.
102. In order to address weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection, ICT development has focused on raising standards in basic skills. Care is taken to ensure that these are not taught in isolation, but are developed through meaningful activities taken from subjects across the curriculum. The adoption of a nationally developed scheme of work has been helpful in this respect. Good examples of work are found in English, mathematics and history, but there is still room for improvement across the curriculum. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what still needs to be done to raise standards further, including the development of more rigorous assessment procedures.

MUSIC

103. At the time of the last inspection, pupils attained the level expected for their ages by seven, and above the expected level by eleven. The school has successfully maintained these levels of attainment, and the good standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are a strength of the school.
104. Both teaching and learning are good overall and promote the good progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs. There is no significant variation in the achievement of groups related to prior ability or ethnic origin. Teaching in the infant classes is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For example, in a well-prepared lesson, Year 2 pupils had to respond to changes in pitch using a xylophone. All were ready to work out whether the notes in sequence were higher or lower than the previous ones. A sense of awe and wonder was evident in the response to the music. In an infant singing assembly taken by the music co-ordinator, the assembly promoted a love for singing and making music.
105. By the time pupils reach the end of the junior stage, attainment is good. This is seen particularly in the quality of both composition and performance, and in pupils' capacity to compare and evaluate different kinds of music. Tuition provided by the co-ordinator is of high quality. In addition to teaching the choir which has grown considerably in the last twelve months, she also teaches the recorder, clarinet, guitar and percussion. These opportunities enhance music provision, enabling standards to be above national expectations. In the choir practice where the teacher emphasised clear diction, a sense of pitch and control, the choir sang three songs tunefully and melodically. A recent and successful innovation has been the introduction of a percussion group to help pupils improve their concentration skills.
106. Teaching in the junior classes varies from satisfactory to very good. Where it is very good, teachers have very good subject knowledge, with good interaction with the pupils whom they manage well. They are technically competent and set clear objectives. As a result, Year 6 pupils successfully composed new lyrics to the football song 'The Three Lions'. They were confident to come to the front of the class to sing their new verses. The same technical competence and subject knowledge applied in a lesson in which Year 4 pupils made good progress in understanding the pentatonic scale. They achieved well in composing rhythmic music, in three different groups, with keyboards, hand chimes and chime bars.
107. The school is fortunate in having a co-ordinator who has considerable expertise in music. Resources are very good, including a very wide range of musical instruments. The school promotes music from a variety of cultures as seen, for example, when pupils compose Chinese-style music for the Chinese New Year. Pupils perform at their own concerts in school. Additionally, musicians from the London Philharmonic Orchestra performed for the school and worked with pupils. Grammar school pupils played to pupils in Years 1 and 2 and a steel band from a special school played to Year 3 pupils. A group of Japanese visitors gave a song and dance presentation. All this helps in the enrichment of music in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Pupils attain the standards expected by the ages of seven and eleven and this is a similar picture to that of the last inspection. The youngest pupils work enthusiastically in games. They learn to throw a ball into the air and they practise in pairs at throwing the ball towards one another and catching it. They are encouraged by the teacher to

evaluate their own performances, and those of others, and to persevere in order to improve their skills. Year 2 pupils enjoy dance lessons. They demonstrate a good awareness of space, which they use well. Working effectively in pairs and in groups of threes they develop a range of movement actions into dance sequences. They incorporate slow and quick movements, and turns, into sequences. Pupils also change direction on the beat of a tambourine. Teaching, which is at least satisfactory and often good, contributes to the sound progress pupils make. Lessons are well planned and teachers reinforce learning by encouraging pupils to practise. Teachers explain tasks very carefully, often using gesture as an aid to understanding. They also demonstrate skills, movement and actions well and this contributes to effective learning. As a result, pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress.

109. In most of the junior lessons observed pupils worked enthusiastically and well. Year 5 pupils co-operated well building up quite complex movement sequences. They held a balance and assumed body shapes that were both asymmetrical and symmetrical. The majority of these pupils demonstrate good body awareness and form but there is a small minority of pupils who adopt postures that do not lend themselves to good body shape. Year 6 pupils built on earlier skills, and performed movement and balance sequences that showed precision, control and fluency. Year 5 pupils enjoy activities in which they develop their games skills. They practise dribbling and passing a football. Boys and girls work well together and practise hard to refine their skills. Junior pupils respond well to teaching, which is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. However, in the one unsatisfactory lesson seen the pace was slow and pupils were inactive for large periods of time. They quickly became bored and, as a result, their response was poor. Junior pupils attend swimming lessons in Year 5 and the school reports that pupils make good progress in swimming. By the time they leave school most pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres.
110. The school provides an appropriate curriculum, and there are opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive games against teams from other schools. Teams have enjoyed success in local competitions in recent years. The co-ordinator has good subject expertise and provides satisfactory support for her colleagues, for example in planning and in looking after resources. However, she has little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and this limits the level of support she can give to teachers. With the help of other colleagues and visitors from outside the school, she organises a good range of extra-curricular activities. For example, older pupils have opportunities to attend clubs for netball, cricket, football and tennis.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

111. In the last report standards were above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school is now working with a revised version of the syllabus with different criteria for assessment and it is therefore not possible to make accurate comparisons with present standards. However, pupils attain the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus by the ages of seven and eleven. Since the previous inspection there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject. Teaching in all lessons is at least satisfactory and often good, and this represents improvement since the last inspection. A new policy and improved planning have been fully implemented and this is contributing to the sound quality of education pupils receive in this subject.

112. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations show that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress in their learning over time. As pupils get older they show an increasing ability to express ideas and feelings and have greater knowledge and understanding of religious issues to aid their thinking and discussions. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learn about a range of religions through studying various celebrations and festivals. They also learn something of how and where people from different faiths worship. Much of this learning is concerned with the study of symbolism. For example, when introduced to the festival of Diwali, Year 2 pupils relate to the significance of light by drawing on their knowledge of a number of religions. In this way pupils build up an understanding of the significance of light in religious worship. Year 1 pupils visit the local church in order to learn at first hand how and where some Christians worship.
113. Junior pupils extend their knowledge of symbolism. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils learnt about Sikh beliefs from a learning support assistant who shared her faith with these pupils. The class included pupils from a range of faith backgrounds including a number of Sikh pupils. They were able to participate fully in the lesson, responding to questions both from the support assistant and from other pupils. These pupils displayed considerable interest in each others' questions and happily shared knowledge with one another. They discussed together in small groups Sikh beliefs about God and considered similarities and differences with the beliefs of other faiths. Year 5 pupils develop an understanding of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, again relating to and reflecting on the importance of light in other faiths, such as Christianity and Sikhism. Many pupils are building up an idea of the universality of God and His care for all persons.
114. In their written work, Year 3 and 4 pupils show that they have satisfactory knowledge of characters and stories from the Old Testament, such as the story of Moses. They contrast and compare aspects of several religions including symbols, celebrations, beliefs, rules and sacred books. They make satisfactory progress in their learning over time. Year 5 and 6 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress building on earlier knowledge. They extend knowledge of stories and events from both the Old and New Testament. Year 6 pupils are given more opportunities for extended writing. They reproduce stories in their own words and write down their own reflections, for example on 'What is a Soul?'
115. Teachers have good subject expertise and manage pupils effectively so they respond well to their activities. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers' expectations and the pace of learning are sound but could be improved. Where teaching is good, lessons are lively, interesting and relevant to the lives of the pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute their own ideas and suggestions. Teachers skilfully involve pupils directly in lessons and, by the use of astute questions, they encourage them to answer by drawing on their existing knowledge. In this way, lessons contribute to the development of speaking skills. Pupils respond to this approach by participating enthusiastically and contributing to discussion. Most lessons make a good contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the pupils. For example, pupils learn about codes of conduct, study aspects of other cultures and reflect on what makes things sacred.
116. The recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has recently updated the policy, which provides teachers with clear guidance about teaching. Her sound

knowledge contributes to the good capacity to improve. A good range of resources provides good support to teaching and learning.