

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WILLIAM BYRD SCHOOL**

Victoria Lane, Harlington

LEA area: London Borough of Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102401

Headteacher: Mr Paul Lake

Reporting inspector: Mr G S Bignell  
OFSTED No. 1880

Dates of inspection: 1 - 4 July 2002

Inspection number: 197574

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Victoria Lane Harlington Hayes Middlesex
Postcode:	UB3 5EW
Telephone number:	020 8759 9688
Fax number:	020 8754 8058
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Franks
Date of previous inspection:	22 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1880	Garry Bignell	Registered Inspector	Physical education Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1311	Barry Wood	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1616	Philip Schofield	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Equal opportunities	
27635	Diana Cinamon	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematics Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15971	Michael Pye	Team inspector	History Geography	
10543	David Dewhurst	Team inspector	Science Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

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
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>31</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

William Byrd is a two-form entry primary school with 443 pupils on roll, including a part-time nursery class with 31 children. There are more boys than girls in each year group, except Reception. The school has a very mixed ethnic population which, although mainly white UK, includes substantial numbers of Indian children and smaller numbers from many other backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, there were 25 refugee pupils and five Travellers. Overall 44 per cent of pupils speak a home language other than English, which is very high when compared with other schools. 21 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals - this figure is broadly in line with the national average. About 20 per cent of pupils have been identified with special educational needs and three have statements - these figures are slightly below the national average. The most common area of need is in language and communication. Pupils enter the school with low standards of social and speaking skills.

Significant features of the school are the levels of pupil mobility and staff turnover. The number of pupils who leave and enter the school during the year is very high compared with other primary schools. The level of mobility can be up to 20 per cent per year; of the last Year 6 cohort of 53 pupils, only 43 had been at the school since the start of Year 3 and fewer still had been at the school during Key Stage 1. Teaching staff changes have also resulted in some classes having several teachers during the past year. Last year over half the teaching staff were new to the school.

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

William Byrd is an effective school which promotes the achievement of all its pupils. The quality of education, including teaching, is good and pupils make good progress from low starting points. Standards are improving over time. Leadership and management are developing strengths and the school provides good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good in many classes
- Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress
- Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their approach to learning are mainly very good
- Provision for pupils' personal, especially their social and moral, development is good
- The leadership and impetus given to the school by the headteacher and senior staff are strong
- The school's successful efforts to build an increasingly strong relationship with parents

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

- Standards in English, especially in handwriting and spelling, are lower than they should be
- Higher-attaining pupils do not make the same good progress as other pupils in their class
- Attendance and punctuality levels are much lower than many other schools
- The school's forward planning towards achieving its goals, including the assessment of future resource needs, is underdeveloped

*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 previously inspected in 1997 and since then overall improvement has been good. All key issues have been addressed, although concerns remain about standards in aspects of English. The quality of teaching is now much better and provision for learners of English as an additional language is now good. Arrangements for the teaching of music and the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship are now in place. Indeed, standards in music, art, reading and information and communication technology are all now higher than last reported. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be developed in future and the school has the capacity to make the required improvements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	C	E	D
Mathematics	C	A	D	C
Science	B	B	E	D

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

Baseline assessment of the youngest children entering the school shows performance to be below average across a range of measures, especially in communication and social skills. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with those of pupils in other schools with similar prior attainment and family backgrounds. In reading and mathematics, the trend of improvement is better than the national trend. Standards in history and geography are below those expected.

By the time pupils leave the school at age 11, standards are comparable with those in similar schools, except in English and science where they remain below. This is due in part to the unsatisfactory progress made by more able pupils, resulting in a lower than average number achieving higher levels. Work seen in science confirms standards are improving. Handwriting and spelling are weak skills throughout the school. For the most part, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well. Targets set by the school are challenging, though achievable with continued good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn and respond well to good teaching.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good and improving as pupils progress through the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Initiative and personal responsibility are developing well. Relationships throughout the school support good learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, despite recent improvements.

With the exception of attendance, this is an area of significant strength and one in which the school has put considerable effort in recent years. Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of school are very positive and their relationships with staff and with each other support their learning and help them to achieve well. There is a calm, happy and friendly school environment with a developing work ethic.

Attendance and punctuality have declined since the last inspection. Some pupils have a poor attendance record which impedes their progress at school. Unauthorised absence has increased to a very high level, due in part to holidays being taken during term time. Some parents regularly bring their children to school late and this delays the start of learning in the mornings. This is an area for action by the school and by parents.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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 much better now than at the time of the previous inspection. Only one in twenty-three lessons observed was judged unsatisfactory compared to one in six in 1997. There is strong teaching in each key stage with particular strengths in some of the Foundation Stage classes and in Year 2. Teaching in Year 6 is never less than good and some is of very high quality. Unsatisfactory teaching is concentrated in a small minority of teachers and the school has taken steps to remedy this situation in the future. In the best lessons, good subject knowledge and effective teaching methods result in good progress by all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language benefit from the specialist help they receive and the care taken by teachers to cater for their needs. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced effectively in other subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, and good for Foundation Stage. It has breadth, balance and meets the needs of pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Support is well targeted and ensures good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Specialist help is of good quality and classroom activities are adapted to suit pupils' stage of English development.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Particular strengths in moral and social development where staff present good role models and clear boundaries are drawn to enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong. The school ethos strongly supports this provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school is a supportive and caring place. Better monitoring and recording of pupils' personal development is needed. Assessment of pupils' learning is better in some subjects than others.

The school has maintained these areas as overall strengths. All parts of the curriculum now meet statutory requirements. There are good opportunities to learn from the role-play areas in Foundation Stage classes. Assessment of pupils' progress is good in the foundation stage and in English and mathematics, but is underdeveloped elsewhere. More systematic recording of pupils' personal and academic progress is needed in a school where there is a high turnover of staff and pupils.

Great efforts have been made to strengthen the involvement of parents in the school and these are now beginning to show results. The "reading army" and the improved quality of information provided to parents are examples of good practice. Parents feel more welcome in the school and find the staff approachable.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Several senior staff are new in post, including the headteacher. Initiatives to improve the quality of provision and, consequently, to raise standards are bringing tangible benefits.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are becoming familiar with and are developing their role. They receive good information to assist decision-making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are robust self-evaluation and review procedures in place. Action points enable weaknesses to be addressed.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Staffing and accommodation are used sensibly. Whole school planning is short-term at present.

At the time of the inspection, staffing levels were adequate for all classes and the allocation of support staff to year groups was making a substantial contribution to the good learning across the school. Given the recruitment difficulties experienced by the school, the senior team has done very well to maintain a good standard of teaching and learning. Accommodation is sufficient for the needs of the curriculum, though some internal re-modelling of space could have been more thoughtfully done. Learning resources are variable in quality: good in physical education, unsatisfactory in history and geography but satisfactory in most other subjects; the book stock in the library needs replenishing and there are old computers in some classrooms.

There is an awareness of best value and the need to secure high quality outcomes from limited resources. These principles now need to be applied to longer-term planning which will enable the school to plot a course towards achieving its goals in years to come.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The welcoming and approachable nature of the school and staff</li> <li>The high expectations staff have of children</li> <li>The way the school is led and managed</li> <li>The quality of teaching and learning in most classes</li> <li>The behaviour of children at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of extra-curricular activities provided</li> <li>Information provided by the school about children's progress</li> <li>The high turnover of teaching staff</li> </ul>

Inspectors broadly agree with the positive views of parents. The questionnaire results were overwhelmingly in support of the school. Similarly positive views were expressed at the parents' meeting and in the majority of written comments received.

The high expectations of staff are offset to some extent by the insufficient challenge presented to higher-attaining pupils in some classes. This is an area for improvement.

Inspectors considered the comments by parents about after-school clubs and found that provision is generally satisfactory and no worse than in many primary schools. The fact that most activities are offered mainly to older pupils may be a reason for the comment. Annual reports and home-school cards provide a good picture of pupils' progress. This may be improved further by better assessment procedures. The high turnover of teaching staff was recognised by parents as a national problem. The school makes good efforts to secure high quality staff to replace those who leave.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Based on the 2001 national tests, pupils' standards at William Byrd School are below national averages in all subjects tested at both key stages, with the exception of mathematics at Year 2 which are in line with expectations. At the age of seven, pupils achieve standards which are broadly in line with those of pupils in other schools with similar prior attainment and family backgrounds. However, standards in writing are below average. At the age of eleven, standards in mathematics are comparable with those in similar schools; in English and science they remain below average.
2. The trend in performance over recent years has been upwards, despite the 2001 Year 6 results taking a dip. This was due to a Year 6 group that had been weaker than average throughout the school and which had over one quarter of its pupils join the school in later years. The standards being achieved by pupils currently in the school indicate that results in 2002 will be much better and bring the school back on track to reach its targets.
3. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and many achieve as well as other pupils, but results of tests are below the local authority average. Pupils who enter the school at later ages do as well as can be expected taking into account their previous experience of schooling and competence in English. There is no significant difference between the performance of different language groups.
4. Baseline assessment of the youngest children entering the school shows performance to be below average across a range of measures. A high proportion of children leave the school before the end of their primary education and are often replaced by others with lower prior attainment. Given these factors, the school does very well to ensure pupils progress at a good rate and achieve standards which are comparable to those elsewhere. The targets set for 2002 and beyond are challenging, being 11 to 12 percentage points above 2001 figures. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 5 and 6 suggest that these targets are achievable with continued good teaching and learning.
5. Despite some school initiatives to provide more challenging work for pupils capable of higher attainment e.g. "challenger" classes run by the headteacher, fewer pupils than in most schools achieve higher levels at Year 6, especially in English and science. A major reason for this is that class teachers do not always provide more demanding work for able pupils. In a significant minority of lessons seen, expectations for these pupils were no higher than for the class as a whole.
6. Children in the **nursery** are good observers and look closely at small creatures, such as snails, slugs, spiders and ladybirds. They are developing well their fine motor skills by using tools and equipment with increasing control, such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes. They use clay and play dough to mould and make different shapes and models. Children sing songs with enjoyment and good rhythm, and often use action songs during story sessions. They are confident in singing in front of others and participate well in the games.
7. Initial assessments of children confirm that they enter the **reception** classes with below average attainment, but make good progress throughout the year. By the time they reach Year 1, most reach the early learning goals, except in relation to language and literacy and to some extent personal, social and emotional development. However, progress is uneven because of variations in the quality of teaching between the two reception classes.
8. Through using well-known stories and rhymes, younger children are becoming well aware of the different sound and spelling patterns within words. They read with good comprehension and

answer questions relating to the story characters. Most children in the reception classes count reliably to ten using everyday objects, and many count beyond 20. Children know the sequence of numbers to 20, and many can order them. Many can do recorded sums of addition, although the forming of numbers is not totally secure. Through practical activities they begin to understand mathematical ideas, such as 'how many more', or 'how many left'.

9. Standards seen in **English** throughout the school are below national expectations and close to those of similar schools. Performance in the previous year's national tests was well below national expectations and below that of similar schools in both key stages. Writing was the weakest area with girls out-performing boys. No boys attained the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 compared with 10 per cent of the girls. Only 28 per cent of boys in Year 6 attained the expected Level 4 or above compared with 63 per cent of the girls. These figures improve significantly if the results for refugee pupils are removed from the calculations. Tests results for reading at the end of Year 2 show this to be a stronger area, with results in line with those of similar schools. The school's own value-added analysis which tracks those pupils who have remained in the school for most of their school career shows that 94 per cent have made at least satisfactory progress. Unpublished Year 2 test results for the current year show that performance remains lower than the national average, though Year 6 results show a significant improvement on the previous year. The results have been affected by the number of changes in teachers and the number of children joining or leaving the school at times other than the beginning of the school year.
10. Standards of English work seen during the inspection show improvement at a faster rate than in similar schools. The performance of boys in writing now compares favourably with that of girls, although it is still below that of boys in similar schools. Pupils' reading is satisfactory at both key stages. Many pupils speak and listen well and this helps them to make progress in other aspects of English. Handwriting and spelling remain weak throughout the school. Improvements noted in the last inspection have been sustained. Literacy skills are supported and reinforced through many other subjects.
11. In the 2001 national tests in **mathematics** for seven-year-olds, standards were close to the national average. Results were above average when compared to similar schools. Over the last five years, there has been a rising trend and results in 2001 continued to improve from the previous year. Girls have tended to do marginally better than boys, although there is no significant difference in performance between the two. Standards seen in lessons in all aspects of mathematics closely match expectations for the age. Mental arithmetic is generally as would be expected for pupils' ages. Pupils show an increasing ability to present and explain their calculations, using a range of mental strategies. They are able to apply themselves in test situation, as this is a regular feature of teaching for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The use of mathematical language is developing, as teachers pay particular attention to emphasising the use of key mathematical terms - shared with pupils at the start of a lesson and re-enforced throughout the lesson.
12. In 2001 there was a dip in performance in national tests in mathematics for eleven-year-olds. Girls have tended to do marginally better than boys. Standards have risen since last year; performance now broadly matches the expected standards for pupils' ages, and there are no apparent differences between the achievement of girls and boys. This year's unpublished Year 6 results confirm there is a rising trend in performance - broadly in line with the national trend. Achievement and progress are good throughout the school.
13. Overall standards observed in **science** are in line with national averages at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were found to be below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. In national tests and assessments for 2001 attainment was found to be well below the national average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. However 2002 unpublished results for the end of Years 2 and 6 confirm that the situation has improved. In lessons seen throughout the school pupils' achievement is now satisfactory with similar, average, standards in their study of life, materials and physical processes.

14. Standards in **art and design** are good throughout the school. Displays are attractive and improve the quality of the school environment as well as valuing the work of the pupils. In **design and technology**, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and are broadly average for pupils' ages.
15. The standard of pupils' work in **history** and **geography** is below that expected for pupils at the age of seven, but reaches national expectations by the time pupils leave the school at age eleven. In **information and communication technology** (ICT), standards are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages. By the end of Year 2, pupils have early keyboard skills and can use the mouse to move the cursor on screen. By Year 6, pupils use ICT to help gather material and information, explore and solve problems and aid their learning other of aspects of the curriculum.
16. There has been good improvement in the standard of **music** throughout the school and this now reaches expectations. Standards in **physical education** are in line with those nationally throughout the school. Pupils' attainment in **religious education** at both key stages is in line with that expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
17. Effective identification and appropriate target setting enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress towards these targets. Other factors which contribute to this are good staff knowledge and teaching techniques, good planning for pupils' progress in almost all lessons, extra adult support where required, and the good strategic use of able, experienced, support staff.

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

18. The behaviour and personal development of all pupils are good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their relationships with staff and with each other are very good. Parents approve of the school's stance to make this area a distinctive strength.
19. Many children enter the nursery and reception classes with social and speaking skills that are below average for their age. Initially, children can lack independence in achieving personal tasks, and take time to adjust to life away from parents. They soon learn to trust the sensitive staff at the school, participate easily in the daily routines, and become absorbed in group play and learning. They applaud each other's efforts in joint assemblies, and are filled with awe and wonder when viewing nature. Their good attitudes and behaviour allow them to build inclusive and confident relationships with each other. They respond well to good teaching, are attentive and listen well, and are keen to participate in tasks, including independent work. The school's early years provision gives a good foundation for the pupils' later school lives.
20. Pupils' attitudes develop well as they progress through the school, and most become increasingly aware that they need to do their best, and that hard work will produce improving results. The very good attitudes of older pupils are a distinctive feature of the school. All pupils are eager to learn and create a positive learning environment, where most pupils respond well to their teachers, and work harmoniously together. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, show increasingly enthusiastic involvement in lessons, listen well and are interested in what goes on in the classroom. Their willingness to discuss ideas from many and varied viewpoints, and to be involved as classroom demonstrators, adds to the enjoyment of lessons.
21. Although many classes have behaviour strategies in place for a small minority of pupils, the behaviour of pupils is good. As pupils progress, they increasingly understand the need for self-discipline and there is a greater acceptance of the school's good behaviour culture. Behaviour by Year 6 can be very good. This leads to a calm, happy, and friendly school environment, with a developing work ethic. Staff have clear control, and pupils do not overreact, even when being corrected. Behaviour around the school is usually good. However, behaviour incident books indicate that most aspects of challenging behaviour can rise to the surface occasionally, but concern only a small minority of pupils, so that these characteristics cannot be widely associated

with the pupils generally or the school as a whole. The school has needed to make only infrequent use of exclusions to deal with poor behaviour in the last three years, with one fixed period and no permanent exclusions in the last year. This is lower than the national average.

22. The quality of relationships, at all levels, is very good and greatly supports the ethos of the school. Staff provide very good role models and pupils value the trust, understanding and care that they are given. The school places a high value on involving all pupils in the life of the school, whatever their backgrounds or ethnicity. Neither ethnic, cultural, nor religious stereotyped images impede harmonious relationships, and strong mutual respect for all parts of the school family is evident in the school's work and play. Pupils' increasing confidence and maturity allows them to value each other's opinions and qualities. They consistently work together in mixed race and faith groups to achieve their best in the classroom, and they share resources, and are helpful to one another if in difficulties. Boys and girls eat and play amicably together, and they are courteous, inquisitive and welcoming to visitors.
23. The personal development of the pupils is good. The school has prioritised building pupils' self-esteem, and this is well promoted by the good quality of the personal, health and social education and through assemblies where pupils can talk about moral issues and their personal feelings. This is a very caring school community where pupils are encouraged to look after each other. Pupils' initiative and personal responsibility are developing well through classroom monitor jobs and whole-school duties for older pupils. The School Council is starting to give pupils "ownership of the school" and is discussing real issues.
24. The school uses the local community effectively, and older pupils appreciate a residential visit further afield. Pupils are developing a strong sense of moral and social awareness, which should equip them well for their next stage of education and eventually as good citizens. Pupils maintain the environment of the site well, without litter or graffiti. They look after the classroom resources well and they tidy their classrooms and cloakrooms eagerly, indicating that they value and have pride in their school.
25. Attendance and punctuality have declined since the last inspection and, despite recent improvements, are unsatisfactory. Although five classes out of 14 exceed national norms for attendance, and Year 6 pupils show a greater awareness of the importance of coming to school regularly, some pupils have a poor attendance record, which hampers their attainment and progress. Whilst authorised absence has reduced towards an average level, unauthorised absence has increased to a very high level. Holidays taken during term time are a significant reason for absence. Many pupils find it difficult to come to school on time, and this affects the start to the school day, and their learning. Punctuality throughout the rest of the day is satisfactory.

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

26. The quality of teaching is good overall. This represents good improvement on the teaching reported in the previous inspection. More than two-thirds of lessons are good or better. A very small proportion, one in 23 lessons, is unsatisfactory. There is strong teaching in each key stage with particular strengths in some of the Foundation Stage classes and in Year 2. Teaching in Year 6 is never less than good and some is of very high quality. Unsatisfactory teaching is concentrated in a minority of teachers and the school has taken steps to remedy this situation in the future.
27. The impact of the good teaching on pupils' achievement is evident in the lessons. However, the standards reached by pupils in tests and analysis of their work over time indicates that this has not been consistent in the past. While the present teaching is generally having a good impact on learning, changes in staffing have meant that progress has often been spasmodic. Consequently the standards reached by the pupils in a key subject such as English, are less than expected from the quality of the teaching observed.
28. The majority of lessons are based on well-organised planning. Teachers plan together to ensure consistency across the year group and this usually has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In the few weaker lessons, teachers were unable to interpret planning effectively due to lack of subject knowledge and insecure behaviour management. Specific needs are identified for pupils

with learning difficulties or those new to English, but less often for higher achieving pupils. Consequently these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and do not learn as much as they could. Plans for some of the subjects with two-year topic cycles are less effective in ensuring progression in skills and are due to be changed. In these lessons, there is not enough difference in the level of skill asked of the pupils in different year groups. However, although the same topic is taught in both Year 1 and 2 in religious education, for the older pupils the expected level of understanding and depth is greater.

29. Teachers plan effectively for the needs of all pupils and take account of different groups in their lessons. They deploy teaching assistants effectively to give support to pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. There is a good programme of support for these pupils from specialist services, although reduced funding will reduce the availability of support for pupils with English as an additional language next year. Teaching programmes are managed well to ensure that all pupils benefit from the teaching that is offered. Resources are used effectively, including books in home languages, to enable pupils to gain access to the teaching programme.
30. Efforts made by the school to include minority pupils in all aspects of the school life are good. The ethos of the school is one that encourages a sense of belonging and of mutual respect. In most lessons teachers are aware of the needs of these pupils and have the skill to ensure that those who find learning difficult, those who are new to English and those from communities such as Travellers are involved in all activities.
31. Specialist teaching is also good. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the specialist teacher kept pupils very new to English involved in the class lesson on the sounds in words. She devised a role-play based on a story they know to help develop spoken language so that they were confident enough to perform a short puppet show to the class. Reception children are helped to understand addition and subtraction in mathematics and to talk about what they are doing. A Punjabi boy makes good progress in describing how many unifix there are and which colours he has used to make number bonds totalling seven. Occasionally, the time available for support is not sufficient for the teacher to develop understanding and language development. Most of the support is concentrated on literacy and numeracy, but that given to other subjects such as history is invaluable. In a lesson on the differences between the past and present, the teacher used a combination of Hindi, English and good visual clues to enable pupils to participate fully in the lesson.
32. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, with clear planning for them in almost every lesson, good specialist teaching and good support by classroom assistants, with staff knowing pupils' needs and targets. The dyslexia training of the co-ordinator is having a positive impact in encouraging multi-sensory methods (sound, vision and action) for pupils with literacy difficulties and encouraging sufficient emphasis on word patterns (e.g. words ending with “-ack”).
33. Although overall teaching is now good, the quality of teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy has not been as consistent over time and therefore pupils have not made as much progress as they now do. Some aspects, such as handwriting and spelling, have not received enough attention. The teaching of numeracy has on the whole been more effective and this is reflected in the standards reached. Some use of ICT was made by teachers in lessons in the Foundation Stage and English, although more effective and frequent use could be made of computers in classrooms.
34. In the best lessons, good subject knowledge and effective teaching methods result in good progress. For example, higher attaining Year 6 pupils were enabled to write a play script with stage directions and appropriate language as a result of their teacher's good grasp of the difference between old and modern English and ability to convey this enthusiastically to pupils.
35. Learning objectives are clear and these are invariably shared with pupils at the start of the lesson so they know what they are to learn. When teaching is very good, pupils are effectively challenged and expectations are high. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher first

demonstrated an easier method of calculating, then asked challenging questions before providing appropriate tasks for different abilities to extend their learning. Teachers' questioning is often very skilful, enabling pupils to develop thinking and explain their ideas. In one Year 6 lesson, discussion around a role-play based on Romeo and Juliet enabled lower achieving pupils to see the relationships between moodiness of character, puberty and adolescence.

36. Resources are well chosen to enable pupils to understand ideas and processes and subject vocabulary is used in contexts that make sense to pupils. Year 2 pupils, for example, learn to identify parts of cars such as chassis and axles as they design vehicles. Lessons usually end with effective summaries on what has been learned and sometimes serve to develop constructive criticism. This was seen in an art lesson when Year 4 pupils talked about the quality of their pastel drawings.
37. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons, not enough is expected of the pupils, particularly higher attainers, who therefore do not learn as much as they could and there are too few opportunities for independent learning. In weaker lessons the pace is too slow, there is a lack of clarity about what pupils are to learn, consequently pupils lose interest and begin to fidget. Main teaching points are not stressed and lost in flat, uninteresting delivery. Sometimes pupils are over-directed and not given opportunities to develop independent learning. There is a direct correlation between the weak teaching and unsatisfactory progress.
38. Support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Where it is used, a Liaison Sheet is effective in briefing assistants and in giving them the opportunity to make their own comments. They work well with teachers and fully involve themselves in activities not only supervising groups but also enabling pupils to understand during class teaching. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the assistant was very effective in modelling her approach on that of a very good teacher. Some assistants have very good computer skills and use this subject knowledge well to break down programs and pupils' learning into small manageable steps.
39. The organisation of teaching into sets for key subjects is effective and having a positive impact on attainment. Teaching pupils in groups of similar levels of attainment enables teachers to plan more carefully for their needs while retaining their base class for the majority of lessons. Pupils know the routines well and move efficiently from one class to another. Progress is monitored and pupils are moved when appropriate.
40. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully, thus helping to improve teaching, and raising standards over the long term. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring teachers' planning, for observing lessons, and for termly self-evaluation. This is having marked impact on improving the quality of planning and achieving consistency of practice across the school, despite a high rate of teacher turnover. There is satisfactory amount of homework assigned to consolidate and extend the classroom work.
41. There are weaknesses in assessment - an area identified by the school for further development. There is some inconsistency between teachers' assessment of pupils' work and in making use of assessment information to plan future work. The quality of marking has improved since the last inspection, but there are individual variations between teachers and subjects. In mathematics, marking has limited value in informing pupils of how they might improve their work. Formal assessment procedures for core subjects of literacy and numeracy are generally good. There is scope, however, for developing assessment in non-core subjects, where systematic progression of skills is less secure. Subjects such as history and geography are particularly affected.

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

42. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils in the school. It reflects the school's values and supports well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school meets statutory requirements in all subjects, including music and collective worship, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. The music curriculum has improved considerably and there is effective co-ordination of the subject.

43. Generally, time is appropriately allocated to most subjects and used effectively, with a good emphasis on daily lessons in literacy and numeracy. Time allocation for the 'literacy hour' is slightly more than is recommended and is also supplemented with additional time for guided reading. Time given to subjects outside the National Curriculum is used effectively for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) and environmental education, which continue to be strengths.
44. The school has further plans to develop skills more systematically, particularly in relation to citizenship. Sex education is taught well through science and as part of PSHE, and there is a clear programme of work for the phase groups, including sessions enabling pupils to become aware of the dangers of drug abuse. Overall, the school has maintained its existing curricular strengths and there are many improvements. Literacy and numeracy are successfully promoted through other subjects of the curriculum. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a developing area. Good links are established with parents when their children join the school and this helps children in the settling-in process, particularly those in the nursery. There are well-established links with the local comprehensive school to which many pupils transfer; useful links are also made with other schools to which pupils transfer, ensuring pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
45. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and in line with the latest recommendations; all areas of learning are covered progressively. Monitoring and self-evaluation of the provision are effective and the curriculum has continued to improve since the last inspection. There is a policy and an action plan to strengthen children's learning further, which includes the development of outdoor learning for reception class children. There are good opportunities to learn from the well-organised role-play areas both indoors and outside, and opportunities for spontaneous play through which children may organise their own learning. Procedures for assessment are good, and linked to the early learning goals. Children's needs are taken well into account while planning activities in different areas of learning. Teachers in the reception classes follow the literacy and numeracy strategies in the summer term, so that children are well used to spending the full hour at a stretch on planned activities. There are detailed records on children's progress in reading, writing and their awareness of letter sounds. These assessments usefully inform teaching and learning, having a good impact on children's progress in these areas.
46. All curriculum policies are in place, and supported by schemes of work. Most policies have been reviewed to bring them in line with the new requirements. There is a self-evaluation cycle for all curriculum subjects, and for monitoring the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language. The school has adopted the nationally recommended Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes for most of the subjects. This is helping to ensure that progress in children's learning is more systematic. Teachers are adapting the QCA schemes to suit their needs, particularly as there are resource implications, for example for supporting history units. The school is phasing out the two-year cycle of topics, which teachers have been using until recently to guide their work.
47. Teachers' medium- and short-term plans and an outline of the topics for the year provide a clear view of the curriculum for each year group. Year-group pairs of teachers plan together, with support from relevant phase managers, which helps to achieve consistency of practice. The headteacher, phase managers and subject co-ordinators have active roles in monitoring the planning; this provides a good check on breadth, balance and coverage of the curriculum. Core curriculum co-ordinators have a strong role in leading developments in their subjects. They have a direct role in monitoring teaching by classroom observation and provide a good level of support for teachers who are new to the school or who are newly qualified.

48. The governing body is involved in evaluating the school's curriculum and noting its strengths and weaknesses. There is a curriculum committee, with a clear view of its responsibilities, which include reviewing subject policies, quality of teaching, standards and the provision overall. Governors are committed to visiting school on a regular basis and are gaining an increasing awareness of what the school offers and what the standards are like. There are links between governors and subject co-ordinators and governors receive written reports on subject areas.
49. Pupils with special educational needs have a good level of support in accessing the curriculum at their levels of need, including pupils in the nursery and in reception classes. They are well supported during the literacy and numeracy lessons. The ability setting in school takes into account individual needs of pupils and, where possible, separate groups are arranged; for example, for pupils in Year 2, an additional teaching group has been formed for literacy and numeracy. The learning support assistants work closely with teachers to plan their work and make useful contributions to pupils' assessments. Teachers identify pupils' needs at an early stage and have the necessary Individual Education Plans, which show clearly their learning targets. Pupils with special educational needs consistently make good progress throughout the school.
50. The school's equal opportunities policy informs good practice and inclusion is a strength. There is equal access to the curriculum and learning opportunities for all the pupils. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language has improved significantly with support from a specialist teacher, particularly at the lower end of the school, where it is most needed. Pupils at the earliest stages of learning English benefit, and have equal access to all activities during literacy and numeracy lessons through careful planning, which is shared between the class teacher and the specialist teacher.
51. Teachers provide suitably matched work for broad ability groups, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The ability setting also supports the school's policy on inclusion. In their lesson plans, teachers identify a small number of pupils who are much more able than the rest of the class. Work assigned, however, does not always meet their individual needs.
52. The school successfully monitors and tracks pupils' progress and sets targets for improvement in English and mathematics. The school makes good use of the national and standardised tests to set challenging targets for pupils. Curricular targets, set by teachers for individual pupils in reading, writing and mental arithmetic areas are proving useful in raising standards, and involving pupils and parents more in the learning process.
53. There is a modest range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school, which currently includes after school cricket and lunchtime recorder groups and choir. From September to March, football and netball are also on offer. The school has plans to extend the provision by starting a story club from September 2002. Parents had expressed some concern about the limited range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Activities such as martial arts and dance lessons are offered for pupils by outside providers after school, although there is a small charge. Overall, there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, helping to enrich the curriculum, even though it is mostly provided for older pupils in the school.
54. Useful links are established with parents and some parts of the local community. The curriculum benefits from good contacts with a number of training colleges. Students from local schools and colleges help pupils with their learning. There are limited contacts with the business community at present, although there are plans to develop these in the near future. There are good links with the local church; pupils visit the church twice a year to celebrate important festivals. The parish priest is one of the governors of the school and actively involved in its work.
55. Visiting performers make a good contribution to the enrichment of the curriculum. Drama, music and poetry are well promoted through periodical performances arranged by the school. All pupils participate in these performances. Visiting theatre groups play an important part in supporting history topics and making the history curriculum more stimulating; for example, through role-play as a 'Victorian School for the day', pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop an empathetic understanding

of life during the Victorian times. A science theatre group was also invited recently to support the theme of 'electricity' for pupils in Years 3 and 4. These performances have a good impact on pupils' learning. Educational visits to places of interest both within and outside the locality also help to extend the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 have been on a school journey to Westward Ho! in Devon, where they had good opportunities to take part in outdoor adventurous activities.

## **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

56. Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils is good. In line with the previous inspection, pupils' moral and social education are the stronger elements of the provision. However, all areas are sufficiently strong to allow pupils to effectively cope with the distracting influences that some experience within their communities, and develop values and attitudes that equip them well for the next stage of education and eventually to become good citizens.
57. The provision for spiritual development is good. The weaknesses of the previous inspection have been overcome. There is a good collective worship policy, which is sensitive to the multi-faith dimension of the school. All pupils enthusiastically enjoy the daily assemblies, which have a good balance of secular and spiritual themes, and allow pupils to relate their own lives to a "bigger picture". In the foundation stage, pupils light a "thinking candle" whilst in the remainder of the school, a lighted candle focuses pupils' reflective moments or prayers. In the classroom, pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to gain insights into the values and beliefs of the principal faiths, and the school makes good use of spirituality across the curriculum as evidenced by work on Buddhism and the production of Buddha statuettes. Pupils are allowed to enjoy thoughtful moments and be entranced by the wonder of the world when experiencing nature and investigating natural phenomena in science.
58. The school's very good moral provision is evident throughout the school day, both in lessons and in the playground, through its positive ethos. All staff represent very good adult role models, and they consistently try to raise the self-esteem of all pupils. Pupils enthusiastically sing a song about the benefits of school rules in assemblies and will frankly discuss concepts of bullying, racism or poor behaviour in assemblies or in good classroom sessions on personal and social education. Pupils increasingly develop self-discipline as they progress through the school, coupled to a strong pride in their school and a realisation that hard work will produce good results.
59. Relationships are a considerable strength of the school, and these greatly assist the school's very good social provision. The school has a real sense of inclusive community through its assemblies, lunchtimes, clubs, school council and collective fund raising activities. The collaboration and co-operation of pupils in classrooms is a distinctive feature and allows pupils to act as demonstrators and discuss issues openly and without embarrassment. Older pupils relate well to younger pupils and want to help them.
60. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school is concerned to be seen as part of the local community, and makes every effort to involve local people and clubs within the school. The school uses the community for visits to enrich their curriculum studies in geography and history. Art lessons and displays introduce pupils to a wide range of artists from around the world, and pupils in turn reproduce pleasing artwork in the style of named artists. During the present year, the school has focused on poetry and pupils have responded enthusiastically with their own poems. Pupils with a non-white United Kingdom heritage are given opportunities to celebrate their own culture, and opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of living in the culturally diverse society that is modern Britain are good. The whole-school study of the Queen's Jubilee enabled the school to develop cross-curricular studies and celebrate the diversity and richness of culture of all people in the Commonwealth.

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

61. The school continues to have a very positive attitude to the welfare and personal development of all its pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the support, guidance and welfare agenda at a high level, in line with its stated aims. However, some individual aspects would be improved by more systematic recording of progress made in pupils' development. The overall good quality of the provision often allows pupils to focus on learning for the first time in their

lives. This is greatly appreciated by parents who are trying to build relationships within the community and with the school.

62. The headteacher and staff are very mindful of the parents that they serve. They are totally committed and dedicated to the welfare and education of the pupils, and they try to give pupils an essential stability in their lives, which some may not have experienced previously. Throughout their time in the school, pupils are well cared for, but this can only be a transient experience for some pupils, due to the high level of movement on and off the school roll. Despite a high turnover of teachers in the last two years, the school has a very detailed knowledge of all its pupils through key staff, and this knowledge often extends to the parents and their problems in the community. The headteacher, in particular, regards the pastoral support of different ethnic minority groups as a fundamental part of his job, and devotes considerable time to supporting disadvantaged parents so that they can benefit from the school's education.
63. The overall monitoring of the personal development of pupils is informal, and is unsatisfactory for a school with a high turnover of teachers. Personal development targets are agreed between teacher and pupils where there are problems, but there are no formal whole-school written procedures or systems and pupils' progress is not tracked throughout their school lives. Weekly staff meetings focus on "pupils causing concern", but all exchanges are verbal, rather than through recorded information. Individual Education Plans include realistic targets, which are reviewed termly with parents and involve outside professional agencies appropriately.
64. The school has a satisfactory array of relevant and updated support, guidance and welfare policies that are sometimes better in their implementation than in their design. Through the energy of the headteacher and senior staff, policies are implemented consistently across the school, with a good understanding by all staff, who are assisted by a good quality staff handbook. The school is effective in supporting pupils on a routine basis with outside agencies for special educational needs and traveller children, and is particularly sensitive to special problems involving pupils or parents from disadvantaged communities and refugees. The school nurse has developed a good relationship with the school. She has been beneficial in bereavement counselling for four pupils, and the training of staff for medical procedures. However, her brief has not been extended into health promotion areas. The school undertakes sex education to a defined policy, with resources supplied by the school nurse. No parents have withdrawn their children from these sessions.
65. The school has made substantial developments in providing a wide range of assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and Special Educational Needs (SEN). For example pupils' progress is assessed each half-term against the National Curriculum criteria for English and mathematics and pupils have clear targets which they know and use to make progress. These assessments also help co-ordinators and teachers to make more effective provision to raise pupils' attainment, for example by focusing more strongly on attainment in writing. Pupils with SEN have very clear, suitably detailed, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) which show a wide variety of appropriate ideas to raise their attainment and which are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure their good progress.
66. The academic assessment picture is more mixed in other subjects. Sometimes there is some good assessment by individual teachers but it is not used by co-ordinators to gain an overall picture of subject needs. However the assessment of progress in ICT is good and in design and technology and art it is sufficient to help the co-ordinator improve how the subject is taught. It is still informal but nevertheless used well in PE and it is underdeveloped in history and geography. National test and assessment results are usefully analysed in science, but the best practices of individual teachers are not yet spread and used to give a full overview. The school has appropriately identified the development and rationalisation of its assessment procedures for the new deputy at the start of the next school year.
67. The school makes good provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs. It is proactive in working to avoid delays in assessment and provision and to ensure that these pupils receive their entitlement. The school shows a good understanding of a wide range of special

educational needs. Progress is well monitored and, despite developmental delays, the action taken to ensure that pupils with statements of SEN progress towards their targets is good overall.

68. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and the school is vigilant through the determination of the headteacher and key staff. However, refresher training for the headteacher and staff has not taken place for a long period and is now a priority. New staff receive child protection training as part of induction and this is satisfactory. The school receives particularly good support from the Local Education Authority in child protection.
69. The school has satisfactory relationships with secondary schools, and enables pupils to transfer without undue anxiety. These relationships may well be boosted by membership of the new excellence cluster of schools. Relationships with local play groups are underdeveloped.
70. The school has developed very good procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour. Through the strong leadership and presence around the school of the headteacher and senior teachers, staff, pupils and parents realise that there are high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school is making pupils aware of self-discipline, and pupils can be overheard correcting each other's behaviour. Well-trained staff fairly and consistently apply the procedures, which are accepted by pupils. Pupils are involved in the development of rules, and these are prominently displayed in classrooms and around the school. The behaviour management policy describes a good range of rewards, which are positively used. The "achievement wall" is a good example. Sanctions are appropriate and often lead to the development of effective classroom behaviour strategies, and can involve parents at an early stage. The headteacher and staff are very effective in detecting any poor behaviour in the school, and their vigilance has eliminated all but occasional examples of challenging behaviour or inter-personal conflict. The behaviour incident book indicates a fair investigation of problems, but an insufficient analysis of trends to enlighten future strategies.
71. Despite an improved attendance performance during the present year, procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are only satisfactory. Registers are completed in a statutory manner. The school has returned to manual registers from the previous computerised system and regularly checks them for patterns and trends. The registration period is carried out politely and efficiently, and provides a settling and calming period for all pupils. The education welfare service has not found any indications of truancy in a sweep of the local area. The school does not make sufficient use of the service in trying to improve attendance and punctuality, despite a good relationship with the local officer. Initiatives adopted by the school have led to some improvements. These include certificates for 100 per cent attendance and regular references in school newsletters. However, the school has not yet produced a culture that requires a commitment from all parents to their obligations on attendance, nor does it have a real plan in place to improve attendance and punctuality.
72. Overall, health and safety procedures are satisfactory, but require greater rigour in the recording of the outcomes of audits and risk assessment. The headteacher undertakes termly inspections, but lacks the guiding influence of a delegated school governor. The school is a generally safe environment for all pupils and staff, but a number of minor health and safety points have been noted and reported back.
73. The school's accident procedures are satisfactory, but better accident recording systems would help the analysis of an above average minor accident rate. The school has a sufficient number of qualified first-aiders, and first-aid facilities are good with a dedicated on-site medical room. Pupils are being acquainted with health and safety principles in the home and at school, through the school's personal health and social education provision, and before the start of lessons, where necessary. The school administration utilises information technology to update all pupil-based information and this is sufficiently accurate and detailed to support any emergency.

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

74. The school continues to work hard to welcome parents into the school, and develop a working partnership. It is having increasing success in involving parents, even though it has a difficult task in responding to the wide variety of individual parental needs and aspirations, and the expectations of different groups of parents. All aspects of the partnership with parents now operate at a good level and have strengthened since the last inspection. Parent-staff relationships are good, as the staff are proactive in establishing links with parents, even though communications can often be difficult in a large sized school on a spacious site. The headteacher and staff often extend support to parents in need to assist them with personal and social problems. This can make demands on school resources, but the school has shown great skill in balancing the needs of groups of parents, particularly when the support needed for more transient and disadvantaged families can be disproportionate to those established in the community over many years.
75. The headteacher has made a good impression on parents, by gaining their confidence, being sympathetic to their problems, and providing caring pastoral support with the continued involvement of outside agencies. When questionnaire responses were assessed, in conjunction with a substantial number of interviews with individual parents at the school gate, it was noted that parents' satisfaction levels have improved to an overall good level. There is only one area of significant dissatisfaction - the provision of an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team judged these as satisfactory, and does not believe that the school suffers in comparison with other primary schools.
76. Although the school is conscious of security implications, it wants parents to play a role within the school, within classrooms and as part of a "reading army". Parents feel that the school is approachable and that they are consulted on decisions, so that both the links to parents and the impact of parents' involvement within the school are good. A significant number of parents, representative of all groups, are seen in classrooms and at school assemblies. The school has a full complement of elected parent governors and the parent teacher association has come through a difficult period and is now developing an essential role in the life of the school.
77. Parents are positive about the school's work with children with special educational needs. They sign their children's Individual Education Plans and attend or are briefed about pupil reviews. In addition to usual school meetings the special educational needs co-ordinator has a weekly slot when she is available for discussion.
78. The quality of information for parents is good. The prospectus gives easily accessible statutory advice, whilst the annual governors' report to parents is informative. Both are good quality documents and indicate that the school values its parents. Induction procedures are sound, and parents are made especially welcome at the start of the day in the nursery. The school has policies and procedures that take account of the role of parents, but they are not displayed in the school. A noticeboard for the parent-teacher association has not yet been provided.
79. The school newsletter is published regularly and communicates the essential ethos of the school. Other written communications are of good quality in accessible prose, sufficient and respectful to the role of parents, and give them enough time to react. The school's annual report to parents is good and is innovative in style. It gives comprehensive feedback on their child's performance against targets, but would benefit from a section for parental feedback and a section for pupil's self-appraisal. Parents additionally receive a half-termly home-school card, which gives feedback in four key areas of pupils' performance.
80. The growth of the partnership between home and school is good. However, it is impeded by the lower priority given to education by a significant minority of parents. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement, though not all parents comply in helping the school to improve its attendance and punctuality performance levels.
81. The school wants to listen to parents, and informal communications are evident at the end of the day around the school. The headteacher has improved the ease of making appointments, so that parents' anxieties do not grow. Termly formal open evenings where pupils' targets are

communicated to parents are well attended, and the school has managed to improve attendance at the annual governors' meeting for parents. Numerous information meetings are run during both the evening and the day to maximise attendance. The school has run regular adult education courses to improve parents' confidence in literacy and numeracy. An increasing number of parents approve of the present homework arrangements, and all parents are well informed on topic work. There is a close collaboration with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, and, together with the teachers, they produce meaningful Individual Education Plans, with targets leading to good progress.

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

82. The headteacher and senior staff provide effective and purposeful leadership for the school. Although only in post since the beginning of the school year, the headteacher has put in place a number of initiatives aimed at raising standards. These include "Challenger" classes for higher-attaining pupils and a renewed focus on reading with extra teaching time devoted to literacy and the "reading army" of parents and other adults to boost reading levels. There is substantial evidence that these measures are proving effective; for example, reading standards have improved since the previous inspection.
83. The role of the four phase managers (Foundation Stage; Infants; lower Key Stage 2 and upper Key Stage 2) has evolved to provide a sharper focus on quality assurance and support for class teachers. They have taken a lead role in promoting the personal development of pupils and improving their capacity for independent learning. Together with subject leaders, they influence teachers' planning and ensure a degree of consistency of approach across the school. They also have direct responsibility for the quality of provision within their phase. This is one of the major factors in the improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
84. The governing body has several recently elected members and is still developing its role. Nevertheless, it is well organised in committees and throughout the past year has discussed a wide range of relevant issues, including staffing, school improvement and budget. In so doing, it has gained a sound overview of the state of the school, including its strengths and weaknesses. They receive regular reports from the headteacher, finance officer and other key staff and are beginning to engage with the role of "critical friend" i.e. asking challenging questions and seeking to understand what they can do to promote high standards.
85. Together with the headteacher, staff and pupils, governors have established a set of values for the school and are clear about the direction in which it should move. The school improvement plan covers a four-term period and shows how the immediate priorities are being tackled. The school is less clear about developments over the longer term, including how resources might need to be redirected to ensure that improvements remain on course and new priorities are adequately supported. There is an awareness of best value and the need to secure high quality outcomes from limited resources; for example, it is as a result of the appointment of a manager for information and communication technology that the quality of provision has improved. However, the school should take more account of such principles when planning its future development. This would ensure that planned improvements are properly costed, compared with those in other schools and assessed against what the school really needs.
86. The school has taken full advantage of additional funding and specific grants. Booster classes have proved highly effective in raising standards of lower-attaining pupils. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language benefit from good support which is enabling them to make good progress. Successful bids have been made for various funds to improve the school environment. Overall, the school's finances are well managed and the budget is monitored on a regular basis. The school has not had a full financial audit since the previous inspection and should request this if the local authority has no plans for including the school in its current audit cycle.
87. The school has developed robust systems for reviewing its practice. Rigorous self-evaluation includes subject reviews which lead to improvements in practice. For example, curriculum

planning is being placed on a one-year cycle in order to provide more frequent opportunities to cover the programme of study and so that pupils will have shorter gaps between study units in some foundation subjects such as history. Action points resulting from the reviews are well focused and their impact is regularly monitored. Performance management of staff is carried out in line with the school policy and is highly satisfactory. The school clearly has the capacity and the will to sustain further improvement.

88. All members of the school's community share a commitment to equality of opportunity. The headteacher and senior management team work tirelessly to make the school an inclusive institution. The headteacher's contribution in this area is significant and others follow his lead. Teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to ensure that all pupils benefit from what the school has to offer and are included fully in all its activities. Equal opportunities principles are embedded in the school's documentation and are evident in its practices. Pupils and staff are proud of their school and have a strong belief in its value.
89. Maintaining an adequate supply of qualified teaching staff has been a significant problem for the school in recent years and remains a challenge. The school has a sufficient number of teachers for all classes at present, though four class teachers do not hold qualifications recognised in this country for qualified teacher status. Three teachers are newly qualified and in their first year of teaching. All teachers new to the school are well supported by more experienced colleagues and senior staff. This will continue to be a requirement while the staffing situation remains unstable.
90. Despite these recruitment difficulties, which are shared by many other schools, there are effective arrangements for monitoring and supporting teachers which result in an overall good standard of teaching across the school. The class size pledge to have no infant classes above 30 is not currently being honoured. This is because of the school's inability to appoint an extra teacher at a suitable time. The pledge should be met in the next school year when the intake into Key Stage 1 is capped at 60.
91. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well trained with a good knowledge of her subject. The school's well-established, and experienced support staff make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The high turnover of teaching staff more strongly necessitates the need for continual training. The newly nominated governor with responsibility for special educational needs has begun to make a positive impact, for example by checking the knowledge of staff about their pupils with SEN. She has appropriately planned additional training for her role in the next school year.
92. The school's accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. There are sufficient classrooms and additional teaching spaces to allow both class and specialist teaching. Most of the teaching spaces are large and well designed, although some are small and have stub walls that obstruct lines of sight; this can make supervision of pupils difficult. Classrooms are spread over a large area and communications between them can be difficult. There are some very narrow passageways and access to some classrooms is through one of the two halls. The school is maintained well by a team of hard-working cleaners, supervised by the site manager. He also oversees the internal redecoration programme and is making good progress in a difficult building, some parts of which are shabby.
93. The external environment is attractive and provides a generous range of grassed and hard playing areas. There are good facilities for sport and environmental studies as well as climbing frames and other play equipment for leisure time. The outdoor environment of the reception classes is under development. The school benefits from being adjacent to a swimming pool; this provides a very good facility for physical education.
94. Teaching and learning resources vary in quality across the school. In physical education they are good, in other subjects, except history and geography, they are adequate and of satisfactory quality. Book stocks in the library are in need of replenishment. Whilst the computer room is a good resource, some classrooms have old machines which are due to be replaced.

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

95. In order to maintain the school's pace of improvement and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Give a high priority to standards in English. Building on the good advances made in reading, attention should be focused on improving pupils' spelling and handwriting. (paras 128, 129)
  - (2) Ensure that pupils who are capable of higher attainment are encouraged, challenged and expected to progress at a faster rate towards higher levels of achievement. (paras 28, 37)
  - (3) Continue to work with parents to emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality and take appropriate action to improve attendance rates to national averages and beyond. (para 71)
  - (4) Plan school development beyond the immediate year, taking account of the school's agreed vision and values, and applying best value principles when directing resources towards priorities. (para 85)

Other areas for development include:

- Developing assessment of pupils' progress in foundation subjects (paras 41, 66)
- Ensuring staff receive refresher training in child protection procedures (para 68)
- Requesting a financial audit if one is not currently planned (para 86)
- Improving resources and lesson planning in history and geography (paras 174, 176, 182, 186)
- Upgrading reading resources in the school library (paras 94, 133)

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

96. The school is very welcoming towards pupils with different language backgrounds. Different cultures are valued and respected and this is evident in all aspects of the work and in pupils' behaviour towards each other. All staff demonstrate a positive attitude towards the pupils and take account of their needs. This positive learning environment contributes significantly to the progress of pupils learning English as an additional language. As a consequence, they try hard and persevere with their work.
97. They make good progress and many achieve as well as other pupils, but results of tests are below the local authority average. Pupils who enter the school at later ages do as well as can be expected taking into account their previous experience of schooling and competence in English. There is no significant difference between the performance of different language groups.
98. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress due to the specialist help they receive and to the care taken by teachers in most lessons to cater for their needs. The overall good level of teaching in the school is a major factor in the good progress made by the majority of such pupils. Due to effective in-service training and guidance from the specialist teacher and the co-ordinator, most teachers are aware of the needs of pupils new to English and are careful to present ideas in a way that pupils can understand. They use practical explanations and visual clues wherever possible and encourage same language pupils to help each other. If necessary they arrange for a pupil from another class to translate.
99. The school provides good access to the curriculum for all pupils including those new to English and other minorities such as pupils from Traveller families. Specialist teaching is provided in the

classroom to enable pupils to work to the same overall learning objectives, and tasks are adapted to their stage of English development. For example two Year 6 pupils, both very new to the school, were able to participate in a history lesson to find differences in the local area past and present. Additional support is not always available and this sometimes means that pupils make less progress than they could. Support is well targeted and used effectively, but with increasing numbers of pupils new to English and the possibility of less specialist help in the future this is unlikely to be maintained.

100. The school takes good care of pupils with English as an additional language and the arrangements for assessing their progress are good. They are assessed at entry and at regular intervals to evaluate their progress in English, so teachers are clear about what the pupils can do. This information is used to set specific English language targets and to find gaps and prioritise needs.

101. The management of the support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. The specialist teacher and the teacher co-ordinating the provision in the school work closely together to ensure best use is made of the provision. They have also undertaken a considerable amount of in-service training for teachers to increase their awareness and skills in supporting bilingual pupils. They provide very good practical guidance for teachers. Due to the rapid turnover of staff, it has been necessary to continually brief teachers who have recently joined the school. Resources have been increased and more are planned. Whilst the level of specialist support for pupils is adequate at present, plans to reduce the time allocated to the school for this as a result of reduced funding would have a detrimental effect on provision and, consequently, the progress made by pupils.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	47	23	4	0	0
Percentage	2	18	51	25	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31	412
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	82

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	195

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	46
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	30	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	21	30
	Girls	25	26	27
	Total	48	47	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (74)	75 (72)	90 (72)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	26	20
	Girls	25	26	24
	Total	47	52	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (70)	83 (70)	70 (72)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	27	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	23
	Girls	21	19	23
	Total	34	36	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (85)	68 (80)	87 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	17	17
	Girls	19	21	20
	Total	30	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (69)	72 (85)	70 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	14
Black – other	2
Indian	79
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	2
White	206
Any other minority ethnic group	34

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.8
Average class size	29.4

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

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	393

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	16
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	14
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4

### **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	1	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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,064,385
Total expenditure	1,056,356
Expenditure per pupil	2,393
Balance brought forward from previous year	61,829
Balance carried forward to next year	69,858

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
--	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	443
Number of questionnaires returned	183

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	4	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	42	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	39	13	2	5
The teaching is good.	61	33	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	30	14	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	30	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	54	38	7	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	64	33	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	36	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	31	22	5	11

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **Strengths**

- Self-evaluation and monitoring of the curriculum by the senior management team are good, and this is an important factor in sustaining improvement in the provision overall.
- Teaching is good overall.
- There is consistently good teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world, both in the nursery and in reception classes.
- Children make good progress in creative development and reach the standards expected
- Role-play areas are particularly stimulating.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The teaching of communication, language and literacy is less well structured in the nursery.
- The sensory room in the nursery is underused at present.

102. Children enter the reception class as rising fives and there are two admission intakes in the year, one in September and another in January. This ensures that all children have access to the reception class before they join the statutory schooling in Year 1. There are two parallel reception classes, both supported by qualified nursery nurses. Children's initial assessments confirm that they enter the reception classes with below average attainment, but make good progress throughout the year. By the time they reach Year 1, most reach the early learning goals, except in relation to language and literacy and to some extent personal, social and emotional development. However, children's progress is uneven between the two reception classes because of variations in the quality of teaching.
103. There is good provision overall for children in the Foundation Stage, which includes nursery children, attending on a part time basis. The provision has much improved since the last inspection. Self-evaluation and monitoring by the senior management team are good, and this is an important factor in sustaining improvement in the provision overall. Improvements are particularly evident in the areas of curriculum planning at different stages of the school year - both the nursery planning and the reception classes - leading to improvements in the quality of teaching overall. Outdoor play has improved recently, particularly in the nursery. There is a policy statement for the Foundation Stage, and the aims of the policy are met successfully. Transition arrangements are good between the nursery and reception classes, and children are inducted well as they are admitted into the school. Liaison between the reception classes and Year 1 is an identified area for development, and part of the action plan. The staggered intake helps to settle the children well and there are good contacts with parents, which are useful in supporting their children's learning. Parents are provided with a good level of information about the provision and there is a welcoming ethos.
104. Teaching is good overall, but there are some variations - it ranges from very good to just satisfactory - leading to uneven progress in different areas of learning, and in achievement overall. The quality of learning, which is good overall, reflects the quality of teaching. Children are developing independent learning skills satisfactorily. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. On the whole, children achieve well and make good progress over the long term. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the children's needs. There are interesting areas of learning set within the rooms to support learning. Role-play areas are particularly stimulating. Reading areas are small but well resourced and used well. The planning is good and takes into account the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. The use of learning objectives is clear, key questions are listed and key vocabulary for development identified. The role of adults is clear in leading focused activities.
105. During the summer term, children in the reception classes benefit from more structured activities that are based on the literacy and numeracy framework, in line with the rest of the school. The

teaching of communication, language and literacy is less well structured in the nursery where more focused teaching could achieve better results. Ongoing records are kept of the children's assessments and of their progress; assessment information is generally used well to plan activities for the future. There is a close working relationship between teachers and the support staff with reference to planning, teaching and assessment.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

106. Children enter the nursery with a low level of personal and social skills, many showing immature behaviour. By the time they leave the reception class, their skills have improved significantly, and many children are close to achieving the early learning goals in this area. There are differences in children's achievement between the two reception classes, reflecting the levels of expectation from adults, and their skills in managing behaviour. In one reception class, children are more attentive and stay longer on tasks than the other. On the whole, children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well through a range of activities and experiences, contributing well to their positive attitudes to learning and to their generally good behaviour. Children with special educational needs are well supported with additional adult support and individual targets for improvement, making good progress towards their targets. Parents are involved and support the staff as necessary.
107. Children enjoy playing and working independently and pay good attention during the structured adult-led activities. They generally play co-operatively with others and take turns. They look forward to coming to the school and know that if they are late, they will 'miss something' important. During activities, children are encouraged to take turns, to share and to listen to what others have to say, for example when children are asked to perform their musical composition for others or when some children tell a story for the class, using glove puppets. Children are aware of what is expected, what the class rules are and can show where they can locate rules on the classroom wall. They are becoming increasingly aware of the difference between what is right and what is wrong. Children are taught well to care for their environment and they show interest in their surroundings. They are taught how and why they should care for creatures, and feed them instead of hurting them. They are sensitive when they touch and feel them.
108. The quality of teaching varies between the two reception classes, but is always at least satisfactory. Children form good relationships with adults and generally mix and play well with others. They have good opportunities to celebrate important events and festivals, such as birthdays, 'Jubilee and the Commonwealth Week' and Christmas, to which they respond well. They look forward to getting a merit star in their 'star assembly' when they have been chosen for good work or deed.

### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

109. Many children enter the nursery with a low level of language and literacy skills. By the time they leave reception class, children are on course to reach the early learning goals in this area, though only a minority do so. There are detailed records on children's progress in reading and writing and their awareness of letter sounds - showing good progress overall. Children's assessments usefully inform teaching and have a good impact on their progress. Teaching is good overall, but significantly better in one of the two reception classes.
110. Children are beginning to speak with confidence and assurance to each other and to adults. Most children are beginning to develop skills in speaking and listening through role-play and opportunities to discuss stories in pairs and groups. Good strategies are used to develop talk in a variety of contexts. For example, a reception class teacher asked children questions about mini-beasts, using large reading cards and expected them to read these questions as a class activity and answer them using 'yes' and 'no' cards. This activity was enjoyed by the children and was most successful in developing reading, speaking and listening skills simultaneously. Children with English as an additional language are well supported through guidance from a specialist teacher. Children's role-play is used well to encourage them to talk and gain confidence. In another lesson observed, children were encouraged to make use of their puppets

to talk about their diary of events they plan for the week. Listening skills are developing well through story sessions and through the direct teaching during the literacy hour.

111. Through a well-structured programme in literacy, reception children have become well aware of the letter/sound relationships. Teachers involve children in the teaching of the initial, middle and final sound in a word, such as c a t, and teach the blending of phonemes, for example, sh ee p. Children also practise their sounds and writing by using their 'Jolly Phonic' sheets. Through using well-known stories and rhymes, children are becoming well aware of the different sound and spelling patterns within words. Children use a range of strategies while reading; for example, they guess new words by using picture and context cues and also use their knowledge of letter sounds to build them. More able children know some of the consonant and vowel sounds, and can recognise common words while reading simple sentences. They read with good comprehension and answer questions relating to the story characters. There is a small but well organised book area in reception classes, which is used frequently. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories from the big books that are read by their teachers. Parents are involved in supporting their children's reading at home on a daily basis. This is a well-established routine and children look forward to taking their books home. This is a useful support and helps to reinforce children's learning at home. Extra time is given for guided reading during the day to support the literacy strategy, as part of the school policy, which also helps with progress in reading.
112. Good links are established between reading and writing. Children are encouraged to use their experience of well-known stories to make up their own stories using their imagination. Children appreciate that writing can be used for a variety of purposes. They are encouraged to do their writing independently, for example, to make a shopping list or to list mini-beasts they find in the 'classroom jungle', as part of their role-play. The more able children manage to write sentences and short stories independently about activities and events at home. Many children write their own name and make lists of words and labels related to their class themes. They use their pencils with some skill to form recognisable letters and words. More able children form their letters and words more accurately and try to write stories using their knowledge of letters and sounds. They are becoming aware of where to use a capital letter and a full stop in a sentence. They are encouraged to use a picture dictionary as an aid to phonic recognition.

### **Mathematical Development**

113. Children enter the reception class with low levels of attainment. Children's mathematical development is fostered successfully. They achieve well in relation to their starting points in the nursery. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain the early learning goals for mathematics, and some exceed these. Most children in the reception class count reliably to ten using everyday objects, and many count beyond 20. The quality of teaching varies, but is satisfactory overall. Teachers have high expectations and encourage them to explain how they have worked out answers in their heads. Children take an active part in the mental and oral work during formal lessons and they try to explain their methods. They solve simple problems using two sets of numbers -involving practical addition or subtraction. Teachers make good use of the key vocabulary listed in their planning and ask questions well to promote learning. The practice of 'extra practical maths' is proving useful in developing children's understanding of the use of mathematics in real life situations.
114. Children recognise numerals 1 to 9 and use them to label sets of objects. Many can do recorded sums of addition, although forming of numbers is not totally secure for some children. A strength in teaching is the use of practical activities to teach addition and subtraction facts and to make a link between the two. Through practical activities they begin to understand mathematical ideas, such as 'how many more', or 'how many left'. Good use is made of resources, such as dice, puppets and ladybird picture cards to help in counting and in their practical work involving addition. Through working with sets of objects and shapes, children are developing a good awareness of number patterns and of sequencing. They learn to use everyday words to describe position and direction.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

115. Children are offered many opportunities to learn about the world. They start in the nursery at a low level, but gradually increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's progress is satisfactory overall, with a number of strengths. There is consistently good teaching in this area of learning, both in the nursery and in reception classes. The learning environment provided is stimulating. There are good opportunities to learn from using senses. There is an attractive sensory room in the nursery, with very good potential for teaching and learning. However, it is underused at present, although it has been used well in the past. Teachers should consider new ways of making a fuller use of it. Children learn to test materials from the 'feely bags' and learn to use related language, such as 'scratchy', 'rough', and 'bubbly'. During outdoor play, children use the water tray to find out whether things will float or sink, and they enjoy the process of transferring water from one container to another of different shape and size. They observe with interest what happens when plastic sea animals are put in the water tray through the drainpipe.
116. There are good opportunities to play outside with sand and water, particularly for children in the nursery, and to investigate their properties. They also observe plants as they grow. Children are helped to investigate mini-beasts through making close observations. There is good use of resources and books to make children's learning relevant and meaningful. Children in the nursery are good observers and look closely at small creatures, such as snails, slugs, spiders and ladybirds. A few can recognize a dragonfly. Children are well supported in their observations through books, magnifying glasses and fish tanks with wet soil. Children in the reception class examine stick insects with much interest and learn about the life-cycle of a butterfly.
117. Through religious activities children are developing a good awareness of their own culture. There are also some opportunities to learn about people from other cultures and beliefs. Religious festivals, such as Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year are celebrated. Children recently took part in the 'Jubilee and Commonwealth Week', with the rest of the school. There are planned opportunities to make pictures and models using a variety of recycled materials. Finished pictures are displayed on classroom walls. Displays in one of the reception classes include flags from different countries, and a large collage of Hayes and Harlington, the area in which they live, using two- and three-dimensional models to represent houses and roads. There is a computer in the nursery, and one each in the reception classes, which are used frequently by the children to support their learning. Children's skills are developing satisfactorily in using the mouse. Both boys and girls choose to work on the computer without any adult support.

## **Physical Development**

118. Teaching is good overall, often very good, and children's physical development is sound; most reach the early learning goals. There are regular opportunities to take part in structured physical activities, which are well organised in the spacious hall. Activities provided help them to develop their body control and co-ordination. Children use their imagination to move in a variety of ways, and some at different heights, making good use of the space. Through warming up activities, they are developing a good awareness of the effect of exercise on their bodies; safety rules are well taught. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
119. Within their classroom, children are developing well their fine motor skills by using tools and equipment with increasing control, such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes. They use clay and play dough to mould and make different shapes and models. Outdoor learning is well established as part of the nursery curriculum, and well resourced and organised. Children in the reception class have access to the nursery facilities, and to their own outdoor space, where they may play with sand, water, or building-bricks or look out for mini-beasts in the school garden. More storage space would further encourage teachers to make more regular use of the outdoor space. The school has plans to improve outdoor provision for the reception classes in the near future.

## **Creative Development**

120. This area of learning is a strength and is well taught. Most children make good progress and reach the expectations of the learning goals. Children experience a wide range of creative activities, which includes music, poetry, art and imaginative play. They use a good range of resources, tools and materials to express their ideas and feelings. Percussion instruments are well used to explore different sounds of the instruments and to perform in front of an audience. There is a 'singing assembly', which provides an additional platform for singing favourite songs. Children sing together with a good rhythm, and often use action songs during story sessions. They are confident in singing in front of others and participate well in the games.
121. There are opportunities to explore children's ideas and feelings through imaginative play, such as 'the classroom jungle', 'Whiskers the vets' and the 'café'. The role-play areas are well organised and provide good opportunities for language development and personal and social skills. Opportunities for spontaneous play are also available through which children may organise their own learning. Children draw, paint and design their own pictures of mini-beasts, which are labelled and well displayed around the rooms, making the learning environment more stimulating. They use a wide range of materials to explore colour, shape, texture and form in two- and three-dimensions. Items of food, such as cooked spaghetti, dried pasta and fruit are used creatively for learning purposes.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Strengths**

- The performance of boys in writing now compares favourably with that of girls.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils can speak confidently, often expressing sophisticated opinions about different subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Pupils work well in literacy lessons and are particularly enthusiastic about taking part in role-play.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Though steadily improving, standards in writing are below those of pupils in similar schools.
  - The school's limited range of reading materials restricts pupils' progress - many books are damaged and in need of replacement.
  - Standards of handwriting and spelling are variable and well below average overall.
  - Co-ordination of English needs to be stabilised.
122. Standards in English tests are below national expectations and close to those of similar schools. Performance in the previous year's national tests was well below national expectations and below that of similar schools in both key stages. Writing was the weakest area with girls out-performing boys. No boys attained the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 compared with 10 per cent of the girls. Only 28 per cent of boys in Year 6 attained the expected Level 4 or above compared with 63 per cent of the girls. These figures improve significantly if the results for refugee pupils are removed from the calculations. Test results for reading at the end of Year 2 show this to be a stronger area, with results in line with those of similar schools. The school's own value-added analysis which tracks those pupils who have remained in the school for most of their school career shows that 94 per cent have made at least satisfactory progress. Unpublished 2002 test results for the school show that performance remains very low at Year 2, though Year 6 results show a significant improvement on 2001. The results have been affected by the number of changes in teachers and the number of children joining or leaving the school at times other than the beginning of the school year.
123. Standards of work seen during the inspection show improvement on past years' results although are below national expectations and broadly in line with similar schools. The performance of boys

in writing now compares favourably with that of girls, although it is still below that of boys in similar schools. Reading standards are showing signs of improvement. Many pupils speak and listen well and this helps them to make progress in other aspects of English. The early literacy strategy in Year 1 and additional literacy support for Years 3 and 4 are contributing to the good progress seen. Improvements noted in the last inspection have been sustained.

124. Pupils entering Year 1 have below average ability in speaking and listening. They can answer questions tentatively and follow simple instructions. Some are beginning to describe personal experiences well. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most speak with confidence and can explain their work and describe their preferences, for example in choosing particular books when reading. Many pupils remember well the words they have learned; for example more able pupils could use the correct terms for bodily functions in a health education lesson. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive very good support from teaching assistants and are able to understand questions and frame suitable responses.
125. By the end of Year 6, pupils can speak confidently, often expressing sophisticated opinions about different subjects. They are able to describe and explain their work and offer constructive criticism to other children. In several lessons based on a study of Romeo and Juliet, pupils used the information they had about characters and settings to formulate ideas about ways in which the script could be staged in a modern setting. They used appropriate vocabulary to describe and explain the actions of adolescent characters in the story. Pupils throughout the key stage listen carefully and are able to use the information they have been given to complete their tasks or follow instructions.
126. Whilst there are indications that standards in reading are improving in Year 1, they remain below average in Year 2. More able pupils in Year 1 can read appropriate text fluently and with expression. They can explain what they have read and predict what will happen next. Less able readers sometimes stumble over unfamiliar words, but have strategies to sound out these words and make good attempts to pronounce them. In one lesson, there was good group reading of a story based on 'Old MacDonald's Farm' and more able Year 1 pupils were able to predict the content of a book from clues on the cover. Year 2 pupils understand how books work and are able to use the contents and index lists. The most able pupils can talk confidently about a range of books that they enjoy. Less able pupils can describe and explain familiar books and are beginning to take note of punctuation to give expression to their reading aloud.
127. Pupils in Year 6 have good knowledge of how books work and are able to express preference for books and authors within a limited range. They read regularly both in school and at home and use the local libraries. Many can read fluently and with expression and have the skills needed to decode unfamiliar words. However, the limited range of reading materials available in the school library restricts their progress. Many are beginning to read text they have downloaded from the Internet and understand how to search for materials to support their work.
128. There are signs that standards of writing are beginning to improve. By the end of Year 2, more able pupils are developing a good sense of audience and are beginning to use writing conventions well. Examples of letter writing, reports of investigations and descriptions of special events show that pupils are beginning to understand the purpose of writing. Less able pupils are still developing a sense of spacing, layout and still make many mistakes in spelling more complex words. Although more able pupils produce some well-structured extended writing, many pupils produce a limited amount of writing in the available time. Standards of handwriting in Year 2 are variable and are well below average overall. Pupils learn to form and join letters well in handwriting lessons, but do not use their skills consistently in other writing activities. Many who have learned to join letters regress to print. Others find it difficult to keep their writing on the line or to maintain even spacing and sizing. Pupils often use pencils that are blunt and this makes their writing untidy and sometimes illegible.
129. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are below average but improving. Some pupils produce well-structured extended writing and many understand the conventions of redrafting their work. In one Year 4 lesson, pupils successfully used editing conventions to identify errors in each other's

work. Some pupils are able to develop and extend ideas in their writing. Good examples were seen of writing for different purposes, including letters, poetry, investigative and persuasive writing. Most pupils have a reasonable understanding of punctuation and spelling rules, but many make careless mistakes. Some of these mistakes are attributable to poorly formed and sometimes illegible handwriting.

130. Standards in English are improving at a faster rate than those in similar schools. In those lessons where the teaching is good, pupils make good progress and learn new skills. They respond well to questions and use their prior learning to offer explanations and ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support and make good progress. Pupils with refugee status are helped to adjust to the new school setting and soon make progress equal to their peers. Pupils enjoy English and look forward to their lessons. They work well within the structure of the literacy lessons and are particularly enthusiastic about those lessons where they can engage in role-play. Most enjoy reading and regard it as a valuable activity outside school.
131. The quality of teaching is good overall. Half of all lessons seen were very good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use the structure of the lesson effectively to ensure pupils make good progress. Most lessons are well paced and clearly focused on learning objectives that are made known to the pupils. Questions and explanations are used effectively to ensure that pupils are challenged and extended. Time is used well within lessons to provide an informative introduction, activities that are matched well to the needs of pupils and whole-class sessions at the end that refer back to the objectives of the lessons. The best teachers use a range of methodology. For example, in teaching about Romeo and Juliet, Year 6 teachers used explanation, comparison and role-play to give the pupils a deeper understanding of the plot and characterisation. Some teaching is less effective and lacks pace and rigour. There is lethargy in this teaching and the pupils are often interrupted as they work. Support staff are deployed effectively and make an important contribution to the learning of the pupils.
132. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a good structure for the teaching of English. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for its curriculum provision. This is supplemented with additional lessons to support extended writing. Planning is effective and ensures teachers are clear about what is to be taught. Marking is generally effective, although some does not explain to pupils how they can improve. Work is assessed regularly and information gained from assessments is used to plan subsequent work. Parents receive detailed and relevant reports on their children's progress. Homework, including reading practice, is used well to support learning. Year 6 pupils were keen to complete their preparations to perform their play scripts in their own time.
133. Two senior teachers co-ordinate the subject very effectively. They have an effective action plan and clear strategies to develop the subject. They ensure that the school's aims are reflected in subject planning. However, co-ordination of the subject has gone through changes and needs to be stabilised. The school has an adequate range of resources, but many books in the library are damaged and in need of replacement. Library lessons alternate with lessons in ICT and are limited in value. Good use is made of computers in the ICT suite; the use of computers in classrooms is variable and sometimes non-existent. Many worksheets challenge and extend pupils' understanding, but some have low-level tasks that do little to consolidate skills or extend understanding.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Strengths**

- Standards in mathematics, including the use and application of number, have shown good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.

## Areas for improvement

- The use of ICT to support mathematics is underdeveloped
134. In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were close to the national average. Results were above average when compared to similar schools. Over the last five years, results have continued to improve. Girls have tended to do marginally better than boys, although there is no significant difference in performance between the two. This trend of improvement is confirmed by work seen in lessons. Mental arithmetic is in line with expectations for pupils' ages. Pupils show an increasing ability to present and explain their calculations, using a range of mental strategies. They are able to apply themselves in test situations, as this is a regular feature of teaching for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The use of mathematical language is developing, as teachers pay particular attention to emphasising the use of key mathematical terms - shared with pupils at the start of a lesson and reinforced throughout the lesson.
135. By Year 2, most pupils have a secure grasp of the size and order of numbers up to 100. Pupils are generally secure in their knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction facts involving two-digit numbers, although there are differences in pupils' capacity to apply their knowledge to solving simple problems. More able pupils are using three-digit numbers to solve problems and are more aware of number patterns and sequences. Pupils use money in practical shopping and the majority know the value of coins up to one pound, giving appropriate amounts of change. They are aware of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes, and many can describe some of those properties. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of using a graph to handle data such as a graph showing which fruit they like most.
136. There was a dip in performance in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds. Girls have tended to do marginally better than boys. Standards seen in lessons are better than last year's test results. Performance broadly matches the expected standards for pupils' age, and there are no visible differences between the achievement of girls and boys. Despite a dip in last year's test results, there is a rising trend in performance - broadly in line with the national trend. Achievement and progress are good throughout the school. The National Numeracy Strategy implementation is sound and contributing well to raising pupils' achievement.
137. By the time pupils are in Year 6, most pupils have a well-developed understanding of place value in three- and four-digit numbers and good knowledge of multiplication tables. Pupils apply their knowledge of the four rules in simple problems, and more able pupils select appropriate operations, including a combination of methods to solve more complex problems. They learn about equivalent fractions and decimals and more able pupils order them correctly. Pupils make use of the co-ordinates and learn to measure accurately the angles of a triangle. They calculate the area and perimeter of shapes and present their findings in a table form. More able pupils solve problems involving percentages, and investigate problems relating to probability, using dice or coins.
138. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. This is due to the good level of support they receive from the additional support staff during mathematics lessons. Pupils' Individual Education Plans include targets in mathematics, which are appropriate for meeting individual needs. Activities are modified to ensure pupils are able to access mathematics at their levels of need. For pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 and Year 6, there is more focused teaching in a smaller group, which is highly effective in meeting individual needs, and in challenging them to extend their learning.
139. Standards in numeracy are sound throughout the school. Pupils are able to recall number facts at expected levels, and they make their calculations using mental and written methods. Older pupils are beginning to check if their answers are reasonable and understand how addition and subtraction are linked, and the relationship between multiplication and division. This is one of the strengths in teaching. Pupils' knowledge of tables is sound and they use tables increasingly in their day-to-day work. Numeracy is promoted well through other subjects, such as science. Pupils use mathematics in a range of measuring activities linked to their work in science and present this information in graphs and charts; for example, while measuring the growth of plants,

classifying animals by their attributes, measuring the level of force in Newton's and using co-ordinates to show this.

140. The use of information and communication technology to support work in mathematics is underdeveloped. During the inspection, there were no examples available of pupils using the computer to support their work; pupils' work samples and displays also lacked any evidence. In particular, insufficient use is made of ICT to support work in data handling.
141. Mathematical language is used in a variety of ways; this is helping to develop pupils' understanding of English as well as their ability to use appropriate terms and mathematical ideas. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers encourage pupils to think and explain their strategies, both during the initial part of the lesson and at the end. This is having good impact on their ability to speak and think logically. There is some scope for improving pupils' writing skills through more opportunities for writing in mathematics work.

142. The quality of teaching is good overall, and this is an important factor in pupils' achievement. Some very good teaching was seen in a Year 6 class, which was particularly successful in using a variety of approaches to solving problems. These related to real-life situations and challenged pupils to think and to increase the speed of their mental recall. Good use was made of resources, including support from learning support assistants, and an overhead projector for demonstration. Planning is good; teachers of both ability sets share their planning to ensure that teaching is linked and tasks assigned are suited to pupils' needs, including pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Activities are suitably varied for the broad ability groups. Mental/oral strategies are taught well at the start of a lesson, and teachers share clearly the lesson objectives with their pupils. This helps pupils to remain focused and work towards achieving those objectives. Teachers set mental mathematics targets for pupils on a regular basis, which helps pupils to be more responsible for their learning, and to make greater efforts to achieve them. The use of homework is satisfactory in consolidating new ideas as well as extending them.
143. The main weakness in teaching in a minority of lessons seen was a lack of challenge for the most able pupils, which led to unnecessary wastage of time, and a lack of interest in the activity. Most teachers use time effectively in their three-part lessons; the final whole-class (plenary) session is used well to check on pupils' progress, and to consolidate what they have learned. In a small number of lessons observed, however, teachers had not allowed enough time for these whole-class discussions at the end of the lesson. Consequently, some opportunities were missed for developing pupils' mental/oral skills and for extending their thinking. In a minority of lessons, mathematical language was not used precisely by teachers. This suggests that in some instances there is scope for improving teachers' subject knowledge, although on the whole, teachers' subject knowledge is good.
144. The good quality of teaching overall leads to positive attitudes towards the subject and good relationships throughout. Pupils enjoy being challenged and do not like work which is repetitive or does not include a variety of activities. Older pupils persevere, and appreciate systematic approaches to problem solving and using logical thinking. They show mutual respect while doing paired work. Younger pupils enjoy learning from playing games and scoring points against their teachers. In a few mathematics lessons, some pupils have difficulty in managing their behaviour and are easily distracted. The work of class teachers, support staff and specialist provision for English as an additional language, helps to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and over time make good progress in relation to their starting point.
145. The mathematics curriculum is generally broad and balanced, placing due emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge of number and number systems. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use and apply newly learnt facts in a variety of situations. Problem solving is encouraged, but the level of challenge in activities varies between teachers. Despite the good procedures for assessment, the precise use of assessment information to match work for the most able pupils is less successful. The use of key objectives for each year group for planning work, and for checking pupils' progress on a systematic basis is less well developed in school. The setting of pupils by ability works well and consistency of curriculum content is achieved through shared planning.
146. The co-ordination of the subject is effective; mathematics is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and has appropriate plans for future action. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers, including both those new to the school and newly qualified, are supported in their lesson planning and in developing teaching methods. The co-ordinator has a leading role in reviewing the subject, looking at standards and monitoring teaching through direct lesson observation, which is proving useful in improving teaching and supporting staff development. All this is contributing to raising achievement and the profile of the subject within school. There is good improvement overall in the subject since the last inspection.
147. Resources for mathematics are adequate, easily accessed by pupils and well used by teachers during their demonstrations. This is particularly effective in facilitating pupils' understanding of

new mathematical ideas, for example the use of the whiteboard and fraction cards, to develop a good understanding of fractions. Pupils make good use of the available resources, including pupils' laminated cards to show their calculations, number lines and place-value cards. Displays in mathematics, including pupils' work and printed charts, are well organised, providing a stimulating learning environment. The school could further support teachers' professional development through additional teachers' resource books, textbooks for reference and model demonstration lessons.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Strengths**

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- The needs of the less able are well catered for with effective use of learning support assistants when available.
- The co-ordinator is having a strong impact by creating a better balance to the curriculum.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Marking rarely gives pupils ideas on how to improve
- The needs of more able pupils are usually less well provided for.

148. Based on work seen, overall standards are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were found to be below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. In national tests and assessments for 2001 attainment was found to be well below the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However 2002 unpublished results for the end of Years 2 and 6 confirm that the situation has improved.
149. At the end of both Years 2 and 6, pupils' achievement is now in line with expectations with similar, average, standards in their study of life, materials and physical processes. The increased emphasis on the skills of scientific enquiry is showing improvement across the school, although it does not reach the level of their factual knowledge. Pupils in Year 2 use a "Science day," to investigate which of a range of places is the best to dry washing and which materials dry faster, hypothesising that those with the widest mesh are fastest.
150. Pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically discuss their "Science day," investigations into the speed of a parachute fall or the movement of a model boat. They explain that for a fair test the items have to be "all the same" except for the element investigated and give a plausible list of factors which need to be controlled, such as areas and shapes of parachute, sails and hulls. When investigating the most effective "string telephones", the more able make appropriate predictions about the effect of the width as well as the length of the connecting material. Pupils enjoy and are often enthusiastic about science. They almost always show a good standard of behaviour and work together supportively.
151. At the end of Year 2, in studying life, pupils know that light and water are necessary for plant growth, learn about the difference between animals and plants and make basic animal classifications. At the end of Year 6, they know the names, location and function of most major human organs, the Latin names for some bones, and understand the dangers of drugs. They can give the name and function of parts of a flower and understand reproduction in plants and animals. More able pupils give an effective explanation of the necessity for chlorophyll in photosynthesis.
152. In their investigation of materials at the end of Year 2, pupils discover the best material to "make a waterproof jacket for teddy" and check similar materials to see which keeps iced water cool for longest. At the end of Year 6 pupils can name a range of gases and metals and their properties and broadly describe the differences in the movement of particles in solids, liquids and gases.

153. In investigation of physical processes, pupils at the end of Year 2 learn that items roll further if they go down a steeper ramp. At the end of Year 6 they enthusiastically build a range of circuits and begin to explain the movement of shadows in terms of the movement of the earth. The more able explain that the red spot on Jupiter is a storm.
154. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good, but is satisfactory overall with greater strengths towards the end of each key stage. More teaching is good or better than is unsatisfactory. The most general weakness is that marking rarely gives pupils ideas on how to improve. The most general strength is that the needs of the less able are well catered for with effective use of learning support assistants when available. In one lesson, less able pupils were challenged to find a wide range of categories, e.g number of legs, flying, habitats, etc to go on to categorise the same large set of animals. The needs of the more able are usually less thoroughly provided for. The strongest teaching showed a vigorous determination to bring out all the implications of a fair test, and showed pace, and good questioning skills to establish predictions and reasons which were based on the teacher's good knowledge and understanding; for example of the way sound travels in different media. In good lessons, teachers' effective knowledge and understanding enables them to demand clearer answers from pupils and avoid fudge. However, where teachers' subject knowledge is weaker, there can be confusions for example about the idea of force or how the measured drag will differ when the force meter is held at different angles. Usually a good range of materials and equipment is provided for lessons, but in weaker lessons this is lacking.
155. The co-ordinator has only been in place since the start of the school year but has had a good impact, for example by creating a better balance to the curriculum. More recent changes in the curriculum, including some more detailed changes which are due in September, promise to continue to raise standards. The appropriately increased emphasis on investigational skills is improving attainment. However, occasional unsatisfactory use of time during longer non-practical lessons prevents investigational skills from being taught as effectively as they should. The co-ordinator recognises the potential to improve assessment procedures to benefit both teachers' planning and the overview of the subject. There is an appropriate plan to improve the resources, which are only just satisfactory at present. The school benefits from a quite attractive environmental area with a pond.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

### **Strengths**

- Inspiration for art is drawn from a variety of sources and for different purposes.
- Management of the subject is good.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Pupils start using notebooks from Year 2, but this aspect is not yet well developed in the school.

156. Standards in art and design are good throughout the school and this shows improvement since the last inspection. Little art was taught during the inspection, so the judgement is made from analysis of pupils' work, planning, discussion with pupils and one lesson. Art has a high profile in the school. Displays are attractive and improve the quality of the school environment as well as valuing the work of the pupils.
157. Pupils use a variety of different media and techniques demonstrating increasing skill in their use as they progress through the school. Inspiration for art is drawn from a variety of sources and for different purposes. Year 1 pupils painted large animal heads to decorate their poetry display. Year 4 pupils celebrated the Commonwealth making splendid collages of the British Queen and The Swami King. Their self-portraits show well-observed skin tones and good pastel technique. One display showed good progression of skills and the use of different media. Year 2 pupils first drew shells, then made shell collages and printed repeated patterns. Maori art was the starting point for Year 3 pupils to create whirl patterns with lovely colour and detail. Their flower collages

show good use of different materials to create a three-dimensional effect. Pupils start using notebooks from Year 2, but this aspect is not yet well developed in the school.

158. As pupils get older they have a growing awareness of different periods in art and a genuine interest in the work of artists. Year 4 pupils clearly enjoyed drawing Picasso-style self-portraits which show a great deal of fun and invention. Although sometimes they copy work, more often they are asked to apply the style and techniques to their own ideas. Year 6 pupils enjoyed learning about artists, although they had different opinions about how they should use this. Some found copying satisfying while others wanted more freedom. As one said, 'Art lets your mind go wild'.
159. Year 6 pupils found particular pleasure in the work of Lowry, describing how he draws figures and buildings. They have good understanding of the uses of different media and techniques such as cross-hatching and shading. They explain that watercolour is good for landscapes because it runs easily but that also makes it difficult to control and that poster paint is good if you need more solid colour. While they have made pots out of papier-mâché they have less experience with three dimensions. They can explain what they did to draw trees in perspective and how to use a frame to select a detail for a picture.
160. Teaching in the one lesson seen was good. The teacher has high expectations of the work of all pupils, intervening very effectively to help them improve their work. She is skilful at encouraging the less talented as well as those with skill for the subject. She has the confidence to demonstrate if necessary and this enabled pupils to use white pastel to show light falling on a bunch of cherries. Pupils concentrate very well to draw the bowl of fruit or the vase of flowers showing a nice mix of colour blending and crisp detail. The teacher encouraged critical appraisal of what they achieved. In a religious education lesson, Year 5 pupils made a good first attempt at using clay to represent religious beliefs as they make models of Buddha showing his serene facial expression and symbolic hand positions.
161. Management of the subject is good. The self-evaluation process is effective in monitoring teaching, planning and pupils' opinions and in using this information to set priorities for the subject. Plans to change from a two-year to a one-year cycle have been made and this will make the process of developing skills easier for teachers to manage. The co-ordinator has very good understanding of the subject and the enthusiasm to move the school forward.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Strengths**

- Teaching is good overall.

### **Areas for improvement**

- There is not always sufficient difference in the level of challenge for pupils of different ability.
- The current two-year cycle does not lead to sufficient progression in learning.

162. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and are broadly average. However, the work done by pupils in the current two-year topic cycle does not show sufficient progression of skills and there is very little difference between what some older and younger pupils achieve. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6.
163. By Year 2, pupils are learning about food technology and have planned a healthy meal. Some have baked bread and written instructions for making this. Higher attaining pupils' designs for a cat basket are labelled to show the materials to be used. At age eleven, the models pupils have produced show effective use of a cam mechanism to make a moving toy. However, the plans for these are very sketchy and not well presented. Year 5 pupils' moving toys are very imaginative. A sailing boat has moving sails and an anchor and two cams are used to move both cars in a police chase.

164. Teaching is good overall, although some is weak due to lack of encouragement for independent learning. Generally, teachers follow plans well, although there is not always sufficient difference in the level of challenge for pupils of different ability. Resources are used well to introduce new vocabulary in a practical context so pupils can understand. A Year 2 teacher used questions and demonstration well to ensure pupils thought about the problems they might encounter.
165. A teacher took Year 5 pupils through a step by step process so they made very good progress in writing instructions for making a musical instrument, while also having materials at hand to test out their ideas. As a result they were able to modify their designs to be more practical. Pupils were very involved and many had brought in materials or tried things out at home.
166. Management of the subject is sound. Problems that arise from the two-year cycle have been recognised and a new one-year cycle has been planned.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

### **Strengths**

- Pupils knowledge of the local region that they have studied.
- Field work activities.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Teachers' planning should identify work suitable for pupils of differing abilities and identify subject-specific skills.
  - Develop topic planning that highlights subject-specific skills and how they are progressed across the key stages.
  - Appropriate assessment procedures need to be introduced that allow for the identification of targets for pupils' improvement.
167. Pupil's standards of work and their progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1, but improves to become satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2 in Year 6. The additional targeted support that teachers have in the classroom results in pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language making good progress. The subject, through its emphasis, on key words, graphs and surveys, means that it makes a satisfactory contribution to supporting literacy and numeracy across the school.
168. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, their attainment and progression are unsatisfactory. Pupils with low attainment levels compare seaside locations now and in the past, but their knowledge of the geographical features is limited. High attaining pupils reach satisfactory levels in their work on identifying the physical and human features on an island, and making some comparisons with their locality. Average attainers in Year 2 do not extend their knowledge and skills beyond identifying some basic symbols on a map of the Island of Struay. Geographical vocabulary, knowledge of physical features, and the ability to draw plans and sketches are not taught systematically.
169. By the age of eleven, pupils have extended their geographical knowledge of regions around the world, including India and the Commonwealth countries. Sound progress is evident when pupils in Key Stage 2 study the local area and how it has been changed by the expansion of Heathrow Airport. High attaining pupils reach satisfactory standards in their survey work on whether the local High Street should be closed to traffic.
170. Teaching and learning in geography are overall satisfactory. In the better lessons, work was set for pupils of different abilities, good pace was present and support staff were well used. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They answer questions willingly. However, there is little evidence of pupils having targets set for them that enable them to improve their work in geography. Pupils in Key Stage 2 obviously enjoy their field

studies and they show interest when discussing the differences between their locality and the other areas visited.

171. Work sampling shows that teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities in the topics for pupils to build their subject knowledge. However, there is less emphasis on the teaching of geography skills such as the posing of geographical questions, the development of mapping skills, and geographical vocabulary across the school.
172. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently. Overall, sound progress takes place when pupils extend their knowledge about rivers and the water cycle and pupils' vocabulary is extended. However, there is lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils when asked to comment on the appropriate clothing to wear in different climates and when average attainers comment on the differences and similarities between climates.
173. Assessment procedures in the subject are unsatisfactory and, with little information about levels of achievement and progress, teachers do not have the necessary data on which to base pupils' targets for improvement. Presently, teachers assess against learning objectives in their planning. However it is inconsistently applied across the school. As in history, pupils who are gifted and talented are not identified. Such information would help teachers to plan work that is more appropriate for pupils of differing abilities. Similarly, teachers' marking gives encouragement to the pupils, but does not always give guidance on how they can improve their work.
174. At present there is no designated subject leader and consequently the monitoring of the subject rests with the headteacher. Monitoring arrangements are limited and generally unsatisfactory. A scheme of work is in place and the topics do enable the National Curriculum to be taught. However the planning insufficiently highlights the subject-specific skills to be taught in a particular topic. Consequently, teachers' learning objectives are not focused enough with the result that geography skills are inconsistently developed across the school.
175. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced appropriate action planning for the development of the subject. The topic cycle timetable has been redesigned to minimise the gaps in teaching the subject. However standards at the end of Year 2 are now unsatisfactory and concerns exist over the resources, leadership, and monitoring of the subject. Overall improvement since the last inspection is therefore unsatisfactory.
176. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory with more maps, teacher resources and computer software required. However the field visits and local studies in Key Stage 2 are valuable and contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment and achievements in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

### **Strengths**

- The subject's contribution to supporting literacy and numeracy across the school.
- Examples of good teaching in Key Stage 2.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Teachers' planning should identify work suitable for pupils of higher abilities and heighten pupils' awareness of the skills involved in the study of history.
  - Appropriate assessment procedures need to be introduced that allow for the identification of targets for pupils' improvement.
  - Topic planning should emphasise the subject-specific knowledge and skills to be taught progressively across the school.
177. Pupils' progress and the standard of work seen during the inspection are unsatisfactory by the time the pupils reach Year 2, but becomes satisfactory by Year 6. Pupils with English as an

additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress, benefiting particularly from the additional targeted support that teachers have in the lessons.

178. By the age of seven, pupils' learning and progression are unsatisfactory. The majority of pupils demonstrate only a basic understanding of the passage of time. Their knowledge and use of the words that are identified with the subject are unsatisfactory. They have insufficient opportunities to work with a good range of written, visual and oral evidence and hence their skills in this area are underdeveloped.
179. Pupils during Key Stage 2 make sound progress in their learning about such history topics as the Tudors and the Victorians and the Ancient Egyptians. Higher attainers reach satisfactory standards when they write in detail about aspects of life in Ancient Egypt, such as the importance of the River Nile. All pupils study developments during Henry VIII's reign, describing the reasons behind his various marriages.
180. Across both key stages, pupils' grasp of the more difficult history skills is less secure. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 study the life and times of Florence Nightingale. Her career is then used by the pupils to help them understand about the passage of time. Pupils of all abilities produce drawings of her as a young, older and old person. However there exists little evidence that the pupils have been consistently asked to develop other history skills such as how we know about her, and what questions we might ask about her life and times. In Key Stage 2, timelines are inconsistently used and there is little written evidence that sufficient progress is being made in developing the questioning skills of pupils when they approach history topics.
181. Teaching and learning in history are overall satisfactory. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to extend their historical knowledge, although less attention is paid in lessons to adapting a skills-based approach to the subject. Teachers have sound subject knowledge in both key stages. Good teaching at Key Stage 2 takes place in lessons where teachers' questioning is challenging for pupils and they have high expectations of the pupils' work. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good; they work well together and relationships in the classroom are usually good.
182. At the time of this inspection, there is no designated subject leader. The responsibility for the subject rests with the headteacher. The necessary monitoring of the curriculum is carried out through examining the planning that teachers are using. However, monitoring overall is unsatisfactory with no observation of history teaching or checking of pupils' work consistently taking place. The subject is taught through topics and there is an appropriate scheme of work that enables the full national curriculum to be delivered. However, teachers' planning does not sufficiently identify subject-specific skills in the topics. Consequently, the learning objectives which teachers use in lessons are often too vague and the skills associated with history are not taught on a consistent basis across the school.
183. The learning and progress of pupils are satisfactory overall. However, both aspects are not helped by the unsatisfactory nature of assessment. Assessment is carried out by teachers who use the learning objectives from their planning as a basis for judging achievement. However, such assessment is inconsistently applied across the school. This lack of targeted assessment opportunities in history means that the tracking of pupils' progress and attainment is unsatisfactory, and such information is not making a significant contribution to informing teachers' planning, or the setting of appropriate targets for pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are not identified in a formal way, and assessment would help to do this. Gaps exist in teachers' planning in terms of identifying work specifically aimed at pupils with differing abilities. Marking gives encouragement to pupils, but does not always give guidance on how they can improve their work.
184. Through the promotion of key words, lesson reminders about literacy expectations and the extended writing opportunities offered to pupils in Key Stage 2, the subject makes a good contribution to supporting literacy across the school. Similarly the graphs in the Victorian-based census work support numeracy across the curriculum.

185. The subject now has an appropriate action plan. The timetabling of the topics is being changed to ensure more continuity. However, standards at Year 2 are now unsatisfactory and concerns exist over the resources, leadership, and monitoring of the subject. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is therefore unsatisfactory.
186. The resources for the subject are unsatisfactory, with a need for more teaching resources, textbooks and computer software. Attention should also be paid to arranging visits and visitors as well as building an artefact collection for pupils to use as part of their evidence work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **Strengths**

- The quality of the specialist teaching is very good and pupils make good progress in these lessons.
- Good use has been made of national training initiatives to improve the ICT skills of teachers.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The quality of teaching in other lessons is variable and not as effective as in the specialist lessons.
  - The planning of ICT in other subjects often lacks the detail needed to make it effective.
  - Many computers in Key Stage 2 classrooms are obsolete and prone to break down.
187. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are average, and therefore have improved since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils have early keyboard skills and can use the mouse to move the cursor on the screen. Many can cut and paste or drag text from one place to another. In one lesson, Year 1 pupils successfully dragged text and pictures of the growth cycle of plants into a logical order. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to log on and use a simple search engine and links to find information.
188. By Year 6, pupils use ICT to help gather material and information, explore and solve problems and aid their learning in many aspects of the curriculum. They can access, retrieve and save data in a variety of software packages including word-processing and data-handling programs. They can present information, including checking for accuracy, to others using text, graphics and pictures, appropriate for their audience. In one successful lesson, Year 5 pupils used Word Art to create attractive advertising banners as a centrepiece to a sequence of controlled sound and light actions. Year 6 pupils showed understanding of the language of programming as they worked on a sequence of controlled actions related to house security.
189. Pupils make good progress in lessons taught by the specialist teacher. They develop good keyboard skills and increasingly develop their use of ICT. They enjoy the subject and work with confidence and enthusiasm. They sustain concentration and show determination to complete tasks to a high standard. In those lessons that take place in classes, the rate of progress is variable. When the lesson is part of the overall study being undertaken by the class and is supported well by the teaching, progress is good. Where pupils are left to their own devices, they make much slower progress.
190. The quality of the specialist teaching is very good and is a strong feature of the school. Lessons are well structured and learning objectives are made very clear. Both the teacher and the support assistant have very good knowledge of the subject and can communicate both processes and information very effectively. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and expectations of pupils' performance are high. Relationships are very good and the specialist teacher works alongside the class teacher very effectively. This helps the class teachers to gain confidence and skills to support their own teaching of ICT. The quality of teaching in other lessons is variable and not as effective as in the specialist lessons.
191. The curriculum follows the national programme and provides a good range of opportunities for pupils. The curriculum is planned to provide a good range of experiences for pupils and to ensure that they develop the skills needed to word process, manage data and access information.

Detailed planning ensures that each specialist lesson provides good experiences for pupils. However, although the use of ICT is included in other planning, it is often lacking in the detail needed to make it effective. The specialist teacher has good knowledge of the pupils and keeps effective records of their progress.

192. The computer suite provides a good facility for pupils and is well equipped with computers and software. There are good resources for control technology. The room is small and the ventilation is sometimes inadequate. There is at least one computer in each classroom and increasing use is being made both by teachers and pupils of laptops. However, many computers, particularly in Key Stage 2 are obsolete and prone to break down. This undermines the confidence of the teachers in using them. The appointment of a part-time specialist teacher to teach and manage the subject has improved provision considerably since the last inspection. Good use has been made of national training initiatives to improve the ICT skills of teachers. However, staff mobility has resulted in over half the teachers who undertook the training leaving the school.

193. The subject is co-ordinated very effectively and the school has a realistic plan to develop the subject and upgrade provision. ICT is seen as central to the development of the whole curriculum and the school has made an appropriate investment in both training and resources. Money allocated under government schemes has been used appropriately. Although ICT is used effectively to support the school's administration, its use by teachers to support their teaching is underdeveloped.

## **MUSIC**

### **Strengths**

- There is good teaching of music and one lesson seen was excellent.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The number of places for instrumental lessons cannot satisfy the demand.

194. There has been good improvement in the standard of music throughout the school and this now reaches expectations. Singing assemblies are effective in raising standards. The headteacher and other staff work together to improve pupils' sense of pitch so that they sing more tunefully. The younger pupils sang 'Today' quite sweetly having practised reaching higher notes in the previous song. Older pupils also find it difficult to reach higher notes, but improve as a result of effective teaching. They improve their articulation, keep to the rhythms of the songs and respond well to the different moods. They manage a song with increasing tempo well. The selection of songs was appropriate for giving pupils different musical experiences and the lyrics served to reinforce good behaviour and respect for others. Music is played as pupils come into and leave the hall, but the composer or type of music is not always mentioned.
195. The good teaching throughout ensures that pupils make good progress, but as much of the curriculum is new there has not been time for this to result in a higher standard overall. Teaching is based on good lesson plans and resources are used well. There is a good balance between the different aspects of the curriculum. Pupils learn to handle instruments with care and co-operate well in groups. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils clap simple rhythms confidently and read basic notation for loud and soft sounds and rests. They are learning the names of percussion instruments and make sensible choices about the instruments to compose sounds of a storm. The teacher gave pupils the opportunity to work independently in groups and took particular care to ensure that a traveller child was involved.
196. One lesson was excellent. This high quality teaching is due to very good subject knowledge and an exceptional ability to enthuse and engage the pupils in the tasks. Throughout this Year 6 lesson, the teacher used technical terms in a practical context which made them understandable to the pupils. Consequently their knowledge of these is good, especially as much of this is new knowledge and not gained over a long period of time. After listening to a tape of 'Surfing with the Aliens', pupils wrote their feelings and responses, noticing the pattern of the rhythm. Enthusiastic singing of the 'Kiawa' song accompanied by the teacher on the guitar was not only great fun, but informed pupils' ideas about language and accents as they sang in 'Australian', French, Spanish and 'posh' English. Continuing with the space theme, pupils produced interesting sounds using their mouths rather than voices, which they fit into a 'sound sculpture'. Very good demonstration by the teacher and practise of a challenging time change from three beats in the bar to two, leads pupils to know about time signatures and have an acquaintance with the idea of metre.
197. The school uses its self-evaluation process well to identify strengths and weaknesses. The management of the subject is good and this has been a significant factor in the recent improvement in standards. A new scheme of work has been introduced which gives teachers confidence in the subject. A choir has been started and pupils have sung at a local hospice and to parents and governors. Clarinet, flute, violin and cello lessons are offered, but although there are many applicants the number of places offered by the borough music service is limited. The

co-ordinator has a very clear view of what is needed to further improve the quality of music in the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Strengths**

- Resources for physical education (PE) are good.
- The subject leader has good specialist knowledge and provides support throughout the school.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Pupils' co-ordination and control when playing with balls are generally weak for their age, especially in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2.
- More opportunities should be provided in lessons for pupils to evaluate their own and each other's performance.

198. Standards of attainment by pupils at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Satisfactory progress is made by pupils of all backgrounds and abilities throughout the school. They are developing a sound understanding of how exercise benefits the body and older pupils can explain how heart rate, circulation and body heat all increase during physical activity.
199. Infant children were seen engaging in a variety of different activities, including dance and ball games. Their movements show some imagination and they are able to change speed and direction with good body co-ordination. They usually listen attentively and follow instructions closely. When working with bats and balls, their skills are less well developed and they often fumble when attempting to catch. These skills remain quite weak in Years 3 and 4.
200. Junior children work particularly well in teams and can take some responsibility for organising themselves. They have satisfactory and sometimes good poise, balance and fluency of body movements. Pupils are learning specific skills and techniques e.g. batting styles in cricket and a variety of strokes in swimming which they then practise and strive to improve. Pupils have enjoyed success in competitions in football, cricket, netball and swimming.
201. Throughout the school, children enjoy their PE and levels of non-participation are very low. Behaviour in lessons is often very good and pupils are keen to be involved and to make progress. They are happy to be chosen to demonstrate their performance to others. This positive attitude - promoted by effective teaching - helps their learning.
202. Teaching is satisfactory with good and very good teaching in some classes. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and identify suitable learning objectives for each class. Lessons have a good sequence of activities with more complex and demanding work being required as the lesson progresses. Subject knowledge is sound amongst class teachers generally, and that of the subject manager is good. Children are organised well for the various activities and instructions are clearly given. In most classes, good attention is paid to safety and teachers and support staff maintain a good level of supervision, especially when pupils are outside. Learning is particularly effective when teachers demonstrate skills to the class, enable the pupils to practise, and then bring them back together at intervals to review progress and check on technique. Where lessons are less successful, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance and learn from the work of others.
203. Since the previous inspection, attainment has improved at Key Stage 1 and the quality of teaching is better. Resources are now good, both in quality and quantity. There remains a need to improve the methods used to assess pupils' progress in PE and to regularly monitor the quality of teaching in all years. A subject review of PE was undertaken in March 2001 and resulted in several useful recommendations, some of which have been implemented and have led to improvement.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Strengths

- The involvement of pupils from different faiths in teaching others about their beliefs.

### Areas for improvement

- The need for more focus on understanding of religious practice, rather than a mere superficial knowledge of what takes place.

204. Standards in religious education (RE) by the end both Years 2 and 6 are in line with those established by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' progress is steady throughout the school. Teachers draw on the different religious backgrounds of pupils and use this as a resource to promote learning and raise achievement. Pupils are comfortable with talking about and sharing their knowledge and experience.
205. During Key Stage 1, children have a basic introduction to several faiths including Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. They learn about major festivals, significant stories and religious ceremonies. In lessons observed, pupils were learning about the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar and showed genuine interest in its construction and use. Some pupils in Year 2 had visited the temple and were able to recall and share their knowledge.
206. By the end of Year 6, pupils have explored the major world religions in greater depth and know something about the founders, leaders and traditions of these faiths. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils are making a study of the significance of water in different religions and make good contributions to the lessons by drawing on their own knowledge and experience. Older pupils are learning about the various forms of the Buddha and know what different hand positions and postures represent.
207. The quality of teaching in RE is satisfactory overall with some good teaching. The most variable factors are teachers' subject knowledge and their confidence in using the resources available. The best learning takes place when teachers are well prepared, have sufficient resources available and link the RE lesson with other aspects of the curriculum e.g. a focus on literacy or art. In such lessons, pupils are well motivated and often engrossed in their work. The subject contributes significantly to their spiritual and cultural development through discussion and through the use of real artefacts as a stimulus to learning.
208. Overall, the subject has maintained the strengths reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, there is more emphasis on knowledge than on understanding and many pupils' books contain drawings of religious symbols and events with little evidence of any underlying meaning and empathy. There is, therefore, room for improvement in the extent to which pupils are able to reflect upon the beliefs and practices they are learning about and to evaluate the relative importance of opinion, belief and fact.