

INSPECTION REPORT

RIPPLE JUNIOR SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Barking and Dagenham

Unique reference number: 101198

Headteacher: Mr G Sanders

Reporting inspector: Mrs T Chakraborti
12603

Dates of inspection: 19 – 23 March 2001

Inspection number: 197540

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Suffolk Road Barking Essex
Postcode:	IG11 7QS
Telephone number:	020 8 2704670
Fax number:	020 8 2704673
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Luby
Date of previous inspection:	22 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
(Ofsted No. 12603)	T Chakraborti	Registered inspector	Science, art, equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
(Ofsted No. 9405)	J Philbey	Lay inspector		How high are the standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How good are curricular and other opportunities? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
(Ofsted No. 27240)	W Hooper	Team inspector	English, design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
(Ofsted No. 21103)	V Ives	Team inspector	Mathematics, information technology, history, religious education, special educational needs	
(Ofsted No. 25342)	M Hanna	Team Inspector	Geography, music, physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd.
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ripple Junior School is situated in a residential area close to the town centre of Barking, in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. It serves the surrounding area, which includes largely council housing as well as some private housing. The school is multicultural, with approximately 20 per cent of the pupils coming from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being of Indian and Pakistani origin.

The school is a bigger than the average-sized junior school and has 380 pupils on roll. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs varies from year to year and this year it is above average. The number with Statements of Special Educational Needs is also higher than the national average. The school has a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including four refugee pupils. Only four pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The main languages spoken in the school are Punjabi and Urdu. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school at Year 3 is below the national average. The school experiences high pupil mobility.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides good quality education that meets the academic, social and emotional needs of most of its pupils well. Pupils make good progress across the key stage. The quality of teaching is consistently good and is a strength. The school is led and managed well by the headteacher who is supported effectively by the senior management team and governors. The school has a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities and fostering the well being of its pupils. This effective school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good, overall, and a high proportion is very good; this helps most pupils to make good progress.
- The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school is led and managed effectively. The headteacher provides a clear sense of educational direction.
- The provision for the educational and personal support and guidance for pupils is good and the procedures for child protection are implemented well.
- Financial planning supports the school's educational priorities very efficiently.
- The school monitors pupils' behaviour and attendance well.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and religious education.
- Provision for the pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Attendance; which, in spite of the school's best efforts, is too low.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development.
- Accommodation, especially the dining hall and the playground.
- Attendance.

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. The report stated that the new headteacher had made a good start which was beginning to have a positive impact on standards of achievement. The school has continued to improve over the last four years and the overall quality of education is good. Key issues from the last inspection have been addressed well. Planning is now good and ensures that the learning objectives of all lessons are stated clearly and met well. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and is good. Strategies for monitoring teaching and learning have been developed and implemented well. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The school's development plan is linked very effectively to

financial planning. Good positive procedures for monitoring behaviour have been established, ensuring that pupils work hard and do their best. Teamwork is effective and the morale of the staff is high. A good foundation for providing good quality education has now been established. Improvements so far based on the combined efforts of the staff, headteacher and governors indicate that the school's capacity to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

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

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

The standards attained by the 11 years old pupils in the 2000 national tests are below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, standards are slightly better: they are average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The variation in standards in the national test results since the last inspection is, partly, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year groups and high pupil mobility. However, overall, results have improved at a faster rate than that found nationally.

The inspection evidence finds that standards achieved at the end of the key stage are in line with the national average in English and science and below the national average in mathematics. Standards are in line with those expected of similar age pupils in all other subjects, except in religious education where standards are below expectations. Pupils make good progress when their low attainment on entry to Year 3 is taken into account. However, the progress made in religious education is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress consistently in relation to their prior attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The attitudes displayed by pupils to school life are good. They are keen to learn, and respond to class discussions and tasks responsibly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There are opportunities for pupils to take on a range of responsibilities which they carry out willingly and successfully. The relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are good.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. Too many pupils are absent without a good reason. In spite of the school's best efforts, attendance is still well below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	N/A	N/A	Good

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

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. It is consistently good across the school, with some very good and excellent teaching. Ninety-eight per cent of teaching is now at least satisfactory of which 55 per cent is good, 16 per cent very good and two per cent excellent. Only two per cent of all teaching is less than satisfactory. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when over 25 per cent of teaching was less than satisfactory. This is one of the main reasons why pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Teaching is particularly good in English and mathematics.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively. Teachers have good subject knowledge in most subjects and manage behaviour well. As a result, pupils gain in knowledge and understanding in most subjects effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well across the school by the teachers and the learning support assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning English are not always supported effectively. This limits the progress that they can make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and take a full part in lessons
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. No specialist support is available for these pupils, especially those who are at an early stage of learning English. This limits their rate of learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory, overall. The school promotes good moral, social development and satisfactory cultural development for its pupils. The provision for the spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school promotes the welfare of its pupils well through an effective support system and good links with external agencies.

The school works hard to involve parents in its life and encourages them to participate in school activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has a clear sense of educational direction and is supported very well by the senior management team and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well through the evaluation of the School Development Plan and the performance management programme.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of all staff and accommodation. Grants and other fundings are used very efficiently to address the school's educational priorities.

The school has an adequate number of staff and they are well trained. It applies the principles of best value well in all spending decisions and monitors these effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible • Children are making good progress • The teaching is good • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best • The school promotes good behaviour • Their children receive sufficient homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents do not feel comfortable about approaching the school • The school does not work closely enough with parents • Parents feel that they are not kept well enough informed about their children's progress • The school does not provide a wide enough range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. However, the team did not find any evidence to confirm the concerns about the information about pupils' progress and the provision for extra-curricular activities. The inspection concludes that the school provides good quality information for the parents about their children's progress, and also a good range of extra-curricular activities which enhance pupils' opportunities for learning and physical activities. The school works hard to involve its parents in all aspects of its life and is very appreciative of the few parents who help in school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school receives pupils from two infant schools. The analysis of their national test results indicates that the attainment on entry to the school at Year 3 is below the national average. In the 2000 national tests, 11 years old pupils attain standards that are below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, standards are average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Since the last inspection, national test results varied from year to year indicate variation in attainment from year to year. This is because of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in year groups and high pupil mobility. Overall, however, the rate of improvement in test scores since 1996 has been greater than that found nationally.
2. The inspection evidence indicates that standards achieved at the end of the key stage are in line with the national average in English and science and below the national average in mathematics. Standards are in line with those expected of nationally for 11 year olds in all other subjects, except in religious education, where they are lower than usual. Pupils make good progress in all subjects except in religious education, where progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress consistently in relation to their prior attainment.
3. By the end of the key stage, pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory and they make good progress as a result of work in English and in other subjects, such as history and science. They discuss the characters in the stories they read in lessons, for example *The Iron Man*, confidently.
4. Standards in reading are satisfactory for the majority of pupils and there are some good readers in all year groups. Most pupils enjoy books, take pleasure in reading and make good progress. Their library skills are well-developed. Many older pupils have good skills in skimming and scanning when looking for information. By the age of 11 most pupils read and enjoy a variety of books and use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. However, higher-attaining pupils are not always encouraged to choose more difficult books.
5. Standards in writing are satisfactory. By the end of the key stage, Pupils write for different purposes and audiences. Their written work is often presented well and most pupils use joined-up writing, rather than printing. The higher-attaining pupils produce pieces of extended writing to support their work in other subjects, using a range of imaginative vocabulary. Pupils are beginning to use computers more regularly to improve their work by drafting and redrafting.
6. In mathematics, pupils calculate with increasing competence. They explain the mental strategies they use to work out the answer to a sum. There is appropriate emphasis on mental and number work and pupils develop a suitable range of strategies for solving problems. They identify the denominator in a fraction and collect data to produce a bar graph successfully. Average pupils identify regular and irregular shapes and measure their perimeters accurately. Higher-achieving pupils know their multiplication tables and use number effectively when solving problems. However, higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged and do not achieve as well as they might.
7. In science, pupils gain steadily in the knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. They investigate how electric circuits are made and know that force acts in a particular direction. They explore parts of human skeleton and the functions of bones. And they know the process of food chains. Most pupils recognise the importance of fair tests in scientific experiments. Younger pupils design a fair test on evaporation and condensation. They learn about healthy food and design a healthy lunch.

8. In information technology, pupils make good progress in all aspects of work. By the age of 11 they know how to design a board game that combines text and pictures and produce a poster to advertise a play. They compare data by using bar graphs and learn to transfer a picture into a multimedia page, adding sound and text. All pupils use the Internet confidently to find out information for other subjects.
9. In religious education, pupils develop insufficient knowledge of the major world religions and, therefore, make unsatisfactory progress. This is because teachers lack sufficient knowledge and teaching emphasises personal and social education. As a result, pupils' develop positive attitudes towards relationships and values through discussions about friendships and school rules. They discuss activities that promote a healthy mind and body, with some tenuous links to the Sikh festival of Holi, but this is not sufficiently developed.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They are given work closely matched to their abilities and the targets set within their Individual Education Plans.
11. At present, pupils who are at an early stage of learning English do not receive any specialist support. This means that, although they make steady progress, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
12. There is no significant variation between the attainment of boys and girls. The school sets targets for its pupils in English, mathematics and science and reviews the targets every year to ensure that these are sufficiently challenging. It meets its set targets successfully.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons and around the school buildings are good, and have remained positive since the last inspection. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils know that they are expected to work and generally involve themselves readily in their tasks. They are eager to contribute to discussions and answer any questions posed in lessons or during assemblies. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 history lesson where pupils were discussing the differences in travel through the ages. Most pupils respond well to challenges set them in the class and maintain interest during lessons. Many persevere diligently until the task is completed. The quality of presentation in pupils' written work is often good and pupils are proud to show and discuss the results of their efforts with visitors.
14. Pupils are courteous and well-behaved in the classrooms and assemblies. Rules are displayed in classrooms and around the school. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers' explanations and instructions and to the contribution of others in group discussions and assemblies. Examples of this were seen during a Year 5 assembly when pupils sat in complete silence whilst the year group pupils performed the narrative poem, *The Highwayman*. Pupils also listen attentively to the personal issues discussed during 'circle time' and respond sensitively to them.
15. There are some parental concerns about the behaviour of pupils in the playground. The inspection finds that behaviour is satisfactory; most pupils are well behaved and play together happily. There are, however, occasional incidents where pupils behave unkindly and inconsiderately towards one another in the playground, especially at lunchtimes. The headteacher is on duty most lunchtimes to monitor such behaviour. Pupils know that they should report any form of bullying to their teachers or headteacher and are confident that they will be supported by their friends as well as the teaching staff. Nine pupils were excluded during the last school year, which is high.
16. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. The aims of the school are based on respect for one another and these are constantly promoted by class teachers through 'circle times' and assemblies. This results in most pupils having a good relationship with one another. Pupils work effectively both individually and collaboratively. A good example of this was seen in a history lesson, when pupils were working in pairs planning a report on their recent visit to the 'Ragged Schools' Museum.

17. Pupils are keen to participate in classroom routines and, when given the opportunity, show initiative and responsibility. Pupils return registers, act as classroom monitors and help in the dining hall. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced through involvement in school productions, outside trips and a Year 6 residential visit. Pupils often use their own initiative to raise money for charity. Recently the pupils packed shoeboxes for the Christmas Shoe Box appeal.
18. Attendance during 1999/2000 was unsatisfactory. The actual attendance rate for this period was well below the national average but was above the average rate of attendance for the local authority. The rate of unauthorised absence is well above the national average, despite the school's rigorous attendance procedures.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, with some very good and excellent teaching. This is one of the main reasons why pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Improving the quality of teaching has been a priority following the previous inspection, when a quarter of all lessons was judged to be less than satisfactory. The school has been successful in improving teaching: 98 per cent of teaching is now at least satisfactory of which 55 per cent is good, 16 per cent very good and two per cent excellent. Only two per cent of all teaching is less than satisfactory. This significant improvement in the quality of teaching reflects the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and the staff.
20. The quality of teaching is consistently good in English and mathematics with a large proportion being very good. This indicates that the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching is also solidly good, sometimes very good, in most other subjects. As a result, pupils make good progress throughout the school.
21. Teachers in all years prepare their lessons carefully by planning exactly what they will cover, the activities they will use and different work for most pupils with varying abilities and ages. This was evident in the majority of the lessons where the plans set out exactly what the teacher wanted pupils to learn and how the time was to be used. The well-planned range of activities during lessons help pupils to concentrate. A very good example was in a Year 3 English lesson: here the session moved quickly making it exciting and keeping pupils engaged. Lessons have a clear structure: often an introductory session is followed by activities where pupils work with others or by themselves and ends with a plenary session. These features help to ensure that the pace of learning is brisk and that pupils remain active until the end of the lesson. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson the teacher maintained a brisk pace involving pupils in their learning throughout the lesson and, as a result, pupils demonstrated very good grasp of the functions of bones in a human body by the end of the lesson. These features contribute positively to pupils' attitudes to learning and their progress. However, planning does not always take account of the higher-attaining pupils. As a result, they are not always challenged sufficiently.
22. Teachers are particularly skilled at managing pupils. This good management of pupils also means that they are ready to work, they concentrate well on what they are set and produce good amounts of work. Examples of this were seen, amongst many other lessons, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson; here pupils settled to their tasks very quickly, creating an excellent working atmosphere and produced correct bar graphs recording their mathematical data.
23. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers treat all pupils with respect as individuals but at the same time expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils respond positively by valuing their teachers and what they have to teach. This was seen in most classes where good support and relationships enabled the pupils with special educational needs to carry out their tasks effectively.

24. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and understand how to present and discuss subject material in a way that helps pupils really understand. This has a strong impact on pupils' learning. In a Year 4 music lesson, where pupils were developing singing skills, good explanation by the teacher gave pupils a clear understanding of the difference between 'steps' and 'space in notation. In most lessons, teachers' thorough knowledge and understanding of the children's learning needs lead to very good group organisation and very efficient support for all pupils. The learning atmosphere in most lessons is good. Pupils feel safe and valued and develop their reading and writing skills effectively. As a result, pupils make obvious gains in their learning.
25. Most teachers use questioning techniques effectively to assess pupils' progress in lessons and use this information for future planning satisfactorily. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 English lesson where the teacher's good method of questioning had a positive impact on pupils' writing skills. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and suggest the ways they can improve. They use homework well to enhance pupils' learning.
26. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is mostly due to a lack of subject expertise or of detailed planning. There are also weaknesses in a few otherwise satisfactory lessons where, again, a lack of subject knowledge or clear plans mean that pupils are not reaching their full potential.
27. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. Class teachers are aware of their pupils' needs and work in close conjunction with the special needs co-ordinator and support staff. Learning support and classroom assistants are deployed effectively. They are very competent and give appropriate support to these pupils. This is seen through the careful planning of lessons, the match of work to the ability of each pupil and the individual preparation of resources to support their work. There is increasing differentiation planned for them with achievable targets. A secure learning environment is achieved and good relationships are established, which enable pupils to become confident and want to improve. In addition, clear instructions build confidence and enable pupils to sustain concentration and complete the tasks set for them.
28. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning English do not receive effective support at present, as the school has no specialist teacher for these pupils. This means that, although they are supported satisfactorily in the class through appropriate group organisation, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

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

29. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided throughout Key Stage 2 and the subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Religious education is taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school endeavours to offer a good range of worthwhile opportunities for pupils that interest and motivate them and gives priority to this. Skills in information technology are now being consistently taught in specific lessons held in the ICT suite.
30. The schemes of work for all subjects have been implemented. All members of staff are familiar with them, and have a clear knowledge of what they need to do to implement them so that pupils can gain the maximum benefit from them. Teachers work in close collaboration with each other and the co-ordinators to ensure that this is maintained. The weaknesses in design technology, history and geography mentioned in the last report have all been addressed and the standards in these subjects are now higher. The school continues to make good use of available time by using links between subjects wherever this is appropriate.
31. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and they are having a positive impact on standards. The school uses the Local Education Authority Literacy scheme and has detailed provision for using this to help improve standards of literacy. The

work is carefully planned to ensure consistency throughout the school. Teachers take the opportunity to develop literacy skills in other subjects.

32. Numeracy is also promoted satisfactorily. In information and communication technology, for example, pupils use numeracy skills to help them produce bar graphs. These are generated on the computer to help them to display numerical facts in a graphic way.
33. There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal social and health education. Pupils receive education about the use of alcohol and tobacco in science, as well as in discrete personal, social and health education lessons. Years 5 and 6 pupils receive education about issues related to sex education and drugs
34. There is a broad range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits out of school, which enrich the pupils' experiences and support their learning. Good opportunities exist for pupils to participate in clubs and activities such as football and netball, musical activities, art and drama. There is a good take-up for these. Several activities take place at lunchtimes and after school, and the teachers are generous with the time that they spend on them.
35. The school has a strong commitment to equality in education and this is clearly laid out in a good policy document. Pupils who are on the special educational needs register have their needs met through their Individual Education Plans, which focus on aspects of literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. However, the support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning English is unsatisfactory, as it is difficult to obtain the specialist teacher provided by the local authority's service for ethnic minority pupils. The Individual Education Plans are prepared by the classteachers in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator and the special needs teacher. These plans are well supported by outside agencies and all who are involved with the pupil's continuing education. All pupils with special educational needs receive the full National Curriculum offered by the school with some areas of work modified for the pupil's specific needs. They are fully included in all the activities organized by the school, which supports their social and moral development well.
36. The school has good links with Eastbury Comprehensive School, which is the destination of most of the pupils. Pupils from Ripple visit Eastbury for concerts, plays, etc. Staff from Eastbury makes regular visits to make themselves known to Year 6 pupils. The school also has good links with Eastbury Infants' School as well as Ripple Infants'. There is an induction day for the new intake of pupils and their parents in the term before pupils move into Year 3, to ensure smooth transition.
37. Overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall, with some strengths and some weaknesses. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory, but the provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory. The school fulfils its statutory requirement by holding an act of collective worship each day. Planned provision for spiritual development within different subjects is not developed effectively. There is limited opportunity for developing an awareness of the many parts of life that have a spiritual dimension. Collective worship complies with statutory requirements and makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral and social development, but this is insufficient for promoting spiritual development.
38. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong and the school operates as a well ordered community where pupils know what is expected of them. The school rules occupy a prominent position in classrooms and these have been negotiated with pupils, so that they have a sense of ownership of them. These rules form an agreed code of conduct, which is clearly understood by all pupils. Good use is made of moral tales, as shown in the planning for collective worship, and issues are discussed in 'circle time'. A good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities supports the understanding of the need for rules and fair play. A reward system of personal and house points encourages a positive attitude to learning and behaviour.

39. Provision for social development is good. Adults set good examples in their relationships with each other and with the pupils, and this is reflected in the pupils' attitudes towards the staff and towards one another. Adults value each child and work effectively towards developing high self-esteem. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn to work together and live as part of a community through the annual residential trip to Trewern in Wales for Year 6 pupils. There are also satisfactory opportunities for pupils throughout the school to work together in subjects such as design technology, or in group work in literacy. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour from an early age and all teachers give pupils additional responsibilities to carry out within the classroom. Older pupils undertake additional responsibilities, such as acting as monitors at lunchtime.
40. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils to learn about the cultures represented in this country through visits to places of interest such as the National History Museum, Colchester Castle and the "Ragged Schools' Museum. As part of the religious education programme pupils go to local churches, mosques and Gurdwaras. Visitors to the school, such as the local police liaison officer, road-safety officials and parents who give talks, all serve to enrich the curriculum and broaden the pupils' horizons. Pupils study famous leaders from other countries, such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. There are good displays of pupils' work on the festival of Diwali and Indian patterns used in art. There are also some opportunities for them to appreciate and value the contribution made by other cultures to subjects such as art, music, dance and history.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school's provision for the educational and personal support and guidance of the pupils is good and compares favourably with the school's last inspection report. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. Teachers know their pupils well and understand their different personalities and pastoral needs. When difficulties arise pupils can, and generally do, turn to a member of staff of their choice for help and guidance.
42. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. The designated member of staff responsible for child protection has been fully trained and ensures that all other members of staff are aware of child protection issues. Class teachers know that any concerns should be reported immediately. The school liaises effectively with the relevant agencies when necessary. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety and two first aiders attend to pupils who are sick or distressed. Whilst the first aid room is well resourced, it does not provide a warm and comfortable environment for pupils who are feeling unwell and awaiting collection by their parents. The headteacher is aware of this concern.
43. There are good procedures for promoting pupils' discipline and good behaviour, and most pupils understand that good behaviour is expected in school. Class and playground rules are discussed with pupils at the beginning of each school year. The school has a comprehensive behaviour/discipline policy that is consistently adhered to throughout the school day. Pupils take great pleasure in receiving stickers, personal points and certificates for good work or behaviour. Friday's Celebration Assembly celebrates and recognises pupils' personal achievements. Class teachers monitor behaviour carefully during lessons and pupils understand and accept the sanctions given if they misbehave. During lunchtimes, the headteacher keeps a watchful eye on behaviour in the lunch hall and playground. Whilst lunchtime supervisors have received training from the school, relationships between them and the pupils are not always good. This results in their supervision being ineffective at times. Pupils are aware that bullying will not be tolerated. When incidents occur, they understand that they must tell a member of staff, or use the daily 'circle time' to raise the issue. The headteacher is vigilant in his efforts to eradicate bullying in the school.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality are good. Registration takes place before morning and afternoon sessions and attendance is recorded correctly in class registers. Parents are asked to phone in on the morning of their child's absence and most parents respond to this request. The school will contact the pupil's home within one day if no reason for absence has been received. Parents have been made aware of

the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. The school monitors unauthorised absences carefully and will contact the Education Welfare Officer if there is a concern. Procedures for dealing with poor punctuality are equally efficient and letters are sent to parents if their children are continually late. An attendance cup is presented each week to the class with the best attendance.

45. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development and achievement are satisfactory. Both personal, social and health education and 'circle time' for discussions are timetabled. Personal development is enhanced by many outside trips and a residential visit organised for Year 6. This enables pupils to take responsibility, make decisions and use their initiative.
46. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school has focused on assessing and recording achievements and tracking pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and are doing so effectively. Assessment procedures for other subjects are developing satisfactorily. The school has carried out an appropriate number of assessment tests, such as reading tests and optional tests, and analysed the results. The headteacher monitors pupils' work effectively. He carries out this exercise regularly and reports back both to pupils and teachers. In this way, he is able to assess progress made over time.
47. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and their progress is well tracked. Careful support and guidance is given to pupils with special educational needs and their parents. Effective use is made of outside agencies, such as the specialist intervention teacher, occupational and speech therapists and other specialists who make occasional visits.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school recognises that home/school liaison is most important. Parent's views are mainly favourable. They are pleased that their children go happily to school each morning and enjoy their lessons. Parents report that class teachers are friendly and approachable. Parents also appreciate the commitment of the headteacher and what the school seeks to achieve for their children.
49. The quality of information to parents is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The school's prospectus is of high quality, being comprehensive and clearly written for parents and pupils to understand. The prospectus does not include the current table of national test results, but they are given to parents at the annual parents' meeting. The school is now aware of this statutory requirement. Parents are most appreciative of the regular newsletters that provide information on school events and activities. Each term parents are sent detailed curriculum information from each year group to enable them to understand what their children will be learning in the classroom. They are also advised of children's homework duties and relevant sanctions if homework contracts are not adhered to.
50. A minority of parents who responded to the questionnaires felt that there was not enough information available on their children's progress. The inspection finds that this concern is not justified. Parents have the opportunity to discuss progress each term at formal consultation evenings. Class teachers are always available on specific days after school to see parents, by appointment, and sort out any concerns. In addition, teachers are in the playground each evening for informal discussion. Parents receive clear and informative annual reports that give detailed information on the progress their children are making in all subjects and suggest targets for the future. This report is timed so that parents receive them before the summer term consultation evening.
51. The school tries hard to involve parents in the life of the school and encourages any parent participation or suggestions for school activities. Most of the parents have signed the home/school agreement. Parents make a positive contribution to the standards achieved by signing their children's homework and reading diaries. The school is particularly appreciative of the few parents who help in school specifically with reading, the homework club and outside visits. The school's open day is very well supported, with parents either observing or taking part in lessons. Parents are invited to special functions such as concerts and the successful

annual school production. On the week of inspection many parents were seen enjoying a Year 5 assembly and joining their children afterwards for refreshments.

52. There is some concern amongst parents about the availability of extra-curricular activities. The school offers a number of clubs, including football, netball, guitar, art and theatre club. Many of these are over-subscribed and for some clubs pupils' names for places are drawn from a hat. In other clubs the school tries to be fair by operating a rota, ensuring that at some time all pupils who wish to participate will get a turn.
53. Parents are regularly involved in discussions with the class teachers where children have special educational needs. They are involved in reviews of the targets set in pupils' Individual Education Plans. These take place termly.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear sense of educational direction. He has established an effective partnership with the governors in which they have a shared vision of how the school can improve further and achieve high standards. Over the last four years, since his appointment, the headteacher has introduced and implemented several new initiatives, both national and individual, to improve the quality of educational provision. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher and the other members of staff. An effective senior management team has been established. All staff with management responsibilities have clear understanding of their roles. The behaviour of the pupils has improved. Appropriate planning and assessment procedures have been devised and implemented successfully. National and internal test results are consistently used to track pupils' progress over the years. Assessment of children when they enter the school is beginning to be used efficiently to monitor pupils' progress. Teaching is monitored well by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and some of the co-ordinators. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved significantly and standards are improving.
55. The governing body has a clear structure that enables it to fulfil its responsibilities. All statutory requirements are met. Regular meetings of the governing body and its committees have clear agendas and are well-minuted. Governors actively support of the headteacher and staff and are closely involved in the life of the school. The Chair and the Vice-chair visit the school regularly and have a strategic overview of the performance of the school.
56. The school has a good ethos and the aims and values of the school are reflected in its practice. It is clearly committed to high achievement and actively promotes equal opportunity in all areas of school life. The School Development Plan is an effective document for guiding school improvement. It is based upon a realistic evaluation of what needs to be done in the school and is modified appropriately as required.
57. Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. The special needs co-ordinator and support teacher are knowledgeable and work closely with the class teachers in planning, assessing and monitoring pupils' achievements. The support assistants have received appropriate training, have clear understanding of the needs of the pupils and provide effective support for these pupils. The governor overseeing special educational needs has recently left the governing body and the governors are in the process of appointing a new governor for this area.
58. Effective links are maintained with outside agencies and regular contact is maintained with parents.
59. Provision for the pupils who speak English as an additional language is unsatisfactory as the school has no specialist provision for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

60. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and classroom support staff match the demands of the curriculum. However, the school does not have a specialist teacher from Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant to support the pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. All teaching and support staff are conscientious and work very effectively as a team, contributing to the good quality of education provided. The classroom support staff are well-qualified and experienced and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress.
61. The induction programme is good and consistently applied. Newly-qualified teachers and new members of staff receive good support. In addition to the local authority training, newly qualified teachers are well supported by the deputy headteacher and colleagues. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are very good and always linked effectively to whole-school needs identified in the School Development Plan. A policy for performance management has been introduced to the staff and is being implemented successfully as planned.
62. The accommodation in the two main buildings is adequate for the curriculum to be taught effectively. Good displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment. Classrooms are bright, lively and create a welcoming environment for the pupils. Space is used effectively. There is a modern ICT suite for the teaching of information technology. This is helping to raise standards in this subject. Whilst the school buildings are attractive and well-maintained the school's dining room is depressing, unwelcoming and in a very poor decorative state. The windows in the main buildings are draughty and in need of replacement. There is a lack of shade in the playgrounds and areas where pupils can sit quietly if they wish are limited. Since the last inspection, resources for learning have improved considerably and are now good for the teaching of all subjects.
63. School administration is efficient. The school has a thorough approach to financial planning. The governors have a strategic overview of budget management. The chair of governors, who is also the chair of the finance committee, manages financial planning well, in collaboration with the headteacher. The draft budget, carefully prepared by the headteacher in consultation with staff, is presented to the governing body for approval, with appropriate reference to the School Development Plan. Grants, including that for the pupils with special educational needs are used very effectively and monitored efficiently to ensure that the educational priorities are supported well through financial planning. The governors apply the principles of best value in all spending decisions and closely monitor its impact on financial planning.
64. The deployment of teaching and support staff is effective and ensures efficient management of the school. Resources are used well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. Good use is also made of visitors and outside visits to enhance pupils' learning. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further and to improve the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- improve the standards in mathematics by ensuring that the higher attainers are challenged sufficiently; (*paragraphs 2, 74*)
- improve the standards in religious education by increasing the subject knowledge of the teachers; (*paragraphs 2, 116*)
- improve the provision for the pupils who speak English as an additional language and at an early stage of learning English by providing appropriate support for developing their English language skills; (*paragraphs 11, 28, 59*)
- improve the provision for promoting pupils' spiritual development effectively by planning for this in assemblies and subject areas; (*paragraph 37*)
- improve attendance by applying the existing monitoring procedures more rigorously to reduce unauthorised absence. (*paragraph 18*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

65

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	16	55	25	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		380
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		137

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		85

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	58

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	46	42	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	25	32
	Girls	33	23	33
	Total	62	48	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (59)	55 (72)	74 (79)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	27	35
	Girls	30	24	33
	Total	51	51	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (56)	58 (72)	77 (78)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	16
Black – African heritage	22
Black – other	24
Indian	31
Pakistani	24
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	259
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	15	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.2
Average class size	31.7

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	174

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	773186
Total expenditure	747792
Expenditure per pupil	1979
Balance brought forward from previous year	57804
Balance carried forward to next year	83198

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

380

Number of questionnaires returned

134

Per centage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	51	8	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	49	8	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	52	10	3	1
The teaching is good.	39	52	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	49	15	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	40	8	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	35	4	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	46	14	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	45	39	6	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	49	6	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	38	17	9	7

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

ENGLISH

66. In last year's national tests, results in English were below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 or above (70 per cent) was below the national average as was the percentage reaching the higher than expected Level 5 (14 per cent). Pupils in the present Year 6 attain satisfactorily and standards are broadly in line with the national expectation. Literacy standards are sound. Many pupils come into school with underdeveloped skills in English, but they make good progress in all aspects of the subject, especially in reading. In writing and in reading the overall trend is towards a raising of standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The standard observed in reading during the inspection was sound. Standards in writing are improving, particularly in the basic skills of punctuation, spelling and handwriting.
67. At the end of the key stage, speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. The development of language is well planned. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and this is enhanced by work in other subjects such as religious education and science. Year 4 pupils can discuss characters in works such as *The Iron Man* with confidence and support their opinions by reference to the text. However, little use was made during the inspection of drama or role-play to extend pupils' skills in these areas.
68. Standards in reading are sound for the majority of pupils and there are some very able readers in all year groups. Most pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. The school does not use one specific reading scheme but, instead, pupils are encouraged to use a variety of books appropriate to their ability level. This is carefully monitored and ensures that pupils make good progress. Pupils' library skills are well-developed and some pupils belong to a public library. Most pupils are able to use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and information. Some pupils have very good reading standards and they have good skills in skimming and scanning when looking for information. Pupils of average attainment are able to read and enjoy a variety of books and have well-established reading strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words.
69. Standards in writing are sound for the majority of pupils in all year groups. By the end of Key Stage 2 writing is often presented well, with virtually all pupils being able to join-up letters rather than printing. Pupils can write for a variety of purposes and audiences depending on the subject they are writing about. The higher-attaining pupils write about, and illustrate, their ideas very well. Many produce pieces of extended writing to support their work in other subjects, using a more formal style where appropriate. In Year 4, a stimulating lesson on *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes engaged the pupils' interest and developed their speaking and listening skills, as well as giving them a better understanding of using the evidence found in the text to support their views. Pupils in Year 6 produced some excellent and lively pieces of work with careful choice of a range of words. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 are clear about the difference between a dictionary and a thesaurus and can make effective use of both. The vocabulary choices of more able pupils are imaginative and words are used precisely. However, not all pupils are able to organise simple and complex sentences into paragraphs. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation. In some work, a range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is used accurately. The range of written work is good, and some good imaginative work seen, such as the retellings of the 'Sir Gawain and the Loathly Lady'. Pupils are beginning to use computers more regularly to develop their work by drafting and redrafting and some good examples of this were seen in a Year 5 class. Raising standards in writing is a priority in the School Development Plan and the school is well on course to reach its target.
70. The quality of teaching is good, overall. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is good or better in 58 per cent of lessons, and in 25 per cent it is very good or better. Teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the teaching of English and they teach the basic skills of reading and writing well. Teaching is effective in small groups and with the whole class. The

teaching of creative writing is good and the approach to planning for the Literacy Hour is very effective. In the most successful lessons, pupils make very good progress because of the pace and rigour of the work, the high quality of questioning and the exciting range of activities. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and Individual Education Plans and learning support are available. Work is marked frequently. There are some examples of very good marking that enables pupils to identify areas for development. Assessment procedures are good and are beginning to have a positive impact on the planning of teaching. Information about what individual pupils can do is used effectively in the planning.

71. Learning is monitored very effectively in English, helping pupils to make good progress. There is generally, a good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils and this helps the majority of pupils to progress well. Pupils with special educational needs are given support that enables them to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The support provided for the pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is inadequate and as a result they do not make satisfactory progress. Higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. This means that they do not always reach their full potential.
72. Pupils of all ages approach their work confidently and with enthusiasm. The majority of younger pupils can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and they read all kinds of books with pleasure. Older pupils understand how to use reference books to access information and they enjoy research work. There is a good system of reading diaries, which fosters links between home and school and helps to give parents information about their children's progress.
73. There are well-chosen resources for work in all aspects of literacy. The library is used effectively for both individual and class learning and is in a convenient location. The school's determination to provide resources and good quality planning have contributed well to the standards observed during the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

74. Pupils enter the school with below average standards of attainment. The proportion of 11 year-olds reaching the expected standards (Level 4) in the 2000 National Curriculum tests was below the national average and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. There had been a steady improvement in results from 1996 until the year 2000, when there was a significant dip. A number of appropriate strategies have been put in place to address this. The results have been carefully assessed and analysed. This showed a higher proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs in this year group and a higher number of absentees amongst pupils who were likely to achieve average standards. In spite of this, pupils exceeded the targets set for them by the school and the local authority. Inspection findings for the current Year 6 indicate that, although standards are improving, they are still below the national average. Standards are, however, close to the target the school has set. Taking account of the low attainment on entry to Year 3, most pupils are making good progress.
75. Progress is good, overall, throughout the school. Pupils manipulate numbers with increasing competence. There is appropriate emphasis on mental and number work and pupils develop a suitable range of strategies for solving problems. This is closely linked to the good teaching and thorough planning of the subject that is modified to match pupils' knowledge and understanding. Resources are well prepared, accessible and support the planned activities. Mathematical skills are built upon from year to year. For example, in Year 3, pupils identify the denominator in a fraction and in Year 4, they collect data to produce successfully a bar graph. In Year 5, pupils explain articulately the mental strategies they use to work out the answer to a sum, while in Year 6, average-achieving pupils identify regular and irregular shapes and measure their perimeters accurately. Higher-achieving pupils know their multiplication tables and use number effectively when solving problems. Scrutiny of work shows that they understand fractions, decimals and percentages and their equivalents. However, these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged as the school focuses more on the attainment of the average and below-average pupils in order to reach the targets in national tests at the end of

the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs are given work closely matched to their abilities and receive extra, effective, support from both teachers and support assistants. They make good progress when taking account of their previous learning. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are not supported effectively, as the school does not have any provision from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.

76. Learning skills are generally good. Pupils are nearly always ready to apply intellectual and creative effort in class, as a result of their own positive attitudes, the clear learning ethos in the school and the good relationships that teachers maintain and foster in class. They show interest and sustain concentration well. The majority of pupils understand what they are doing and know how to improve their work, because of the clear instructions given and the targets set by themselves and their teachers. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and most enjoy their lessons. There are good relationships in all classes and personal development is fostered well. In all lessons, the majority of pupils co-operate and collaborate well with a partner. Throughout the school, pupils take pride in the presentation of their work.
77. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with instances of very good teaching. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Pupils remain focused on a task through the brisk pace and the high standards of work and behaviour expected. Teaching builds systematically on pupils' previous knowledge and work is explained clearly. There are good opportunities for pupils to further develop their speaking and listening skills and to use the correct mathematical terminology; for example, by explaining what they have learned and how they reached the answer. This is a distinct improvement since the last inspection, which reported that pupils were not given enough opportunity to explain their understanding of what they were doing. Teachers plan well together in year groups. Their planning is thorough and detailed and includes clear learning intentions, supported by well-prepared resources. Praise is used effectively to show pupils that their work is valued and to encourage higher standards. All the teachers speak clearly and provide good role models of spoken English. They have secure subject knowledge; most explain concepts precisely. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that there is much good teaching. The majority of teachers mark the pupils' work thoroughly, make regular comments to encourage and give effective suggestions for improvement. Homework is set regularly and suitably supports and reinforces pupils' learning in the classroom.
78. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully satisfies statutory requirements. Numeracy is developed appropriately in other subjects, for example, through collecting data on a bar graph in science; the use of time-lines and investigating Roman numerals and coins in history and by using a program for controlling commands and storing sequences set by the pupils to create a shape or pattern in information and communication technology.
79. The subject is managed well by a knowledgeable co-ordinator, who has planned meticulously for its development. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of number skills. The scheme of work is closely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy programme and the school's own needs. The co-ordinator monitors the subject by observing lessons and discussing strengths and areas for improvement with staff. Teachers' planning is checked through regular monitoring of pupils' work. Good use is made of assessment. Resources are adequate for the effective teaching of the curriculum, they are well organised and easily accessible.

SCIENCE

80. Results in last year's national test show that, by the end of the key stage, pupils attain standards that are well below the national average. An analysis of the last five years' national test results show that standards improved steadily since 1996 but show some decline since 1999. In comparison with similar schools, however, standards are slightly better. An analysis of test results indicate that this is partly due to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, high pupil mobility and pupil absence.

81. The inspection finds that the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 6 are in line with the national average. This indicates an improvement in attainment since the last inspection. This is due to increased teacher expertise and good coverage of all the elements of the subject.
82. Pupils throughout the school gain steadily in knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the subject. In Year 6, pupils investigate electric circuits to show why a light bulb can be brighter or dimmer. Most show a clear understanding of how electricity flows through the wires and what are conductors and insulators. They experiment effectively to show how plants grow, applying the principles of a fair test, and describe the process of food chains, referring correctly to 'prey' and 'predators'. Most develop well a clear understanding of gravitational attraction. They know about the use of newtons to measure the pull of gravity and that the bigger the mass the greater is the pull of gravity. In Year 5, pupils explore parts of human skeleton and the functions of bones in protecting and supporting different parts of human body. They investigate the 'rotating' and 'open and shut' movements of joints, using a plastic model of a skeleton, and relating this to their own body movements. They learn that force acts in a particular direction and friction is an invisible force that slows the movements of objects down. Year 4 pupils learn the importance of fair tests in scientific experiments to reach accurate results. They design successfully a fair test on evaporation and condensation to show how things evaporate quicker. They know that light travels in a straight line and experiment, to establish through which objects light passes, differentiating between transparent, translucent and opaque objects. In Year 3, pupils learn about food groups, such as carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals, and design a healthy lunch. They differentiate correctly between living and non-living things and study minibeasts, such as caterpillars, butterflies and stick insects.
83. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and this helps to sustain the progress that pupils make. Lessons are planned thoroughly, and clear learning objectives are highlighted for pupils at the start of each lesson. In the most successful lessons pupils and resources are managed well. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson where the teacher used resources very effectively to explain the functions of bones and joints and intervened efficiently to make some pupils aware of the behaviour code, when they did not concentrate well. Teachers' skilful questioning techniques encourage thinking and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. Expectations are high and activities are challenging, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where pupils had to establish through experiment why a light bulb was brighter or dimmer. In many lessons very good planning and teaching ensured that pupils developed investigative skills well.
84. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work effectively and ensures appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum programme for science. Her role in monitoring teaching is at very early stage of development. The headteacher monitors teaching and staff receive useful written feedback from him. This has a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Although some recording and tracking of pupils' progress is in place, assessment procedures are in the process of development. National test results are analysed but the results are not yet used consistently to inform planning. The science policy has been reviewed and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme is being adopted. Resources are good.

ART AND DESIGN

85. At the age of 11, pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally of pupils of this age. The standards been maintained at a similar level since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress throughout the key stage, gaining in knowledge and understanding of various techniques of painting and sculpture and the use of a variety of medium to achieve the desired effect.
86. Pupils in all years use a wide range of medium and techniques successfully in their work. Most are good at colour matching and mixing and can produce attractive artwork using pastels, crayons, pencils and paint. Pupils in Year 6 learn screen painting and produce sculptures of figures using newspaper and masking tape, twigs and tissue paper. They explore and sketch

the sculptures of three-dimensional art at the Tate Gallery, mixing different hues of the same colour. Sketchbooks are used effectively across the school for observational drawings, free drawings to express pupils' own experiences, and designing masks. Pupils in Year 4 use a variety of pencils to create light and dark shades. They experiment with different surface textures to design a printing template to produce collograph print. In Year 3, pupils work at creating 'mosaic tiles' linked appropriately with their history topic on 'Romans'. They choose their own patterns or pictures from books on the Romans and learn to make effective use of colours, tones and shades to represent different parts of patterns or pictures. Year 5 pupils explore Aboriginal paintings, during a day with an Australian teacher. Pupils are given opportunities to study some past and contemporary famous artists, but this area is not sufficiently developed.

87. Only two art lessons were seen during the inspection. Based on the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, as well as the lessons observed, teaching is judged to be good. Teachers plan well and create a positive atmosphere that enables pupils to concentrate and produce their best efforts. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work, discuss it in depth and behave well.
88. The co-ordinator, in post since September 2000, has a clear vision of how to improve standards in this subject. There are no formal assessment or recording procedures in place. However, a portfolio of pupils' past work is kept, which records some good quality work produced by pupils across the school. The co-ordinator monitors medium-term planning and intends to start using the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work in the near future. Resources are good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Little teaching of design technology took place during the period of the inspection, but in the lessons seen teaching was good or better. Taking into account examples of work from the previous year and photographic evidence, standards are judged to be in line with those expected of 11 year olds nationally. This indicates a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils recognize that their designs have to meet a range of different needs and can clarify ideas when asked. They use labelled sketches and models to communicate the details of their designs. They think ahead about the order of their work, choosing appropriate tools, equipment, materials, components and techniques. They are also able to select and work with a range of tools and a variety of materials. They evaluate their designs by identifying what is working well and what needs to be improved.
90. There are attractive displays of 'Monsters' that Year 3 pupils have built, incorporating pneumatic mechanisms to enable them to open their jaws. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they are able to build vehicles that incorporate hydraulic controls to enable the platforms to be raised. A very good lesson was observed in Year 5 in which pupils were using cams to create movement in toys. They have a good knowledge of the effect of the various types of cam on the movement of the parts of the toy. Pupils are able to develop designs that show awareness of constraints, produce step by step plans and evaluate their designs when completed, but they do not generate a range of alternative designs that they then evaluate before settling on their final design.
91. The subject co-ordinator has been in post since 1999 and liaises with co-ordinators of other subjects so that suitable cross-curricular links can be made. The subject is well managed and planning for future progress is good. The school has adopted the scheme developed by the Local Education Authority. The co-ordinator has chosen appropriate topics for each year group and is very active in developing her colleagues' skills, as well as her own. Resources are adequate and accessible. The co-ordinator is very aware that the subject needs to be accessible to all pupils. She has made provision for pupils who find it difficult to manipulate tools by ensuring that suitably adapted versions are available for them to use. However, monitoring of pupils' progress is still not fully in place. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in this subject is now planned and in the process of being implemented.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Further evidence was gathered from an analysis of pupils' previous work and discussion with a group of pupils. The available evidence indicates that standards in geography are similar to those achieved nationally by pupils of the same age. This marks an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below those expected nationally.
93. Good progress is evident from the range of work in books. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Geographical enquiry skills develop well. Scrutiny of work shows that the youngest pupils can describe and compare features between Barking and Walton on the Naze. They are able to compare some of the features of their immediate locality with those of The Chase, an environmental study centre, which they have studied as a contrasting locality. They can identify buildings in the local area from an aerial photograph and can label cities in the UK on a map. Pupils in Year 4 compare contrasting localities further afield; they compare the key features of tropical and continental climate. They are aware of how the environment have an impact on people and places outside the United Kingdom. In Year 5, pupils can explain the journey of a river satisfactorily and identify key features such as estuary, tributary and confluence. They demonstrate sound map-reading skills by using grid references to find tributaries in a local river. In a study of world climate, pupils in Year 6 can describe features of the Polar Regions, the Sahara desert and India, and make comparisons with the United Kingdom. They can compare similarities and differences between Bangalore and Bombay. They use grid references to find these places on a map. They develop fieldwork techniques on an annual residential trip to Trewern, a field study centre in Wales.
94. The quality of teaching, as seen in the Year 4 lesson, was good. The lesson was well planned, with an effective introductory session that the teacher used to establish understanding and prepare pupils for the tasks that followed. Maps, photographs and an overhead projector were used effectively. The teacher used geographical vocabulary, such as *settlement*, *climate*, *environment* and *landscape* so that pupils were confident of its meaning and use. Pupils were able to use skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions about climate and settlement in the United Kingdom. They were able to present their findings in a visual way.
95. Pupils showed enjoyment during the lesson; they demonstrated that they could think through their answers and draw conclusions from evidence. They were attentive and responsive and worked equally well individually or in pairs, either studying the atlas or presenting their findings on a map. Overall, pupils' response to geography is good. When they are provided with stimulating and interesting work, they achieve satisfactorily.
96. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. There is a policy and scheme of work in place, which offers helpful guidance to teachers and shows the skills and progression needed across the four years. She has begun to develop a portfolio of pupils' work and is continuing this useful exercise. She orders relevant resources to make lessons effective and interesting. These are stored centrally and are easily accessible to teachers.

HISTORY

97. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards that are typical for pupils of the same age. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was below national expectations. Additional evidence is taken from an analysis of pupils' previous work in books and on display, scrutiny of photographs of a visit, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing historical skills of enquiry and in their understanding of the passage of time. Pupils who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

98. It is clear from the scrutiny of work that pupils generally build their knowledge and skills on their previous learning. By the end of the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in deepening their knowledge about historical periods. They learn to look closely at artefacts, pictures and photographs and make relevant historical inferences. For example, in Year 6, pupils were able to identify evidence as to how people lived and the difficulties they experienced by looking at pictures, visiting a museum and handling artefacts of people and events during the Blitz. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by visits to specialist museums that enhances their first-hand experience of what it was like to live during the war and in the 1930s. In addition, pupils in Year 5, visited a museum to support effectively their learning about the Victorians. They were able to handle artefacts and enact scenes from the past through role-play to help them to understand the contrast between school life then and now. A scrutiny of work in Year 6 shows that pupils research relevant information, for example, to discover information about wartime leaders. Information technology supports the pupils' learning in history well. Teachers' marking is satisfactory and most pupils take great care in their presentation of facts and in drawing and illustrating their work.
99. There are appropriate links with other subjects. For example, in English, pupils in Year 6 imagine that they are evacuated during the war and send a letter home describing their experiences. Pupils in Year 4 enact a mock Olympic games to support their learning of the ancient Greeks.
100. The co-ordinator has recently been appointed and it is too early to judge her impact on the subject. She is currently developing a new scheme of work to assist teachers' planning. Teachers in the same year group plan well together. Targets for assessment are not yet written into the planning. Resources are adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain the expected standards for their age. Although this is a similar judgement to that made last time, pupils' skills are better, keeping pace with improved standards nationally. Until recently pupils had limited opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in using information technology because of a lack of equipment and limited teacher expertise.
102. Regular lessons in the newly-opened computer suite are having a very positive impact on the standards pupils achieve and upon their progress. Pupils across the school, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. They quickly develop skills in Year 3, learning to use the mouse to move and control pictures. They learn how to design a board game that combines text and pictures. In Year 4, pupils combine a number of features to produce a poster to advertise a play. In Year 5, pupils compare data by using bar graphs, while in Year 6, pupils use a program effectively and transfer a created picture into a multimedia page and then add sound and text. All pupils use the Internet with confidence to support their work.
103. Overall, the quality of teaching is consistently good. This is due largely to the teachers' keenness to improve their skills and the co-ordinator's support in some lessons. Teachers give clear explanations of the skills to be learned and tasks to be accomplished; expectations are high, subject knowledge is good and help is given quickly to pupils. Pupils are keen and enjoy using information technology. They listen well to their teachers' instructions and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are managed well and relationships are good; teachers are patient and encouraging. Pupils respond well to their questions and are keen to find out more. Lessons are suitably planned from a local authority-based scheme of work. This provides teachers with good guidance, which is well-matched to their own levels of expertise. Sufficient time is allocated to the subject. Information and communication technology supports other subjects adequately. For example, in religious education Year 5 pupils make good use of a control program to devise Rangoli patterns, while in Year 4, pupils use Logo for mathematical investigations.

104. The subject co-ordinator is efficient and enthusiastic and has raised the staff's confidence and competence in teaching the subject. She supports teachers effectively, providing a valuable resource for the school. Due to good leadership, the subject has continued to develop well since the last inspection. The school is very well-resourced and has both Internet and Intranet access. Worthwhile plans are in place to use grants under the National Grid for Learning to support and continue to train staff to become more competent and confident in their teaching.

MUSIC

105. The school is maintaining the satisfactory standards reported at the time of the last inspection. By the time pupils leave school, at the age of 11, standards are typical of those found nationally.
106. The progress made by pupils in music is good. This marks an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory. There are opportunities for singing and good instruction in pitch, rhythm and expression. Pupils sing regularly in assemblies to guitar or piano accompaniment. There are also opportunities for listening to and acquiring familiarity with the works and styles of famous composers through the music played in the daily assembly. In Year 6, pupils are beginning to read music and learn how to sight sing. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in school performances every term.
107. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. In both, the quality of teaching was good. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and give clear instructions. Consequently, pupils make good progress. In Year 4, pupils are able to identify the phrase in a song where there are repeated notes. They are competent in the use of musical language and, through careful instruction, are able to identify the difference between a step and a space on a piece of music. In Year 6, through careful instruction, pupils identify ways to refine their vocal performance through pitch and phrasing. Teachers are able to demonstrate musical techniques and styles competently, and pupils remain completely engaged in the lessons.
108. Pupils' response to music in lessons and assemblies is one of involvement and enjoyment. Pupils are motivated to learn and are given the opportunity to develop their musical talent in a spirit of teamwork. Pupils listen with interest and concentration and are able to sing and perform together confidently. They work together in small groups and appreciate each other's efforts.
109. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She is trained formally in music and provides good leadership and management of the subject. The scheme of work clearly shows how knowledge and skills are to be taught over four years and provides useful guidance for teachers. Each classroom has a set of percussion instruments. Tuned and untuned instruments are stored centrally and are easily accessible. Teaching of the subject is shared between classroom teachers. Tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers for pupils who wish to learn clarinet, trumpet, violin and flute further enhances provision. Several members of staff play instruments, and this contributes to the musical ethos of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. The satisfactory standards reported at the time of the last inspection are being maintained. By the time they leave school, at the age of 11, standards in physical education are similar to those attained nationally by pupils of this age.
111. All pupils have opportunities for gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. In the summer term, Year 6 pupils go on a residential trip to Trevern, an outdoor activity centre in Wales, to pursue outdoor activities such as caving, swimming and rock-climbing. The school is involved in the national 'Top Sport' initiative to improve the teaching of games.

112. The progress made by pupils during lessons is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory. Year 3 pupils are able to plan and carry out a task effectively in small groups. They evaluate and refine their plan. In Year 4, pupils can complete an orienteering task by using a range of problem solving skills, including observing and comparing. Pupils in Year 6 are able to demonstrate an awareness of tactics by developing their fielding skills during an outdoor batting game in teams.
113. Teaching in the lessons observed was good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well managed in clear stages, and are carefully planned to build upon the skills learnt during the previous work. Pupils are given tasks with an increased level of challenge. The good range of resources is carefully organised and used effectively. Explanations are clear and teachers made good use of demonstration. Lessons move at a brisk pace with no time wasted. Teachers pay appropriate attention to safety issues and make sure that pupils are suitably dressed. In the very good lesson seen pupils were encouraged to evaluate their performance and identify what made it effective.
114. The pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and make great efforts to achieve and perform well. They are well-behaved and attentive between activities. They work well individually and in small groups. They are able to get into teams quickly and efficiently. They respect one another's contribution during the team activities and have a good sense of fair play.
115. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provides good leadership and management of the subject. She supports teachers well by preparing medium-term planning. This provides a valuable resource for the school. She arranges regular visitors to the school, including a professional dance company who led a workshop on the 'Lindy Hop' for Year 6. Subsequently, one of the classes demonstrated this in an assembly with a 1940's theme. The policy and scheme of work offer helpful guidance to teachers and show the skills that are to be taught during the four years. Work is monitored to ensure that planning is implemented. Resources are centrally located and accessible.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. By the end of the key stage, standards attained by pupils are below those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. This is a reversal since the last report. No judgement was then given in relation to standards attained by pupils, owing to the lack of evidence that was available. The lessons observed and other evidence, including samples of work and weekly planning, show that the subject is not taught sufficiently in its own right. It is too closely linked to personal, social and health education. Teachers' weekly planning lacks religious content and does not always reflect the guidance in the scheme of work.
117. Pupils develop insufficient knowledge of the practices of major world religions, although an appropriate emphasis is given to the study of Christianity. Pupils of all ages, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make unsatisfactory progress in acquiring religious knowledge, but good progress in moral and social understanding. Pupils' current work reflects good progress in developing positive attitudes towards relationships and values through discussions about friendship and school rules. In Year 5, pupils discuss activities that promote a healthy mind and body, with reference to the Sikh festival of 'Hola Mohalla', but this is not sufficiently developed. Pupils in Year 6 show little understanding of the events leading up to Easter.
118. The majority of pupils are well behaved and attentive during lessons. They listen well to the story-telling and participate in class discussions, for example, when contributing factors that lead to conflict and argument in Year 3. Pupils usually show respect, for example, when they listen in assembly to a teacher's experiences as a child. Relationships with teachers are good.

119. Overall, the quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. However, many teachers have insecure subject knowledge. This is reflected in their planning and lack of expertise in this subject. They interact well with pupils and make good use of questioning to encourage them to develop their thoughts. This keeps them focused and interested in what is being discussed. The use of collective worship and lessons on personal, social and health education reinforce pupils' social and moral development, but does not appropriately foster their spiritual development. Pupils' individual needs are met and the teachers' caring approach builds up pupils' confidence and self esteem. The use of role-play and drama makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to places of worship. For example, pupils in Year 3 visit the local church; in Year 4 they visit a mosque; and in Year 6 they visit the Gurdwara, a Sikh Temple.
120. The subject is soundly managed. The co-ordinator has recently developed a scheme of work that is linked appropriately to themes suggested in the locally agreed syllabus. Resources are adequate, including multicultural artefacts that enhance teaching of other religions in the world.