

INSPECTION REPORT

Eton Wick CofE (VC) First School

Eton Wick
Windsor

LEA: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 197577

Headteacher: Mrs Jan Robinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies
22460

Dates of inspection: 12 – 15 March, 2001

Inspection number: 109996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sheepcote Road Eton Wick Windsor Berkshire
Postcode:	SL4 6JB
Telephone number:	01753 860096
Fax number:	01753 868274
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William Cooley
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22460	Mrs Patricia Davies	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Mathematics; Art and design; Design and technology.	The school's results and achievements. How well pupils are taught; How well the school is led and managed.
9053	Mrs Viv Phillips	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils; How well the school works in partnership with parents.
23009	Mrs Anne Hogbin	<i>Team inspector</i>	History; Physical education; Foundation Stage; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.	The effectiveness of the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils.
23658	Dr Stephen Parker	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Music; Religious education.	
7813	Dr Kevin Wood	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Geography.	

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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33 Kingsway

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WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 145 pupils attending full time. It is smaller than other schools with primary aged pupils and is currently under-subscribed. Most pupils are taught in mixed age classes and the size of each year group varies. Children at the Foundation Stage are educated in a nursery class and a reception class. Just over six per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is 23 per cent and most are at the lowest stages of need. No pupils have statements of need. A few pupils have English as an additional language. During the last school year, 22 per cent of pupils left or joined the school other than at the usual time of admission or transfer, and this movement affects some year groups more than others. When children first enter the reception class their attainment is broadly similar to children of the same age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Eton Wick First School gives its pupils a sound education. The care and welfare of pupils continues to be a very successful feature of the school's work. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to their work. Despite the considerable changes and disruption to teaching staff this school year, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, they achieve standards that are broadly in line with national expectations in English and science, and are above national expectations in mathematics. Leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The school currently gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards in mathematics are above national expectations by the time the pupils leave the school at nine years of age.
- Children in the nursery are currently receiving a very imaginative and stimulating start to their education.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to school and good levels of personal development provide a good platform for learning.
- The very good relationships amongst pupils and with adults reflect the high priority given to moral and social development.
- The school's partnership with parents is very strong.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards of achievement in writing.
- Assessment procedures and the analysis of data to help plan activities that consistently meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, and help pupils understand how they can improve.
- The setting of whole school priorities that are directly linked to raising standards and increasing teacher's expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Opportunities for all pupils in the same year group to have equivalent learning experiences year on year.

The school is aware of the need to improve standards in writing and is further developing assessment and planning. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in September, 1997. Standards in mathematics have risen and pupils are now meeting national expectations in information and communication technology and history at both key stages. There has also been good improvement to pupils' attitudes and behaviour, to the opportunities for moral and social education and to the roles and responsibilities of senior staff and co-ordinators. These improvements are reflected in the increased satisfaction of parents with the school. Whilst the quality of other areas of the school's work has largely been maintained, there has not been enough improvement to assessment systems. They do not yet give teachers enough detailed information to consistently plan challenging activities for pupils of different abilities. Neither does curriculum planning yet ensure that pupils of the same age have equivalent experiences within current arrangements for mixed age classes. In addition, weaknesses in the teaching of writing have not been effectively addressed. Whilst governors have improved their role in monitoring the school's strategic direction, planning does not yet focus enough on raising standards.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by seven year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	C	C	E
Writing	B	C	C	E
Mathematics	B	A	B	C

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

In the most recent tests, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in mathematics was above the national average. More pupils achieved the higher level in reading than they did in

writing. Test standards in mathematics have improved overall since 1997, particularly for girls. Inspection evidence reflects test results and shows that pupils achieve standards that are above national expectations in mathematics at Years 2 and 4, and in line with national expectations in English. Standards are also in line with national expectations in science and information and communication technology. The objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus are satisfactorily met at both key stages. Attainment in geography is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 but below the expected level at Key Stage 2. Attainment in design and technology, history and music meets the expected level. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on art and design or on physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy their lessons, particularly when teaching is imaginative and challenging.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. There is a calm and harmonious atmosphere as most pupils behave well. Some individual pupils find it harder than most to behave as expected when lessons do not hold their attention well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect and understand the effect of their actions on others. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory in general. The unusual rise in absences this year is linked to the ill health and extended absence of particular pupils as well as an increase in extended family holidays. Otherwise, there has been steady improvement in raising attendance and reducing absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows the quality of teaching to be satisfactory overall, but with strengths. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons. It was good or better in 53 per cent of lessons, with 18 per cent very good. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent throughout the school. The strongest teaching was seen in the nursery, where it was very good, and in the class of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teaching was unsatisfactory in six per cent of lessons, located at Key Stage 2. Most pupils work with interest and good levels of effort. Where teachers use a variety of interesting strategies to seek and use pupils' ideas and explore their understanding, pupils are attentive and eager to take part. This was particularly apparent in information and communication technology, which is well taught, and in religious education where there is thoughtful written work,

reflecting pupils' positive response. However, in otherwise satisfactory teaching, activities do not always consistently challenge pupils enough to achieve their best, particularly the more able. This is largely because assessment does not yet give teachers enough detailed information to help them plan work that matches pupils' particular needs. This occasionally causes teaching to be unsatisfactory. English and mathematics are satisfactorily taught, as are numeracy skills in other subjects. Literacy skills are generally not well used and developed in other subjects, particularly writing skills. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, where it is not taught frequently enough or with sufficient challenge.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Planning for all subjects is detailed and thorough but is not yet fully completed or established. Pupils of the same age in different classes do not always have equal access to learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils receive close support in lessons and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. These few pupils take a full part in classroom activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with particular strengths in opportunities for moral and social development. Provision for spiritual education is good, although there are fewer chances planned within subjects. Cultural development is satisfactory, but there is less emphasis on ensuring that cultural diversity is valued and celebrated regularly.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good support for personal development and welfare. The monitoring of academic achievement is not yet sharply focused enough to help to plan work to consistently meet individual pupils' needs.

There are highly effective links with parents because communication is good and school staff are approachable.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is hardworking and very committed to maintaining a caring ethos. There are clear roles and responsibilities for senior staff and co-ordinators, but staff changes have impeded their impact on development. The current staff are working together well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well-informed and giving valuable support. Some governors are very active in the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring systems are satisfactory. There is not yet enough detailed focus on the quality of pupils' learning and achievement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Unallocated funds have been earmarked for further improvement to the school's accommodation.

Staffing is adequate overall. The accommodation is spacious, well kept and scrupulously clean. Outside areas have been imaginatively developed. Learning resources are good. The school secures satisfactory value for the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the school's leadership and management. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children like coming to school. • Children are encouraged to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons. • The amount of homework. • The amount of information they get about their children's achievement.

Parental satisfaction with the school has increased since the previous inspection and a larger proportion now have very positive views. Inspection findings generally endorse these positive views. Homework and the range of extra curricular activities were both found to be satisfactory. Reports about children's progress were found to be clear and useful, although less attention is given to indicating whether children's achievements are similar to other pupils of the same age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When children enter full time schooling at the age of five years, assessments show their attainment to be broadly similar to what is expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress during their time at the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception class. Hence, attainment remains broadly average in reading and writing, and in mathematical, physical and creative development, meeting the expected early learning goals when they enter Year 1. Standards of achievement are above the expected levels, however, for speaking and listening and personal, social and emotional skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because of the importance the school gives to personal development and to the good use of investigative strategies to encourage learning. Children in the present nursery group are making very good progress in lessons as a result of highly interesting and imaginative teaching.

2. In the 2000 national tests, pupils achieved average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were well below average while those in mathematics were close to those of the other schools. There has been good improvement to standards in mathematics since the previous inspection. This is reflected in a rising trend overall since 1997 in the national test results in mathematics for seven year olds, particularly in the achievement of girls. In the most recent national tests, where standards were above national averages, more pupils achieved the higher Level 3 than was found nationally. Whilst, in reading, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average, it was below in writing. However, results in both reading and writing were affected by a larger than usual number of boys in that year group who had special educational needs. The school has been successfully tackling this. It has also identified the need to raise writing standards and is planning to make this a major priority for improvement in future whole school planning. Teacher assessments in science show pupils achieving standards above national averages, but in line with national averages when compared with similar schools. However, the school is aware of the need to review its assessments of achievement in science to make sure that they are based on secure and informed evaluations.

3. Overall, pupils are currently making satisfactory progress as they move through the school, including the few who have English as an additional language. Those pupils with special educational needs are making good progress, particularly against the targets in their individual education plans. This is because they are well supported during lessons and fully included in main activities. Pupils are also making good progress in mathematics and the school feels this is due both to the influence and early introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and to a closer focus on systematically developing skills and understanding. Generally, however, pupils' progress is inhibited from being greater by several factors. Firstly, the school has been considerably disrupted by staff changes: every class except one has been affected. Secondly, there are weaknesses within assessment and, as a result, work is not consistently well matched to pupils needs and abilities. This happens particularly where some staff are new or pupils are more able. Finally, pupils of the same age in different classes do not always have the same access to equivalent curriculum experiences year on year.

4. Evidence from this inspection found standards to be above national expectations in mathematics for pupils in the present Years 2 and 4. In English, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in speaking and listening, whilst it is in line with national expectations in reading and science. Whilst standards in writing are close to national expectations overall, few pupils reach the higher level in either year group. The lower level of attainment in writing is mainly due to the lack of opportunities throughout the school for pupils to write at length and in a range of forms. Standards of presentation and handwriting are also too low and pupils do not make consistent progress in these aspects.

5. Throughout the school, pupils speak confidently and listen closely, taking an active part in discussion. Older pupils make formal presentations. In all year groups pupils are enthusiastic about reading and most have favourite authors. Pupils aged seven sound out new words and have a good understanding of what they are reading. By the age of nine, pupils read longer texts silently. Whilst they prefer to read fiction, they are generally confident in using books to find information, although they are less skilled at finding books in a library. Some pupils need more guidance when choosing books to make sure that they are changed frequently enough or are matched to their ability. By the age of seven, most pupils express their ideas clearly in written personal accounts. They show good imagination and achieve sound standards of spelling and punctuation. However, standards of handwriting are less consistent, and many older pupils do not have a joined style or form their letters correctly. Whilst there are examples of pupils at Key Stage 2 producing thoughtful and improved stories and factual accounts, these opportunities are limited, particularly for more able pupils. This is similar to the findings in the previous report.

6. Many pupils are confident with number, particularly in the present Year 4. Pupils in Year 2 are quick to spot number patterns and relationships. More able pupils apply a good knowledge of hundreds, tens and units to their calculations, whilst middle attaining pupils work in numbers to 100. Some lower attainers are not yet confident working with numbers beyond ten. Many pupils use standard linear measures and complete simple block graphs. By Year 4, most pupils work comfortably with three digit numbers and make rapid mental calculations, of time for example. Lower attainers calculate two-digit numbers. Those with higher and middle attainment accurately calculate right and half-right angled turns and calculate complex fractions of whole numbers. The good use of investigative activities helps pupils at Key Stage 1 to satisfactorily increase their scientific knowledge and understanding. In this way, pupils in Year 2, for example, understood what a spring does, although they did not go on to explain why. By Year 4, pupils link cause and effect and give simple explanations, for example in relating gravity to its effects on motion.

7. There has been good improvement to standards in information and communication technology since the previous inspection, and these now meet national expectations in both Years 2 and 4. The use of these skills within other subjects is developing well, although this needs further work. Pupils are also meeting the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Standards have improved in history at Key Stage 2, and attainment is now in line with national expectations. The new scheme of work is having a significant effect on standards in design and technology, particularly at Key Stage 1. Evidence was too limited to make an overall judgement in art and design and physical education. Standards are generally in line with national expectations in all other subjects except in geography at Key Stage 2, where they are below. This is because geography is not taught with enough frequency or challenge.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have improved well since the last inspection in response to the school's strong moral and social codes. Pupils' attitudes are good and give a firm foundation for learning. Parents say that their children like school. Pupils are happy to do what is asked of them and enjoy their lessons, particularly when work is challenging enough to make them think and keep them interested: as in a literacy lesson at Years 1 and 2, involving responses to poetry. There were high levels of attention during this stimulating lesson, with many pupils volunteering answers and suggestions. This is also particularly true in the nursery, where children are enthused and motivated by their exciting activities and, consequently, are making very good progress. Even when the pace of the lesson is slow and activities are not well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, they are still willing to work. However, older pupils have not developed positive attitudes to geography because they receive a limited experience of the subject.

9. The overall standard of behaviour is good, as parents indicated in questionnaires and at their meeting before the inspection. In most cases, pupils are well behaved in and out of lessons, resulting in a calm and civilised atmosphere around the school. They play together very happily, without any sign of racism or bullying. In lessons, most pupils listen carefully and do their best to follow instructions. However, some individual pupils find it harder than most to meet the school's expectations of how to behave, particularly when teaching does not hold their attention well. In one or two instances, pupils' efforts to behave well go unnoticed, and so they call out or fidget during extended whole class teaching. There is an undercurrent of restlessness in uninteresting lessons and assemblies when pupils have to listen to the teacher for a long time. One or two examples of this unsettled behaviour are linked to the significant turnover of staff. There have been no exclusions.

10. Personal development is also good. Pupils have a very good sense of what will happen if they treat someone in a particular way. This is because the school works hard to help them to understand the effect of their actions on others. Their respect for other people's values and beliefs is good, particularly where they have the opportunity to consider other cultures, faiths and ways of life thoughtfully. Pupils enjoy the chance to give a helping hand and take responsibility, when this happens, as in the school council. Pupils in the Years 2 and 3 class like to read with the children in the nursery. Relationships are very good. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds get on well together at play. In lessons, such as design technology, boys and girls work together productively. Even the youngest children are happy to help each other where they can. There is a strong sense of harmony in the school.

11. Attendance is satisfactory in general. Most pupils come to school regularly and on time. An unusual rise in absences in the year before the inspection was linked to the chronic ill health and extended absence of particular pupils, coupled with an increase in numbers of term time holidays. This resulted partly from the intake of more pupils with family connections overseas. Otherwise, improvement in raising attendance and reducing absence has been steady. Quite properly, the school does not authorise absences for casual days off or family holidays of more than ten days, unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so. This is intended to make it clear to families that children should not miss school

unnecessarily, because of the impact of absences on their learning and achievement. Not all families recognise the disadvantage of missed literacy, numeracy and other subject lessons where work is unlikely to be repeated, but the school has worked very hard to change their view that odd days off do not matter.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. There have been many changes in staff recently, and particularly so this term. This has had a disruptive impact on almost every class in the school, and some classes have already had several teachers since the beginning of the school year. Nevertheless, inspection evidence gained from lessons seen and from the work in pupils' books, shows the quality of teaching to be satisfactory overall, with strengths. Indeed, of the lessons seen during the inspection, 94 per cent were satisfactory or better. Teaching was good or better in 53 per cent of lessons, with 18 per cent very good. However, at present, the quality of teaching is not consistent across the school. The most effective teaching was seen in the nursery, where it was consistently of a very high quality, and in the class containing pupils in Years 1 and 2. Other examples of good quality teaching were also seen, the greatest proportion at Key Stage 1. Teaching was unsatisfactory in per cent of lessons, located at Key Stage 2. However, this was not representative of the teaching quality as a whole. Where it occurred, a temporary staff member was very new to the school and the English system of education, and was therefore unfamiliar with national teaching initiatives.

13. The strengths of teaching include effective questioning which uses and explores pupils' ideas, the positive management of behaviour and the use of good quality resources to support learning. There has been considerable improvement to the teaching of information and communication since the previous inspection, most notably because of the new computer suite. Pupils are responding enthusiastically to this development and making good progress in lessons. For example, some pupils at Year 4 could hardly wait to access information on the CD-ROM about India. They were also well supported with prompt sheets to guide their exploration. Pupils are also responding positively to strengths in the teaching of religious education. This is evident in thoughtful written work. Detailed lesson plans help to give all teaching a firm foundation. Classroom support staff are well deployed and give groups of pupils and individuals valuable support, particularly those with special educational needs. However, although teachers plan tasks for different ability groups, even within otherwise satisfactory teaching, more able pupils are still not consistently challenged to achieve their best. This reflects the findings of the previous report. This is because the lack of sharply focused assessment makes it difficult for teachers to plan activities that meet the specific needs of individual pupils. Additionally, although work is regularly marked, developmental feedback is rarely recorded in pupils' books to support their understanding of their learning or suggest how they might improve. English and mathematics are satisfactorily taught at present, with weaknesses in the teaching of writing because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write independently or in a range of forms.

14. Whilst the use of numeracy skills is satisfactory, literacy skills are not used or developed enough in other subjects, particularly those related to writing. The school is planning to extend the use of information and communication technology skills across the curriculum. Science is also satisfactorily taught, with a strength in the use of investigation

and enquiry. The teaching of history, music and design technology is satisfactory, but in geography it is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in art and design or physical education.

15. In a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3 on haiku poetry, their initial interest was raised and harnessed by quick changes of activity, and by tasks that claimed their full involvement. As a result, they were proud of their achievement in sorting and classifying nouns. Their contributions were carefully listened to and used to extend vocabulary. As a result of this effective introduction, all pupils participated well in subsequent activities, some eager to contribute to the drafting of their group poem. High levels of subject knowledge and focused input, constant reinforcement and the skill to predict and pre-empt potential difficulties, ensured a fast paced literacy lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This was a calm, controlled lesson with a good atmosphere. Skills were effectively modelled on the board and expectations firmly established. Activities were challenging and, as a result of all these factors, most pupils made very good progress. These positive features were reflected in a mathematics lesson in the same class, where pupils' attention was also focused by the effective use of good quality resources to demonstrate and question and, so, successfully increased their understanding of division.

16. The quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception group is good overall, and consistently of a high calibre in the nursery. Teachers work effectively with learning support assistants and other available adults to give an effective mix of whole class and small group teaching. The development of children's personal, social and emotional skills is good and underpins all Foundation Stage teaching. As a result, children have very positive attitudes to school, are keen to learn, and make good progress. Teaching in the nursery is very good because the recently appointed temporary teacher is experienced and develops learning through imaginative experiences. For example, children showed enormous enthusiasm when planting bulbs and watching birds and animals through binoculars. These practical approaches to learning are successful in both Foundation Stage classes. However, teaching is satisfactory overall for reception children. This is because they do not benefit from the broader range of activities currently taking place in the nursery that more closely match the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

17. However, within otherwise competent teaching through the school, pupils are not consistently and sufficiently challenged, particularly those of higher ability. Sometimes, expectations of achievement are too modest. At other times, all pupils complete the same task regardless of ability or, where tasks are planned for different ability groups, they are not refined enough to meet the particular needs of individual pupils. On some occasions, pupils are limited by the nature of the task. This is often true of written activities. In some mathematics lessons, the activity sessions are not used effectively enough for the focused teaching of skills and understanding. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, tasks are ill matched because new teachers do not yet have enough information about the abilities of each pupil. Very occasionally, pupils are not well managed and behaviour deteriorates.

18. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well taught and benefit from close support in lessons, both as individuals and in groups. This is an improvement on what was found during the previous inspection. As a result, they make good progress and move down the stages of need.

Those few pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactorily taught and are enabled to take a full part in lessons.

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

19. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum that includes religious education and all the required subjects of the National Curriculum. The national literacy strategy has been adopted, and planning is based on the targets set out in the official framework. Nevertheless, the lack of opportunities for extended writing in English or in other subjects is a weakness that is affecting standards. The National Numeracy Strategy is in place, and all classes have a numeracy lesson each day. Standards have risen as a result. Provision for science has been improved since the last inspection, particularly planning for practical investigations. There has been considerable progress in developing a scheme of work for information and communication technology and in introducing information and communication technology applications into other subjects. Teaching in religious education is soundly based on the locally Agreed Syllabus, and is extended effectively through links with the topics planned for assemblies and covered in the new policy for personal, social and health education. This policy has a good level of detail to guide teachers. Its coverage includes drugs awareness, which corrects an omission noted in the previous inspection. Elements of health and sex education are introduced informally as opportunities arise in other subjects. Provision includes regular class “circle time” discussions, when teachers can focus on issues of concern and emphasise key features of citizenship.

20. The curriculum planned for children in the Foundation Stage has not been fully developed to reflect recent changes to official requirements, partly because the process has been interrupted by staff changes. However, the curriculum is satisfactory because children are offered a good range of learning experiences that ensure they will meet the early learning goals set for their age group. There are particular strengths in the curriculum for personal, social and emotional skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Additionally, the experienced temporary teacher in the nursery is currently providing very enriching experiences. The development of the Foundation Stage curriculum is highlighted within the school’s current development plan.

21. Since the previous inspection, the school has conscientiously sought to address the weaknesses in planning highlighted in the last report. Currently, subject co-ordinators are developing detailed schemes of work for all subjects as the year progresses, to take account of recent changes to the National Curriculum. Work to date on schemes of work is thorough and soundly based on official guidelines, though it is not fully clear what pupils will cover year on year because the schemes are not yet complete. The schemes for history and for art and design were noted as weaknesses in the previous report. These have been improved and are now of good quality, though the use of this planning is not yet fully established.

22. However, although the school is successful in ensuring that pupils have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of considerations such as gender and ethnic origin, there are significant weaknesses in provision for pupils of different ages and abilities and this makes provision unsatisfactory overall. All classes except one contain pupils of two year groups, and two classes currently contain pupils from different key stages. Because year groups vary in size, class groupings can change each year. The governing body has agreed to this arrangement on the

grounds of avoiding large class sizes. However, the arrangement creates difficulties in ensuring that all pupils receive all elements of the National Curriculum appropriate for their age as they move through the school, and that pupils in one class cover the same work as pupils of the same age in another. Instances of significantly different coverage for pupils of the same age were noted during the inspection in several subjects: for example, in the detail of coverage of Hinduism in religious education in the two Year 4 classes. As yet, the curriculum planning structure does not identify and address this problem adequately.

23. Weaknesses in matching work to the needs of pupils across the range of attainment were also noted in the inspection. This was a key issue of the previous report. There has been some progress because the lesson-planning format in use during the inspection prompts teachers to identify the provision for different groups of pupils. Nevertheless, the work set in lessons observed was generally most appropriate for pupils with average attainment and below. Pupils with potentially higher attainment are not consistently given enough challenge through the school, either by means of specifically designed tasks or of higher expectations for the quality and quantity of their work. This contributes to inhibiting pupils' progress over time from being greater than satisfactory.

24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. This is because needs are identified and addressed sooner. Individual education plans set out specific targets to guide the development of these pupils, mainly in language and personal development. Their targets are regularly reviewed and appropriately updated so that these pupils make consistently good progress. Support in class is good and the curriculum is generally modified well in lessons so that they take a full part in the main activities. The provision for the few pupils with English as an additional language is adequate. For the first time, the school is to receive additional funding for these pupils for the coming financial year.

25. Provision for activities outside lessons has been reduced in range by staff changes, but it is satisfactory. Recent provision has included clubs for chess, French and music. Private tuition in basketball is available. Music and the arts are well supported by opportunities for pupils to perform for community groups and in a local arts festival and, each year, all pupils contribute to an art and design theme. Out-of-school visits and visiting performers are of high quality, with a notable recent performance by a visiting orchestra. History is particularly well supported by visits to museums and sites of historic interest, and visitors including a local historian. Special focus weeks such as those for mathematics, science and reading are good opportunities to stimulate interest. Good use is made of the local community to support studies, such as fieldwork in geography and history. There are close relations with the church and involvement in many aspects of local life. The vicar is one of a number of visitors who present positive role models of life in the community. Contacts with neighbouring middle schools are sound and support curriculum planning, to ensure that leavers are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

26. The school provides well overall for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because of the consistent reinforcement of the school's core values within its Christian ethos. This includes consideration for others and moral principles.

27. The school provides well for children's spiritual development through its regular contact with the vicar and the church, religious education and everyday routines. There is careful attention to ensuring that the pupils have a daily Act of Collective Worship. Pupils and parents talk enthusiastically about assemblies led by the vicar, which they value for the sense of occasion and spiritual awareness fostered. Not all assemblies are as successful in encouraging meaningful reflection and awe-inspiring moments. This is also the case in some lessons, where opportunities are missed to allow pupils to experience special moments or explore their ideas about key questions in life. In other cases, teachers encourage pupils to think about their feelings and experiences in relation to values such as kindness, honesty and love. Adults value children's ideas and contributions in lessons. The school does not always celebrate the spirituality in its work through displays of stimulating and moving examples of art, sculpture and poetry.

28. There is very good provision for moral and social development, which reflects the priority that the school gives to children's well being and personal development. The personal, social and health education programme makes a good contribution to this area of the school's work. A very good lesson in Years 1 and 2 challenged children to think carefully about different ways of behaving and the right thing to do in the context of health education. Activities in music and physical education give pupils good opportunities to work together. Daily routines such as the way children are expected to organise themselves as they come into the classroom in the morning and arrangements for eating lunch help to reinforce a sense of responsibility and civilised behaviour. Adults encourage good manners very effectively through example and direct teaching.

29. Cultural development is given satisfactory support. There are examples of good practice where pupils are encouraged to think about their own and other people's traditions, as in a display of different celebrations of New Year. Within subjects such as history and religious education, there are good opportunities for pupils to visit the local area and explore their own cultural heritage. Pupils have been introduced to the idea of Barnaby Bear and his travels to different places, which are then pictured in photographs and postcards. Such work is not always used in a lively and systematic way to ensure that cultural diversity is valued and celebrated regularly. For example, opportunities are missed in lessons and displays to show the rich contribution of many cultures to literature, art, music, science, mathematics and technology.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school's pastoral work is a particular strength - as it was at the last inspection - and the rate of improvement has been steady. Positive comments from parents at their meeting before the inspection endorsed the school's caring and sensitive approach and, so too, did views expressed by older pupils. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very effective. This is because the school makes the care and well being of its pupils a priority of its work: it believes that they cannot learn effectively unless they are happy and secure. The development of a successful programme of personal, social and health education is a key part of the school's approach to caring for its pupils. Adults know children and their particular circumstances very well and respond to individual needs in a very supportive way. They monitor pupils' personal development very well informally. In individual cases, formal monitoring of pupils' behaviour and personal development helps to ensure that appropriate help can be given to a child who finds it

difficult to settle in class and develop good learning habits. The strong sense of community and care that exists provides a firm platform for raising standards, but the focus on pupils' achievement is not yet as strong as the attention to their well being. This deficiency contributes to the rate of pupils' progress, over time, being any better than satisfactory.

31. There are effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance, which ensure that parents avoid trivial absences and let the school know quickly when a child is ill. The school deals swiftly with any oppressive behaviour and reports instances to the governing body as required, although these are extremely rare. There have been no exclusions.

32. The development of assessment systems and their use to guide planning was a key issue in the last inspection report. Since that time, arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress has been improved and their continuing development remains a improvement area within the school' planning. However, they are still not sharply focused enough to give teachers detailed information to help them plan work which consistently and accurately meets the needs of different ability groups and individual pupils. The recent changes to staff have highlighted this as a weakness, as it has been hard for new staff to manage classes quickly and effectively because of the difficulty of working without accurate profiles of each pupil's achievements and personal development.

33. The school collects useful information from statutory national tests which is supplemented by optional tests in Years 3 and 4. This data is now being analysed to look for trends and areas needing improvement. For example, the school has identified weaknesses in writing and the attainment of boys. They are also aware that science assessments need further attention. The school records individual results so it can track the progress of individuals as well as year groups, the outcome of which produces group targets in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these are not consistently used to inform lesson planning. The good quality schemes of work being drawn up by all subject co-ordinators this year have clearly focused assessment criteria linked to National Curriculum levels, and staff are beginning to record the achievements of individual pupils. These systems, however, are very new and are also not yet fully influencing the quality of activities in lessons. Consequently, although work is often modified to meet different abilities, it often presents too little challenge, particularly for more able pupils, or is not always targeted at the right pupils. However, the school is aware of the need to develop and use more detailed information. The use of a computerised assessment program is being explored at present, but this has been hindered by technical difficulties. The school has a marking policy, but written comments do not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work. Assessment arrangements for those few pupils with English as an additional language match those for other pupils.

34. The most effective assessments are carried out for pupils with special educational needs, and for children in the nursery. This is because both groups are closely monitored on a daily basis. Initial assessments of children, taken when they are five years old, are well used to identify any with special educational needs. Targets in individual education plans are reviewed regularly and parents take a full part in this process. In the nursery, detailed,

ongoing assessments are very effectively used to guide planning. However, in common with all pupils, the academic progress of pupils with special educational needs is not so well tracked over time against National Curriculum requirements. Neither do children in the nursery and reception classes have their achievement monitored against national goals for the Foundation curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Partnership with parents has been improved and strengthened since the last inspection. Replies to the parents' questionnaire also shows parental satisfaction with the school to have increased, and a larger proportion of parents now have very positive views of the school. They are very supportive of its aims and ethos and the priority given to their children's welfare. Links with home are highly effective because communication is good and it is easy for parents to approach staff to ask for information or raise concerns about their child. Families are welcomed at Friday assemblies and events throughout the school year. Parents are involved well with the school's life and work through membership of the parents' and teachers' association (PTA). They contribute to swimming costs, and this allows children from reception onwards to have lessons. During the inspection, pupils were busy gardening, and planting spring flowers bought with parental help. Parents also support their children's learning well, particularly at home, where they hear them read and encourage them to do other homework tasks.

36. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. Regular newsletters, a helpful booklet for new pupils and their parents, and a wide range of other letters ensure that parents are kept well informed about the school's work. Reports on pupils' progress are clear and give useful information for parents about what children have learned, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils' own comments and one or two individual targets for improvement add to the quality of these reports. However, the positive language used to describe the child's progress sometimes masks possible under-achievement, as in writing skills. There is less attention than in other schools to giving parents a clear idea of whether their children's achievements are similar to those of other pupils of the same age. As a result, it is not always clear whether more or less progress might have been expected reasonably. This reflects the concerns of some parents expressed through the parent questionnaire. The other concerns raised by parents about the range of activities out of lessons and the quality of homework were both found to be satisfactory, although extra curricula activities have been fewer recently because of changes to staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. In the responses to their questionnaire, many parents felt the school to be well led and managed. The headteacher is hardworking, and highly committed to maintaining a strong and caring school community. Consequently, the school's pastoral aims are well fulfilled. There are high levels of support for pupils' personal development and, as a result, throughout the school the quality of relationships is very good and all pupils interact harmoniously. At the meeting held before the inspection, these strengths were endorsed by parents. There has been good improvement to the development of the roles and responsibilities undertaken by senior staff and co-ordinators since the previous inspection, and to information and communication technology. Despite the disruption

caused by many changes to the teaching staff during this school year, the current staff are working together well. Provision for mathematics has been improved since the previous inspection, and standards are now above national expectations both for pupils aged seven, and by the time they leave the school at the age of nine. Those parents who attended the meeting before the inspection expressed their satisfaction with the standards the school achieved for their children. However, the school is not yet as successful in promoting academic achievement as it is personal development. Although the school has identified appropriate priorities for development in its strategic planning, particularly those related to improving the curriculum and assessment, these are not yet linked to raising standards of achievement, particularly in writing. Neither has the school fully addressed the challenges posed by its present arrangements for mixed age classes to ensure that all pupils have equal learning experiences.

38. The deputy headteacher is much valued by staff for her considerable expertise as a teacher and as a senior member of staff. As a result, she has directly and successfully influenced and initiated whole school planning and curriculum development and improvements to assessment. A good senior management structure has been established since the previous inspection, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This is also true for subject co-ordinators, although the work of both the senior management team and subject co-ordinators has been inhibited recently by staff changes. For example, there is no co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage where the curriculum is in need of further development. The headteacher is also caretaking several key roles, including the co-ordination of special educational needs and of mathematics. However, co-ordinators are working hard to build up the planning for their subject and review its implementation. The development of information and communication technology has been particularly well managed. There are satisfactory systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and planning, although these, too, have been adversely affected by disruptions to staffing. However, the school has identified that this aspect of its work needs further development as it is not yet focusing closely or rigorously enough on pupils' learning and how it can be extended and improved.

39. The governing body is kept well informed of important factors influencing the school's development. For example, governors are well aware of local issues surrounding the admissions of children aged under five, those factors likely to affect tests results and current staffing difficulties. Annual targets and predictions for each year group are fully discussed. Since the previous inspection, a Strategic Committee has been set up which monitors the completion of the school's developmental priorities. The school's improvement plan is a detailed document and there are good procedures for linking the use of staff meeting time and training with its priorities. However, there are no priorities in the present document which relate directly to raising standards. Having been alerted by the results in the most recent national tests to the need to raise standards in writing, the school has now begun to analyse its test and assessment information more closely to look for trends. It plans to include achievement in writing as a priority for attention in its next improvement plan.

40. Administrative and financial systems are well organised and efficiently managed. This was endorsed in the school's recent auditor's report. Expenditure is satisfactorily monitored by the governing body, although it does not always evaluate the allocation of funds and how well money is spent: for example, the sum given to supporting special educational needs. Resources are good overall and generally well used. This is particularly true of learning resources for information and

communication technology both as a learning and administrative tool. Classroom support staff are also used effectively in lessons to support groups and individual pupils. Extra funds and money raised by the parents' association has been used well to create varied and interesting outside play and learning areas. The accommodation is spacious and, in keeping with the findings of the last report, is kept scrupulously clean and well tended. Since the previous inspection, a computer suite and the reorganisation of the library area have successfully contributed to the learning environment although, during the inspection, pupils made limited use of the library area. Use of the outside facilities for children in the nursery is not extended to those children in their reception year, although reception age children have access to other outside learning facilities. The governors carefully maintain a contingency of funding to allow them to repay the Borough for unallocated pupil places at the school. Other unallocated funds are earmarked for further improvements to the school's accommodation.

41. The match of staffing to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school has had considerable difficulties recruiting new staff. As a result, there is no one amongst the present new staff who has had training in the new curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage. Performance Management procedures have been satisfactorily established, and newly appointed and newly qualified staff are given sound support. Taking all the school's factors into consideration, together with the high level of spending for each pupil, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42. To improve the standards of work in all subjects and the achievement of all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing, by:
 - * planning work in subjects other than English to develop skills in writing;
 - * teaching pupils to take more responsibility for the accuracy of their work and standards of presentation.

- Improve assessment procedures and the analysis of data to help plan activities that consistently meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, and help pupils understand how they can improve by:
 - * refining and sharpening the focus on individual pupils in order to closely track and predict their achievement and progress over time;
 - * planning work that challenges all pupils, especially those with potentially higher attainment;
 - * ensuring that teachers' marking identifies pupils' needs and points to areas in which they can improve, and that these are consistently addressed in work that follows;
 - * improving teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum levels for science to ensure that assessments of pupils' performance are accurate.

- Set whole school priorities that are directly linked to raising standards and increasing teacher's expectations of what pupils can achieve by:
 - * using assessment data and information to set clear and challenging targets for improvements in the School Improvement Plan that are directly linked to raising standards;
 - * closely monitoring whether the school is successful in achieving these targets.

- Ensure all pupils in the same year group have equivalent learning experiences year on year by:
 - * reviewing the school's current arrangements for creating the mixed age classes on a yearly basis;
 - * extending existing monitoring by senior staff and co-ordinators to ensure that planning and teaching is giving all pupils of the same age in different classes equal opportunities and experiences;
 - * fully establishing and implementing all medium term planning to ensure the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects.

- Other weaknesses, which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan for improvement, are:
 - * Standards in geography at Key Stage 2;
 - * the development of the Foundation Stage curriculum in the nursery and reception year to explicitly include national early goals for learning;
 - * planning for opportunities in lessons and displays to ensure that the richness of cultural diversity is regularly experienced and celebrated;
 - * fully establishing stable co-ordinator roles for all areas of the curriculum, and extending their monitoring.

The school is aware of the need to raise standards in writing and is already making improvements to assessment and planning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	55

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	35	41	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	128
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	34

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	26	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (91)	78 (89)	88 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	15	15	17
	Total	27	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (97)	84 (97)	97 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	9
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21:1
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff:

YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71

Qualified teachers and support staff:

nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17:1

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.5:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	389149.00
Total expenditure	372789.00
Expenditure per pupil	2206.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	15451.00
Balance carried forward to next year	31811.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	165
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	71	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	42	16	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	47	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	41	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	29	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	52	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	26	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	35	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	55	6	6	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Children enter the nursery for part time schooling during the term in which they become four years old. Most have previously attended a playgroup or private nursery. In the term after they become five years old children start school full time. Because of recent difficulties recruiting staff, these children are at present in a mixed age class with pupils in Year 1. About one third of pupils who start the nursery leave to join schools in the neighbouring authority because full time schooling starts there sooner. During the inspection there were nine full-time pupils in the mixed reception and Year 1 class and 33 children attending part time in the nursery. Changes to staffing have also affected the nursery class this year. Since Christmas, this class has been taken by a temporary teacher, who is unfamiliar with the English education system. The staffing changes have inhibited the development of the new curriculum for these very young children. Consequently, those children in the reception class are tending to follow the work already planned for the pupils in Year 1. However, children in the nursery are gaining considerably from imaginative activities closely matched to their needs and abilities. As a result, they are currently achieving well in lessons. The school is aware of the need to develop the Foundation Stage curriculum, and its improvement is highlighted in the school's development plan for the current school year. When children enter the reception group their attainment is broadly similar to what is expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall in the nursery and reception class, so that they are meeting the expected early learning goals when they enter Year 1 in reading and writing and mathematical skills, physical and creative development. However, standards of achievement are above the expected levels for speaking and listening and personal, social and emotional skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This reflects the importance the school gives to personal development and to the effective use of an investigative approach to learning.

Personal Social and Emotional Development.

44. This area is well taught and underpins all the experiences these children receive. Each child's development in this area is well monitored and improvement is recognised with praise. Children take turns, share ideas in small groups and play harmoniously together. The religious education curriculum is well developed to support this aspect of learning. Children are encouraged to think why they and their families are special and to analyse their feelings. For example, they put into words what makes them scared. Pupils conform well to school routines and dress and undress themselves with minimum help for playtime and physical education lessons. They are very polite, helpful and willing to do as they are told.

Communication, Language and Literacy.

45. The quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory. The children are effective communicators and frame questions carefully to extend their knowledge. They listen well to instructions. Children have daily practice in these skills through the many opportunities for whole class discussion. However,

reception aged children do not progress as fast in this area as those in the nursery, where children have more chances to extend their vocabulary through role-play situations and purposeful play activities. Children develop their pre-reading skills well. For example, they share books such as 'The Pig in the Pond' with their teacher, to distinguish the difference between text and illustrations, look for detail in the pictures, and retell the story in their own words. The more able children are beginning to infer meaning lying behind words and actions. This is aided by teachers' skilful questioning. The use of a television programme enhances classroom literacy work. Children in their reception year follow the National Literacy Strategy programme and learn alphabet sounds well by following the school's phonic programme. By the end of the Foundation Stage children construct complete words correctly. Good attention is also paid to learning the shape of words they find in their reading books. These factors combine to provide a very good basis for starting to read independently. It is well extended by taking books home to share with parents. Writing develops satisfactorily. In the nursery, children use a variety of equipment for early writing experiences during their role-play activities: at a garden centre or in the doctor's surgery. This develops to copying over writing that they have dictated to their teacher. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children have sufficient skill to write captions for posters about keeping safe. They also write their own news, making a sensible guess at spellings.

Mathematical Development.

46. Teaching and learning in this area is satisfactory overall. However, it is currently very good in the nursery. In a lesson during the inspection, the teacher used imaginative strategies to teach the names and properties of shapes, and the level of challenge was high. Previous work was successfully used to extend the children's understanding. They were enthused and motivated by a range of attractive resources and challenging enquiries. The knowledge and use of mathematical vocabulary developed rapidly, and children explained confidently which shapes were 'angular', 'curved' or 'closed'. Most of the children in the reception group understand and use mathematical language such as 'taller', 'shorter' and 'wider' accurately: when, for example, they compare the length of their table with a strip of ribbon. They sing number songs such as 'Five Currant Buns in a Bakers Shop', understanding the concepts they contain. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children use objects to add and subtract to ten and are starting to record their sums. They write their numbers correctly. Estimation skills are developed through practical experiences, such as covering and uncovering a tray of objects. However, those children in the reception class do not make such a high rate of progress as those currently in the nursery. This is because work is not always accurately planned to meet their needs. Additionally, not enough use is made of activities such as sand, water and purposeful play to extend and reinforce mathematical skills and concepts and to give depth to children's knowledge.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

47. The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, particularly good teaching and learning was taking place in the nursery because of the interest and enthusiasm of the teacher. Activities were imaginative and effectively planned to encourage an investigative approach. Children confidently turn to picture books to demonstrate their knowledge of the names of common garden birds and identify the different colour eggs. They use binoculars to view those that visit the school grounds. They know what birds like to eat and carefully watch the birds' feeding habits. Children also enjoy

gardening. To develop their understanding of plant growth, some plants were put in large see-through containers so pupils could watch root systems develop. Scientific principles are learnt through the excitement of melting red and yellow jellies to make orange ones. In their reception year, children take part in National Curriculum based studies and continue to make good progress in lessons because the teacher adopts the same interesting and investigative approach to learning. During a science lesson, for example, children felt different materials to explore their textures. Using magnifying glasses, they then sketched the patterns they saw. The good interest level of this lesson resulted in keen and productive work. Ideas from an earlier investigation had been well remembered. These children also learn about the past through comparing their beach holidays with those of the Victorian era. They design weather symbols for cloudy and windy days. Through religious studies, they have a good understanding of Christian festivals and customs that accompany them, such as giving up something they enjoy during Lent. Independent computer skills are used confidently to log onto a painting program and draw attractive pictures.

Physical development.

48. This area is generally well taught. Children in the nursery have confident physical skills. They have exciting opportunities to develop finer physical skills during their gardening and bird watching activities. For example, they rolled fir cones and nuts in lard to hang on the bird tree, and dug soil to plant bulbs. Others carefully directed their binoculars to see magpies and rabbits at the edge of the school field. The outside learning area is varied and interesting with a good range of equipment. Children use these resources well. Reception aged children have physical education lessons in the hall. They move confidently to music and develop a series of movements together with a partner. However, they do not have access to the outdoor nursery area, although they do have opportunities to use other outside learning areas such as the trim trail and games box.

Creative development.

49. Overall, the quality of teaching in this area of development is good. In the nursery, very good progress was made in this area during the inspection, reflecting the very good opportunities provided for purposeful and experimental play, guided well by adults. In the nursery, the role-play area reflects the current topic focus. At present it is a garden centre and previously has been a doctor's surgery and an office. Daily opportunities to paint, print and mix colours, and to cut and glue paper and materials, result in interesting wall displays. Children design and make their own gardens. They use stones, bark and plastic insects to invent stories. They sing songs and beat rhythms, choosing different musical instruments. However, opportunities are currently more limited for reception aged children where they are following the art and music curriculum planned for Year 1.

ENGLISH

50. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 for pupils aged seven were similar to the national average in reading and writing. Results in 1997 were well below average, but they improved to the level of the national average in 1998 and have been sustained at that level since. Nevertheless, the results in 2000 were well below the average of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. The number reaching the higher level was above the national average in reading, but below average in writing. Results were affected by a larger than usual number of boys who had special needs in language. The school has been successful in raising boys' attainment in reading, by providing them with books more likely to interest them. The school has identified the need to raise standards in writing, and that remains a challenge.

51. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils presently in Year 2 and Year 4 is above average in speaking and listening, and average in reading. Standards in writing are average overall, but few pupils reach the higher level at ages seven and nine. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The lower standards in writing through the school are mainly attributable to a lack of structured experience in writing at length and in a range of forms. Additionally, standards of handwriting and presentation are too low, and pupils do not make consistent progress.

52. Through the school, pupils become confident in speaking to larger audiences for a widening range of purposes. Pupils in all years pay close attention to instruction in literacy hour, and take an active part in discussions. They speak clearly in Standard English, though generally very quietly. Many extend their answers, responding well when encouraged to develop their ideas. These good skills help their learning in other subjects, where discussions are usually very productive in exploring and developing ideas. Older pupils use more formal language appropriately in class discussions, with correct use of technical terms in mathematics, though they are less confident of terminology in information and communication technology. Many older pupils still speak quietly, but those with higher attainment are confident in making formal presentations to the class.

53. Pupils make steady progress in reading because reading materials are well chosen for their interest and clearly graded for difficulty. Many parents give good support at home. Pupils aged seven know how to sound out new words to find their meaning, and have a good understanding of what they read. They are generally able to read instructions in other subjects, although occasionally a few pupils with English as an additional language have difficulty in understanding mathematics worksheets. This reflects the much greater emphasis in the reading programme on fiction rather than information texts. By age nine, pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. They have sound understanding of what they have read, and try to read aloud with dramatic expression. They generally prefer to read fiction, though they are mostly confident in using non-fiction books to find information. This helps them to learn in all subjects, with good results noted in the search by Year 4 pupils for information in history. However, their knowledge of how to find books in a library is not well developed, reflecting the under-use of the school non-fiction library for borrowing and research on a frequent basis. This reflects the findings of the previous report. Enthusiasm for reading is evident in all years. Most pupils have favourite authors and explain their preferences fluently. Pupils choose their own books, but some need more

guidance. Examples were noted in Year 4, where an over-ambitious choice was resulting in slow progress for one pupil, whilst another higher attaining pupil was reading a favourite book for the third time. Pupils with special needs make good progress because they are given additional well-planned instruction, and are carefully monitored so that they build on success.

54. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing so that, by age seven, most can express their meaning clearly in personal accounts. They show good imaginative ideas and create appealing word pictures in brief forms of poetry, as in current work on haiku. Standards of spelling and punctuation are sound, but progress in handwriting is inconsistent. Pupils presently in Year 2 are beginning to write in a joined style, but the writing of many older pupils is not joined and their letters are poorly formed, to the extent that spelling and punctuation errors are concealed. Much of the work seen in Key Stage 2 is focused on formal exercises and brief pieces, with low frequency of stories and creative writing. Pupils do not make enough use of thesauruses and dictionaries to extend their vocabulary range and increase spelling accuracy. There are good examples of factual accounts in history in Year 4, and very good accounts of the school visit to the Millennium Dome, written by higher attaining pupils. This writing has been carefully thought out and improved to a good standard. Some stories use dramatic dialogue and description of settings to create a word picture in the reader's mind. Nevertheless, there is much less evidence of extended writing for real purposes than generally found at Key Stage 2, and a similar criticism was made in the previous report. Pupils aged nine do not have frequent enough practice in planning, drafting and correcting their work, and this affects their achievement in all subjects. They do not study a sufficiently wide range of factual and imaginative writing in enough depth or detail to extend their skills in writing across the curriculum. This affects all pupils, but it is most evident in the work of those with higher attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional support so that they make good progress. Those few pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Standards of presentation are often unsatisfactory in exercise books in all subjects

55. Teaching is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, and one was good and one very good. The structure of the literacy hour is well established and teachers follow it closely. Pupils understand the routines and behave well. Teachers have a sound understanding of the targets of the literacy framework. Lesson targets are clearly defined and shared with the class so there is a common sense of purpose. Pupils are given clear instruction in basic skills, such as phonics, using a wide range of techniques to ensure sound learning. However, older pupils do not have enough specific instruction in the characteristics of a range of writing forms. Shared texts are well chosen for their appeal and quality of language, and teachers generally read aloud well, which helps pupils to understand the text and raises their interest in books. This is extended in guided reading groups, and pupils make good progress here because the reading books are appropriately graded and teachers work closely with individuals to ensure they are learning effectively. Discussions are a strength of most lessons, and pupils are keen to take part because teachers are good listeners. The final whole-class review is sometimes too brief to reinforce language targets, though this part of the lesson was used effectively- in a lesson at Years 2 and 3 and in a Year 4 class - to hear and evaluate the written work of several pupils. Lessons are generally well organised and managed, and this was a significant strength of the

very good lesson. Teaching in this lesson moved at a brisk pace with a strong sense of purpose, with all activities carefully planned to make best use of time and to reinforce learning. The teacher's high expectations ensured full pupil involvement, and she carefully checked their understanding of instructions and new learning at each stage.

56. A weaker element of teaching in both key stages is in planning writing tasks that match the needs of pupils across the range of attainment. Pupils' learning is not developed through sustained focus on a specific form of writing over a series of lessons, and expectations for proof-reading and standards of handwriting and presentation are too low. The official format for lesson plans prompts teachers to set different tasks for pupils at different levels of attainment. However, this feature is not used precisely enough, and most tasks are more appropriate for pupils of average attainment and below. Pupils with lower attainment and special needs make good progress when the teacher or support assistant gives them individual help. By contrast, those with potentially higher attainment do not have greater challenge through more difficult tasks or higher expectations for the quality, quantity and accuracy of their work. In marking, teachers respond sensitively to pupils' ideas, give encouragement, and identify some weaknesses that need attention. However, much of the impact is lost because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or follow-up work. Teachers' marking in other subjects generally ignores language mistakes and misses the opportunity to consistently reinforce language learning.

57. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Planning is based on the framework of the National Literacy Strategy, and monitoring has ensured that all teachers understand its expectations. Resources for reading have been improved, with a view to raising the attainment of boys in particular. Lower attaining pupils are identified, and they make good progress when they are withdrawn for intensive support in small groups. However, planning does not take enough account of more able pupils and specify how to realise their potential. The programme for writing is not planned in enough detail across the curriculum through the school to ensure that pupils have regular and in-depth practice in major kinds of writing, such as letters, stories and factual accounts. The marking of pupils' work each half term against official benchmarks is a good development aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of teaching. However, more frequent and detailed assessment of extended writing, and closer monitoring of the reading choices of older pupils, are needed to ensure that all make their best progress.

MATHEMATICS

58. Standards in mathematics have improved well since the previous inspection, when they were found to be in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 4. Since 1997, standards in the national tests have risen overall against national averages, particularly in the achievement of girls. In the most recent national tests for seven year olds, standards were above national averages, with more pupils reaching than higher Level 3 than was found nationally. These results were in line with the national average when compared with similar schools. Evidence from this inspection indicates that pupils in the present Years 2 and 4 are also achieving standards that are above national expectations. Analysis of the school's test and assessment data indicates that many pupils are making good progress in mathematics as they move through Key Stage 1. The school feels that this improvement is due to the early introduction of that part of the National Numeracy Strategy that

aims to develop mental mathematics. The school has also focused more closely on systematically and progressively developing pupils' mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills through its planning. Those pupils with special educational needs often benefit from good support in lessons. Occasionally, the progress of those few pupils at the earlier stages of learning English is inhibited when they do not understand their worksheet.

59. Many pupils in the current Year 2 are confident with number. They are quick to spot patterns and relationships. For example, pupils quickly understood how to double numbers in a sequence of multiplication sums. This allowed them to work out a more challenging calculation. More able pupils apply a good understanding of hundreds, tens and units to work out the answer to 90 and 900 divided by three from their knowledge of the answer to nine divided by three. Middle attaining pupils add and subtract numbers up to 100, whilst some lower attainers are not yet confident with addition or ordering numbers beyond ten. Many pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the two, five and ten times tables. With the help of counting blocks or sweets, they are beginning to use this understanding to divide numbers, and record their calculations using signs and symbols. They use standard linear measures and complete simple block graphs to show for example, favourite colours or how they get to school.

60. By the time they reach Year 4, most pupils are comfortably working with three-digit numbers. Lower attainers use two-digit numbers, and some accurately multiply these by ten. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils in the single age class accurately changed 12 hour clock times into their 24 hour equivalents and the majority made speedy mental calculations of the number of minutes between different times. More able and higher attaining pupils confidently calculated the number of right- and half-right angled turns they passed through between different compass points. Some more able pupils recognised how this work could be applied to movement around a clock face. Higher and middle attainers calculated complex fractions of whole numbers and worked out the area of regular and irregular shapes using squares. They recorded their answers with the appropriate mathematical symbols. They also investigated the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Throughout the school, work is generally neat although, the work of some middle and lower attainers is untidily presented.

61. The teaching of mathematics is generally satisfactory at present. It was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen except in one, where it was unsatisfactory. Teaching was good in one lesson. The Numeracy Strategy has been well established although staff changes this year have affected its quality. For example, where very new staff are unfamiliar with the English education system and have not been trained in the Numeracy Strategy. In addition, assessment procedures are not yet refined or rigorous enough to give teachers enough detailed information about achievement to allow them to plan work that meets pupils' individual needs. This is particularly significant when teachers are new and crucially need this information to guide their planning. As a result, teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson. This factor also affects the quality of the differently planned activities in otherwise satisfactory lessons. As a result, more able pupils do not consistently receive enough challenging work. However, where teaching is good, clear learning intentions and a confident use of a variety of teaching strategies enable pupils to make good progress. For example, in a whole group numeracy session at Years 1 and 2, counting in twos was thoroughly reinforced by changing the ways in which pupils had to count. This maintained the pace of the lesson and kept the pupils' interest. Individual pupils were targeted with questions, and new learning about division carefully

built on what they already knew. Written methods of calculation were well modelled and good quality resources were used effectively to demonstrate the calculations and ask questions. As a result, most pupils were keen to respond throughout the session. The majority of pupils have good attitudes in lessons and this makes an important contribution to their progress. Even in the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils still conscientiously attempted to complete their tasks.

62. Curriculum planning has been improved since the previous inspection. It is detailed, and clearly sets out a progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. However, pupils of the same age in different classes do not always receive the same quality of experiences. For example, pupils in Year 2 do not all have the same opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in their mathematical work. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily overall, in subjects such as science. However, the use of information and communication technology to support and enhance the teaching of mathematics is under developed. For example, whilst pupils at Key Stage 1 make simple computer generated graphs to sort and represent information, they do not interpret and explain the results. The school is aware that its assessment systems do not yet fully address the need for detailed information about pupils' achievement in order to track progress more carefully, identify areas for improvement and so influence the planning of activities which meet these needs. For example, whilst the school sets targets for individual pupils, these are broad and do not focus on the particular strengths and weaknesses of each pupil. Additionally, although work is regularly marked, there is rarely comment to show pupils how they can improve or to extend their understanding.

63. The co-ordination of the subject has been developed well, although it is currently under temporary co-ordination by the headteacher because of changes to staff. Where monitoring has taken place, for example, in reviewing and planning the development of the subject, not enough emphasis has been placed on directly relating developments to their impact on standards of achievement. The school is planning to develop monitoring further. Resources have been improved and are effectively supporting the teaching of mathematics.

SCIENCE

64. The results of national teacher assessments in 2000 shows that the proportion of seven year old pupils reaching the required standard in science is above average national expectations when compared with all schools, and average when compared to schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils assessed to be at the higher Level 3 was very high compared to all schools, in the highest five per cent nationally, and above average compared to similar schools. However, evidence from this inspection indicates that standards reflect the findings of the previous report and are closer to national expectations for pupils aged seven and nine. This reflects the school's perceived need to improve the assessment of achievement in science and ensure that it is based on informed evaluations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those few with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress over time. Additionally, many pupils make good progress in improving their investigative skills, because this is a strongly developed aspect of the subject and is used well to increase their understanding. The inspection found no difference in attainment or response between boys and girls.

65. In an investigation carried out by Year 2 pupils, they focused on the action of springs in a collection of everyday objects and toys. They demonstrated satisfactory understanding of what a spring does, but did not go on to explain this physical phenomenon. When manipulating a variety of toys, all pupils in Year 4 used their knowledge and understanding to link cause and effect, and made simple explanations relating to gravity and how it effects motion.

66. Inspection evidence from lessons and pupils' work indicates that the overall quality of teaching in science is satisfactory. Four lessons were observed during this inspection, two at each key stage. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good, and at Key Stage 2 teaching was satisfactory. The Key Stage 1, lessons were well organised and prepared. The development of investigation and enquiry skills was well supported by good resources. The use of a wide variety of fabric pieces caught the interest and enthusiasm of many pupils in Year 1, and they were keen to make patterns with them. Similarly, as the result of an effective emphasis of the experimental and investigative aspect of the curriculum, Year 2 pupils enjoyed the taste, smell and looks of a variety of fruits and vegetables. Consequently, these pupils all made good progress. At Key Stage 2, there is less focus on investigative strategies. In a lesson with Year 4 pupils, for example, teaching was well planned with good resources, but the investigation into the effects of friction on vehicles moving down a variable angle ramp was heavily teacher directed. There were limited opportunities for pupils to investigate for themselves, and no mention of fair testing as identified in planning.

67. Planning is good. It is coherent with clear expectations. However it has only recently been introduced and is not yet consistently applied. Work in pupils' books also indicates that work is not consistently well planned to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. This is compounded in some classes with mixed year groups. For example, the Year 2 pupils in the Year 3 class are presented with a more demanding curriculum than Year 2 pupils in the Year 1 class. Teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Presentation is poor and this goes unchallenged in marking. Written tasks are short, and opportunities for extension activities for higher attaining pupils are more secure in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Marking is generally perfunctory and does not lead pupils to a greater understanding of the subject or extend their learning.

68. The science co-ordinator has recently returned from a temporary leave of absence. She has a very good understanding of the present strengths and shortcomings of the subject, and is already making a sustainable improvement to its organisation. The problems with teacher assessment are being dealt with effectively. A portfolio of work matched to National Curriculum levels is being gathered to improve teachers' understanding of standards in science and to increase the accuracy of assessments. Informal, on-going assessment records representing good practice have been introduced at Key Stage 1 and this practice will be extended through the school. Assessment data is being transferred onto a computer system in order to improve the analysis of data, and to enable more accurate target setting for, and tracking of, individual pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

69. There was limited art and design taking place during the week of the inspection because of timetabling arrangements. However, in the few samples of work on display and those in the school's portfolio, standards were broadly in line with national expectations for pupils at Years 2 and 4. Some of the collage work of Tudor portraits by pupils in Year 1, displayed as part of the Millennium timeline, was above national expectations for pupils of this age. Whole school themes, such as observational drawing, take place annually: these give a valuable boost to the art and design curriculum and allow staff to look at how skills develop over time.

70. In connection with the whole school Millennium project, pupils throughout the school completed collaborative panels of art and design work connected with periods of history. They are bright, colourful and individual, and cover a satisfactory range of painting, drawing and collage skills. At Year 2, pupils also created symmetrical patterns linked with work in mathematics. Pupils at Year 4 completed carefully painted portraits in connection with their work last term on the Tudors. Those examples still remaining in school were of a satisfactory standard. So, too, were their observational drawings of chairs.

71. Since the previous inspection, when art was found to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, the school's scheme of work has been superseded by good quality planning, drawn up by the school's co-ordinator. This planning not only gives detailed guidance for individual lessons, but also helps teachers to plan work for different ability groups and make informed assessments about pupils' achievement. However, this planning is very new and not yet fully established as a working tool. Consequently, the quality of experiences in art and design remain inconsistent and, therefore, are not yet making enough impact on standards. This reflects the findings of the previous report. For example, although inspection evidence indicates that pupils meet a satisfactory range of experiences as they move through the school in two-dimensional art and design, there was only limited evidence of pupils studying the work of other artists. Some classes use sketchbooks, whilst others do not. Sometimes, work in art and design is not clearly distinguished from that in design and technology. However, there are some useful links with other subjects. For example, during the inspection, children in the class containing reception and Year 1 pupils made patterns based on the textures of fabrics they had explored during science. In the class with pupils in Years 1 and 2, the artist Mondrian was used as a stimulus for exploring a shape program and teaching computer-drawing skills. The subject is being temporarily co-ordinated due to staff changes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

72. Recently, there have been some significant improvements to the curriculum for design and technology: these are already beginning to have a positive impact on standards. As a result of these improvements, pupils in Years 2 and 4 are achieving standards that broadly match national expectations for pupils of their age, although their confidence in the whole design process has yet to be fully established. Progress is now less erratic than it was at the time of the last inspection, particularly for pupils at Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 1 design and make simple moving puppets, using split pins as a means of joining the limbs to the torso. They also design pop-up books and complete paper plate masks with moveable eyes. Linked with their scientific topic on materials,

pupils make different types of homes creating a variety of textured surfaces. Pupils in Year 2 work to a design brief to build a vehicle that must travel at least a metre. They evaluate what their car will need to be successful and use subject vocabulary, such as *axle* and *chassis*, to describe the cars' features. Some pupils make simple scale drawings of their vehicle. At Years 3 and 4, pupils learn simple stitches and sewing skills, such as attaching pattern pieces and cutting out, to make money containers and apply decorative patterns. Pupils in Year 4 also design desirable classroom features, in some cases producing labelled diagrams and justifications for their choices and ideas.

73. The new co-ordinator is producing good quality planning to support the progressive development of design and technology skills and, as a result, pupils are now meeting a good range of experiences. However, how the planning for each year group relates to the current organisation of mixed age classes, or how the school will ensure that all pupils of the same age, but in different class groups, receive similar experiences, has yet to be fully identified. This is particularly the case for Year 3 and 4 pupils who are currently spread across three classes.

74. A small number of lessons were seen during the inspection, and the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in them all. In one lesson at Years 2 and 3, it was good. In this lesson, pupils were learning about the use of pneumatic power to make something happen. Useful links were made with the pupils' own experience of playing a recorder or blowing up a balloon. Together with careful questioning, these features successfully allowed pupils to explain their ideas and increase their understanding. More able pupils were helped to contribute more sophisticated examples, such as making a link with the braking noise when a lorry stops. It was clear from these lessons, and from the quality of some of the work on display and from pupils' own comments, that pupils enjoy their activities in this subject, and this helps them to make good progress in their skills. During lessons in both the Year 4 and Years 3 and 4 classes, there was a good working atmosphere. Pupils helped each other with stitching and put a good level of effort into their work. However, in otherwise satisfactory lessons, pupils are not always given enough opportunity to explore individual ideas. Additionally, at Key Stage 2, some design technology drawing tasks have been confused with those in art and design. The new planning has clear criteria to help teachers assess the extent of pupils' achievement once each unit of work has been completed, although they have yet to be comprehensively used.

GEOGRAPHY

75. Attainment in geography is in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven. In contrast to the findings of the previous report, standards are below expectations for the pupils in the current Year 4. The new co-ordinator has now begun to develop the subject effectively and planning has been revised to ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are progressively developed. However, this is currently having a more positive impact on Key Stage 1 than on Key Stage 2, partly owing to staffing disruptions.

76. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of places further afield, such as the island home of Katie Morag on Struay. They use their knowledge of geographical features to identify both physical and human characteristics on the island, contrasting conditions with their own locality by using maps and aerial photographs. At Key Stage 2, standards of attainment vary

between classes, although none has paid enough attention to the geography curriculum. Discussion with pupils shows that some geography work is covered during historical studies of Elizabethan explorers and the Spanish Armada. Whilst the subject is enhanced by local field-work in and around Eton Wick, locality work is limited and pupils do not have enough experience of geographical vocabulary. Their maps of the United Kingdom and the countries of Europe are simplistic, with limited descriptions of human and physical features. As a result of these deficiencies, these pupils have not developed positive attitudes to the subject. This is particularly reflected in the poor standard of presentation in their work.

77. The one lesson seen during the inspection at Key Stage 2 was taught well. This is because teaching was effectively supported by the good quality of resources in the computer suite, including the use of CD-ROMs. Consequently, these pupils were keen to find out and share information, reviewing it for later presentation. However, discussion with pupils and evidence from pupils' work indicates that, although the quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, it is unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. This is because geography is not taught with enough frequency or challenge, and the needs of pupils with different abilities are not taken fully into account when planning work. These gaps in provision hamper the development of geographical skills, especially for the more able.

78. Co-ordination and management of geography are now satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator, although part-time and newly qualified, has attended liaison meetings of all local First and Middle schools. The revised policy and scheme of work give satisfactory support to the subject, although links with ICT are not yet fully secured. In addition, map work is satisfactory when pupils have experience of different scales and grid references. It is unsatisfactory if the map is used only for a colouring exercise.

HISTORY

79. Standards are at the expected level for the majority of pupils, both when they leave the school at the age of nine, and when they are seven. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report, when standards were below the expected level for pupils at Key Stage 2. However, the depth of pupils' knowledge and level of historical enquiry skills varies depending on their current class or the one they were in during the previous year. This is because curriculum planning and assessment procedures have not yet been fully established or developed in order to ensure that skills and knowledge are consistently developed, particular within the current structure of mixed age classes. These weaknesses have not been improved enough since the last inspection.

80. Pupils in Year 2 find information from a range of resources. Orally they communicate this well. However, the majority of pupils have little recollection of history they have learnt prior to their current topics. The younger Year 2 pupils, working with those in Year 1, study the Victorian period in good depth. They contrast the life of rich and poor families. They learn about Lord Shaftesbury and his work in education and Dr. Barnardo's support for poor children. The older pupils work with those in Year 3. They follow a different programme of study and do not have the broad range of experiences nationally outlined as suitable for their

age. However, although they gain a satisfactory knowledge of the Romans and Celts, and understand the reasons for Boudicca's revolt, most pupils complete the same work and do not have enough opportunities to work independently. Additionally, work is not always well presented.

81. Those pupils in the Year 4 class have a good depth and range of understanding of everyday life, important people and dates of the Tudor period. They also develop good historical enquiry skills through using a wide variety of resources including computer programs and visits. However, they do not readily recall what they have learned about history in previous classes. Year 4 pupils in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class cover the Year 3 scheme of work and attain levels of skill and understanding expected for Year 3 pupils. Through their studies of Anglo Saxon Britain, they understand the work of archaeologists, why invasions took place and study the runic alphabet. Pupils in this class have had several different teachers during the year, and this has had an adverse effect on their achievement.

82. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, evidence from pupils' work indicates it to be satisfactory, particularly in engaging pupils' interest and in supporting their personal, social and cultural development. In conversation with pupils during the inspection, they expressed their enjoyment of history lessons and talked enthusiastically about what they had recently learnt. Additionally, homework is well used to extend classroom knowledge. Not all teachers, however, have high enough expectations of presentation and do not use marking effectively enough to help pupils understand how they can improve.

83. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to plan and introduce a new curriculum based on national guidance. The new scheme of work includes detailed lesson plans of a good quality and valuable links with other subjects, for example group-reading books for literacy lessons and ideas for art and design. A good variety of visits and visitors enhance classroom learning, but not all pupils benefit from similar opportunities. For example, pupils in Year 2 in one class have a visit from a local historian, whilst Year 2 pupils in the other class do not. Assessment procedures have been introduced, but are not sufficiently developed to inform teachers of pupils' prior attainment and so form a basis for planning work to meet the needs of individual pupils. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory overview of what is being taught through formal discussions at staff meetings and talking informally with colleagues. During last year she also had the chance to improve the teaching of history through observing teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

84. Standards of work in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations for pupils aged both seven and nine years, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when below expected standards were a key issue. Such success has been achieved primarily through improvements to resources and in creating a well used scheme of work to guide planning. This in turn has had a positive effect on teaching.

85. In Key Stage 1, pupils confidently and competently access a painting program and use it successfully to communicate ideas about their artwork in the style of Mondrian. In Year 1, pupils

recognise icons on the desktop of the computer and use them to navigate to the painting programs. Brush and pencil tools are used successfully to create their abstract pictures. Increasingly confident use of the mouse and cursor enables them to produce thick or thin lines and rectangles. Pupils enliven their work by adding colours with floodfill. Pupils in Year 2, responding to a haiku poem, drafted words to fit the strict pattern, effectively building up their literacy and computer skills. More able pupils changed the fonts to italic and underlined for greater effect, deleting and inserting as they composed the poem. Throughout the school, pupils competently access the school's network and respond well to instructions on screen. At Key Stage 2, pupils use CD-ROMs for research purposes when studying India in geography and Aztecs and Egyptians in history, accessing information on clothes, foods, Aztec gods and Egyptian mummies. In Year 4, pupils highlight blocks of text to copy for adding to their presentations. They use keyboard skills to add facts and draw up questions, clearly considering the effects on their readership. This is well supported by their understanding that information can be amended or added to.

86. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was consistently good. All were supported by good resources and were well planned. When skills are taught, teachers are informative and supportive. They have very good relationships with pupils and mostly motivate them well. They draw effectively on pupils' own experience and knowledge of information and communication technology. Sometimes, however, there is not enough emphasis on teaching subject-related vocabulary, and this inhibits pupils' explanations of what they are doing.

87. Co-ordination of the subject is strong. The subject is promoted well and supported by a scheme of work that covers all strands of the subject and demonstrates how skills should be developed across the school. The school has gained national funding which it plans to use to further increase teachers' confidence and expertise so that they make full use of the recently installed computer suite. Additionally, links are being made with other subjects, such as, history, geography, art and literacy, although the school is aware that it must improve the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Additionally, computers in classrooms do not yet have prompts to enable pupils to have independent access to programs and, therefore, have the opportunity to practise skills learned in the computer suite.

MUSIC

88. Standards are in line with nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school at nine years of age. This standard has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils across the school are currently making satisfactory progress in composition, performance and appreciation of music from different traditions. Pupils with special needs and the few for whom English is an additional language are encouraged to take a full part in all activities, and their progress is similar to that of other pupils.

89. Pupils of all years listen well to music played at the start and end of assemblies. Their singing is generally tuneful and many sing hymns with enthusiasm. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show sound control in playing tuned and untuned percussion instruments to achieve different textures. They have a good appreciation of beat and rhythm, and respond positively to suggestions as to how to improve their performance. Performance skills are extended in Years 3 and 4, where pupils play

instruments confidently, and with sensitivity, to suggest the movement of an animal. They are beginning to understand musical notation as a means of guiding the structure of group performances.

90. Two lessons were seen: the quality of teaching was sound in one and good in the other. A good sequence of activities was planned so that pupils' attention was held throughout, reinforced by teachers' high expectations for careful listening and full participation. Teachers give clear explanations of technical terms and reinforce learning by using them frequently, so that pupils are able to name the instruments they play and understand key points of technique. Tasks are well designed to challenge pupils across the range of attainment, extending their powers of appreciation and their skills of performance. A very good feature of a lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3 was the teacher's use of open discussion to deepen response to two contrasting pieces of classical music. With her encouragement, all pupils showed strong appreciation, and several were keen to describe the pictures the music created in their mind's eye. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class were sensitive to the qualities of sound of different instruments when composing sequences to suggest the movement of their chosen animal. All listened well to the performances of others. In both lessons, pupils with special needs were given sensitive additional help when needed.

91. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is developing a detailed scheme of work based on official recommendations, and accompanied by additional information for teachers who lack confidence in the subject. The present scheme of work shows that pupils are to learn skills progressively through the school, but lesson observations indicate that Year 3 pupils in two different classes have not covered the same material in the past. This is partly because assessment procedures and records of attainment do not give enough information on what pupils have learned in previous years or what standard they have reached in each of the required elements of the National Curriculum. As a result, teachers' planning lacks the necessary guidance to meet pupils' needs accurately. Resources are good, and supplemented by high quality experiences such as a visiting orchestra. The well equipped music room provides a very good setting for pupils' learning. The quality of music provision makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

92. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards of achievement for those pupils currently in Years 2 or 4 because, owing to timetabling arrangements, few physical education lessons took place during the inspection. However, where teaching was seen, all pupils reached the expected level in games skills. For example, most pupils in Years 1 and 2 developed increasing accuracy and control using a bat and ball. Pupils in Year 1 worked well with partners during a dance lesson, putting a sequence of movements together and performing these to country dancing music. Pupils warm up and down for lessons well and recognise the changes that occur in their breathing and heart rate when they have been running. They use the hall space well, running in different directions safely.

93. Where teaching was seen in two lessons at Years 1 and 2, it was good in one and very good in the other. This indicates some improvement to the quality of teaching since the previous inspection at Key Stage 1. One lesson at Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. This was where a

teacher had been very recently appointed. The best teaching was characterised by high expectations of the quality of movement. Pupils were given opportunities to work together, in pairs throwing or batting, for example, or as partners in a dance sequence. These opportunities supported their personal development well. Generally, lessons are thoroughly planned, well structured and purposeful. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes and recognise and reward pupils' effort with praise. Consequently pupils have positive attitudes, listen well to the very clear instructions and concentrate hard to perfect their skills. Teachers encourage pupils to learn from the demonstrations of others. Although lessons are conducted at a good pace, sometimes, a few pupils' learning slackens when expectations are mismatched to their ability. Where this happened, pupils became dispirited and did not try so hard. However, the teacher's skilful intervention quickly restored confidence and effort. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the new teacher did not establish enough control to ensure that all pupils made at least satisfactory progress during the lesson.

94. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the strengths and areas to develop in the subject. National Curriculum requirements for physical education are mapped out well in the new planning documents, showing in detail what each age group will be taught. Pupils' experience of the subject is enhanced further by swimming lessons for six weeks per year for all pupils at the local swimming pool, and in the school pool during the summer term. Additionally, pupils perform at local events, such as maypole dancing at the village fete. In recent years the school has used lottery funding well to establish basketball, and there is a private basketball club which is popular with pupils. Older pupils visit a local athletics track for specialist teaching and other specialists are engaged when they are available. However, the new assessment system does not yet give teachers enough information about pupils' achievement to allow them to pitch their teaching to the needs of all pupils. In response to the findings of the previous report, the school has removed large and heavy apparatus and is hoping to purchase further suitable equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

95. Standards have been sustained since the previous inspection, and meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils at the ages of seven and nine.

96. By age seven, pupils show a sound understanding of the part that religion plays in the daily lives of Christians. They are introduced to stories from the Old and New Testaments, and retell them accurately. In retelling the story of Palm Sunday through the eyes of an imagined eye-witness, they show sensitive appreciation of the context, its significance and emotional impact. They understand key features of other faiths, including Hinduism and Islam. This study is developed in Key Stage 2, where pupils compare similarities and differences in the religious beliefs and traditions of three world religions, through such themes as festivals, pilgrimages and symbols. By age nine, pupils have a clear perception of the significance of artefacts, symbols, books and places of worship of these religions. A strong feature of the planned curriculum is the encouragement pupils are given to think for themselves about the broader meanings of life while studying the beliefs of others. The

effectiveness of this approach is reflected in the thoughtful quality of pupils' written work. Their commitment shows in the standard of presentation in exercise books, which is often good and better than in other subjects. Pupils with special needs and English as an additional language play a full part in lessons. They are given work at an appropriate level and additional support so that they make steady progress.

97. The standard of teaching was satisfactory or better in the two lessons seen. Teachers prepare the content of their lessons thoroughly so that pupils are given a sound basis of factual knowledge. This was placed in a framework of moral values, and skilfully related to pupils' personal experiences, including the experience of those from other faiths. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to make connections with their prior learning. As a result, pupils in both key stages have positive attitudes towards religious education. They show keen interest, ask thoughtful questions and concentrate hard. Written tasks encourage thought, accurate recall of factual information and the exploration of personal response. However, it was a weakness of an otherwise satisfactory lesson that not enough written work was required of pupils with potentially higher attainment.

98. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The scheme of work sets out a structured sequence of skills and knowledge, but assessment procedures and records do not give teachers enough information to guide the detail of their planning for different groups across the range of attainment. In addition, the present arrangements for mixed age classes presents difficulties in ensuring that pupils of the same age in different classes receive the same curriculum coverage. For example, pupils in Year 4 in different classes do not cover Hinduism in the same depth. There are good resources, including artefacts of several faiths. The school has strong contacts with the church and the life of the parish. Parents from other faiths visit to talk about their customs and beliefs. The sequence of topics for assemblies has been well chosen to widen pupils' understanding of other faiths and their experience of worship. The subject is also supported through links with the programme for personal, social and health education, to enable pupils to explore issues of concern. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and the ethos of the school.