

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **NORMANDY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bexleyheath

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101450

Headteacher: Mrs W Burton

Reporting inspector: R E G Cross  
15917

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 197402

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fairford Avenue Barnehurst Bexleyheath Kent
Postcode:	DA7 6QP
Telephone number:	01322 333998
Fax number:	01322 333998
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Normandy Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Homer
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15917	Bob Cross	Registered inspector		Information about the school. How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22745	Rosalind Johns	Team inspector	History, music, religious education, English as an additional language.	
23434	Marie Gibbon	Team inspector	English, art.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18083	Judith Howell	Team inspector	Geography, Foundation Stage.	
14596	Tony Fiddian Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, physical education, Special educational needs.	
17766	Eira Gill	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, equality of opportunity.	

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants, "Thule", 60 Joy Lane, Whitstable,  
Kent, CT5 4LT

01227 273449

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Normandy Primary school educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 600 pupils on roll altogether, 36 of whom attend on a part-time basis in the Nursery. This is much bigger than most other schools of its type. There are 117 children in four classes (three Reception and one Nursery) in the Foundation Stage. The school has 135 pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is broadly the same as the national average. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties are the largest single group of pupils with special educational needs. Eight pupils have statements of special educational need which is also broadly the national average. The school has 17 more boys than girls on roll. About four per cent of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Indian, Black African and Chinese heritages. This is lower than in most schools. Twelve pupils are refugees from Albania. Forty-nine of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Sixteen of these pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak the language. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. The most common first languages of these pupils are Nigerian, Albanian, Gujarati and Spanish. Around 180 of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. During the last school year, 57 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 59 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is a high rate of mobility. In the last two years, seven teachers have left the school and six have been appointed. Pupils enter the school at well below average levels of attainment.

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

Normandy Primary school provides its pupils with a sound standard of education which has a number of good features. Standards have risen since the school's last inspection and, in 2000, the school received an award from the then Department of Education and Employment which recognised this improvement. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and promotes a similar rate of achievement for the pupils. From a low starting point, pupils left the school in Year 6 in 2001 at above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics in the national tests compared with similar schools. However, standards in science were well below average as they were in all three subjects when compared with all schools. The leadership and management of the school are good. This is particularly noticeable in the personal development of the pupils where achievement is very good which ensures that all pupils benefit fully from their education. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Relationships in the school are excellent and create a first rate ethos for learning.
- The very good quality of teaching and learning in the Nursery gives the children a flying start.
- The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and gives rise to a culture in which everyone's efforts are valued and recognised.
- The pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good and fully support their learning.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and guide its improvement well.
- The "Nurture Group" for pupils with behavioural difficulties is very effective in helping them to overcome their problems.

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

- The quality of teaching which, although satisfactory, does not consistently promote the maximum progress of which the pupils are capable.
- The use of assessment information which is not always used well enough in some teachers' planning to provide work, particularly for more able pupils, which will move them on.
- The use of curricular time which is not always used to the best advantage.
- Attendance is well below the national average and this hinders the pupils' progress.
- The school's partnership with parents which does not engage all parents in supporting its efforts to raise standards.

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

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

The school was last inspected in September 1997 and, since then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. Standards in the end of Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) national tests show a rising trend because the quality of teaching has improved. Additionally, the pupils' behaviour, the quality of the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the way the school cares for its pupils are also better. The key issues for action from the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. For example, arrangements for pupils who are withdrawn from the classroom activity are now appropriate and better use is made of the staff's expertise. However, there are still weaknesses in the use of assessment information and curricular provision. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

## 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				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	E	E	B	well above average A above average B
mathematics	E	D	E	C	average C below average D
Science	E	D	E	E	well below average E

Compared with similar schools, standards in 2001 were above average in English, average in mathematics and well-below average in science. The trend in the school's results has been upward at a similar rate to that found nationally. However, there was a fall in standards between 2000 and 2001. Standards in the end of Key Stage 2 test have been consistently below or well-below average since 1999 compared with all other schools. The school was four per cent below its target for pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in 2001. It has increased these targets for 2002 to a very demanding level.

Throughout the school, the pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English as an additional language, is satisfactory from a well below average starting point. In Years 1 to 6, achievement in music, physical education and information and communication technology is good, as it is in the Nursery.

The findings of the inspection are that, in Years 2 and 6, standards are well below average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, and science and below average in all other subjects except physical education where they are average. Children in the Nursery and Reception are on course to reach average standards in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development, below average standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and well below average standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the time they enter Year 1.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils work hard and are keen to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school when they are supervised or acting independently. They are polite and courteous. There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school. Twenty-two pupils were excluded in the year before the inspection. None has been excluded since last September when the Nurture Unit was opened.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils enjoy the good range of opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative and respond enthusiastically to them. They show a mature understanding of how their actions can affect others.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average and significant numbers of pupils are late. However, attendance has improved since the last inspection and the school has a suitable range of strategies to continue this improvement.

All of the above factors except attendance have a positive influence on the standards that the pupils attain.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in the Nursery are very good and the specialist teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language is good. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are good in music and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects including English, literacy, mathematics and numeracy. Throughout the school, the way the teachers manage the pupils and their expertise in information and communication technology are important strengths. In Years 2 to 6, the teaching of the pupils in groups based on attainment in literacy and numeracy is an effective strategy. Weaknesses in teaching in some lessons are slow pace, a failure to set pupils work which is challenging enough because of insufficiently high expectations of them - particularly the more able – and the fact that assessment information is not used well enough to plan work. Additionally, some teachers lack sufficient knowledge of some of the subjects they teach, for example, art. The major strengths in the quality of learning are the very good attitudes which the pupils display to their work. The most important weakness in learning is directly related to shortcomings in the quality of teaching. In lessons which are slow paced and do not extend them, the pupils do not work hard enough.

The school meets the needs of its pupils, including the gifted and talented, satisfactorily. Pupils' needs are met well in music, information and communication technology and physical education and by the specialist teaching for pupils with English as an additional language. They are also very well met in the Nursery.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in that all statutory requirements are met. In the Nursery and Reception, curricular provision is good. In Years 1 to 6, the inappropriate use of time means that in some subjects, for example, art and history, the full range of skills is not taught well enough which is unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school includes pupils who have special educational needs in all it offers, and they have access to the entire curriculum and extra activities. The inclusion of the Nurture Group for pupils with behavioural difficulties into what the school offers its pupils is very good. The deployment of support assistants is satisfactory. However, there are not enough assistants to provide help in all classes where it is needed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The pupils make adequate progress in class lessons and good progress when they receive specialist support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for the pupils' moral development is excellent. The very effective implementation of the school's E.I.G.A.S (Everyone is good at something) motto helps pupils to appreciate the strengths and views of others. Provision for social development is very good, for example, through the school's link with the veterans of the Normandy landings. Provision for spiritual development is good and that for cultural development satisfactory. There is insufficient provision for the pupils to understand fully the multicultural nature of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school takes great care to ensure the welfare of the pupils. The staff know the pupils very well, look after them very carefully and give them confidence. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and monitoring their academic and personal development. The use made of this assessment is, overall, unsatisfactory except in the Nursery where it is very good.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory although there are difficulties in involving some parents in the support of their children's work.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is provided with clear direction. The headteacher and staff with management responsibilities make sure that the pupils receive and benefit fully from an all round education. The roles of some subject co-ordinators are not fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support the school fully and are committed to ensuring that standards continue to rise.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Assessment data are carefully analysed to promote improvement and to gain a comparison with other schools. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has resulted in significant improvements. The school's spending is thoroughly evaluated to ensure that the best possible value for money is obtained.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The funds available to the school are spent in a way which results in adequate progress by the pupils. The school development plan is not organised in a manner which allows spending to be linked sufficiently to educational priorities.

The school's levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources support learning well.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high expectations that the school has of their children.</li> <li>• That they are well informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching in the school.</li> <li>• The fact that their children like school.</li> <li>• The way the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The progress made by their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.</li> <li>• The format of the annual reports they receive on the progress made by their children.</li> </ul>

The inspection team supports the positive views of the parents except that some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the children. In addition, they find that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities although there is little provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The team also agrees with the views of the parents who would like the format of the annual reports to be improved.

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## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the school at well below average standards of attainment. They make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and are on course to reach standards that are well below those found in most schools by the end of the Reception Year. Progress is good in knowledge and understanding of the world and children are on course to reach below average standards. In personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development, progress is very good and children are on course to reach average standards. There were no conclusive judgements made in the previous inspection. A significant number of children in the Nursery demonstrate poor speech and language development and have poorly developed social skills. The children show particularly good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. This reflects the skilful teaching, both in the Nursery and Reception classes where children are encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. On entry to the Nursery, many children find it difficult to socialise. However, by the end of the Reception year, most children are able to work as part of a group and have learned how to take turns and share fairly. Most children dress and undress themselves independently and learn to manage their own personal hygiene appropriately. Given the children's low starting point in their communication skills, all adults, both in the Nursery and Reception classes work very hard to promote the use of language across all areas of learning.

2. In the end of Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) tests in 2001, compared with all schools, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. The trend in standards in these tests since 1997 has been upwards in mathematics but falling in reading and writing. However, standards in reading rose between 2000 and 2001 and, in writing, they have risen slightly since 1999. Over the period 1999 to 2001, girls outperformed boys on average in all three subjects. However, the only significant difference was in reading where the data show that girls made almost one term's progress more than boys. No significant differences in attainment were seen during the inspection.

3. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2001, compared with all schools, standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. This is largely because too few pupils reached the above average Level 5 although, in mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching the average Level 4 was also low. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. Standards in the end of Key Stage 2 tests have been consistently below or well-below average since 1999 compared with all other schools. The trend in the school's results has been upward at a similar rate to that found nationally. However, there was a fall in standards between 2000 and 2001 which is explained by the nature of the year group. Almost a third of the pupils did not start their education in the school and these pupils generally reached significantly lower standards than the other pupils. The school was four per cent below its target for pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in 2001. It has increased these targets for 2002 to a very demanding level. Over the period 1999 to 2001, the only significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls was in science where girls did not progress as well as boys. No significant differences were seen during the inspection.

4. The findings of the inspection are that, in Years 2 and 6, standards are well below average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, and science and below average in all other subjects except physical education where they are average. These findings are the same as the school's results in the end of key stage national tests and assessments in 2001 in English, mathematics and science. Compared with the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection in October 1997, standards have fallen in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6. However, the findings of this inspection are the same as the school's results in the end of key stage tests in 1997 at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In other subjects, compared with the 1997 inspection, standards are the same in information and communication technology and physical education throughout the school and geography at Key Stage 1 and design and technology at Key Stage 2. Standards are lower in other subjects including religious education. This is because of the national concentration on English, mathematics and science during part of the intervening period. It is also due to

increases in the degree of special educational needs shown by the pupils, more pupils with behavioural difficulties, increased mobility and rising numbers of pupils with English as an additional language.

5. Throughout the school the pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English as an additional language, is satisfactory from a well below average starting point. The school does identify pupils who are gifted and talented and makes provision which allows these pupils to achieve satisfactorily in the areas identified. However, general achievement is limited by shortcomings in the quality of teaching. In particular, the teachers' failure to plan sufficiently effectively for pupils to reach the higher levels in English, mathematics and science has a detrimental effect on their achievement. This is compounded as literacy skills are not well used in other subjects which not only slows down progress in English but limits achievement across the curriculum. Furthermore, curricular time is not always used to the best advantage.

6. In Years 1 to 6, achievement in music, physical education is good because of the good quality of teaching and learning. Achievement is also good in information and communication technology across the school because of the teachers' expertise in this subject and pupils reach average standards in two aspects of it. Achievement is also good for pupils with English as an additional language when they receive specialist support. Achievement in the Nursery is very good because of the quality of the teaching and learning.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets. For English and mathematics, pupils work in groups according to their ability, and this enables more specific help to be given to pupils who need it. Some pupils are withdrawn from classes in order to have extra help, mainly in literacy. The school is careful to ensure that no pupils miss too much work in their classes, and that they are not taken out of the same subject each time. This action addresses the key issue for action from the last inspection about this issue well. Standards of achievement in special educational needs were reported to be good at the time of the last inspection. Although standards are now satisfactory, this is fully accounted for because the severity of the special educational needs has increased considerably, and the instances of behavioural difficulties have grown. The Nurture Group has countered this rise well.

8. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils with English as an additional language has increased steadily to nearly six per cent. Overall, these pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Their rate of learning is satisfactory because class teachers do not always plan effectively for the individual language and learning needs of these pupils and do not make the most of opportunities to develop their language skills. However, pupils who are at an early stage of learning English achieve well when they receive support from the specialist teacher in class or in withdrawal groups.

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

9. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development were considered to be good at the last inspection. This inspection finds that pupils' attitudes to school are now very good as is behaviour. Pupils' relationships are now considered to be excellent. This aspect is a strength of the school.

10. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is very good. In lessons, all pupils are keen and eager to learn. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson, pupils were highly motivated and enjoyed their work. They are keen to participate, follow instructions well, try hard, are keen to succeed and remain on task.

11. There is a caring atmosphere in the school, all members of staff provide good role models for pupils. All pupils behave very well, complying with school and class rules. They all know right from wrong and are always polite and courteous to staff, visitors and each other. Pupils try their best to help one another and all adults in the school. Behaviour throughout the school is very good, in assembly, between lessons and at break and lunch times either when they are supervised, or acting independently. No examples of any oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism were seen during the inspection.

12. There were a significant number of exclusions in the school year before the inspection. The school has made efforts to improve this by introducing a Nurture Group. This has proved so successful that so far in this school year, there have been no exclusions.

13. There are excellent relationships throughout the school, between adults and pupils and between pupils. There are many very good opportunities for pupils to take additional responsibility throughout the school. All pupils respond very well to these opportunities. Pupils acting as 'Bands' in the upper school have specific jobs to do throughout the school, from manning the doors at break and lunch times to acting as guardian angels for the younger children on the lower school playground. Pupils are very proud of their responsibilities, which they take on a term at a time and are very clear of their role in the school. In addition, there are classroom monitors who take on specific tasks such as taking the registers back to the school office and there is a school council where representatives discuss issues, which affect the school. Pupils show a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They also raise funds for different charities throughout the year. Pupils care for their environment and are careful with resources and equipment.

14. The warm, welcoming ethos of the school where pupils are made to feel confident and valued, means that pupils with English as an additional language soon benefit from all the activities and experiences that the school has to offer. They are usually highly motivated and enthusiastic learners and behave well in and outside the classroom.

15. Attendance has improved since the last inspection, but still remains well below the national average and is, therefore, unsatisfactory. A significant number of pupils arrive late at school each day. Absence and lateness affect both the individual child and other children in the class as the class teacher has to spend time repeating work to enable children to catch up.

16. Children settle quickly to the daily routines of the Nursery and grow in confidence. They quickly become independent and respond to the activities provided with enthusiasm. At the start of the day, they enter the Nursery happily with their parents, confidently choose from the activities on offer and apply themselves wholeheartedly to the chosen task. By the time they leave the Nursery, their behaviour is good. When working together in Reception class, they co-operate well and support one another in their learning. Developing initiative and personal responsibility in learning is strongly encouraged by the Nursery teacher and, by the time they enter the Reception, classes most children are able to organise themselves appropriately.

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

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1997 inspection. However, in 1997, five per cent of the teaching was at least very good, 78 per cent good or satisfactory and 17 per cent unsatisfactory. In this inspection, four per cent of the teaching was very good, 99 per cent at least satisfactory and only one per cent (one lesson) was unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement which is due to the monitoring and support undertaken by school. It also represents a good response to the key issue of improving the quality of teaching arising from the last inspection. In particular, a good response to increasing the range of teaching strategies employed has been made, for example, in teaching the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy to groups based on attainment. In addition, more effective use has been made of the teachers' expertise as is shown by the specialist music teaching which now takes place. However, there are still weaknesses in the use of assessment information to plan the work undertaken by the pupils and the amount of teaching which is better than good is virtually unchanged. These factors largely explain why the pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than better than that. They also contribute to the fact that, although the number of pupils reaching average levels of attainment in Years 2 and 6 has increased steadily apart from a drop in 2001 because of factors associated with the cohort, the number of pupils reaching above average levels is still not high enough.

18. Throughout the school, the way the teachers manage the pupils and their expertise in information and communication technology are important strengths. Other strengths, which were also recognised by the school's last inspection, include clear explanations and good use of questions. Weaknesses in some of the teaching are slow paced lessons – which was also identified by the previous inspection – insufficiently high expectations of the pupils and the lack sufficient knowledge of some teachers of the subjects they teach, for example, art. In addition, the major strengths in the quality of learning are the very good attitudes which the pupils display to their work. A weakness in learning identified by the last inspection, that the pupils were complacent, was not observed. The most important weakness in learning is directly related to shortcomings

in the quality of teaching. In lessons which are slow paced and do not extend them, the pupils do not work hard enough.

19. The quality of teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception as a whole and in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, is satisfactory. It is very good in the Nursery and in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development and good in creative development. During the inspection, 16 observations of these years were made. Three lessons were very good, six were good and seven were satisfactory. In the Nursery, two very good and two good lessons were seen. The very good quality of teaching and learning for children in the Nursery means that all children learn at a rate appropriate to their abilities and any that may struggle are soon given extra help and support. The good balance between structured and free play activities helps to build good relationships with other children and extend their independent learning. A particular strength of the teaching in the Nursery is the very effective working partnership between the adults. All staff in the Nursery know the children very well as individuals and are skilled at developing warm relationships. Consequently, the children settle happily into the Nursery, gain in confidence and move into the Reception classes with good attitudes to learning. There is a strong emphasis on promoting the children's speaking skills. All adults listen with interest to what the children have to say and through careful questioning develop their communication skills and maximise their learning. The teaching of social skills is especially good and children enter the Reception classes with a good understanding of how to behave and a growing awareness of others' needs as well as their own. The use of assessment in the Nursery to monitor the development of the children is very good and enables the teacher to plan effectively for future learning experiences. The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes is satisfactory overall and children broaden and consolidate their knowledge in most areas of learning. During the time of the inspection two of the Reception teachers had only been in the school for a week and one joined the previous year. The management of children overall is very good and all teachers work closely with the classroom assistants to provide caring support and help to stimulate children's learning. As it was very early in the term, the main focus of two of the Reception teachers was the settling in of the new children. This they did well. Planning overall is good. Although attention has been given to modifying the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy sessions in the Reception classes, at times the activities provided do not take full account of the needs of all children and for many the work set is beyond their capabilities.

20. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. During the inspection, 27 lessons were seen, ten were good and 17 satisfactory. Year 2 was marginally stronger than Year 1 in terms of the number of good lessons observed. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Sixty four lessons were seen. One was very good, 29 were good, 33 were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. There were no significant differences between the year groups. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning were good in music and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects including literacy and numeracy. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection, teaching has improved in music and physical education and remained the same in all other subjects. No judgement was made in history in Years 1 and 2 in 1997.

21. A Year 1 numeracy lesson illustrated the generally satisfactory nature of the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and the satisfactory implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school. The lesson was carefully planned according to the format of the National Numeracy Strategy which gave it a good structure for development. The teacher shared the objectives of the lesson appropriately with the pupils after they had been unable to read them as the task was too difficult for them. Most pupils were able to count from 1 to 30 in single numbers although some made mistakes. Many made simple mistakes when counting in twos and few successfully counted in tens. The teacher had a helpful strategy to assist the pupils to progress and encouraged them to speak with emphasis to get a pattern established. The pupils showed little understanding of the term "digit". In answer to the question "How many digits in 15?" replies of "0" and "1" were given before the correct answer was received. The teacher explained the term carefully and enhanced pupils understanding of it. The lesson had a steady pace with suitably varied activities. The pupils responded well by concentrating, behaving well and working quietly. The major weaknesses were insufficient consolidation to ensure that pupils fully understood what they were being taught and setting work at the same level for all pupils.

22. A Year 6 literacy lesson exemplified both the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 and the satisfactory nature of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. The start of the lesson gained the interest of the pupils and some brisk questioning established how a writer captures the reader's attention. However, the pupils lacked confidence in replying and the teacher had to feed them the answers. This session went on for too long so that many pupils became passive. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject was evident in confident, informative explanations of the techniques used by the writer. Helpful and encouraging comments by the teacher created a good ethos that promoted learning well. However, there was a lack of pace and energy to keep pupils focused and to extend their concentration. There was a good emphasis on vocabulary that makes a reader feel important – "I value your opinion". The teacher had good expectation of the quality and quantity of work expected and the pupils settled down to work quite quickly. Most pupils coped with the activity of making up a questionnaire well although some of their spelling, even of simple words, was weak. Most pupils made sound gains in their understanding of the objectives of the lesson.

23. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Most special educational needs are addressed within the classroom, with only limited withdrawal for extra help. All teachers have copies of pupils' individual education plans. Where teaching assistants are present, support varies from good to satisfactory. Some assistants are inactive at times and do not involve themselves sufficiently in working closely with pupils. This is particularly so when the whole class works together, such as in the mathematics 'starter' sessions. Support is better in group work, where assistants help a specific group of pupils. There is only one general assistant for each year, which means that two out of three classes in any year have no extra help as a general rule. Separate assistants support pupils who have statements of special educational needs.

24. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory but the specialist teaching is good. The specialist teacher liaises regularly with class teachers to give support and advice but planning does not always meet the specific language and learning needs of these pupils and opportunities are missed to reinforce and extend the use of language. However, the specialist teaching develops pupils' confidence, fluency and understanding well. The teacher has a good rapport with pupils which creates a secure emotional climate for learning and there is a strong focus on exploring pupils' ideas, enriching vocabulary and extending speaking skills. In a Year 2 lesson, the specialist teacher supported two pupils quietly and unobtrusively and channelled their energies into their work. As a result, the pupils composed a simple poem based on the colour blue which was full of vivid images and gave them a great sense of pride and achievement.

25. Teaching assistants generally provide good support for the pupils. However, they are sometimes too passive when the class works as a whole, for example, during the introduction to lessons. In group work, they provide good support and help the pupils to progress well. It was quite clear that pupils made much better progress when they had support from an adult during their individual work.

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

26. The organisation and use of time in the teaching of history and art, together with teachers' planning in these subjects and in geography, do not sufficiently focus on the progressive development of pupils' skills. The school does not have a sufficiently coherent overview of how time is allocated to different subjects and how the time is used. Additional curricular time allocated to the development of pupils' reading and writing skills is not always used efficiently or for the designated purpose. This has an adverse effect on the balance of the curriculum. Therefore, the range of relevant and worthwhile learning opportunities provided by the school is unsatisfactory which represents a decline compared with the findings of the school's last inspection. However, the curriculum appropriately reflects the school's aims and includes all subjects in the National Curriculum. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. Statutory requirements are fully met. In the school's previous inspection, a key issue for improvement was to review the organisation of support given to pupils who are withdrawn from the usual classroom activities. The school has satisfactorily addressed this issue as the support most pupils receive is now based in the classroom. Total weekly time is generally adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 but is marginally below the

recommended time for Years 3 to 6. Time allocations for different subjects are generally appropriate including the provision for pupils' personal and social education.

27. The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully and satisfactorily implemented and are taught daily. Both strategies are having a positive effect on pupils' attainment. The school has identified the need to focus on the development of pupils' skills in writing and has recently allocated additional curricular time to support this development. Additional time has also been allocated to the development of pupils' reading skills. However this time is not always consistently and effectively used for its designated purpose.

28. Numeracy skills are developed generally satisfactorily across the curriculum but the development of pupils' literacy skills is unsatisfactory. There are some useful links with literacy in pupils' work in information and communication technology, history and geography. Pupils write letters as evacuees and write reports of their interviews with older members of the community when they study Britain in the 1930s. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn and use the special terms in each subject and to enhance the range of their vocabulary. The limitations of their vocabulary has an adverse impact on their work in subjects such as religious education where older pupils are not always able to discuss a range of issues in appropriate detail. In their work in science, pupils in Year 5 use their knowledge of graphs to record times of sunrise and sunset and in their work in geography they use charts in their research into British airports. There are some effective cross curricular links with information and communication technology in literacy, numeracy and geography. Specific time is allocated each half term for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy using specific information technology programs designed for this purpose. In music, there are good links with science and design and technology as pupils explore how sound is communicated.

29. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The school makes appropriate use of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies as a basis for its long term planning. The guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority units of work is used as a basis for other subjects in the curriculum. However, the school has not adapted them sufficiently to meet the specific needs of pupils in the school and to support the satisfactory development of pupils' skills in all subjects. Teachers plan carefully for their medium term and weekly planning and in some subjects plan effectively together in year groups to ensure that there is a clear focus on the development of pupils' skills. Mathematics and English are taught in ability groups in all years and this is effective in enabling teachers to plan activities which more closely match pupils' needs. However, in some years and in some subjects, the coherent development of pupils' skills across a year group is weaker. This is seen in literacy planning where teachers of sets of lower attaining pupils sometimes plan a separate skills' focus from their colleagues in the same year group. The curriculum and teachers' planning are regularly monitored by both the curriculum co-ordinator and subject co-ordinators to ensure that the requirements of the long term planning are met.

30. Extra-curricular provision in the school is good and pupils in Key Stage 2 take part in a wide range of activities. However, provision for pupils in Key Stage 1 is limited to participation in the school choir. Over the year, pupils are able to take part in a range of activities both at lunchtime and after school and a good number of pupils are keen to be involved. The school choir is popular throughout the school and more than fifty pupils participate in concerts and musical events. Each year group organises a concert during the year and older pupils sing for older members of the community and link with local businesses to raise money for charity. All Key Stage 2 pupils are offered opportunities to be members of a science club, an information and communication technology club and an after school French club. Both boys and girls in Years 5 and 6 take part in local football tournaments. The curriculum is additionally enhanced by residential visits for pupils in Years 4 and 6. Year 4 pupils visit the Isle of Wight where the focus is on developing pupils' skills in information and communication technology through a series of different activities. In Year 6 pupils undertake the 'school journey' and visit places on the northern coast of France. Pupils in Year 6 are offered 'booster' classes in English, mathematics and science. Attendance at these classes is voluntary and covers the range of ability in the year group. During the school year, a range of visitors and events enhances pupils' experiences across the curriculum. Book Weeks and fairs encourage pupils to be interested in reading and give them opportunities to buy their own books. Theatre groups such as Quantum Theatre and Floating Point Theatre develop pupils' interest and involvement in their work in science and a good range of representatives

from the local services visit to talk to pupils, both in assemblies and in class. The provision the school makes to enhance the curriculum has a positive influence on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

31. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. Planning for the children both in the Nursery and Reception classes is detailed and takes full account of the six areas of learning as recommended in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Planning is well linked to appropriate themes, such as 'Homes' 'People Who Help Us' and 'Growth and Change'. A strong emphasis is placed on providing first-hand experiences of quality and on helping the children to acquire language skills. There is very good provision for personal and social development. This is a strength of the Foundation Stage, which prepares children well for their work in Years 1 and 2.

32. The school includes pupils who have special educational needs well in all it offers, and they have access to the entire curriculum and extra activities. Some pupils have extra help during their withdrawal sessions from a few lessons, but most support is from teachers in classes. Individual education plans are available for all pupils who have special educational needs and these set good, manageable targets to help with pupils' progress. They relate mainly to literacy, with some numeracy targets.

33. The school provides pupils with English as an additional language with a curriculum that reflects positive attitudes towards their languages, countries and cultures. Pupils, except those at a very early stage of learning English, have full access to the curriculum and their language skills are not a barrier to learning. New pupils take part in the curriculum at an appropriate level and older pupils receive good support to achieve the full range of academic language especially in science. Information and communication technology is used effectively to boost skills and confidence. Singing is used well by the specialist teacher to develop pupils' vocabulary and language skills particularly with younger pupils.

34. There are good links with the local community. For example, pupils are able to learn about the needs of others when the choir visit the local area as well as visiting elderly people. There are good links with the Normandy Veterans who regularly visit the school and the Veterans and school jointly lay a wreath annually at the Cenotaph. Staff from the emergency services regularly visit the school and talk to pupils about their work. The Metropolitan Police invite Year 6 pupils to participate in a day about citizenship and a local Magistrate has talked about his work to pupils in Year 6. There are also links with the local Salvation Army.

35. There are satisfactory links with partner institutions. Children from a local special school visit pupils in Year 2 for joint music or story. Appropriate arrangements are made for the transfer to secondary education, with opportunities provided for pupils to visit the local secondary schools.

36. Provision for pupils' personal education is good. Although the provision has only been introduced formally recently, the informal provision has been evident for some time. 'Circle times' are used throughout the school to teach children about health issues as well as to reinforce the school's philosophy of EIGAS (Everyone is Good at Something). The provision is also encompassed within other subjects such as science. Elements such as drugs misuse and sex education are taught appropriately according to the age of the pupils. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils personal, social and health education and citizenship and these have a positive impact on all the children throughout the school.

37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and has improved since the school's last inspection. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. There is a prayer corner where children are able to pray quietly, or if they wish they can write their own prayer, which 'Bands' then paste into a book. Children are also encouraged to read out their prayers in assembly. There are good opportunities for quiet reflection during assembly.

38. The excellent provision for pupils' moral development is based upon the personal and social education provision, which shows pupils the consequences of their actions. There is a buddy system where pupils in Year 6 look after the younger pupils. The ethos of the school encourages moral development through EIGAS and the 'Bands'. The children are encouraged to think of others by raising funds for charities such as the Greenwich and Bexley Cottage Hospital, the Normandy Veterans and Barnardos. The school promotes the principles, which distinguish right from wrong, by getting pupils to discuss and agree their own class rules.

39. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. The recently introduced Anti Bullying Campaign (ABC) has been very successful and is understood by all pupils. There are very good links with the Normandy Veterans who come in and talk to the pupils and the children in turn attend Remembrance services. The school council, which meets termly encourages pupils to take responsibility for their environment. Decisions made by the school council have led to the provision of benches on the playground as well as playground equipment.

40. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. There are links with the community, but there are few links which develop pupils' multicultural awareness. There are Internet links with a school in New Mexico, and there is some provision for ethnic instrumental music. The school does not provide sufficiently to raise pupils' awareness of the wider multicultural aspect of the world in which they live.

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

41. The last inspection found that the school made good provision for the care, health and welfare of its pupils and this has now become very good. All members of staff know their pupils well and this enables them to provide well for their individual needs. Staff have detailed records relating to individual pupils, which is passed on to the class teachers at the beginning of each year. Medical needs are clearly identified and dealt with. There is very good provision for first aid, with a qualified first aider on duty for much of the school day, as well as other trained staff available within the school. A dedicated medical room ensures that all pupils who are unwell are appropriately provided for. There are good arrangements for the identification of any hazards on the school site, with detailed checks regularly made by staff of buildings, ground and equipment.

42. The school has satisfactory arrangements for the monitoring and promotion of good attendance. The school promotes good attendance by the awarding of termly certificates for full attendance and the awarding of a book token for anyone with a year's full attendance. These awards are presented to pupils at the regular celebration assemblies. Despite the school's efforts to increase the level of attendance, attendance levels remain well below the national average, and a significant number of pupils are regularly late for school. The introduction of the electronic system of registers has enabled the school and Education Welfare Officer to identify where there are problems with attendance, both for individual children and for groups of children. The school has also introduced a system of first day contact, where it will contact the parents or carers of any child who has not turned up for school and for whom it has received no reason for absence. The headteacher and educational welfare officer regularly check the registers and the educational welfare officer will contact or visit parents where there is a cause for concern. Despite the efforts of the school, a significant number of parents do not respond and do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. As stated in the last inspection report, parents of these children do not recognise the importance of ensuring that their children attend school.

43. There are very good arrangements for the protection of children. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and staff have received appropriate guidance. The school ensures that all new staff are acquainted with the school policy for child protection as soon as they start at the school.

44. There are very good procedures for the promotion of discipline and the monitoring of behaviour. Class rules are discussed and agreed at the beginning of the year so that all children know the rules and understand what will happen if they break them. The school policy of EIGAS positively promotes good behaviour, and the giving of awards in assembly is appreciated by both pupils and parents. Parents are informed when their children receive these rewards and are given the opportunity to comment.

45. Staff at lunch times have received training in playground management, and the school has provided a range of play equipment for pupils' use. Poor behaviour at lunch times may result in pupils being sent to the detention room. The reasons for the detention are always discussed with the pupils so that they are always aware of the impact of their behaviour. The headteacher closely monitors all records relating to poor behaviour and parents are informed if appropriate.

46. The school has initiated a very successful anti bullying campaign. Pupils spoken to confirmed that there was little bullying and that, if any was identified, it was dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents also

confirmed that the school does all it can to eradicate bullying. No bullying or oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection.

47. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support assistants know the pupils they work with well. The respect and support that the school offers to all its pupils apply equally to those who have special educational needs and they are valued and cared for well. There are good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, both in the early stages of their education, or later if teachers have cause for concern. The school's tracking procedures and individual educational plans enable effective support to be given. The needs of the pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well, and appropriate targets and support are organised. Pupils' files and records are well maintained, and reports from outside agencies are included. Arrangements for the annual review of pupils' statements of special educational need are organised well. These provide a good focus for further targets and development.

48. The inclusion of the Nurture Group into what the school offers its pupils is very good. A few pupils who have some difficulties in behaving appropriately in lessons are gathered into one room for their time in school, and two assistants are with them all day. They have as much of the school's curriculum as is appropriate, and always have English and mathematics every day. The emphasis is on respect and appropriate behaviour, and the adults set very high standards and ensure that pupils keep to them. The pupils and assistants join in with assemblies, but take their lunches in their own room. This very good provision enhances the school's care for its pupils very well.

49. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease in the Nursery and are quickly helped to settle into the Reception classes. Assessment and record keeping procedures in the Nursery are very good. The Nursery teacher and assistants make constant on-going observations of the children at work and play and individual targets are set from the information gained. In the Reception classes procedures are well established and documented. However, the information gained is not always used effectively to set the appropriate tasks for children in such areas as literacy and numeracy.

50. The school is a caring environment where all are treated with kindness and respect. The clear emphasis on inclusion means that pupils with English as an additional language feel secure and valued and effective learning can take place. Good attention is paid by the specialist teacher to monitoring pupils' fluency and setting targets linked to National Curriculum levels. Detailed pupil profiles record language proficiency and personal development. There is no formal child mentor system for pupils new to the school. Although pupils' individual progress is well monitored in English and mathematics, the school does not monitor progress to identify the achievements of different ethnic groups.

51. Overall, the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, particularly in mathematics. When children join the school, in the Reception class, they are assessed using appropriate tests designed for their age range. In subsequent years, they are tested again to check their progress. At the end of each year a reading test is given, and the school also administers optional tests in Years 3, 4, and 5, based on the National Curriculum tests given to all children in Years 2 and 6. The results of these are analysed carefully by the school, and there has been good improvement since the last inspection report in these procedures. The results of the analyses are monitored and are used to set targets for individual pupils, and to forecast the level that pupils are expected to achieve the following year. The school's targets for each year group are constructed from these individual targets. From all this assessment information, it is possible to track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics, and to discover weaknesses in any areas of the subjects. However, insufficient use is made of this assessment information to inform teachers' planning for moving more able pupils towards higher standards. The use of assessment information is, therefore, unsatisfactory.

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

52. Parents have satisfactory views of the school. The majority of the responses to the parental questionnaire were positive as were the views expressed by parents attending the pre-inspection parents' meeting. However, some concerns were raised about the written annual reports for parents. The inspection

team supports these concerns. Although the reports meet statutory requirements and they say what areas the pupils have covered throughout the year, they do not say what pupils know, understand and can do.

53. Overall the information provided for parents by the school is satisfactory. There are opportunities for parents to meet informally with staff at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as attending the more formal parents' evenings. Newsletters and other more general letters give parents information about what is happening in school. Information about what children will be studying in each class is sent out to parents at the beginning of each year.

54. The impact of parents' involvement with the school is unsatisfactory. There are a small number of dedicated parents who support the school by coming in and helping out in the classroom on a regular basis. In addition, the Parent/Teacher Association supports the school well by organising fund raising events. However, there are a significant number of parents who do not support the school. This is particularly evident in the number of parents who keep their children away from school on a regular basis. In addition, a significant number do not support the work of the school and do not help their children with reading or other homework. Despite the school's best efforts to increase parent participation through the 'Partnership with Parents' scheme, parents' support for children's learning is unsatisfactory.

55. The school provides good information for parents about pupils who have special educational needs. They are invited to consultation evenings, and they are asked to sign individual education plans so that they are aware of the targets set for their children.

56. Induction procedures for children are good. Home visits take place for all children entering the Nursery. An effective 'settling in' policy gives all children a happy and relaxed start to school. This process usually takes place over a period of three weeks, when parents have the opportunity to stay with their child until settled. The information provided for parents by the Nursery is very good. A notice board displays information about the Nursery routine and a 'Welcome Booklet' is provided for parents with activities for parent and child to do together. On moving into the Reception classes, parents are given the opportunity to meet with the Reception teachers and the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage to receive any relevant school documentation. As part of the Parent Involvement Programme, a range of talks, workshops and consultation meetings are arranged by the co-ordinator.

57. The school works hard to ensure good links with parents of pupils with English as an additional language. Interpreters and translations are provided when necessary. Parents are usually effective partners with the school in their children's learning and regularly attend consultation evenings. There are few links with the community.

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

58. The leadership and management of this school are good which is the same judgement as that made by its last inspection. The headteacher and the senior management team have a clear focus on providing the pupils with an all round education with an emphasis on raising standards in all aspects of their development. This generates a strong team spirit within the school which helps it to move forward successfully, to achieve its aims and to provide equality of opportunity for its pupils. It has resulted in a rising trend in standards in the end of Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) national tests. This is because the quality of teaching has improved since the school's last inspection due to the effectiveness with which it is now monitored. The effect of the school's leadership is particularly noticeable in the very good progress which the pupils make in their personal development. Nearly all the children enter the Nursery class with immature skills in personal and social development. However, the judgements of the inspection are that pupils have very good attitudes to their work, behave very well and that the quality of relationships in the school is excellent. There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school and all pupils are fully included in all activities. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

59. The key issues for action from the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. For example, arrangements for pupils withdrawn from the classroom activity are now appropriate and better use is made of the staff's expertise. Additionally, the pupils' behaviour, the quality of the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the way the school cares for its pupils are all better than they were at the time of the school's last inspection. However, there are areas of weakness within the school's

management and leadership. For example, there are still weaknesses in the use of assessment information and curricular provision which are largely related to the use of time. The effectiveness of these factors is not monitored rigorously enough. Furthermore, the roles of some subject co-ordinators are not fully developed.

60. The governing body carries out its duties well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are keen to help it to continue to improve. The governors gain this insight into the school through visits, reports from staff, their link with subject co-ordinators and by applying the training that they attend. They are particularly concerned to ensure that the pupils reach the highest standards of which they are capable. Data about end of key stage test results are analysed and discussed and the headteacher is asked to explain any variations in trends and how improvement can be achieved. They have established a productive and appropriate working relationship with the school. All statutory requirements apart from some minor omissions in the information for parents are met.

61. The school evaluates its performance well. Assessment data are carefully analysed to promote improvement and to gain a comparison with other schools and to set individual targets for improvement for pupils. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has resulted in significant improvements. An example of the school's effective self-evaluation is seen in the way it has tackled behavioural problems which were leading to exclusions. Twenty-two pupils were excluded in the year before the inspection. None have been excluded since last September when the Nurture Unit was opened.

62. The school's spending is thoroughly evaluated to ensure that revenue is spent for the benefit of the pupils currently in the school. The school's financial reserves are lower than recommended in percentage terms but the governors are well aware of this and monitor spending very carefully. The school compares its standards and costs with other schools, there is vigorous debate about the best use of resources and value for money is sought and obtained. A particular example of the application of these principles is the school's purchase of closed circuit television cameras which the governors studied in great detail to ensure that the best purchase was made. The school development plan sets appropriate targets for development. Parents and pupils have a chance to contribute to the plan through surveys and the school council. The plan covers a static three year period. It is not extended at the end of each year after evaluation and is now virtually complete. The school had decided not to extend the plan until it could incorporate the outcome of this inspection into it. This decision restricts the school's ability to plan its finances strategically in terms of linking them to planned educational developments. The school's finances, whatever their source, are used satisfactorily as they promote satisfactory progress for the pupils.

63. The co-ordination of special educational needs is good. The deputy headteacher responsible is also responsible for assessment and so has a clear picture of pupils' progress. Files and records are well kept with all relevant information readily to hand. The deployment of support assistants is satisfactory, given the number available. However, there are not enough assistants to provide help in all classes where it is needed. There is a designated governor who has good involvement with the life of the school. The co-ordinator has worked hard to implement the latest Code of Practice for special educational needs and the school is, therefore, well up to date with this procedure.

64. The management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. At present, the teacher responsible for the Foundation Stage is teaching in a Year 1 class and, consequently, the monitoring of teaching and learning in the Reception classes has become more difficult. He does have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and brings a wealth of experience to the lower school department he manages. The quality of relationships is very good. The Nursery is well staffed with a full time teacher and two very experienced assistants. All have a good knowledge of how young children learn. Each Reception teacher has a classroom assistant. The school has an integral Nursery unit that is reasonably spacious, attractive and well-resourced. The outdoor play area adjacent to the Nursery provides an enclosed space that is appropriately equipped to meet the needs of the young children's physical and creative development. Children in the Reception classes also have their own fenced outside play area.

65. Overall, the management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a keen awareness that provision is a growing issue in the school and is realistic about areas to be addressed. However, she does not have a good enough overview of pupils' progress in language development as they move through the school. Resources, such as dual language books and labelling,

posters, toys and multicultural games, are inadequate to support teaching and learning and to celebrate cultural diversity.

66. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers who have a wide range of expertise between them. These factors support the implementation of the curriculum well. This judgement is an improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection when the number of teachers was judged to be adequate and some lack of expertise was noted. Performance management procedures are fully and effectively established. The teaching assistants are appropriately trained and give good help to the pupils they assist. However, there are not enough of them to ensure that pupils always get the support they need. The problem of lack of suitable access to all aspects of the curriculum for pupils supported by teaching assistants, which was a key issue for action following the school's previous inspection, was not observed during this inspection. Induction procedures for staff new to the school and its potential for training new teachers are good. The school's accommodation supports the pupils' learning well. The same judgement was made by the school's previous inspection. There are ample, good-sized classrooms and a number of specialist rooms, for example, for music, information and communication technology, English as an additional language and special educational needs. Two halls and extensive grounds support the teaching of physical education well. Learning resources are good which is an improvement on the school's previous judgement of satisfactory. There are, however, some weaknesses, for example, as already noted in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Additionally, the shortage of books noted by the last inspection still exists. The school is no longer very well equipped with computers as its ratio of pupils to computers is now above the national average. Nevertheless, good use is made of information and communication technology in the school.

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

**67. In order to continue to raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should:**

**(1) Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:**

- making sure that all teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve;
- increasing the pace of lessons where this is necessary;
- concentrating on improving the range of the pupils' vocabulary;
- employing and varying appropriately, an even greater range of teaching strategies;
- giving pupils support from adults when this is needed;
- improving teachers' expertise in subjects such as art.

(Paragraphs 5,18,25,82,89,98,116)

**(2) Ensure that assessment information is used effectively to help pupils, especially the more able, to make the maximum progress of which they are capable by:**

- monitoring rigorously that assessment information is used well enough and is sufficiently detailed to help pupils improve their National Curriculum Levels;
- making sure that the work that pupils are given is challenging but attainable.

(Paragraphs 5,17,51,59,90,91,111,113,123,126,130,140,149)

**(3) Improve the use of curricular time by:**

- checking to be sure that the school is aware of exactly how time is used and making certain that it always promotes effective learning;
- making sure that curricular provision is balanced and progressive and that literacy skills are used fully in all subjects;
- meeting the recommended teaching time for Years 3 to 6.

(Paragraphs 5,26,59,87,91,124,130,146)

**(4) Continuing and developing efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.**

(Paragraphs 15,41)

**(5) Redoubling efforts to work in partnership with parents to raise standards.**

(Paragraph 54)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Making sure that the information given to parents meets statutory requirements.  
(Paragraph 60)
- Considering the views which some parents have on the format of the pupils' annual reports.  
(Paragraph 52)
- Further developing the school development plan.  
(Paragraph 62)
- Improving provision for the development of pupils' understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society.  
(Paragraph 40)
- Developing the role of co-ordinators where this is necessary as already planned.  
(Paragraphs 59,113,118)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	107
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	45	57	1	0	0
Percentage	0	4	42	53	1	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	36	564
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		180

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		135

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	49

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	57
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	59

### *Attendance*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.8	School data	1.4
National comparative data	5.6	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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	47	36	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	35	37
	Girls	27	28	27
	Total	59	63	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (64)	76 (79)	77 (72)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	37	33
	Girls	27	29	29
	Total	61	66	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (71)	80 (73)	75 (72)
	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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	31	50	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	22
	Girls	33	25	28
	Total	51	42	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (69)	51 (63)	61 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	21
	Girls	32	27	35
	Total	52	45	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (70)	56 (63)	(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	1
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	2
Indian	6
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	4
White	484
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*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	32	4
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)	27
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	23.9

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	1,047,727
Total expenditure	1,066,930
Expenditure per pupil	1763
Balance brought forward from previous year	19850
Balance carried forward to next year	647

### ***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	6
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	561
Number of questionnaires returned	119

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	38	8	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	46	6	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	51	6	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	55	9	2	2
The teaching is good.	48	44	7	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	50	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	30	9	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	4	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	47	42	8	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	37	8	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	48	7	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	40	15	1	3

## **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**

68. The school has maintained the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The very good learning opportunities in the Nursery provide a good basis for future education and that together with the very good teaching, help the children to make very good gains in their learning. This is a strength of the school and provides children with a very good start to their education. Many children begin Nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and in their personal and social development. This is confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with these children. A significant number of children in the Nursery demonstrate delayed speech and language development and have very limited social skills. The range of attainment measured by assessment on entry show that children's attainment on entry to the Reception classes is well below average. Of the three teachers in the Reception classes, two were newly appointed and had been in the school for only a week and one had been there for a year. The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes is satisfactory overall and children broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the Reception classes, the majority of the children are achieving satisfactorily and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical and creative development. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, most children attain standards that are still below those expected for this age group and in their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, their attainment is well below expectations.

69. Children enter the Nursery for morning or afternoon sessions in the autumn and spring term before their fourth birthday. Most children transfer to the Reception classes to start their full-time attendance in the autumn and spring term before their fifth birthday. The school also takes a large number of children from playgroups and nurseries other than their own attached Nursery. At the time of the inspection, children in two of the Reception classes had just started attending school for a full day. This had followed a period of part-time attendance for these children. This start to school provides a good introduction for children. The quality of teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception as a whole and in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, is satisfactory. It is very good in the Nursery and in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development and good in creative development. Achievement, including that for pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, good in knowledge and understanding of the world and very good in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development.**

70. Nearly all the children enter the Nursery class with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the Reception classes they are achieving the Early Learning Goals in this area. This shows very good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The very good admission procedures ensure that plenty of time is given to parents and their children. For instance, during the inspection, parents brought their children to the Nursery for the first time and were encouraged to stay and work and play alongside their child. Consequently, the children settled in very well and quickly began to explore the variety of activities on offer. Most children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and put their coats on independently before going outdoors to play, although some still need help to get their coat on the right way up! Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff take prompt action to address any unacceptable behaviour. As a result, children's behaviour is very good and they learn how to consider the consequences of their actions for themselves. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children show interest in the experiences provided for them and share resources fairly. For example, when playing with the building bricks, two boys new to the Reception class were able to share the bricks to build a tower and remembered to say 'thank you' when they handed the bricks to one another. By the time the children leave the Reception class, they understand what is right and wrong and play and work together well. They settle quickly to the more structured activities,

such as literacy and numeracy, and show ability to concentrate for appropriate periods of time. The children are enthusiastic about their learning both in the Nursery and Reception classes.

71. Personal and social development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning and the planning is thorough. The well-established routines and caring nature of the provision in the Nursery allow all children to feel secure and to grow in confidence. The teacher has created a calm, secure environment in which children are valued as individuals. In addition, there are many moments for fun provided by the staff, which strengthen the developing bond within the Nursery. All adults working with the children in the Foundation Stage provide very good role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to develop an awareness of others. All teachers promote children's personal independence effectively. For instance, in the Nursery the well-planned, focused activities provide good opportunities for the children to choose whether to work alone, in small groups or to work with an adult. The Reception teachers ensure that the children know what is expected of them in their new classes and, in general, ensure that there is sufficient time for the children to initiate their own ideas through play. There is a good range of resources to support this aspect of their learning.

### **Communication, language and literacy.**

72. On entry to the Nursery, a significant number of children show delayed development in their speech and language. Many children use gestures such as nods and shakes of the head to communicate their feelings and answers to questions or only use familiar words in isolation to identify what they do and do not want. Few children construct simple statements. Staff provide many good opportunities for children to communicate with each other and adults. As a result, they become more confident in their use of a growing vocabulary and, in general, make satisfactory progress. However, overall, by the time the children complete the Reception year many are still well below the recommended Early Learning Goals in language and literacy. The very good teaching in the Nursery ensures that all adults ask questions sensitively and they give thoughtful responses to promote children's confidence. All adults in the Foundation Stage show children that they value their efforts at communicating. In the Nursery, activities are planned which encourage children to give verbal responses to questions and also to extend their vocabulary. For instance, during role-play activities in the 'Baby Clinic', questions such as, 'What is wrong with your baby?' and 'Do you want to see the doctor?' extend children's ideas and develop their language. Children join these activities with great pleasure and enthusiasm. For example, they help to change the baby's nappy and realistically act out the roles of parents and doctors. Their interest in language is reinforced well through the opportunity to make up and act out stories with the Nursery teacher that requires them to experiment with words. Most children listen attentively and in the Reception classes become more confident in their use of a growing vocabulary when participating in discussions. However, their communication skills remain well below that expected for this age group. All children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with adults. Older children in the Reception class know that pictures and print in books carry meaning and join in with repetitive phrases such as 'I'll huff and puff and blow your house down' from the story 'The Three Little Pigs'. However, few children in the Reception classes understand the concept of a word or can recognise familiar words. There are good opportunities in the Nursery for children to experiment with writing and to recognise and 'write' their own name. For example, when they come into the classroom, they take their own 'written' name card and place it on the board to show that they are present. The classroom is thoughtfully planned to promote the importance of language through signs, notices, books, listening centres and computers. Books are well displayed and the children are encouraged to enjoy them and use the stories they hear in their play.

73. Elements of the Literacy Framework are introduced gradually in the Reception classes, and, in general, are used appropriately by teachers to meet the needs of the children. An appropriate understanding of letter sounds is developed through the use of a commercially produced phonic scheme. Although the older children can hear and say the initial sounds in words when matching words in games and puzzles, very few use this knowledge to help them read and few recognise frequent words in their reading books. Supplies of paper, pencils and crayons are readily available for children to use and they happily 'have a go' at writing. By the end of the Reception year, only a few children use their knowledge of letter sounds to spell and write individual words such as 'mum' and 'dad'. Many children still need an adult to act as a scribe for them and copy write under the teacher's script.

## **Mathematical development.**

74. Children in the Nursery achieve standards that are well below those expected in this area of learning. When they first start in the Nursery, most children have little idea of number. Regular sorting activities, number games and counting using a number line are successful strategies for promoting children's learning. The Nursery teacher has other imaginative ideas to enhance mathematical development. For instance, every day, one of the numbered 'naughty monkeys' on the number line goes missing and the children are expected to identify which one is missing. In this way, children not only learn to recognise the numbers but learn to count in order. Every opportunity is taken to introduce children to mathematical language. For example, during cooking and craft activities the children are encouraged to use words such as more, heavy, long and short as they work with adults. Children in the Reception classes can count out loud and recite numbers to ten. However, they do not always recognise the numbers and very few are confident to calculate or use language to compare numbers. A few older children add two small numbers together but, generally, their understanding of addition and subtraction is at a very early stage and they still need a lot of support. Most children recognise colours and are able to name a triangle, circle and square. Although many children make satisfactory progress during the Foundation Stage, by the end of the Reception year, their attainment overall is well below the expected standard in this area of learning.

75. Mathematical development is appropriately promoted through the use of number games and songs both in the Nursery and Reception classes. The very good teaching in the Nursery ensures that the children develop their mathematical ideas through well-planned play situations. The more formal activities for mathematics are introduced to the children in the Reception classes through the framework for teaching numeracy. In general, the work is well planned and children are encouraged to develop their mathematical ideas through practical experiences such as building with bricks and playing board games. However, the activities provided during the numeracy time do not always take into account the children's mathematical development and the work planned is often beyond their capabilities. Consequently, they struggle and do not confidently tackle the tasks set without a great deal of support. In general, the children make satisfactory progress in their number recognition, but for many their use and understanding of mathematical language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers are well below the standards found in most schools. Classrooms are used effectively to display numbers and give counting opportunities.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world.**

76. Children enter the Nursery with a low level of general knowledge. The Nursery provides a very stimulating environment and staff ensure that children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm are enhanced by questions that promote learning. Many children need encouragement to explore, investigate and ask questions. The good curriculum offers them a wide range of experiences to extend their knowledge of the world around them. Activities are very well planned and organised to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion forms an important part of the work and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see. For example, in the Nursery, while cooking with the teaching assistant, the children were encouraged to use their senses to look closely at the ingredients, smell them and to talk about how the ingredients change as they mix them together. In the Reception classes, children build on these observational skills by looking at mini-beasts in the school grounds and drawing pictures of them. A few children label the external parts of their mini-beast and copy write a simple sentence to go with their picture, such as 'I saw a spider'. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the children are provided with a wide range of opportunities that develop their understanding of the world in which they live. For example, they have had visits from the fire brigade, a police officer and health visitor. All children begin to develop an understanding of the past as they bring in things they played with when they were babies. However, their use and understanding of the language of time, such as 'then' and 'now' are still at a very early stage. Good use is made of the immediate local area to introduce children to real life experiences. For example, children in the Nursery visited the local post office and observed people posting letters, and post office staff weighing parcels. Outdoor activities allow children in the Nursery and Reception classes to use construction equipment and engage in role-play that relate to everyday experiences. During the time of the inspection, children in the Nursery acted out the 'renovation' of their playhouse that included 'painting' it and putting up a satellite dish. This theme was built on well as children in a Reception class used materials such as sticks, building blocks and sand to make homes for the three little pigs. A wide range of

construction toys and materials is provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children in a Reception class develop their designing skills well, as seen in their designs for 'Mrs. Honey's Hat'. They have an increasing understanding of modern technology as they regularly use computers in the Nursery. In the Reception classes, children make good progress and demonstrate well-developed skills in using a computer. They confidently use the mouse to click on icons to cause different things to happen on a paint program and become increasingly confident in using the keyboard to copy write a simple sentence. The children are introduced to a suitable range of religions and beliefs, through listening to stories, eating foods from different cultures, using resources in role play and making models such as a Chinese dragon's head. A good range of planned activities, which always starts from what they know at the moment, enables the children to expand their experience and knowledge of the world.

### **Physical development.**

77. Children in the Nursery achieve broadly what is expected for children of this age. They show increasing control and skills when using the wheeled toys outdoors and develop an awareness of space around them. There is a secure fenced outside area attached to the Nursery which gives an appropriate amount of challenge to enable all children to gain confidence and extend their skills, for example, in running and balancing. Staff make good use of the space and the time outdoors is planned well as part of the everyday activities provided for the children. By the end of the Reception year, children attain appropriate standards in relation to the Early Learning Goals. They have their own designated outdoor play area, which is shared between the three classes and use the school hall for physical education lessons. However, there is no covered area outdoors for the Reception children to use, which means that access is dependent on the weather. At this early stage in the term, only the older children in a Reception class were observed using the outside area, where they moved with confidence and control as they rode tricycles and pushed wheelbarrows.

78. Good opportunities are provided for the children to develop their finer manipulative skills in both the Nursery and Reception classes. For example, in modelling with scrap materials, threading beads and using brushes for painting. They are also provided with an appropriate range of malleable materials, such as play dough. Consequently, by the end of the Reception year, the children demonstrate increasing dexterity and control in the use of scissors, construction sets and puzzles. Most children make marks with a variety of painting and writing materials but, in general, their writing skills are at an early stage of development.

### **Creative development.**

79. A good range of activities with well-focused adult support and encouragement mean that children make very good gains in learning and, by the end of the Reception year, are well on course to attain the Early Learning Goals. Children start from a fairly basic level of skill when they enter the Nursery and make very good progress through a wide range of experiences in art, music, story making and imaginative play. The 'Baby Clinic' in the Nursery is very popular and gives good opportunities for imaginative role-play. The children play alongside others who are engaged in the same theme and delight in acting out scenes such as, changing a 'baby's' nappy and giving it an injection. Adults enthusiastically join in role-play activities and help children to develop their ideas and gain confidence. Their creative play outdoors is well linked to the topics. For example, during the time of the inspection, the topic was 'Homes' and children in the Nursery and Reception became completely engrossed in their roles as builders, complete with hard hats. Many children enjoy playing with the 'small world' toys to act out their own stories and create interesting models using a wide range of construction equipment. In their artwork, children use paint imaginatively and print with different objects such as sponges to create attractive pictures. Children thoroughly enjoy their music lessons and learn to listen carefully. With the imaginative use of 'Tigger' a soft toy and a glockenspiel, the music teacher effectively helped the Reception children to distinguish the difference between high and low sounds. All children learn range of songs by heart and particularly enjoy participating in action songs.

### **ENGLISH**

80. Overall, standards are well below average in Years 2 and 6. Although standards in reading are below average in Years 3 to 6 and well below average in Years 1 and 2, standards in speaking and listening and writing are well below average throughout the school. This represents a fall in standards since the last

inspection when standards were below average. However, national test results for 1997 found standards which were well below average. The school has identified the need to focus on the development of pupils' writing skills and the need for a planned programme for developing pupils' listening and speaking skills.

81. Pupils enter Years 1 and 2 with well below average levels of ability in language and literacy and achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language achieve appropriately and reach satisfactory standards compared with their previous attainment. The school has recognised that test results indicate that boys in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as girls in their reading. This has led to a focus on providing a range of books which are of particular interest to boys. No significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls were observed during the week of the inspection.

82. At both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are well below average. Pupils enter the school with a limited experience of spoken language and a narrow range of vocabulary. They make steady progress as they move through Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2 listen attentively to their teachers and respond appropriately to questions asked by their teachers. However, there are a significant number of pupils who, despite paying good attention, do not always understand and remember clear instructions and explanations and who need encouragement and support from their teachers to develop simple single word answers. They enjoy listening to poems and stories and with careful questioning contribute relevant, simple responses. Some higher attaining pupils are able to recall simple stories and develop their answers in more detail but few pupils use a range of vocabulary which extends beyond the everyday and familiar. In Years 3 to 6, higher attaining pupils' attention and active response improve when teachers create a good level of involvement and maintain a productive pace and a sense of energy. This was seen in a good lesson in Year 5 where pupils were planning a version of the legend of how King Arthur found the sword in the stone for younger children. As a result of effective questions and a purposeful pace pupils were able to recall the most important elements in the story, sometimes in good detail and ask their own questions about aspects they did not understand. However, in some lower attaining groups, pupils need to be well supported by additional questions and explanations before they are able to give answers beyond the single word or phrase. By the end of the key stage, the depth and detail of pupils' responses and their abilities to discuss ideas and issues are restricted by the limitations of their vocabulary. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of speaking to different audiences in different contexts and to use a more formal range of vocabulary.

83. Standards in reading are well below average at Years 1 and 2 and below average at the end of Years 3 to 6. Although a number of higher attaining pupils in Year 2 reach average and a few above average standards, a significant number of pupils are not sufficiently confident in using their knowledge of sounds and phonics to help them in their reading. They understand individual letter sounds and sometimes groups of sounds but do not transfer their knowledge to their reading. Most pupils understand how books are organised and are able to use illustrations to help them talk about their reading. However, a number of pupils have little experience of books beyond those they are reading at school and are not able to talk about their reading in any detail or make simple comments about the characters in their books. Some pupils are not reading at a sufficiently challenging pace and some are re-reading books with which they are already familiar. By the end of Years 3 to 6, most pupils are able to read the texts they encounter in class with a satisfactory degree of comprehension and they read aloud with varying degrees of confidence and fluency. Few pupils read aloud with expression. Higher attaining pupils are able to talk about their reading confidently, clearly outlining the main details of the action in a story. Some pupils are able to talk about the kind of books they enjoy and to discuss and name their favourite authors. However few pupils are able to talk about the characters in the books they are reading in detail and discuss their own personal responses to aspects they liked or disliked in depth. Lower attaining pupils are not always sufficiently confident in their use of phonics to help them in their reading and this also has some effect on the reading of pupils of average ability. Although there are some useful opportunities for pupils to develop their research and referencing skills, pupils in Year 6 are not confident in using techniques such as skimming and scanning to help them improve the efficiency of their reading. Although pupils throughout the school use their library areas regularly, older pupils are not clear about how non-fiction sections in the library are organised.

84. Standards in writing are well below average throughout the school. In Year 2, average pupils are able to write simple statements that make sense but have variable understanding of how to write accurate complete sentences. Some higher attaining pupils are able to write simple stories at an appropriate length for their ages. However, the range of their vocabulary is generally based on words that are familiar and used everyday. There is very limited use of descriptive vocabulary to create a more vivid range of expression. These pupils understand how to use basic punctuation with sometimes variable accuracy. The spelling of simple words is generally accurate and shows that pupils are aware of the phonic structure. Lower attaining pupils are generally able to sequence ideas coherently and are aware of how sentences are formed but they often need the support of their teacher or learning support assistant to form simple sentences correctly. These pupils are able to identify key sounds in words but they are able to spell only simple two and three letter words correctly. Most pupils form their letters clearly but only a few above average pupils use upper and lower case letters correctly and maintain consistent and regular formation of letters. Pupils take care with the presentation of their work and most pieces of work in their books are organised to a common format.

85. In Year 6, pupils write in a generally appropriate range of forms, including narratives, newspaper reports, script writing, poetry writing, autobiography and report writing. However, there is a more limited range of writing using more formal language in the work of older pupils in the key stage.

86. Average pupils write clearly and sometimes fluently using a familiar but developing range of vocabulary. Some of these pupils are beginning to use some more complex structures in their writing but the use of punctuation to support these more complex sentences is variable. A few higher attaining pupils write in a lively and confident style using an effective range of vocabulary in their narrative and descriptive writing. There is more limited evidence of their use of language and more complex sentence structures relating to formal and discursive writing. Below average pupils write coherently but the levels of accuracy and clarity are often limited with significant weaknesses in spelling and punctuation. The pupils have a clear understanding of how to sequence ideas in a narrative but not all sentences make complete sense. Opportunities for pupils to develop their planning, editing and redrafting skills are not consistently evident in older pupils' work. The development of a neat, joined fluent style of writing is not consistent throughout the school and some lower attaining pupils in Year 6 are still not using a joined style.

87. Throughout the school, standards in literacy are well below average and the development of literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are missed opportunities in a range of subjects to develop consistently pupils' vocabulary and their awareness of the special terms and language relating to the subject. Although there are some appropriate opportunities for pupils to write at length and to extend their understanding of different forms and genre in subjects such as history, science and geography, the provision and development of these skills are too dependent on individual teachers' expertise and planning. In some subjects such as religious education, the limitations of pupils' vocabulary inhibits the ability of older pupils to discuss issues in appropriate depth and detail.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall although examples of good teaching and learning were seen in all years. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A similar judgement was made in the school's previous inspection when there was a higher proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. A key feature of all lessons was the good harmonious relationships in classrooms and pupils of all abilities were well included and involved in lesson activities. As a result, pupils develop their confidence well. Where teaching is good, lessons are well planned and organised and teachers are secure and purposeful in their teaching of the lesson. Activities and resources promote a good level of interest and challenge. A good lesson in the top group in Year 6 illustrated these qualities well. The focus of the lesson was for pupils to plan and write their own poem in the style of an Anglo Saxon riddle poem called a 'kenning'. The teacher's confident enthusiasm and his expressive reading caught the pupils' interest. They enjoyed using their understanding of the language to guess what might be described. This good involvement meant that they paid careful attention to both the meaning and the form of the words. One pupil was able to comment on features of the poem perceptively, 'the poet has thought about all the most important features of the animal he has selected'. The teacher used questions very effectively to maintain a good pace and to develop a good level of discussion and interaction with pupils. As a result pupils were able to contribute their ideas and suggestions confidently. Although most of the descriptive vocabulary used was based on a familiar range with supportive questions and prompting,

some higher attaining pupils contributed phrases which showed some originality, describing a lion as a 'pride hunter' and 'a positioned prowler'. The teacher expected pupils to work productively and with good concentration. These high expectations and the interesting tasks provided ensured a good level of challenge for all pupils in the class. By the end of the lesson when pupils shared their work, they had made good progress in understanding how to manoeuvre and manipulate language to achieve different effects. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher used the elements of the National Literacy Strategy well to provide a well-focused range of activities for different groups in the class. She had effectively established her high expectations for pupils to be able to work on their own and pupils completed their tasks working well together in their groups. She used lesson time efficiently, giving pupils clear time limits for tasks and reminders as to when she expected them to finish. The results were seen in the plenary when pupils were able to share their work in a real celebration of what they had achieved.

89. Where teaching has weaknesses, these are mainly related to a loss of pace in some part of the lesson, usually in overlong explanations and introductory sessions. This has an adverse effect on the quality of pupils' attention and responses and results in passive listening and limited answers to questions. This was seen in a Year 5 lesson where the lesson had begun with purposeful use of questions to help pupils understand and analyse the story they were reading. However, too long was spent in the activity of identifying the different elements in the story and pupils became more passive and less involved in the discussion. As a result, there was too limited time for a final plenary session for pupils to share their work and to reinforce the main learning objectives. In some lessons, teachers' expectations of the amount of work pupils achieved were comfortable rather than challenging and this was also linked to some loss of pace in parts of the lesson. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher, working with a lower ability group, used questions carefully and effectively to help pupils discuss elements of the story they were reading. However, the activity was too long and the lesson lost its momentum and the amount of time left for pupils to complete their written work was too limited.

90. Teachers plan their work carefully and with appropriate regard for the requirements of the Literacy framework. Tasks and activities are generally well matched to the needs of pupils in each ability group. However, although there is discussion and consultation between teachers in the same year group, planning does not always have a sufficiently clear and coherent focus on the development of pupils' skills across the year group. Most teachers mark pupils' work supportively and encouragingly but not all teachers provide useful comments to help pupils to improve their work and some supportive comments lack discrimination. There are some useful procedures for assessing pupils' reading and writing skills across the school but some of these procedures are new this year and are still being firmly established. There is no planned programme for the teaching and assessment of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Some teachers make good use of their evaluation of their planning and their ongoing assessment to adjust and develop the next stage of their planning but the use of this information is not consistent in all classes. Although teachers are generally clear in their understanding of the criteria for average levels, some teachers do not have an adequate understanding of the range of criteria for the higher National Curriculum levels. Homework is used appropriately in most classes to develop pupils' reading and spelling skills and to support the work done in class.

91. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school recognises the importance of the development of pupils' literacy skills and allocates a good amount of additional time to the teaching of the subject. This additional time is designated as time for reading and time to develop pupils' writing skills. However, the use of this time is not consistently focused on reading and, in some classes, is used as time for completing unfinished work in a range of subjects. Expectations for the use of this time are not sufficiently clear. Although there are some good procedures being developed for assessment in English, some are still being fully implemented and, overall, assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school uses the results of end of year tests to make useful predictions of pupils' attainment which are used to set individual targets. However, the school does not use the range of assessment information sufficiently sharply to identify specific areas of weaknesses which require a clear focus across the school. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to use computers but their use in editing and refining their work is not sufficiently evident in the work of older pupils.

92. Co-ordination is satisfactory. Both key stage co-ordinators are interested and work hard for the development of the subject. They have good opportunities for monitoring teaching, teachers' planning and pupils' work but the information from their monitoring is not sufficiently sharply used to help pupils' improve the rate at which they achieve. They are not currently involved in the close analysis of national test results. Appropriate priorities have been identified for future development but there is not a clear plan as to how these priorities are to be achieved and how the effectiveness of the school's actions are going to be assessed.

93. Resources in literacy are satisfactory. There have been some good recent purchases to support pupils' work in the literacy hour but whilst in most classes the number, range and quality of reading books are satisfactory, some books are old and well used and do not provide an attractive encouragement for more reluctant readers. The Years 1 and 2 library does not provide an attractive or quiet environment for pupils to explore a range of books, situated as it is outside the main hall and in an open corridor area. The shelving and seating arrangements are limited and do not encourage browsing and exploring. The Years 3 to 6 library has a more appropriate organisation but the number of books available for pupils in a large school to use is limited.

94. The subject is appropriately enhanced by booster classes for Year 6 pupils and by a range of book fairs and Book Weeks which give good opportunities for pupils to buy their own books. The school has visiting poets, such as Geraldine Aldridge, who worked with older pupils to write an anthology of poems in response to their work on the Second World War. Plans to train learning support assistants and teachers to deliver the Additional Literacy Strategy and the Early Literacy Strategy are in progress.

95. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development and a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural progress.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards well below average in numeracy and all other areas of the mathematics curriculum. Although these findings differ from those of the last report for mathematics, they are in keeping with the results of the National Curriculum tests at that time. Assessment data show that these pupils had well below average attainment on entry to the school, and the findings of this inspection agree with the results of the 2001 national tests, reflecting also the trend over the last five years. When all these considerations are taken into account, the judgements of this inspection are that pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who have special educational needs.

97. In Year 6, standards are well below average, and this finding agrees with the results of the 2001 National Curriculum Tests. In the last report, standards for pupils of this age were below average, although the results of the national tests at that time showed that attainment was well below average, agreeing with the findings of this inspection. When analysed against similar schools, the results are average, and the trend over the past five years for this school has been steadily upwards, except for the results of the 2001 national tests, when there was an uncharacteristic drop. Analysis of that year group's assessment data shows that significant numbers of pupils entered the school in the later stages Years 3 to 6 with behavioural and learning difficulties. Observations during the inspection, and further analysis of pupils' assessments, indicate that the pupils are on course to resume the upward trend in the 2002 national tests. The findings of this inspection are that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

98. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory. This broadly reflects the findings of the last report. However, in the lessons observed in the upper school, (Years 3,4,5,6) teaching and learning were sometimes good. The weakness lies in the lack of clear planning and provision for pupils who are capable of working at Level 3 in Year 2, and Level 5 in Year 6. This is also reflected when analysing the work that pupils have done in the past.

99. Teachers plan their work according to the National Numeracy Strategy but, in a few lessons, the idea of the quick-fire mental starter has been lost, and the opening session goes on too long, sometimes for nearly half the lesson. This often results in pupils becoming restless and inattentive. Where the starter session is good, pupils are all absorbed in their work and keen to answer. It is kept to about ten minutes and is, therefore, short and sharp. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were working on the multiplication

facts of numbers, prepared beforehand by the teacher. They worked in pairs and it was a competition to see who was quickest. The teacher took answers from as many pupils as possible when the time was up, and everyone was caught up in the excitement of the competition and tried very hard. Teachers try to make mathematics fit into pupils' everyday lives as far as possible. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were calculating the difference between one o'clock and four o'clock, using a large clock face to help them and later, in their written work, they had to find out when a party would finish if it began at 3.00 pm and lasted for two hours. They learn to 'shop' and give change, and recognise the various coins that we use. In Year 2, pupils successfully ordered numbers up to 100, and were learning how to round up or down for easier calculations. They understand and use mathematical vocabulary, such as 'digit,' 'unit,' or 'one' and can talk about odd and even numbers.

100. Teachers generally ask good questions to ensure that pupils understand and can explain their workings. When pupils struggle with the problems, which happens often, the teacher goes back over the topic. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils sat in a circle and the teacher showed great patience in going repeatedly over the work of adding and subtracting tens for those who found it very difficult to grasp. In Year 2, some pupils were having difficulty in recognising coins and their value and some confused pence with pounds when they saw them written. Again, the teacher patiently went through the work until they had a better understanding. It was very evident in such lessons insufficient support from adults was available because, when pupils received individual help, they were better, and grasped the idea more quickly

101. Teachers generally maintain good control and, as a result, pupils are mostly very well behaved and responsive. They pay attention and are willing to answer the teachers' questions. For the majority of lessons, teachers set a good pace for the work. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were seen adding three numbers quickly, and then adding two further numbers. They immediately followed this by working out subtraction problems, and when they were unsure, the teacher gave them good clues, enabling some good learning to take place. Pupils understand that breaking larger numbers into workable sections of hundreds, tens and units means that calculations become more manageable, and many know that this is called partitioning. The range of expected topics in mathematics is being covered and pupils work in number, solve problems and handle data as well as finding out about shape and measure. For example, Year 4 have done work on the various sorts of triangles, worked in grams and kilograms, and conducted surveys among their friends resulting in charts in order to present the data, which they had gathered.

102. Opportunities for independent work are offered to pupils who can manage this. For example, Year 6 spent the week investigating area and perimeters. They designed shapes, found out the areas and perimeters and recorded these in such a way that a stranger could understand. By the end of the week, they were beginning to work out a formula for finding area and perimeter, so that they no longer needed to draw the shapes and count the dots.

103. Teachers are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it satisfactorily. Across the school, most teachers match the work to the needs of the pupils well. However, there is insufficient directly planned work for those pupils who could gain Level 3 or Level 5 respectively. Whilst some teaching assistants are good, some are often too passive when the whole class works together, for example, in the starter sessions. In group work, they support well and enable their pupils to understand the work. It is noticeable how much better pupils do, in individual work, when they have an adult's help, either from the teacher or from an assistant, but this is not available for all classes in all years.

104. Numeracy skills are in use across the range of other subjects such as in geography, where pupils researched about British airports and then recorded their findings on pie charts. In Year 5, pupils produced a graph in science with data showing sunrise and sunset. Younger pupils use their counting and number skills in some classes by calculating the difference between the number of pupils having a school lunch and those with a packed lunch.

105. Pupils use computers two at a time in classrooms, and one Year 5 class spent a whole lesson in the computer room working out the costs of a supposed party on a basic spreadsheet. In this way, mathematical skills are furthered and pupils are able to apply what they have learnt in the lessons by using the computer programs. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

106. The co-ordination of mathematics is sound, and is shared between two teachers. The numeracy planning is securely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy and teachers work together in their planning for each year group. The use of assessment information, provision and planning for higher levels of attainment, and insufficient adult help for pupils who need it are weaknesses. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out in previous terms, and is to be resumed when one of the co-ordinators has received appropriate training.

## SCIENCE

107. Standards in science in Year 2 are well below average and achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, when their low attainment on entry is considered. This is a decline from the judgements of the previous inspection in 1997 when attainment was judged to be average. The teachers' assessment of attainment in science in that year, however, was below average. The results of the teachers' assessments in 2001 are similar to the inspection findings. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils with English as an additional language and the severity of the special educational needs of pupils have increased.

108. In Year 6, standards in science are well below average and achievement is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language. This would appear to be a decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average. However, in the national tests that same year, the pupils' attainment in science was well below average. The data show that standards in the science tests rose significantly from 1997 to 2000 but declined in 2001. The test data over the period 1999 to 2001 show that boys achieved better results than girls in this school although no difference was observed during the inspection.

109. From the work scrutiny, it is clear that the programmes of study have been covered well. However, the school is using the national scheme of work and is not making appropriate decisions about which units need adapting and how to differentiate the work appropriately. For example, the unit of work on rocks and soils has been taught to the pupils in Year 3. This unit contains some very difficult concepts. Many pupils did not understand the lessons on igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks and the work was too challenging. Higher up the school in Year 6, not enough challenge is given to the higher attaining pupils in all units of work. Only very occasionally are the pupils expected to choose what to keep the same in a fair test, to choose their equipment and to choose the right graph or chart to show their results. A few pupils can say if their predictions were correct but little evidence was seen of pupils being taught to generalise, for example, 'The thinner the wire, the dimmer the bulb', and to use scientific vocabulary. There is no planning, for example, to include the teaching of key scientific words at the beginning or end of a lesson.

110. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 2 is satisfactory overall with some strengths. From the work scrutiny and lessons observed, it is evident that the work is carefully planned and marked. The pupils enjoy science although they find the technical vocabulary very difficult. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, some pupils found it difficult to recall the names of some of the materials they were identifying. They also found it hard to understand the concept of a natural material that has been changed in a factory, for example, into an object such as a wooden spoon. However, the teacher patiently asked them simple and specific questions designed to further their learning and to encourage them to think. The task was to place the objects in the correct square and most pupils found this difficult. Higher attaining pupils were challenged by this activity and most succeeded. Good resources were used in this lesson and the pupils' learning did move forward, albeit slowly. Good management and control of the pupils in both the lessons observed ensured that pupils paid good attention to the teacher.

111. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Year 6, good resources were in evidence and, as a result, the pupils were motivated to listen, to answer questions and to become involved in the activities. Relationships are generally excellent with teachers and pupils clearly respecting each other and working well together. This leads to a good working atmosphere. However, in one lesson the pace was too relaxed and the content could have been covered in half the time with more focus and rigour. From the work scrutiny and from discussion with the teachers in Year 6, there is no focus on ensuring that the higher attainers are given more challenging work and the revision tasks are the same for all pupils. Very little assessment has taken place in Year 6 but this term, it is planned that the assessment

tasks will be more focused and based on the type of questions that the pupils will experience in the end of key stage tests. The targets the school has set for science are very demanding. Last year, the targets were very ambitious and were not realised. However, no analysis of the test papers has taken place in order to discover why the pupils are not making the progress the school expected. Therefore, the revision programme for Year 6 that the school has drawn up is a general one and not based on the scientific concepts that the pupils find most difficult.

112. In Year 5, good management and control of the pupils ensured that a potentially noisy lesson was well structured and the pupils' learning moved forward appropriately. The pupils were finding out what happened when they made vibrations from twanging a ruler, banging a tuning fork and quickly inserting it into a water container, banging a drum and plucking three elastic bands stretched across a plastic container. The good explanations and expectations of the teacher ensured that the pupils were enthusiastic about this lesson. Two of the four groups were supported well by classroom assistants and the teacher was quick to move around and support other pupils. There was no time wasted and the teacher's methods ensured that the pupils were beginning to develop an understanding that sounds are produced when objects vibrate. This series of lessons has good links with music and design and technology.

113. There are two co-ordinators for science in each key stage. They are both very keen and eager to improve their practice but have very little non-contact time. However, they are both attending a course later this month that is designed to help teachers learn how to monitor their subject in the classrooms and the headteacher intends to set up a monitoring programme for both of them later in the year. The co-ordinator in Years 3 to 6 is new to the school and also new to a permanent teaching post. He lacks experience of how to analyse test data and what action to take from the findings. As a result, the co-ordination of science in this key stage is unsatisfactory. He is well qualified to teach science and is enthusiastic. Each week, he runs a science club after school that is well attended by some eager young scientists. During the week of the inspection, they were making a simple circuit and finding out how the brightness of a bulb can be influenced. The use of assessment in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. All teachers give the pupils an assessment sheet at the end of a unit of work and attach it to their workbooks. However, in Years 3 to 6, assessment is not consistent and use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory. This is one of the reasons why the results in science in Year 6 have been much lower than predicted.

114. There are good links with other subjects particularly in design and technology, information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy. In design and technology, good planning has ensured links between the subjects, for example, the shelters pupils made in Year 6 were lit by a bulb and in Year 4, the pupils made games in design and technology using electricity. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. For example, during a Year 6 lesson, pupils were fascinated and overawed watching a large piece of eggshell moving about in a container of clear vinegar. The gas bubbles that had formed were so powerful that they were pushing the eggshell. Socially, the pupils work well together in pairs or larger groups and are happy to listen politely to presentations from their friends. Morally, pupils are learning to draw conclusions using observations and evidence rather than preconceptions.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

115. During the inspection four lessons were observed in art and design in Years 3 to 6 but, due to the organisation of the curriculum, it was not possible to observe lessons in Years 1 and 2. Judgements are based on the lessons seen, the analysis of pupils' work in displays around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils. Indications are that standards are below average in Years 2 and 6. In the school's previous inspection, standards were average. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language attain similar standards to other pupils. Pupils enter the school with variable levels of physical control and with the majority well below average in both language and literacy. Pupils achieve satisfactorily from these below average starting points, and in those classes where there is careful attention to the teaching of skills, pupils achieve well. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not had sufficient attention paid to the development of their observational and drawing skills and, as a result, these aspects of their work are often immature. There is evidence that younger pupils in the key stage develop their skills more appropriately. Pupils are interested and enjoy their work in art and concentrate well. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

116. Observations and pupils' work indicate that teaching and learning in art are generally satisfactory at both key stages. In the school's previous inspection similar judgements were made. In all classes, the good, and sometimes very good, relationships between teachers and pupils enable pupils to demonstrate a good level of involvement and confidence in their work. The strengths of teaching in the subject were well illustrated in a good lesson in Year 3 where pupils were developing their understanding of how to create repeating patterns using a range of shapes and textured materials. The teacher began the lesson with a series of well-focused questions which reminded pupils of the work they had done in earlier lessons on observing a range of patterns. This established a clear and purposeful foundation on which the teacher could continue to develop pupils' skills. The teacher made good links with pupils' work in both science and mathematics to reinforce the key features of repeating patterns. Her very clear instructions to pupils and her good use of special terms such as 'tactile', 'visual' and 'overlap' developed their understanding well. The teacher's well organised modelling of the task and good focus on the main skills required, enabled most pupils to begin their tasks promptly and confidently. A few lower attaining pupils who had not understood clearly were given good support by the teacher's careful organisation of pairs in the class and by her own good knowledge and support of pupils. Pupils worked sensibly and effectively together discussing and selecting appropriate materials and colours. By the end of the time allotted to the task, most pupils had completed a repeating pattern at a level appropriate to their age. The plenary session began effectively with the teacher reminding the class of the attention and responses she expected from them. As a result, pupils listened carefully and respectfully to each other and to the teacher. There were good opportunities for pupils to share their work and for some pupils to talk about what they had tried to do and how they had tried to achieve their goals. Where teaching is weaker teachers are less confident in their subject knowledge and in the development of pupils' skills. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were developing a class frieze on the theme of the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. The teacher devoted too much time to developing the background task and insufficient time on exploring the skills pupils that needed to develop their drawings for the frieze. As the lesson progressed, it became apparent that pupils' drawing skills and their understanding of how to proceed with the task were limited. At this point, the teacher recognised pupils' lack of understanding and interrupted the lesson to revise and enlarge on the skills required. Pupils were able to continue with the task more effectively as a result for the time remaining in the lesson.

117. Planning for the subject is appropriately based on the nationally recognised guidance for the subject but teachers have not sufficiently adapted the planning to meet the specific needs of pupils in the school or to focus sufficiently on the development of pupils' skills in the subject. The school has already identified the need to further develop teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject. Termly assessment in the subject follows the whole school policy but the procedures are too broad based to provide useful information on how and where pupils' skills are weaker and in need of further development. The school has established a useful procedure for observing the progress that pupils make in developing their drawing and observational skills. All pupils complete a pencil drawing of a portrait at the beginning of the year and this is kept as a tool for assessment. However, it is not sufficiently sharply used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of pupils in skills and to inform teachers' planning. Most teachers evaluate their lesson planning on a regular basis but again this information is not sufficiently, sharply used to plan the next stages in pupils' learning. Although there are some effective links with pupils work in design and technology, such as in Year 6 pupils' work on clay pen pots and Year 5 pupils' work on mask making, their earlier experiences of three dimensional work have not been sufficiently well developed for them to reach average standards.

118. The co-ordinator for the subject has been recently appointed after a period of time when the subject was not coordinated. She is developing an appropriate understanding of the role and recognises some of the most important priorities for the subject. However, there have been limited opportunities for her to have an effective impact. There have been no opportunities for her to begin to monitor the subject systematically although there have been informal discussions and observations. Resources in the subject meet the needs of the curriculum satisfactorily. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development and a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. During the inspection it was only possible to observe the teaching of design and technology in Years 2 and 5. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and the displays around

the school. The indications are that standards are below average in Years 2 and 6, which is the same as the findings of the previous inspection for Year 6 but shows a decline in Year 2. However, since that inspection the number of pupils with English as an additional language has increased and the severity of the special educational needs of the pupils has increased. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory when their low attainment on entry is considered. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

120. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and this is the same as the findings of the last inspection. The analysis of work shows that pupils are given a suitably broad range of experiences in designing and making that build appropriately on their previous learning. A Year 2 lesson on making glove puppets illustrated the sound nature of teaching and learning. The lesson was suitably planned with a clear sequence of activities that enabled the pupils to learn in a systematic way how to make a design for a glove puppet. One of the strengths of the teaching was to use the internet to show pupils a wide variety of animal puppets and this motivated the pupils to think carefully about their designs. The teacher's quiet manner and good management and control ensured that she was able to supervise all the pupils and make appropriate suggestions for improvement, such as asking 'Where will you insert your hand into this puppet'. In this way, some pupils realised quickly that they had not thought about that important design point. The scrutiny of work showed that pupils had previously made a moving vehicle using card wheels, split pins and straws as well as other common materials found in classrooms. They have also learned simple methods of making a winding up machine using a cotton reel, string and piece of dowel. Pupils of this age make very simple evaluations, such as, 'Next time I would like to paint it'. Others show their immaturity by writing, 'It is important that we share everything to make our puppet'.

121. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory which is the same judgements as the findings of the last inspection. A weakness in teaching in the last inspection was that teachers did not focus on the development of designing and making skills. There has been an improvement in teaching in this aspect as most of the finished products showed that good attention had been paid by the teachers to both designing and making. However, the very important aspect of the subject that teachers do not develop sufficiently is the pupils' skills of evaluating their product. For example, the pupils in Year 6 had made shelters. Pupils had been given a very clear brief, which was that the shelters needed to be strong, waterproof and windproof. Only half the pupils had been encouraged to write an evaluation and these were too superficial and very short. Although evaluation is included in the teachers' planning in Years 3 to 6, not enough importance is given to it. There is some inconsistency as some teachers use inappropriate commercial sheets that give pupils no opportunity to write at any length. In a Year 5 lesson, the careful explanations of the teacher and his good organisation ensured that the pupils were successful in designing their own musical instruments. He used technical vocabulary, such as amplify and vibrate, which he encouraged the pupils to use. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had selected their instruments, drawn the component parts and identified the appropriate materials. Because of the teacher's persistent questioning, most pupils, but not all, had begun to consider how effectively their chosen materials would carry sound. Good links with music are in evidence in Year 5.

122. There are also effective links with science in this subject. Some intriguing games had been designed and made by Year 4 pupils and these formed interactive displays outside their classrooms. A safe path game had been designed by pupils in the format of card lily pads attached to card bases. On the reverse of the game, the pupils had attached foil to conduct electricity. Some lily pads were connected and some were not. The player of the game needed to travel through a 'safe path'. The pupils had clearly worked very hard to produce the games and the teachers' planning was good with some large paper design sheets that gave the pupils much more opportunity to give plenty of detail. Good links with science were also in evidence in Year 6 when pupils had installed a bulb in their shelters to give light.

123. The co-ordinator of design and technology is an experienced teacher who is very well qualified to manage the subject. It is clear that she has worked hard to improve the provision for the subject since the last inspection and is able to support other teachers. Some staff have observed the co-ordinator teaching the subject and this has helped them to improve their practice. Monitoring of the pupils' work is regular and also the analysis of teachers' planning. The good links with science are incorporated into the planning every other half-term. At the end of every year, the co-ordinator ensures that each teacher completes a portfolio of

work and this is sent on to the next teacher. However, despite her written requests for teachers to assess and indicate the progress that pupils have made, this has not been completed. Future developments in the subject include monitoring time in the classrooms for the co-ordinator and also improving links with information and communication technology. Resources for this subject are good. The subject contributes to the pupils' social development as they need to consider the views of others when discussing their designs.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe the teaching of geography in Years 3, 5 and 6. Judgements are based on these observations, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning. The evidence indicates that pupils' standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. At the time of the last inspection attainment was judged to be below average at Key Stage 1 but in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The evidence provided and conversations with pupils indicate that the curriculum is too narrow and pupils do not have the opportunity to work in any real depth. Overall, all pupils achieve satisfactorily in their knowledge and understanding of the geography topics covered although there is insufficient development of geographical skills from Year 3 to Year 6.

125. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is generally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. An analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils in Year 2, show that they have studied and are aware of features of lifestyles on the fictional Scottish island of Struay at a level that is generally typical for their ages. For example, they have looked at aspects of life on a small island such as, transport and the homes of the islanders. They make simple comparisons between their own homes and those of the islanders. However, their geographical vocabulary is generally at a low level and, consequently, they find it difficult to express their views on features of the island's environment in depth. Pupils draw simple maps of the island and mark in a few of the main physical features, such as jetty, roads and farms. The teaching in Year 1 uses the pupils' own local knowledge appropriately and their work shows that they have looked at the physical and human features of the immediate locality and identified features they like and dislike. Imaginative use is made of the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of places around the world. A wall display identifies his destinations on a world map. However, the amount of recorded work produced by the pupils in connection with the bear's travels is very limited.

126. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning in the geography topics covered is satisfactory. However, the planned curriculum for pupils is too narrow particularly in the development of their geographical skills. The pupils make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of the local area. In a Year 3 lesson to develop pupils' map skills and their understanding of the local area, aerial photographs were used effectively to stimulate discussion. The pupils' existing knowledge was built on as they enthusiastically identified known human and physical features and discovered the school. The teacher harnessed the pupils' interest well by encouraging them to ask and answer questions as they worked. This helped to develop their communication skills in a way that was appropriate to the task. Pupils with special educational needs were given an appropriate task to help them succeed and all pupils received additional support from the teacher as they worked. They worked at a steady pace, applied themselves well and made appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding of the physical and human features around the school. Their geography books show that they have drawn simple maps with a key to show their journey from home to school. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher used suitable atlases to promote pupils' knowledge of different climatic regions around the world. Good use of time and questions at the beginning of the lesson enabled the teacher to assess what the pupils had learnt from the previous lesson and where the gaps were in their knowledge and understanding. The teacher's control of the pupils was good and they were keen to work. The work planned was appropriately challenging for these pupils but with the teacher's skilful support, the pupils made good progress. Consequently, by the end of the lesson, many pupils managed to identify the driest and wettest areas of the world and mark them on a map of the world. An analysis of their previous work shows that pupils have carried out an interesting survey on the traffic in a local high street. They identified the likely cause of traffic congestion and presented their findings in the form of a graph. As a homework task, the pupils carried out a further survey of the views of people to find out what they thought about the benefits and drawbacks of closing the high street to traffic. The work of pupils in Year 6 on different mountain environments show a weakness in their use and understanding of specific geographical

vocabulary. There is also a weakness in the development of pupils' geographical skills, which are, in general, at a basic level by the age of eleven. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on the location of the school, many pupils needed the constant support of the teacher to help them identify the main features on an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Skilful questioning such as, 'Which county is the school in?' and 'Name the nearest city?' involved the pupils well in their learning and helped them to locate some of the major places within the area. However, there is little evidence in their work or in discussion to show that they have learnt to use grid references to identify features shown on maps or are able to plan a route between locations. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in geography. For example, after the lesson on the locality of the school, Year 6 pupils were taken to the information and communication technology suite to access a web site to help them find out about the area they live, in preparation for E-mailing the information to a school in New Mexico.

127. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject and is aware of how it needs to be developed. Geography is taught largely through a topic approach, which may be the main focus or it may be the minor subject in a topic that has another curriculum area as its focus, for example history or science. However, this does mean that, at times, there is insufficient focus on the development of pupils' geographical skills. Appropriate use is made of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines to help staff in their planning. Procedures for assessment are generally satisfactory but they do not provide staff with an overview of the progress made by individual pupils. Resources have improved since the last inspection with the inclusion of good quality atlases and a range of maps. The school makes good use of visits in and around the local environment to extend the pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding. The analysis of pupils' work shows that their literacy and numeracy skills are generally developed appropriately in the subject. The use of information and communication technology is applied well in geography. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they learn about their own and other cultures around the world and investigate a range of environmental issues on a local scale.

## **HISTORY**

128. Standards in history are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. This judgement is different from that of the previous inspection when standards were broadly in line with national expectations. However, in that inspection, weaknesses in literacy skills, which are currently hindering pupils' progress, were not reported. Achievement is satisfactory as pupils move through the school except in Year 6 where it is unsatisfactory. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. During the inspection, no differences in attainment were noted between boys and girls or between different ethnic groups. As history lessons were only observed in Year 1 and Year 4, the judgements of this inspection also take account of the analysis of work, scrutiny of planning and displays and discussions with teachers and pupils especially a group of Year 6 pupils.

129. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. There was no judgement for Years 1 and 2 in the last inspection and in Years 3 to 6, it was at least satisfactory. Teachers skilfully draw upon the natural curiosity and enthusiasm of younger pupils. There is a good emphasis on the language of time and teachers develop a thoughtful response from pupils about their own lives and the past. In a lesson on Toys, Old and New, the headteacher's childhood experiences brought history alive for pupils when she showed them her own carefully preserved toys. Pupils discovered how her toy car was propelled along by pedals and how the toys were made of wood, metal and hard materials. They had already devised questions such as 'Who made them?' 'Why have you kept them for so long?' and responded eagerly when invited to play with the toys. They crowded around the doll's house enthusiastically, for the lesson had captured their imagination and had provided a rich learning experience. Pupils in Year 2 have an appropriate sense of time for their age, can sequence the events of the Great Fire of London and know about the part played by Samuel Pepys in recording what happened to the city at that time. However, the range and depth of recorded work are often limited, especially for more able pupils, and there is no sign of early research work.

130. Pupils in Year 3 have discovered how the Ancient Egyptians were dependent on the riches of the Nile valley for survival by studying artefacts to develop their skills in analysing evidence. However, the overuse of undemanding work sheets limits the style and scope of pupils' writing. In Year 4, pupils are well aware of the importance of source material such as paintings, diaries and artefacts in answering questions

about the past. They have a sound insight into the gulf between the lives of the rich and poor in Tudor times as a result of knowledgeable and well-structured teaching. In Year 5, pupils have learned about the Blitz and its aftermath and the plight of evacuees as they write newspaper reports and empathise with wartime children in their letters home. In Year 6, history is only taught during the summer term and this is unsatisfactory. It means that key historical skills are not being developed progressively in this year group and that pupils' knowledge and understanding as young historians are not extended enough. In discussion, Year 6 pupils showed a thoughtful approach to the subject but they were unable to recall topics in any detail because of the lapse of time caused by the organisation of the curriculum. In addition, opportunities are missed for developing literacy skills through discussion, illustration and writing. Across the school, teachers usually have a good balance between giving pupils information and developing their skills as young researchers. Adequate attention is given to teaching key skills in history and this is an improvement since the last inspection. However, teachers do not give pupils enough scope to identify why the past is represented and interpreted in different ways. Historical language is introduced well but it is not reinforced enough to shore up pupils' weaknesses in speaking and writing.

131. The subject is satisfactorily led and resourced. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' books but there are no classroom observations. Targets for development, including assessment and improving resources, are appropriate. Assessment is unsatisfactory as it relies on the methods of individual teachers. Marking is variable but some of it gives constructive advice on how pupils can improve their work. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance the subject which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Vibrant and interesting displays such as Year 2's 'London's Burning' and Year 5's 'Evacuees' show that pupils' efforts are valued. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they learn about the legacy of ancient civilisations, enjoy group work when researching information and discuss moral issues from different periods. The curriculum is enriched by visits including Crofton Roman villa, Bethnal Green Toy Museum, British Museum and Whitstable as well as Victorian and Roman days and grandparents who talk about their childhood or wartime experiences. A highlight of the subject is the school's very close links with the Normandy Veterans Association which means that pupils are actively and imaginatively involved with the past.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

132. Standards in information and communication technology are below average in both Year 2 and Year 6 and this is the same as the judgement of the last inspection. However, achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and, those pupils with English as a second language, when the pupils' low attainment on entry is considered. The Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in two aspect of information and communication technology. They can create and interrogate spreadsheets and import text, photographs, drawings and maps from the website into their prepared text. The school has worked very hard to keep up with the many developments in information and communication technology and the excellent suite ensures that all pupils have regular practice to improve their skills and knowledge.

133. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and this is a similar finding to the last inspection. Each class in the school has the opportunity to visit the information and communication technology suite for one lesson during the week but also has a computer in the classroom. Teachers use these frequently and competently to demonstrate specific skills. As a result of most teachers' good technical knowledge, the pupils are making better than expected progress and can use information and communication technology to write out a small piece of text but they cannot save or print. Most pupils are able to type slowly and can use the mouse to click on the icon to load and close down the Dazzle program. They are able to change the size of the tools on that program, for example, the paintbrush, and know how to use the dustbin icon to clear their work off the screen. Pupils can also select the colours they want to use and the few higher attaining pupils are able to manipulate the symmetry tool. Most pupils can program a toy robot to move backwards, forwards, left or right. They have not developed the skills of entering information into a table and creating graphs. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher's good management of the pupils in the information and communication technology suite ensured their total concentration for the short time available. Her sound knowledge and understanding and secure methods of teaching ensured that the pupils began to understand that at the end of a line of text, the computer automatically returns the cursor to the next line. The teacher introduced some technical vocabulary, such as 'wordwrap', to describe this facility.

134. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with several strengths. The planning ensures that there are good links with several subjects and, in particular, English and mathematics. Each teacher has the opportunity to visit the information and communication technology suite each day for one week in each term to focus on developing the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. This is good practice and, as a result, the pupils are making good progress. In a Year 6 lesson that linked with geography, the teacher's good technical knowledge of the subject ensured a very swift start with pupils immediately beginning their task of downloading a map of the immediate location of the school from the internet on to a word processing program. Good planning ensured that the pupils were able to key in quickly a description of the area. The teacher's good methods of teaching ensured that there was a good pace in this lesson and most pupils achieved well. They changed the font to different sizes and colours and made decisions about placing their text to the left or right of the map or underneath. Most pupils type fairly quickly but some are still using one hand only and this slows them down considerably. All can log on and download from the web although, sometimes, they need support. In a Year 5 lesson that was planned as part of the mathematics programme, the pupils were developing well the skills of creating spreadsheets that would help them to plan and find out how much the food for a party would cost. The teacher's firm focus on the task ensured that most pupils were able to learn how to type in the formulae that would give a total for each item of food required. In discussion with the pupils, it is clear they have had experience of creating multimedia presentations and also worked on a turtle graphics program to extend their skills of giving repeat directions. They have had a little experience of using sensor equipment to analyse changes in temperature over time. Later this term, the pupils will be exchanging emails with pupils in a Mexican school. One of the teachers has a connection there and this will give the pupils a very good purpose for exchanging information with the pupils about their different experiences. All pupils have the opportunity to attend information and communication technology lunchtime clubs that take place each day and are organised by different teachers. Two after school clubs are run by the co-ordinator and another support information and communication technology teacher.

135. There is good evidence of pupils practising their information and communication technology skills through other subjects. Good links have been established through planning in English, mathematics, geography, history, music and art. This term, Year 6 pupils will be learning information and communication technology skills of sending faxes and emails through the geography program, as well as downloading information and graphics from the internet. There will also be an emphasis on creating databases and spreadsheets to analyse weather data. Good links are made with art using the Dazzle program and mathematics when the pupils use the symmetry tool to create symmetrical patterns.

136. The co-ordinator is a very experienced teacher and knowledgeable. She is a good technician and is very helpful to staff. The co-ordinator is aware of the limitations of the short time available for each class in the suite each week and is putting forward a bid for funding to resource a second suite. She ensures that the skills and knowledge of the teachers are developing appropriately as a result of the training organised in the school and knows which teachers need more support. On the day she is released from her classroom, her role is to ensure that any problems teachers are experiencing with computers are resolved either by herself or by the outside support the school receives. There are 15 computers in the information and communication technology suite and one computer in each of the 22 classrooms. At 15 computers to one pupil, the ratio of pupils to computers is higher than the national average. There is no time for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching. However, she has daily contact with the teachers and is available to support them. The assessment of the pupils' skills and knowledge is recorded by a simplistic method of indicating whether they are above average, average or below average. Nevertheless, in the close confines of the suite, the teachers are constantly assessing their pupils' ability and are very aware of each pupil's stage of learning. The subject makes a good contribution to the social and cultural development of the pupils when they learn to work together to promote their own progress. They learn about other cultures through information on the internet.

## **MUSIC**

137. In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards in music are below average. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection when, although no comparable judgement was given, pupils' musical knowledge and understanding were reported to be poorly developed. The quality of provision for

music has improved greatly since the appointment of a music specialist who has good expertise and high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. As a result, pupils enjoy their music making and their achievement is good across the school. In the previous inspection, they were reported as showing little enthusiasm for music lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language reach appropriate standards and take a full part in all musical activities and experiences. Judgements in this inspection are also based on assemblies, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.

138. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. In the 1997 inspection, it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Most lessons lacked variety of pace and activity, there were insufficient opportunities for developing skills and understanding through practical music making, planning was unsatisfactory and subject knowledge insecure. Lessons are now well planned and prepared with a wide range of musical activities that are suitably challenging. Pupils learn to sing a variety of songs from memory, including those with actions, and their singing is tuneful and controlled. In a Year 1 singing lesson, the teacher stressed the importance of posture and breathing to the quality of singing so that pupils sang a new song 'My hat it has three corners' with lively enjoyment and a good understanding of pitch and rhythm. They are also able to compose by clapping patterns, know what is meant by pulse and give their impressions of whether the music sounds happy or sad. A sense of fun and energy promoted learning well when Year 2 pupils played musical games to help them control the pitch of their voices and when they sang nursery rhymes at different degrees of pitch. 'The singing puppet' gave some pupils the confidence to sing phrases on their own but others were more reluctant. Although they are introduced to the language of music at an early age, this is not consistently reinforced and pupils' knowledge of early notation is not well developed.

139. As they move through the school, pupils make good progress in their understanding of rhythm and basic musical structure. The quality of learning is often increased because pupils' good behaviour in lessons and their interest help them to make best use of the opportunities on offer. Year 3 pupils could recognise melodic phrases in a song and play them on a metallophone although they found the longer phrases more difficult to interpret. By the end of the lesson, pupils could repeat the phrases as an introduction, interlude or ending as a result of the lively pace and the teacher's good organisation. The teacher works hard to motivate pupils and gives positive responses to their efforts which boosts confidence. This was seen in Year 4 when pupils experimented with notes of the pentatonic scale and used it to compose their own simple tunes. The teacher sensitively used their mistakes as learning points and there was a buzz of activity as pupils became engrossed in the task. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are given opportunities to listen to a variety of music in detail and to discuss their reactions. When listening to Grieg's *Peer Gynt*, pupils responded well to changes in mood and feelings but many lacked maturity when describing the emotions evoked by the music. They found it difficult to express their preferences and lacked appropriate vocabulary to evaluate music. Pupils then enthusiastically explored and experimented with different musical instruments to compose their own interpretations of the contrasting moods. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to appraise and refine their performances but their musical vocabulary is too limited. There is insufficient recording of their work and development of musical terms and notation.

140. The subject is well led and resourced. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance has been adapted to meet the school's needs. Priorities for development such as developing the playing of recorders and instruments are appropriate. Assessment is unsatisfactory as procedures are not firmly established. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning and there is plenty of listening music to enable pupils to broaden their skills in musical appreciation. There are good cross-curricular links with design and technology, information and communication technology and science as pupils explore sounds and design a musical instrument for performance. Singing is now a strength and the 54 strong choir sings at Bexleyheath centre, for the Salvation Army, at school concerts and at the Bexleyheath primary schools concert at the Festival Hall. Visitors include a drummer's workshop and the Bexleyheath Music Group. Pupils have opportunities to receive music tuition from peripatetic staff in brass, violin and woodwind. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they respond to calm, reflective music in assembly, cooperate in composing pieces and play a good range of ethnic instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. Standards of attainment are average in Years 2 and 6. At all ages, pupils achieve well, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. These findings are broadly similar to those of the last report.

142. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good, and this represents satisfactory improvement since the last report, when nearly half was good. Pupils are learning to move safely, using the space in the hall without running into each other. They carry and use the apparatus carefully, and create simple sequences in their work on movement. They understand the need for warm-up activities at the beginning of lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils did a series of warm-up exercises, running and jumping, using pushes and pulls, under the careful instruction of the teacher. They responded well to instructions and they stopped immediately when he tapped a tambourine. In the main work, they travelled on hands, feet and knees, both on the mats and on apparatus. Teachers are careful to insist that the pupils land safely when they jump from apparatus onto a mat. Year 2 were seen making up sequences of movements, and 'freezing' when told by the teacher. They use their knowledge of movement, and their imagination, well, and many take a pride in their performance, especially the ending of the sequence. Teachers keep good control in lessons and, in all those seen, pupils responded well. They behave well and are quiet when receiving instructions or watching a demonstration. Most teachers use the pupils' own performances to demonstrate and evaluate the work. In this way, everyone in the class learns well, sees how to carry out the movement, and knows how to improve his or her own performance.

143. In Years 3, to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory, with nearly half that was good. Teachers' own knowledge and understanding of the subject are good. For example, teaching and learning were good in a well organised Year 5 lesson, when pupils learnt some of the basic skills of volleyball. They watched a demonstration by the teacher, and then practised in threes, directing the ball to the pupil on either side of the receiver. By the end of the practice time, many had improved their directional skills and could send the ball to either team partner. Year 4 were observed warming up with stretching jumps, running and making as much ground as possible in the jump. This was followed by standing jumps over the mats, using their arms to give momentum. Finally, they put these together and ran round jumping over the long or short sides of the mats. There was a good pace to the lesson, and good control with pupils stopping immediately when asked. Pupils demonstrated their performances and then several suggestions and points for notice and improvement were made. More advanced skills of movement in gymnastics were seen in a Year 6 lesson. In this lesson, the teacher did the demonstrations, and pupils were very clear about what to do and how to do it. In groups, pupils performed various sequences and the teams helped each other; for example, assisting the performer to stand up after the sequence of movement. Pupils behaved well and worked hard. They performed forward and backward rolls, explored various movements on benches and mats, and travelled along the apparatus. Particular attention was drawn to the endings and pupils were asked to finish with a forward or backward roll and stand up straight afterwards.

144. Pupils in Year 6 are taught to swim, and all but a very few are able to swim at least ten metres by the time they leave the school. The physical education programme includes dance, movement, gymnastics and games. Skills are taught in these as pupils progress through the school, and more control and co-ordination are added, as they get older. They are learning the basic skills of handling and passing balls and increasing their gymnastic skills by devising sequences and adding more activities. This was clearly demonstrated in the increased skills seen in the lessons from Year 4 and Year 6 during this inspection.

145. The co-ordinator is very new to the post but has made a good start by finding out what is being done and what apparatus is available. She has already planned some new initiatives. For example, a link with the local rugby club has been made and tag rugby is about to start. Cricket is planned for the summer terms and more dance is to be added to the curriculum. At present, apparatus is adequate for the planned programme, although storage is difficult. The new co-ordinator has plans for better storage and more apparatus.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

146. In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This differs from the finding of the 1997 inspection when standards were reported to meet requirements. Although there is sound coverage of topics throughout the school, pupils' attainment in

religious education is undermined by weaknesses in their skills in speaking and writing which were not noted at the last inspection. Judgements in this inspection are based on classroom observations, analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays and discussion with teachers and pupils. The warm, inclusive ethos of the school, where pupils are strongly encouraged to develop a sense of self worth, enriches teaching and learning in religious education. All pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language take a full part in all activities and discussions and, with careful guidance, make sound progress. No differences in attainment were noticed between boys and girls or between different ethnic groups.

147. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory. This is broadly the same as the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching soundly reflects the aims of religious education in the school to support children in developing their own beliefs through exploring human experiences and religion in the contemporary world. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of some major world faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. A strong bond of trust and support between teachers and pupils promotes learning well as pupils have the confidence to ask questions and put forward their views. In Year 1, under the thoughtful direction of the teacher, pupils wrote simple thank you prayers 'for Christmas', 'for my baby sister' and in Year 2, pupils discussed their own special books and why the Bible and the Torah were important to believers. Year 2 pupils were fascinated by the teacher's imaginative use of artefacts inscribed with Hebrew lettering which developed learning well. As a result, they handled them respectfully and had a sound understanding of the rituals associated with reading the Torah scrolls. However, few could remember the key vocabulary introduced earlier in the lesson because it had not been consistently reinforced by the teacher. In these younger classes, there is insufficient evidence of teachers developing pupils' spiritual growth through observation and reflection on the beauty, order and mystery of the natural world. There is also not enough detail in recording to meet the needs of more able pupils.

148. A strength of the teaching of religious education in the school is the emphasis on the universal values and messages of different faiths and their relevance to daily life. Year 3 pupils know that Christians try to live by the example of Jesus by praying to God and thinking of others before themselves because the teacher encouraged them to share their ideas thoughtfully. Teachers also draw on pupils' family, religious and cultural backgrounds as a rich resource. In a Year 4 class, pupils learned about the festivals of Eid and Ramadan and the rituals surrounding them from another pupil. In a Year 5 class, pupils considered the importance of rules for living and devised modern equivalents of the Ten Commandments. The teacher encouraged them to build on their own experiences but many repeated the original version. Teachers generally involve pupils in their work sensitively and use challenging questions to develop their responses and their thinking. When a Year 6 teacher tried to draw out simple images of God from his pupils, few were able to offer mature opinions because of their weak skills in spoken language and their range of vocabulary. Similarly, when pupils were exploring the Lord's Prayer and the Mul Mantar, some had expressive ideas 'forgive us our bad times', 'the universe is yours', 'glory for eternity' but many simply copied words from the text without any real understanding. Artefacts are also used skilfully to stimulate pupils' interest and prompt discussion. In Year 6, symbols of Sikhism were used which made pupils think for themselves about Sikh views of God. In the previous inspection, there was a narrow range of teaching methods and insufficient attention to developing skills such as empathy and personal enquiry. This is no longer the case. However, a common weakness across the school is a lack of urgency in teaching so that many pupils relax into a too gentle pace of working and their output is not good enough.

149. The subject is satisfactorily led and well resourced. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of planning but work sampling has not taken place recently and there are no classroom observations. Targets for development are appropriate including assessment and differentiation to meet individual needs. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning. Assessment is unsatisfactory as it relies on individual teachers and marking does not always challenge pupils to extend their ideas. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they reflect quietly on traditional prayers, discuss how artefacts can be sacred to believers and gain a deeper understanding of the world's great faiths. Pupils visit Christ Church at Erith and visitors include a local Christian group, Muslim mothers and the Salvation Army. Colourful and lively displays such as Year

3's 'The Story of the Guru's Cloak' and Year 2's work on Judaism capture pupils' interest and give the subject a high profile.