

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN SCURR PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100906

Headteacher: Mr F Tarrant

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner
23160

Dates of inspection: 5th to 9th June

Inspection number: 198010

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, John Scurr Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Alexander
Date of previous inspection:	15 th October 1997

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Ron Elam	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Pam Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Tony Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Science Religious education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

John Scurr Primary School educates boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 11. Thirty-six children attend part-time and 34 attend full-time in the Nursery. In total, there are 458 full-time pupils, which is bigger than most other schools of the same type. The school has 22 more boys than girls on roll. About 88 per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high compared with most schools. Over half of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Approximately 62 per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is also very high compared with the national average. The school has 116 pupils (25 per cent) on its register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is broadly in line with the national average. Eighty per cent of the pupils are of Bangladeshi origin, 12 per cent are white and eight per cent come from other ethnic minority backgrounds. During the last school year, 37 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission, and seven pupils left at times other than those of the normal leaving or transfer. There is a relatively high turnover of pupils, a large number of whom also take periods of extended leave to visit their home country. The school has recently become part of a small Education Action Zone along with three other primary schools and one secondary school in the local area. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

John Scurr is a very effective school which makes very good provision for its ethnically diverse community. Pupils achieve very well because the quality of teaching and learning is very good and the work they are given is demanding. The headteacher, governors and staff work together very effectively to improve the school and raise the standards that pupils achieve. The school has made very good improvement since its last inspection and now provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are excellent and contribute significantly to the standards achieved by the pupils.
- The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good. They are particularly high in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment.
- The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and relationships are excellent. This has a significant impact on their achievement.
- The school makes very good provision for the very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language which enables them to make very good progress in their learning.
- The curricular opportunities provided by the school are very good and offer a wide range of stimulating experiences for all pupils.

What could be improved

- The levels of pupils' attendance and punctuality are poor.
- Although pupils are achieving very well, this is not reflected in their performance in national tests.
- Standards in writing are below average and are not as good as those in reading and speaking and listening.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's last inspection took place in October 1997, at which time it was found to have serious weaknesses in several aspects of its work. The resulting key issues for action were addressed

thoroughly and with meticulous attention to detail. As a result, there has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching, in curricular planning for English and mathematics and in implementing a highly effective system of assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Despite a drop in standards in 1999, there has been a steady improvement in the pupils' performance in national tests, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. The findings of this inspection indicate a continuing trend of improvement. In addition, there have been significant improvements in the teaching of information technology, which have led to much higher standards of attainment by all pupils. A key factor in the school's success has been the training and development of all staff, especially those with management responsibilities, who now form a highly effective leadership team. The determination and commitment of the headteacher and key staff to improving the quality of education that the school provides and the standards the pupils achieve are excellent. The school's capacity to continue to improve is excellent.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	D	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	C	E	B	
science	D	B	E	C	

The pupils' performance in the national tests in 1999 ran contrary to the trend of improvement which had been established between 1996 and 1998. Of the pupils who took the tests in 1999, a high proportion had special educational needs and a large number had taken extended periods of leave during their Key Stage 2 education. These factors adversely influenced the school's results. In the current Year 6, there are fewer pupils with special educational needs and there have been fewer extended absences. The findings of the inspection reflect this and show that the proportion of pupils who are on course to attain national expectations is in line with the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The school set challenging targets for 70 per cent of its pupils to reach expected standards in English and 66 per cent in mathematics in the national tests in 2000. Indications are that the school is on course to reach these targets. However, standards in writing are still lower than those in reading, as they were in 1999, and the school has introduced a number of strategies to raise pupils' attainment in writing. Standards in information technology have risen to well above average at both key stages as a result of very good teaching in the recently opened computer suite. Pupils also achieve very well in art and music.

In Year 2, pupils achieve below average standards in reading and writing and average standards in mathematics and science. In information technology and art, standards are well above those found in most other schools. In other subjects, standards are similar to those found in most other schools. There was not enough evidence to judge standards in design and technology, history and music. When children under five enter the school, most speak little or no English. By the age of five, children attain below average standards in language and literacy and mathematics, average standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, and above average standards in creative development and personal and social development. Pupils, including those with special educational

needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make very good progress and achieve very well by the time they leave the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes towards school. They show great interest in their work, sustain concentration very well and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are very courteous and considerate to others. They handle equipment with care.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are excellent and contribute significantly to the pupils' achievements. There is a high degree of racial harmony and respect for the views of others. Pupils exercise initiative and show independence in their work and in helping around the school.
Attendance	Poor. Attendance for the current year is well below the national average and is much lower than the previous school year. Many pupils have taken periods of extended leave to visit their home country. A large number of pupils arrive late for lessons in the morning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Very good

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

During the inspection, 85 lessons were observed. Of these, the quality of teaching was excellent in 20 per cent, very good in 39 per cent, good in 31 per cent, satisfactory in nine per cent and unsatisfactory in one per cent. This represents a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when it was judged to be of an 'appropriate standard'. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good at both key stages. In lessons devoted to teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy, the quality of teaching is consistently very good. These skills are also developed very well through the pupils' work in other subjects. The quality of teaching is also very good throughout the school in science, information technology and art, and in music and physical education at Key Stage 2. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and set demanding work for them, which is well matched to their individual needs. This very good teaching leads to very good learning and high standards of achievement. The quality of teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language is also very good and the excellent partnership between class teachers and specialist teachers ensures that all pupils' needs are very well met. The quality of teaching is also very good for pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted or talented and meets their needs very well. As a result of the very high quality teaching, pupils are motivated to learn, acquire new knowledge and skills at a rapid rate and make very good progress in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities for pupils. Curricular planning and organisation are very good. Teachers devise very effective links between different subjects which enhance pupils' learning. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities and links with the local and wider communities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified at an early stage and pupils and parents are involved in setting and reviewing appropriate targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes very good provision for the very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Class teachers and specialist teachers work very effectively together to enable these pupils to become increasingly fluent in English and to make equally good progress in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness through assemblies and the curriculum. Very good provision for moral and social development runs through every aspect of school life and is constantly reinforced. The excellent provision for cultural development includes celebrating the cultural diversity within the school and providing an impressive range of opportunities for pupils to visit places of interest and participate in a wide range of creative arts activities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are satisfactory procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring their academic performance and personal development.

The school works well in partnership with parents and this contributes effectively to the progress made by the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and key staff provide excellent leadership for the school and a very clear sense of direction. They are committed to achieving high standards in all aspects of the school's work and have an excellent capacity to continue to bring about improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very well informed and are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is very detailed analysis of the school's performance by staff and governors which leads to successful initiatives and strategies to improve standards. Rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and the curriculum contributes significantly to the school's effectiveness.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes excellent use of all its resources and achieves a very good balance between cost and effectiveness by applying the principles of best value to very good effect.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is very good, overall. However, the libraries do not have enough books and are not used effectively to develop pupils' independent research skills.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school has high expectations of their children. • The school is well managed and led. • Children make good progress. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • They are made welcome in the school and are kept well informed about their children's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of homework

The findings of the inspection agree with the very positive views expressed by the parents. The school makes good use of homework to support pupils' learning, although the amount set depends on individual teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. An analysis of the pupils' results in the national tests for 11 year olds between 1996 and 1998 shows that, over three years, there was a significant improvement in their achievements in English, mathematics and science, creating an upward trend that was greater than the national trend. The school was included in the list of 100 most improved schools in Key Stage 2 tests in 1998. However, in 1999, the pupils' results in all three subjects were well below average when compared to schools throughout the country. When the 1999 test results are compared to those of schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, they are below average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. The school carried out a very thorough analysis of the reasons for this drop in performance, and highlighted a number of relevant factors. The year group contained an unusually high proportion of pupils with significant special educational needs and an exceptionally high number of pupils whose education had been interrupted by extended holidays to Bangladesh or by changing schools. This accounted largely for the low test results, but the situation was compounded by the pupils' poor performance in writing, which was significantly lower than that in reading. Even taking all of these factors into account, the school met its own targets for this year group. The Local Education Authority's analysis of the progress made by these pupils since they took the tests for seven year olds in 1995 shows that they made above average progress compared to other schools in the borough.

2. The school's detailed analysis of the pupils' results led to a number of initiatives, especially in writing, which have already had a significant impact on pupils' achievements. The school set formal targets for 70 per cent of its pupils to reach or exceed the expected level in the national tests for 11 year olds in English in 2000, and for 66 per cent to do so in mathematics. These targets represent a considerable degree of challenge for the school. Indications are that the pupils are on course to meet these targets, which will re-establish the improving trend in performance.

3. The findings of the inspection are that, by the age of 11, pupils attain standards that are similar to those found in most other schools in English, including literacy. Within this overall judgement, standards are above average in reading, below average in writing and average in speaking and listening. In mathematics, including numeracy, standards are in line with the national average, while in science they are above average. Pupils achieve standards that are well above those found in most other schools in information technology, art, music and physical education. In religious education, pupils are meeting the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and in geography and history, standards are similar to those found in most other schools. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology. The standards found during the inspection in English, mathematics and science are higher than those achieved in the national tests for 11 year olds in 1999. This is partly due to the differences between groups of pupils as outlined above. However, the school's detailed analysis of the test results led teachers to identify specific areas of weakness and to devise successful teaching strategies to address them. The highly skilled teaching of literacy and numeracy, through the very effective implementation of the national strategies, has been a significant factor in bringing about improvement. Changes in organisation have enabled teachers to focus on particular groups of pupils, with the result that a significant proportion of pupils are achieving higher than average standards in English, mathematics and science, and a few pupils are achieving standards which are well above those expected for eleven year olds. In science, an increased emphasis on learning through experimentation and investigation has had a positive influence on standards of attainment.

4. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection in 1997, standards are higher in English, mathematics, information technology, religious education, art and music. Standards are lower in

history and similar in science and physical education. In the last inspection, there was not enough evidence to form a judgement about standards in geography, and in this inspection, there is not enough evidence to do so in design and technology. Some of these differences can be attributed to a shift in emphasis on certain subjects as a result of national initiatives, rather than to any significant differences in the quality of teaching. However, the very good improvement in standards in information technology has a number of contributory factors. An excellent partnership has been created with an international news agency, which has funded the establishment of a state-of-the-art computer suite in what was once a first floor swimming pool. The appointment of a talented and enthusiastic co-ordinator for the subject has had a major influence on raising attainment, as he has provided excellent training and support for all staff to enable them to use the computer suite to its full effect. In addition, he has produced an excellent scheme of work, which has already been updated in preparation for the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in September 2000. The quality of teaching in the subject has been raised to a very high level and this has led to pupils making very good, and often excellent, progress in their learning.

5. At the time of the last inspection, the school had only just begun to develop religious education and no formal syllabus was in place. This had a negative influence on pupils' achievements in the subject. The school is now implementing the locally Agreed Syllabus appropriately and this has led to an improvement in standards.

6. In English, by the age of 11, pupils show confidence in speaking and enjoy taking part in class and group discussions. They listen very well to teachers' explanations and to each other and respond appropriately. They read accurately and with good expression and understanding. Pupils discuss texts critically and are able to express preferences for different types of books. In writing, most pupils present their ideas and thoughts in a coherent and organised way, but a higher than average proportion of the pupils does so in simple language, using a limited range of grammatical structures. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use a broad range of mental strategies and explain them well. They convert percentages to fractions, measure angles accurately and calculate the circumference of a circle. Pupils work out complicated multiplication and division sums involving decimals and find the mode, median and range of a set of data. In science, by the age of 11, pupils carry out investigations independently, analyse their findings and draw conclusions from their observations. They classify living things and understand how the human digestive and reproductive systems work. They know the properties of solids, liquids and gases and successfully conduct experiments with electrical circuits. In information technology, pupils use spreadsheets to plan and cost out a party, use e-mail confidently to send and receive messages and gain access to the Internet to find information from a website. In religious education, pupils have an understanding of the significance of major religious festivals and key figures, such as Abraham, David, Muhammad and Jesus. In geography, pupils use an atlas successfully to find climatic regions of the world and in history, they understand how the gods influenced the lives of the Ancient Greeks. In art, pupils produce sketches of high quality with great attention to detail, line, pattern and form. In music, they sing songs in three or four parts very expressively and melodically and compose variations on a theme using instruments and voices. In physical education, pupils vary speed and direction well when working on the floor and apparatus to create sequences of movement.

7. In the national tests for seven year olds in 1999, the pupils' results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with schools nationally. When the results are compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools, they were below average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. In reading and mathematics, the pupils' results have been well below average for three years, while in writing, they were below average in 1997 and 1998 and well below average in 1999. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments by teachers in science, standards were well below average.

8. The findings of the inspection differ from the school's results in the 1999 tests and show evidence of improvement. The successful implementation of the literacy hour and the introduction of a new strategy for teaching pupils sounds and early reading skills have had a significant impact on raising the standards achieved by the pupils. Although standards in reading and writing are judged to be below average, they are considerably better than those achieved in the national tests in 1999. A very high proportion of pupils enter school with little or no knowledge of English. As a result of very good teaching, these pupils make good progress in acquiring English, so that, by the time they are seven, the proportion of pupils who are attaining expected standards is approaching the national average. In mathematics, the findings of the inspection show a significant improvement over the previous year's test results, as pupils are achieving average standards. The implementation of the daily mathematics lesson is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, which is also enhanced by their improved language skills. Standards in science are also in line with the national average. As a result of detailed analysis of the pupils' performance in the 1999 national tests, the school set challenging targets for improvement this year, and indications are that these are on course to be met.

9. In information technology, pupils achieve standards that are well above those found in most other schools as a result of very good teaching. In religious education, pupils meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In geography, standards are similar to those found in most other schools; in physical education, they are above and in art, they are well above. There was insufficient evidence to form judgements about standards in design and technology, history and music. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection, standards have improved in art and physical education, and there has been considerable improvement in information technology. In English, mathematics, science and geography, standards are similar to those found in the last inspection. It is not possible to make comparisons in design and technology, history, music and religious education.

10. Although pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills at Key Stage 1, standards are still below average by the end of Year 2 because of the very high proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils listen attentively to stories, rhymes and teachers' explanations and make simple but appropriate responses. Many use a limited range of vocabulary when expressing their ideas. They read simple texts accurately and use their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words. Most pupils can write a simple version of a story, although these are often limited in range and grammatical structure. In mathematics, pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 mentally and calculate halves. They use estimation well in measuring activities and measure their own height in centimetres. Pupils use grid references to find their way around a treasure island and are beginning to develop the ability to explain their methods of working when making mental calculations. In science, by the age of seven, pupils identify parts of plants, compare materials and record their observations. They understand how some materials change when they are frozen or mixed together. Pupils construct simple electrical circuits. In information technology, they program a floor robot to follow a planned route which includes turning to left and right. In religious education, pupils know the biblical story of creation which they compare with creation stories from the Maori and Aboriginal cultures. In art, pupils achieve very good standards in drawing and painting to represent what they have observed or imagined. In geography, they use grid references to find locations on a map of the local area and in physical education, they develop good control of a bat and ball.

11. Children's standards of attainment on entry to the school are well below average, especially in language and literacy and familiarity with numbers. Children aged under five make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and, by the time they are five years old, standards have risen to below average in language and literacy and mathematics. In knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, standards are average by the time that children are five. In personal and social development and creative development, they are above average, as a result of the very good emphasis placed on these areas of learning. Children participate in activities with increasing confidence, taking turns and being willing to share resources fairly. They relate well to each other and

to adults, and develop independence in selecting resources and activities. Despite knowing little or no English when they enter the school, those pupils who are at the early stages of language acquisition soon learn to use essential vocabulary. Children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and join in with telling a story. Some recognise familiar words in simple texts. Children attempt to copy their own name with guidance. They know a range of number songs that use numbers up to five, and older children count up to ten. Few children have developed an awareness of number operations. They investigate what happens when they add water to soap flakes, and use magnifying glasses to observe shells and pine cones. Children make model houses and cars and use the mouse competently to move items on the computer screen. They run, play ball games and climb on apparatus confidently. They have a good awareness of space and handle small equipment skilfully. Children participate with enthusiasm in imaginative play and enjoy creative activities such as creating necklaces from pasta and making icing sugar pictures. They respond well to music and enjoy singing.

12. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress in their learning at both key stages and achieve very well in relation to their earlier attainment. They are given work that is appropriate to their stage of development and receive very good support in lessons. Teachers keep very good records so that they can track how well each pupil is doing. There are several pupils who make sufficient progress to be taken off the register of special educational needs. Pupils who are gifted or talented also make very good progress because teachers recognise their potential and extend and accelerate their learning through challenging and demanding work. As a result, a few pupils attain very high standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. Pupils with particular talents in art and music are also given opportunities to develop these to a very high standard.

13. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language, which accounts for 88 per cent of the school population, make very good progress in their learning. Those who remain at the school for the whole of their education at Key Stage 2 achieve well in the tests and assessments for 11 year olds. Pupils whose education is interrupted by changing schools or taking extended holidays to visit Bangladesh often achieve lower standards than those of which they are capable. An analysis of the school's data about the stages of fluency reached by pupils in successive years shows a picture of steadily increasing fluency. About one third of pupils achieve the final stage of fluency by Year 6, and nearly three-quarters reach the final two stages by the end of their primary schooling. This represents very good achievement.

14. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make very good progress and achieve very well. Since the previous inspection, considerable effort has gone into analysing the pupils' performance and identifying how it might be improved. This has led to very good improvement in the quality of teaching, which, in turn, is having a significant influence on how well pupils learn and make progress. The school's commitment to achieving the highest possible standards for all pupils is carried through at all levels and ensures that all pupils receive appropriately challenging and demanding work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are strengths of the school and make a very good contribution towards promoting their attainment and progress. This conclusion is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Parents state that their children enjoy school. Nevertheless, the attendance and punctuality of the pupils are poor and limit the progress made by some pupils.

16. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those pupils with special educational needs. They are eager to gain knowledge, thus reflecting the learning ethos throughout the school. This was particularly apparent in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, when a

group of pupils asked for extension activities when they had finished their work. Pupils show interest in what they are doing and concentrate well, as was seen particularly during map work in a Year 3 geography lesson, when they were reluctant to leave their individual work when it was time for the whole class plenary session at the end of the lesson. Pupils have the confidence to try and work out answers in front of their classmates, as seen during the mental mathematics session in numeracy lessons. The whole of Key Stage 2 showed great enthusiasm when the lower three years were the audience at a musical performance by the pupils in Year 6.

17. Pupils behave very well in the classroom, at play and at lunch times. This reflects the views of parents in the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors. They are well mannered, polite to adults and to each other, and courteous and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised. Pupils show respect for property, for example, when using the computers, and take care when collecting and putting away materials and equipment during lessons. Nevertheless, in some classes in Key Stage 1, pupils are still learning not to call out and the teachers have to remind them to put their hands up. The pupils from different cultural backgrounds mix together very well. The inspectors concluded that there was a complete absence of any oppressive behaviour, with no bullying or name-calling. Pupils who have special educational needs are enthusiastic about their work as most pupils are, and the level of behaviour is usually very good. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

18. Relationships between pupils and with adults are excellent and contribute very well to the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils get on very well with each other when playing games at break and lunch times. In the classroom, the youngest respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet. They are often very good at taking turns: when one pupil was in difficulty during a Year 2 mathematics lesson, others waited patiently, letting him think the problem through. Pupils also work together well in lessons, as seen in some excellent group work when Year 6 pupils summarised the story of Perseus during a literacy lesson.

19. The pupils' personal development is very good. The previous inspection report stated that there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning, show initiative and take responsibility. The school now provides considerable opportunities for the pupils to become independent learners and to show initiative. They were often seen working independently, as when Year 4 pupils created line graphs in an information technology lesson. There are various opportunities to use their initiative. Pupils take on many tasks within the classroom and the older ones have some opportunities to work with the younger when they help with playground activities. The pupils also benefit from collecting for charities during the year and meeting people in the community who come to help in the school. One drawback is that the library is not sufficiently well stocked to be a useful means of developing pupils' independent research skills.

20. Children under five settle quickly to the daily routines of the Nursery and grow in confidence. They quickly become independent and respond to the activities provided with pleasure. The children are friendly and, with the support of the bilingual nursery nurses, make their needs known to the staff. Their behaviour is very good. When working together in Reception, they co-operate well and support one another in their learning.

21. Pupils with English as an additional language have very good attitudes to the school and to their work. They are keen and eager to get on, and are interested in all the activities and experiences presented to them. They try hard and their behaviour is very good. There is very good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others from all pupils in the school, and relationships are excellent, producing an atmosphere of harmony in the school.

22. Attendance and punctuality are both poor. High levels of absence not only affect the attainment of individual pupils; other pupils are sometimes affected as the teacher has to repeat work to help the absentees to catch up. Late arrivals delay the start of the day, resulting in a loss of teaching time for all pupils. Attendance in the current school year is running at just over 89 per cent overall and is lower than at the time of the previous inspection. It is also considerably lower than the figure of 95.9 per cent which was recorded for the previous school year. In part, this is due to the great majority of pupils being away for two days to celebrate a religious festival, but a more important factor is the extended holidays taken by a significant number of pupils to visit Bangladesh. Many of these holidays are much longer than two weeks, with some of three months or more. Even if these two factors are ignored, attendance is still below the national average at around 93 per cent. The level of unauthorised absence is very high, at over 3 per cent, reflecting the school's appropriate policy of not authorising any holidays of more than three weeks. Many pupils are not at school ready to come into class when the bell rings. A continuous stream of pupils, some with their parents, arrives for several minutes after the start of the day. Registration usually does not take place immediately, which results in the number of pupils who arrive after 9.00 a.m. not being adequately recorded.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching and learning at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is very good and a strength of the school. The teaching and learning for children aged under five is good overall. During the inspection, 85 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was excellent in 20 per cent, very good in 39 per cent, good in 31 per cent, satisfactory in nine per cent and unsatisfactory in one per cent. This represents a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when it was judged to be of an 'appropriate standard'. A key issue for action was to address the level of unsatisfactory teaching. This has been achieved very successfully as a result of very good programmes of staff training and development. The consistency of the very good teaching enables pupils to make very good progress in their learning. Teaching that had a positive impact on pupils' learning was seen throughout the school and was particularly effective in Years 5 and 6, where the quality of teaching is excellent overall. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language benefit significantly from consistently very good and sometimes excellent teaching.

24. The particular strengths of the teaching are the very well planned lessons, based on clear learning intentions that are shared with the pupils, and the excellent use of time, support staff and resources, which means that very little time is wasted and all pupils receive the support they require to extend their learning. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge, which is effectively communicated to the pupils and, together with the very high expectations of pupils, is a major influence on the very good progress that they make. Teachers are skilled in finding different ways to question and explain in order to ensure successful learning for all pupils. Across the school, the very good teaching has a direct and positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

25. The quality of teaching and learning is good for children aged under five. It promotes good learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, where teaching was judged to be satisfactory. During the inspection, 71 per cent of the teaching observed for these children was at least good, and 29 per cent was very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Teachers' planning is detailed and is carefully matched to the nationally recommended areas of learning for children of this age. The daily activities are very well prepared and the good range of resources available is effectively used to stimulate children's interest and participation. The area of personal and social development is served well by all adults and the provision for purposeful play forms a secure basis upon which interaction with others develops. Teachers are very skilled at developing warm relationships with both the children and their parents. Very good use is made of the bilingual nursery nurses to translate any queries from parents or to relay

messages to them. Consequently, the parents feel that they are listened to and are happy to leave their children in school. All adults listen with interest to what the children have to say and, through a range of strategies, develop and extend their language skills. The days are well structured to provide periods of time for free choice activities, periods of interactive group activities with an adult and whole class sessions. The focused activities are very well led by all adults. Physical development is promoted well through the use of outside play, both in the Nursery and Reception classes. However, in general, planning for this area of learning is insufficiently well organised. The co-ordinator for the early years has identified this as an aspect to be developed. This term, teachers in the Reception classes have appropriately introduced aspects of literacy and numeracy that are generally based on the national strategies. This is proving to be beneficial to the children, particularly in the development of the basic skills of early reading. There are very good relationships between adults and children, both in the Nursery and Reception classes, which enable all children to feel confident and secure. Both the Nursery and Reception classes have part-time teachers who are funded by the Ethnic Minority and Travellers Achievement Grant. This arrangement is very effective and teachers work very well in partnership.

26. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is very good and promotes very good progress in the pupils' learning. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be of an 'appropriate standard'. At this key stage, 88 per cent of the teaching and learning observed during this inspection was at least good and 62 per cent was at least very good. Fifteen per cent of the teaching was excellent and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Examples of very good and excellent teaching were seen in several subjects. Particular strengths were noted in the teaching of English, mathematics, science, information technology and art. In English, the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on learning. For example, in a literacy session in Year 2 that focused on humorous poetry, the teacher's careful planning incorporated appropriate content at all three levels of work, which enabled all pupils to achieve very well. The very good teamwork with the bilingual instructor allowed opportunities for explanations in Bengali to those pupils who needed it, while still focusing on the explanations of English words. The teacher created a sense of fun and enjoyment in the lesson that the pupils responded to very well and consequently made very good gains in their learning. The emphasis that teachers place on pupils' involvement is a key factor in motivating them to learn. The teaching of English permeates the whole curriculum and pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through a range of approaches. The basic skills of literacy are soundly developed and reinforced across other areas of the curriculum. Very good strategies are used in lessons, where new vocabulary introduced is closely related to the subject, such as that seen in science, art and geography. This shows great improvement since the previous inspection when the teaching of some aspects of English was judged to have shortcomings.

27. Very good learning occurs in numeracy lessons as all teachers are well aware of the requirements of the national strategy and apply their knowledge very well. In most classes, the very good mental mathematics session moves at a brisk pace, which the pupils enjoy immensely. This leads to very good acquisition of new mathematical skills and knowledge. Teachers are very good at questioning and they explain new concepts clearly. This is also a significant improvement since the last inspection, when there was insufficient emphasis on developing basic skills in numeracy in some classes. In science, teachers show very good knowledge of the subject and capture the interest of pupils with the content of the lessons. The very good pace of lessons ensures that all pupils remain involved. Lessons in information technology are successful because pupils are inspired by the very good teaching methods and use of resources and, as a result, increase their knowledge and understanding of concepts such as directional language when using a programmable robot. In art, teachers achieve a very good balance between the teaching of skills and techniques and the opportunity for pupils to explore a wide range of media. In these lessons, time is used effectively and teachers provide constant knowledgeable support and guidance to the pupils.

28. The quality of teaching and learning is good in physical education and geography, and satisfactory in religious education. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about design and technology, music and history. Teaching in physical education is characterised by lessons that are carefully planned and pupils being clearly shown how to improve their technique. Good discipline ensures that all pupils work hard to improve their skills. Lessons in religious education and geography are carefully planned, sometimes as part of a wider topic, and teachers make good use of the local environment to broaden the pupils' experiences.

29. Overall, at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good. This is a very good improvement on the last inspection, when it was judged to be of an 'appropriate standard'. At that time, teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in some lessons in Year 3 and Year 5. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection. In the last inspection, the reasons for the unsatisfactory teaching included poor classroom management, where teachers spent too long organising pupils and not enough time teaching, and inappropriate work being set for some pupils. These weaknesses have all been remedied. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, art, physical education and music. Exceptional teaching was seen at the upper end of the school, where, out of the 25 lessons seen in Years 5 and 6, 44 per cent were excellent and 40 per cent were very good; the remaining 16 per cent were good. In these lessons, teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge in their direct teaching, particularly in literacy, numeracy and information technology. The work set is very challenging for all pupils and stimulates them to apply greater effort and think through things for themselves. The very good pace accelerates pupils' learning and maintains their keen interest. A Year 6 literacy lesson, which entailed writing a synopsis in the style of a particular author, embodied the features of exceptional teaching found at the upper end of the school. The high level of language used constantly challenged pupils and the on-going assessment through the pupils' responses and written outcomes was excellent. The clear and detailed planning and the integration of the specialist teacher supporting pupils who have English as an additional language were extremely effective. This partnership is a strength of the school and is seen in many lessons. Excellent teaching was also seen in mathematics, when in whole-class sessions pupils are challenged to think things out for themselves, and comments such as 'Give everyone a chance to think it out' highlight the supporting structure of the class work. A calm and purposeful learning environment enables pupils to make very good progress in their learning, and end-of-lesson sessions are used effectively to reinforce learning and to highlight the progress made by pupils.

30. In science, teachers use very good questioning techniques to draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding and to encourage them to think as scientists. For instance, in a lesson following on from a field visit, pupils were asked 'What do all good scientists do?' which elicited the response, 'We do several tests, check the results and record'. By these methods of discussion, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding well and learn from each other. In information technology, excellent use is made of the demonstration screen in the computer suite to show pupils how to gain access to different programs and operate them independently. In one lesson, nearly all of the pupils in a Year 6 class were able to log on quickly to the network and gain access to a web site. Excellent teamwork between the two teachers kept the lesson moving at a very productive pace and teachers quickly spotted where help was needed, which ensured that all pupils were fully engaged. In physical education, pupils are taught a wide range of skills, which is reflected in the sequences produced by pupils in a gymnastic lesson. Modelling of skills by the teacher is used to good effect and, at the end of the lesson, pupils are asked which sequence they like and why, which leads to an improved performance. The teaching of art is especially good in Years 4 and 5 as teachers teach the combined skills and techniques of design and art, offering knowledgeable guidance and inspiring pupils to produce work of a very high standard. The pupils' work is clearly valued, as seen in the many visually stimulating displays around the school. The specialist music teacher is having a very positive effect on pupils' learning, and the extremely good opportunities provided for pupils to work with musicians of a very high calibre from such institutes as the Guildhall School of Music, has an impact on their learning, and provides a great deal of enjoyment.

31. The quality of teaching and learning in history, geography and religious education is good. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about design and technology. In history, the well planned structure of lessons, with good use made of artefacts and first hand experiences, has a positive impact on pupils' learning that is reinforced well by the practical activities of observational drawing. In geography, teachers build well on pupils' previous understanding and provide a wide range of meaningful experiences for the pupils. Lessons are planned well for religious education and the integration with subjects, such as art, reinforces the pupils' knowledge of a range of religions and extends their artistic skills, as seen in their work on Islamic patterns, icons and the patterned quilts based on fabric prints from Bangladesh.

32. Teachers ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in classwork. They include them in question and answer sessions, and celebrate their work in the sessions that round off lessons. "Explain how you worked that out, for those who are still not sure", said one teacher, making sure that all pupils understood. Teachers provide work that has been designed specifically to enable pupils with special educational needs to make progress, and to take a full part in the lesson.

33. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. There is excellent liaison between class teachers and specialist staff, and very good integration of the support teaching within mainstream classroom work. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high, but pupils are enabled to reach the challenges set in their learning by the very effective teaching methods. These include placing significant emphasis on meaning, breaking learning down into small steps and reinforcing pupils' understanding through repetition and engaging their interest. Planning for lessons is undertaken jointly by class teachers and specialist staff, so that even where work is adapted for different groups it remains within a common context. The quality and use of ongoing assessment for pupils with English as an additional language, including the tracking of individual progress, are excellent, and clear records are kept, including those of their stages of fluency in English, as they progress through the school.

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

34. At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not meet the statutory requirements for teaching religious education. Acts of worship did not take place on a daily basis and there were no schemes of work for some aspects of English and mathematics. Weekly and daily planning by teachers did not pay sufficient attention to how subjects would be taught. Curricular planning lacked clarity and did not contain enough detail, and, as a result, activities were not always well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities. There was inequality of access to the curriculum for Year 3 pupils.

35. The findings of this inspection are that the school provides a very good range of worthwhile learning opportunities for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 that meet the needs, aptitudes and interests of all pupils. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum in both key stages are very good. A particular strength is the way that aspects of different subjects are combined in lesson planning. For example, geography and English are very effectively combined in the Poetry Trail using the area surrounding the school. Subjects are interwoven skilfully to make learning highly effective and relevant to the pupils' experience. Appropriate statutory requirements are fully in place, and the provision of religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Preparation for the introduction of the new National Curriculum in September 2000 has already been undertaken. The school is fully meeting the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education, which includes sex education and awareness of the misuse of drugs.

36. The very good learning opportunities provided for pupils are the result of very good planning, very good monitoring and very good links made to draw together several curricular strands into lessons, when this is appropriate. The provision for information technology is a particular strength as it also includes the use of an excellent information technology room and extensive support from an international business. It supports learning in most other areas of the curriculum. The provision for art, science, English, mathematics and physical education is also excellent. The planning for design and technology is not as thorough or as systematic as for other subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, those who are learning English as an additional language and gifted pupils is very good. They receive very good support as a result of the careful planning and monitoring that take place between all members of the teaching and support staff. All pupils receive equality of access and opportunity as a result of the very good planning and organisational strategies such as teaching pupils in groups on the basis of their previous attainment at the upper end of the school.

37. The time allocation for the teaching of all subjects is appropriate. Planning documents indicate that all subjects are covered in very good depth and planning has improved so that it is now very good. Specialist teachers and staff who support the teaching of English as an additional language and special educational needs are involved with the planning and monitoring which enhances the strength of provision. A strong feature of the planning is the way lessons take account of the wide range of needs of the pupils. Policy documents and schemes of work are all in place and take account of the schemes of work published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

38. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very good across both key stages. As a result, pupils make very good progress in developing literacy skills, which are well used across the curriculum. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented very effectively and, as a result, pupils make very good progress in acquiring mathematical knowledge and understanding. The strong emphasis that has been given to this subject and the very good teaching of skills are having a very good impact on standards. Numeracy skills are developed very well in other subjects, such as science.

39. The school offers a good range of learning opportunities for children aged under five. Curricular planning is detailed and in both the Nursery and Reception classes takes full account of the designated areas of learning and the stages of development of very young children. A strong emphasis is placed on providing first-hand experiences of quality and on helping the children to acquire language skills. The Nursery and Reception classes together form a coherent department and operate effectively as an early years unit.

40. The school makes very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. They have full access to the school's curriculum and are very well supported in lessons by teachers and support staff. Pupils' individual education plans contain appropriate targets, which are agreed with the pupils. All teachers share very detailed information about each pupil's needs and they plan work accordingly to enable pupils to make very good progress in their learning.

41. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils who are learning English as an additional language are very good. Pupils follow the National Curriculum fully, with the pace adapted as necessary to meet individual needs, but with specialist support and input aiding acceleration as much as possible. The planning and provision for these pupils is very good, and strategies for the teaching of both literacy and numeracy skills are also very good. There is excellent teamwork, both within the specialist team and between this team and the class teachers, both in planning the programmes of work and in carrying them out.

42. In the last inspection, extra-curricular activities were judged to be appropriate to enrich the curriculum. The findings of the present inspection are that the provision is very good. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of sporting activities, including cricket, football, athletics, hockey

and tennis. Bengali is taught three evenings a week and there is an after-school reading club for Year 6 pupils supported by the New Opportunities Fund. The computer suite is used to hold a computer club. There are very good links with the three other primary schools in the area as well as the local secondary school and competitive sports take place between the schools. The school's involvement in the Globetown 'Partners in Education' initiative makes an excellent contribution to enriching and extending the curricular opportunities that are available to pupils. This includes opportunities for pupils to participate in music, drama, art, design and technology projects with pupils from other schools.

43. The school's links with the local community are excellent. The school is part of a small Education Action Zone and has identified working with parents and families and education in the community as areas to be developed. The initiatives that have been taken include having a toy library in the school hall, taking books into homes and training parents as reading partners. Employees of an international news agency give time on a regular basis to help pupils with information technology. Employees of an international bank visit the school to hear pupils read in Year 4. Cricket, football and athletic competitions have been arranged both locally and at Crystal Palace. There are very good links with the local secondary school, which include valuable opportunities for pupils to visit the school and work alongside older pupils.

44. The last inspection found that the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was good but constrained by the lack of systematic teaching of religious education. The findings of this inspection are that provision is very good. The provision for spiritual development is good, for moral and social development it is very good and for cultural development, it is excellent. Clear judgements were not made about each aspect in the previous inspection.

45. The religious and cultural festivals of different faiths are celebrated and these add an important dimension to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Assembly themes are linked to the topics being taught in religious education and acts of worship provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on important issues. In one assembly, the imaginative use of puppets to explore the meaning of the parable of the Good Samaritan enabled pupils to gain a fresh insight into its meaning and relevance for their own lives. Pupils visit local places of worship, including churches and temples, and learn what it means to be a Christian and Muslim. Opportunities are provided to reflect on the beliefs of others. Spiritual development is fostered effectively through other subjects. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils explored people's differing feeling by re-writing a story from the point of view of another character. In an art lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to study photographs of a range of facial expressions and discuss the emotions they were expressing. In science, pupils learn to appreciate the natural world of plants, animals, the universe, the sun and moon and weather. Provision is made for pupils to experience moments of awe and wonder. In a Year 4 art lesson, pupils gasped with admiration as their teacher showed them an icon that she had made. Pupils in Year 6 perform music along with students from the Guildhall School of Music for other Key Stage 2 pupils. Both the performers and the audience respond to the exhilaration of the occasion with wonder and joy.

46. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school's very high expectations of pupils' behaviour lay the foundation for very high standards in this aspect. Staff, pupils and parents have all contributed to the writing of the school's very effective behaviour policy and, as a result, the pupils take their moral responsibilities very seriously. The policy is applied consistently by all staff. A constructive system of rewards and sanctions underpins the clearly defined rules for behaviour. Rules and expectations for good behaviour are displayed in classrooms. Opportunities to explore moral issues are incorporated in many strands of the curriculum. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils learn about moral dilemmas and how there can be good and bad options. An outside speaker talks to pupils in Year 6 about a moral maze and how they have to travel through making choices. Pupils are made aware that sometimes, as in life, they have to go back to the crossroads and try again.

47. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The finding of the previous report was that the school did not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop independence, show initiative or take responsibility. Pupils are now given very good opportunities to work together in pairs and groups and to take responsibility for tasks appropriate to their ages and stages of development, both within the classroom and the wider school community. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to work collaboratively in lessons in many areas of the curriculum. There are very good links with other schools through the Globetown 'Partners in Education' initiative, through which pupils meet and work with others from local primary and secondary schools. This has a very favourable influence on preparing them for secondary education. A consultant has worked with a group of pupils on playground games. These pupils have now taught other pupils how to play them. Older pupils take part in residential trips, which support the development of social skills and independence.

48. The last inspection judged cultural development to be good. The findings of the present inspection are that the provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to appreciate cultural traditions through visits to museums, art galleries and Bore Place Farm in Kent. At Key Stage 1, visits include Shepherd Leas Woods, the Science Museum, the National Gallery and the London Hospital Helipad. At Key Stage 2, pupils visit a range of places including the National Portrait Gallery, the Islamic Gallery of the British Museum and Docklands. These visits make an excellent contribution to enhancing the pupils' learning. The visit to Gilwell Park by Year 4 pupils is used to support several areas of the curriculum. Pupils listen to sounds in the woods, participate in orienteering and put together a 'mapstick' to record what they have found on their journey. Year 2 pupils use the local area to make observational drawings of buildings. Traditions of various cultures are drawn upon through art, music and literature. The Globetown 'Partners in Education' projects provide very good opportunities for pupils to work with the Barbican Centre on arts projects, take part in performing arts festivals, work with local textile artists and experience different types of music. Workshops led by the staff and students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama make an excellent contribution to developing pupils' cultural awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. Overall, the teachers show appropriate concern for the needs of the pupils. The school has improved its child protection procedures since the time of the last inspection to ensure that confidentiality is respected and that all staff know the reporting procedures. Parents are very satisfied with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable.

50. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The staff have a good understanding of the symptoms of child abuse and know who to report to in the school if necessary. There are good links with social services staff in the local authority. The provision for first aid is good. Several staff have received appropriate training; they record details of any treatment given to pupils and send letters home to parents as appropriate. A health and safety policy is in place and the school generally has good procedures to promote the health and safety of pupils, employees and visitors to the site. It has effective measures for checking equipment and for dealing immediately with, for example, any spillage of water. However, staff have had little training in these areas for several years and are not fully aware of their personal responsibilities and no formal risk assessments have been carried out. The teachers generally ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and personal and social education. However, pupils were not reminded of potential hazards during a lesson on how to wire an electric plug. The arrangements for sex education and drug awareness are satisfactory.

51. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. There has been a very good improvement in this aspect since the last inspection, when assessment procedures had a number of shortcomings. The school's documents about assessment set out the aims and procedures very clearly and much work has been done to put these into practice. There is an agreed marking system, which is known and used consistently both by pupils and teachers. Teachers set targets for individual pupils, which they discuss with them and review in the light of the pupils' achievements. Pupils' assessment records in the main subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology provide a very good picture for teachers, parents and carers. All teachers share the main goals of each lesson with pupils and, at the end of the lesson, the whole class usually reviews whether these have been achieved.

52. In English, mathematics, science and information technology, all assessment is clearly linked to the expectations of the National Curriculum, and the results of national tests are carefully analysed. Teachers, and the leaders of subjects, use these comparisons and analyses to inform their planning and then they address any topics that need revision. For example, they use these findings to reorganise groups within their classes, or add more work on a topic that pupils are unsure of. Teachers keep very good records of their assessments and these help them to pass on useful information to parents in reports, and to other teachers when a pupil moves into a new class. Assessment procedures are not used to this generally very high standard in all subjects. Although they are satisfactory in most other subjects, the exceptions being design and technology and religious education, insufficient work has been done to match the practice in English, mathematics and information technology across all other subjects.

53. The school is very efficient in identifying those pupils who have special educational needs. Class teachers mainly recognise these needs and arrange the required support. Pupils' individual education plans and targets are very good and offer suggestions for teaching and how parents can help at home. These targets are reviewed at least every six months and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.

54. The monitoring of academic performance and personal development, including levels of fluency in English, for pupils with English as an additional language is very good indeed. It is careful and thorough, and is used well to plan the next steps forward for each pupil. The procedures used for assessing their attainment and progress are excellent, with careful tracking of each pupil's progress and special attention to the assessment of pupils' fluency in spoken English.

55. Assessment and record keeping procedures in the Nursery and Reception are well established and regular observations of the children at work and play, within each area of learning, are well documented. Consequently, teachers have a good overview of the curriculum and recognise the purpose and potential of each activity. An initial assessment is carried out when the children enter the Reception classes, which teachers use to plan appropriate work for the children.

56. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development is good, although it is less structured than the monitoring of their academic development. Detailed records are kept for children in the Nursery and Reception classes and for pupils with special educational needs. Generally, the school relies on the teachers' personal knowledge of pupils, enhanced by the notes kept by support teachers and staff during lessons. Observations during the inspection show that the staff work hard to improve the pupils' social awareness and their emotional well-being. Assemblies are particular times when the school encourages personal development through discussions about feelings and how to help others. The pupils' sense of responsibility is enhanced by the various tasks they have around the classroom and, for the older pupils, around the school.

57. The procedures for promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy is thorough and was developed in discussion with staff, parents and pupils. It includes the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and acknowledges good behaviour as well as

describing procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Midday supervisors are actively involved in promoting discipline and good behaviour as well as the adults in the classroom. Pupils have a good understanding of how to behave. Observation during the inspection showed that the arrangements are effective, that pupils know what is appropriate and behave very well, even when not directly supervised. The school also has very good procedures for dealing with bullying or racism if any were to occur. The pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well through the school's special educational needs system.

58. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The headteacher checks the registers each week to identify any immediate concerns. The office staff telephone home on the second day of any unexplained absence. The newsletters to parents regularly remind them of the need for good attendance and punctuality and, at the twice yearly parent conferences, the teachers review any concerns that appear during the year. Nevertheless, the school is not fully using the computerised record system to produce regular totals to identify whether the levels of attendance and punctuality are at an unacceptable level in particular year groups. In addition, the school does not make sufficient referrals to the education welfare officer to ensure that parents are made fully aware of their responsibilities. The proposals for the Education Action Zone include targets for improvement in attendance levels which are unrealistic for this school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are very pleased with all that the school does. The findings of the inspection support all of their positive views. Parents state that their children like school, that they make good progress and that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. They consider that the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress, and that it works closely with them. They feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have questions or problems. Doubts were expressed about the amount of homework that some pupils receive but the inspectors concluded that the school's approach is good, although the amount set depends on the individual teacher. Overall, the school works well in partnership with parents, as at the time of the last inspection.

60. The school has established good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. The quality of information provided is good. Regular newsletters are sent home, providing general administrative information and, for example, emphasising the need for good attendance and punctuality. Other letters refer to school trips, arrangements for national and internal tests and homework, explaining how parents can help. The school does not send parents information about what is being taught in the coming term. The early years unit provides particularly useful information for parents in both English and Bengali about its work and, for example, about reading and writing. However, in the main school, only a few documents are translated. The limited use of translation restricts the opportunities to ensure that all parents understand how to help their children and also prevents some parents from fully appreciating the extent to which the school values the local community's language and culture. However, a recent survey carried out by some governors showed that most parents did not feel this was necessary. Good interpreting facilities are provided at the formal meetings between parents and teachers twice a year to discuss pupils' progress. In the summer term, the school also provides a report on each pupil's progress. This generally provides a good summary of the skills and understanding acquired in English and mathematics but does not contain enough information about what pupils know, understand and can do in other subjects, referring only to the work covered and the attitudes of the pupils. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are kept very well informed about their children's progress and the targets that have been set for them. Their views are asked for and recorded at annual reviews. Parents are also invited to help with pupils' individual education plans when the children are at home.

61. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Few parents help in the classroom, although, as was seen in the Nursery, parents feel welcome to stay and sit with their children while they get used to being in the school. Parents are willing to help by accompanying pupils on school trips. A group of parents were actively involved in devising the behaviour policy. Pupils are very happy to be in school and work hard and are keen to learn. These attitudes reflect the extent to which parents encourage their children to respect the school and the education process.

62. The information provided for parents of children aged under five is good. Curricular planning is displayed on the notice boards for all parents to see and regular letters are sent home informing parents of any news. A simple pamphlet is provided for parents that contains points to consider when their child starts the Nursery and on transfer to the Reception classes. However, it does not contain information on how the curriculum is organised. The 'Toy Library' provides a very good introduction to the school for both the children and their parents. The Nursery teacher meets with each parent individually, before the children start school. The bilingual nursery nurses offer valuable support in translating.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. The leadership and management of the school are excellent and promote very high standards in all aspects of school life. There was no clear overall judgement about the school's leadership and management in its last inspection report. However, the main findings of the inspection were that the senior management team did not "provide the support necessary to bring about the sustained improvement of educational standards". The report also stated that there was "no vigorously pursued sense of purpose other than the intention to introduce the *Investors in People* scheme". The school's involvement in, and commitment to, *Investors in People* proved to be the catalyst which has ultimately resulted in very good improvement in all aspects of the leadership and management of the school. In the last inspection, the school was found to have serious weaknesses in a number of areas. The key issues for action were addressed thoroughly and with meticulous attention to detail. As a result, there has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching, in curricular planning for English and mathematics and in implementing a highly effective system of assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Despite a noticeable dip in 1999, which the school was expecting based on its detailed knowledge of the year groups concerned, there has been a significant improvement in the pupils' performance in national tests, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. The findings of this inspection indicate a continuing trend of improvement. In addition, there have been major improvements in the teaching of information technology which have led to much higher standards of attainment by all pupils. The determination and commitment of all involved in the leadership and management of the school and their shared sense of purpose in improving the quality of education that the school provides and the standards the pupils achieve are excellent. The school's capacity to succeed in the future is also excellent.

64. A key factor in the school's success is the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinators who have responsibility for managing key stages, subjects and aspects of the school's work. Their leadership provides very clear direction for the work of the school and ensures that appropriate priorities for development are identified and addressed through effective action. Since the last inspection, the school's management structure has gradually evolved to create a highly competent and committed team, whose strengths complement each other and whose roles and responsibilities are clearly defined to ensure maximum effectiveness. All share a common purpose and reflect critically on what they can do to improve teaching and learning and to develop better ways of working. The headteacher delegates responsibilities appropriately and these are set out in individual job descriptions. He recognises and builds upon teachers' strengths, and supports them very well in their development, allowing them the freedom to exercise their talents to the full. A very good example

of this is the co-ordinator for information technology, who has been given a very clear brief to develop the subject and has received the necessary support and resources to enable him to bring about significant improvements in a short time.

65. The previous inspection found that insufficient attention was given to rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and that curriculum co-ordinators had limited influence in managing their subjects. There has been very good improvement in these areas. Every member of the senior management team is involved in monitoring the quality of teaching throughout the school, as are some teachers who have responsibility for subjects. All teachers are observed regularly and receive both verbal and written feedback, which helps them to build on their strengths and address any identified weaknesses. Since the last inspection, teachers have come to accept classroom observations as an integral part of the school's management processes and they are open to new ideas and constructive suggestions from colleagues. Subject co-ordinators play a much more pivotal role in monitoring, evaluating and developing their subjects than previously, though the emphasis has been appropriately on English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. Co-ordinators offer very good support to colleagues, review their planning and have a good overview of pupils' work and the standards they achieve.

66. The school is highly effective in monitoring and evaluating its own performance and in diagnosing its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher and senior staff carry out detailed analyses of the pupils' performance in national and internal assessments, as a result of which they identify priorities for action and put strategies in place to address them. During the past year, for example, the school has introduced a new scheme for teaching spelling and reading skills to younger pupils and has focused on improving the range of opportunities for writing for older pupils as a means of raising pupils' attainment in these areas. In the term before the inspection, a whole school review was carried out in which senior staff and other co-ordinators were fully involved in identifying priorities for action within their own subjects and areas of responsibility. These were then incorporated into the school development plan. The two key stage co-ordinators produced very comprehensive reports of their findings, which reveal a considerable depth of analysis and a keen perception of what needs to be done to improve standards and the quality of education in each key stage. The deputy headteacher has also analysed school data in considerable depth as part of her performance management targets for the current school year. The senior management team draws all of these threads together very well to formulate a coherent plan of action. The school uses assessment and performance data very well to predict potential, set targets for improvement and take effective action to move the school forward. The involvement of all staff with management responsibilities in this process enhances its effectiveness.

67. The management of the provision for children who are under five is very good. The early years co-ordinator, who teaches in the Nursery, has a clear overview of the provision and provides excellent leadership. The school operates the Nursery and Reception classes very much as an early years unit and is well prepared for the introduction of the 'Foundation Stage' in September. The Nursery and Reception classes are well staffed by experienced teachers, nursery nurses and support staff. All have a good knowledge of how young children learn. The school has an integral Nursery unit that is spacious and well resourced. The spacious outdoor play area is adjacent to both the Nursery and Reception classes and provides a secure, well-equipped area that effectively meets the needs of the young children's physical and creative development. This is a very good improvement on the previous inspection when the outside play equipment was judged to be in need of development.

68. As at the time of the last inspection, the governing body makes a very effective contribution to shaping the direction of the school. The Chair of Governors is very knowledgeable and well informed about what is happening in the school and in the wider sphere of education, and he provides strong leadership. Governors are well aware of their responsibilities and are fully meeting their statutory obligations. Through visits to the school, regular meetings with and reports from the headteacher, and through their well appointed committees, which have clearly defined terms of reference, governors have

developed a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a clear idea of how they want the school to develop and have a constructive relationship with the headteacher and staff. Co-ordinators make presentations to governors about issues and developments in their subjects, which help governors to review and evaluate what progress is being made. Governors have agreed appropriate performance targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher, which focus on raising standards of attainment and levels of attendance. They are not sufficiently involved in matters relating to health and safety and ensuring that risk assessments are carried out.

69. The school's explicit aims and values include a commitment to good relationships and to equality of opportunity for all pupils. They are reflected throughout the school in the excellent relationships that exist between pupils and adults, and, particularly, in the way that teachers value and respect all pupils' contributions. There are excellent procedures to ensure that the school meets the needs of each pupil and there is mutual respect between pupils, and between pupils and adults, which helps to create a very caring and supportive climate for learning. Visitors are warmly welcomed, and staff and pupils evidently feel great pride in their school and their joint achievements. This is clearly reflected in the quality of the school environment, which is beautifully maintained by the premises manager and cleaning staff and greatly enhanced by the colourful and attractive displays which celebrate pupils' work in the classrooms and shared areas.

70. There is systematic budgeting for all expenditure on the basis of the priorities identified by staff in their areas of responsibility and the senior management team, who have the overview of whole school and key stage priorities. Expenditure is related appropriately to raising pupils' standards of attainment through very good staffing levels and the purchase of new resources to support learning. For example, funds have recently been allocated to purchase a new scheme for teaching phonics and to ensure that the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well resourced. The school effectively balances costs against quality as it applies best value principles in deciding how to use its financial resources. For example, the school's high expenditure on staffing is offset against the benefits it brings in ensuring that there are sufficient qualified staff to meet the needs of the very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The very good support provided for these pupils also ensures that pupils who speak English as their first language are not disadvantaged because teachers have to devote their attention to other groups. The deployment of teachers within the school has proved highly effective in raising standards of attainment. For example, teaching older pupils in small groups on the basis of their previous attainment has allowed teachers to focus their attention on a narrower ability band and this has enabled higher achievers and gifted pupils to reach very high standards.

71. The development of links with an international news agency has greatly benefited the school and its pupils. The school has made excellent use of the resources that were generously donated, with the result that pupils' achievements in information technology have improved very significantly. The school has recently become part of a small Education Action Zone, which is funded by the Department for Education and Employment and sponsored by an international bank. The school is already benefiting from the expertise of a technical manager in the computer suite and a number of other initiatives that enhance the school's own provision.

72. There are very effective systems and procedures for financial control and administration. The senior administrative officer is very experienced and receives very good support from her colleagues in the school office. She is highly efficient in keeping track of expenditure and providing information for the headteacher, senior management team, co-ordinators and governors, keeping them well informed throughout the year. The school makes very effective use of new technologies, including electronic mail, the Internet, multimedia applications and the analysis of data about pupils. Senior staff are all fully involved in using and promoting the effective use of technology, both to support pupils' learning and to increase the effectiveness of administrative procedures. It is not being used to the full in monitoring pupils' attendance.

73. The school makes very good use of the money it receives under the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant. Funds are allocated appropriately to provide specialist teachers, who work in a very good partnership with class teachers to ensure maximum interaction and dialogue with pupils. The concentration of this support in the Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 classes ensures that pupils make very good progress both in learning English and in acquiring knowledge and skills in other subjects. The work of the specialist team that provides support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is very well led and co-ordinated by the acting co-ordinator. The team hold regular staff meetings and have developed very good support strategies and excellent assessment procedures which influence planning for these pupils on an individual and group basis. Their work is integrated very well within that of the classes and there is very good liaison between the specialist team and the class teachers. There is a very positive attitude towards such support among the teaching staff, and there is a very high level of shared commitment to improvement. The headteacher co-ordinates the provision for pupils who have special educational needs very well. Records and details of how well pupils progress are very good and inform all concerned. All teachers are made fully aware of pupils' special educational needs and they are able to plan accordingly from this information. The school uses outside professional help well.

74. There is a very good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has ensured that all staff have job descriptions and a good system for the appraisal of teachers is in place. Staff are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to roles of responsibility maximises their experience and expertise. There is very effective induction of staff who are new to the school, and the high levels of expertise among existing staff ensure that students who are receiving initial teacher training are very well supported during their time in school. The school's professional development systems are co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher and are highly successful in developing individual teachers' expertise and in meeting the needs of the school as identified in the school development plan. They are effective in improving both teaching and learning. Training for the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been successful in providing a structured and effective programme of learning which has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

75. The accommodation is very good and enhances the teaching of the curriculum and the pupils' learning. Most classrooms are spacious and all have attractive displays of pupils' work and information. The various smaller rooms are very well used for teaching small groups of pupils, storage and providing facilities for staff. Very attractive features are the well painted murals around the school, both inside and out, especially those that feature the social history of the area. The playgrounds are well used during play and lunch times. Pupils and staff make efficient and effective use of the facilities available and there is very good support from the premises manager and his staff in providing a very attractive and well-maintained environment. The outside toilets are maintained to a high standard.

76. Overall the provision of resources is good and has improved since the last inspection. Those for information technology and art are very good. Resources for religious education are satisfactory. Whilst the provision for English is very good, the number of books in the library is poor, especially for a school of this size. This weakness prevents pupils from using the library to the full and limits their ability to acquire library and research skills. The school makes good use of the loan facilities provided by the Local Education Authority to borrow books and artefacts. The appointment of a resources co-ordinator has resulted in a very good links between various subjects of the curriculum, especially when they are integrated with the teaching of literacy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77.

1. Take further measures to improve attendance and punctuality by:

- setting specific, realistic and measurable goals and deadlines for improvement;
- establishing a new sense of urgency about this issue amongst staff and parents;
- ensuring that outside agencies are fully involved with those families who show poor attendance and punctuality

(Paragraphs number 22, 58, 68, 72)

2. Continue the very good work already in progress to raise standards of attainment, so that they are consistently reflected in the pupils' performance in the end of key stage national tests;

(Paragraphs 1-14, 66, 68, 92, 96, 106, 108, 113, 115)

3. Continue to implement the very good strategies that are already in place to improve the standards that all pupils achieve in writing.

(Paragraphs 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 66, 70, 95, 99, 101)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensuring that all staff and governors receive training so they are fully aware of, and carry out their responsibilities, with regard to health and safety matters, including risk assessments.

(Paragraph 50)

- Re-organising and improving stock in the libraries and making more effective use of them to develop pupils' independent research skills.

(Paragraphs 19, 76, 94, 104)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	39	31	9	1	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	406
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		283

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	115

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	401

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	36	18	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	21
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	35	37	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (69)	69 (69)	65 (71)
	National	82 [80]	83 [81]	87 [84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	21	23
	Girls	15	14	14
	Total	39	35	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (68)	65 (70)	69 (70)
	National	82 [81]	86 [85]	87 [86]

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	24	23	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	10	13
	Girls	14	16	17
	Total	17	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	36 (72)	55 (66)	64 (75)
	National	70 [65]	69 [59]	78 [69]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	15	15
	Girls	12	15	15
	Total	17	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	36 (68)	64 (62)	64 (70)
	National	68 [65]	69 [65]	75 [72]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	10
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	265
Chinese	2
White	42
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Total number of education support staff	3.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	997714
Total expenditure	1014523
Expenditure per pupil	2270
Balance brought forward from previous year	-16809
Balance carried forward to next year	-16809

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	250
Number of questionnaires returned	170

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	12	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	32	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	25	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	31	12	4	5
The teaching is good.	78	20	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	35	5	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	28	2	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	19	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	54	34	5	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	66	27	2	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	29	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	30	5	3	14

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

78. Children enter the Nursery, either part-time or full-time, during the year in which they are four. During the year in which they are five, the children move into the Reception classes full-time. At the time of the inspection, 68 children were registered in the Nursery and half of the children in the Reception classes were under five.

79. Attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. Although the majority of children in both the Nursery and Reception classes are learning English as an additional language, they are able to communicate their needs and ideas using their own family language, and, by the time they are in Reception, most children indicate that they understand what is said to them. From this starting point, the children make good progress and most are on course to meet the goals that are set for children aged five in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical development. In personal and social development and creative development, they exceed what is expected and in language and literacy and mathematics, standards are below expectations. The school's last inspection judged the children's progress to be good in the Nursery and, with additional support, good in Reception. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory and often good. The findings of this inspection show that the children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes and that the quality of teaching in the Nursery is now very good. In Reception, the quality of teaching is good overall.

Personal and social development

80. Most children are on course to exceed the expectations of the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five years old. Personal and social development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning and the planning is comprehensive in both the Nursery and Reception classes. The well-established routines and caring nature of the provision help all children to feel secure and to grow in confidence. Children come to the Nursery happily and respond positively. The staff set very good examples of respect for each other to the children and to their parents, which the children learn to emulate. The provision for purposeful play in the Nursery and Reception classes is good and enhances the children's co-operation with others. Children in the Nursery start to make independent choices about which activity to participate in and, although some children are quiet in their play because they do not yet speak English, all adults participate in the activities and engage the children in conversation. Children settle to tasks quickly and are able to concentrate for increasing periods of time. Good examples included a child in the Nursery caring for her 'baby' doll in the home corner. She was engrossed in dressing and feeding it, while another child prepared the bottle to feed the 'baby'. A group of children in Reception played in the 'John Scurr Accident and Emergency' department for some considerable time, acting out the roles of doctor and receptionist. Relationships are very good and children of different races and nationalities are very well integrated. By the time the children are five, most are able to work and play as part of a group and behave in appropriate ways. If there are too many children at an activity, they wait their turn patiently or move on to find an alternative task. There is rarely any squabbling over resources. The children enjoy school and are eager to explore new learning. By the age of five, most children have mature attitudes to learning, make the most of all the activities provided for them and concentrate for suitable periods of time in the more formal group times of literacy and mathematics.

81. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good in this area. Opportunities are exploited to the full to promote the children's personal and social development and the children respond positively. All adults use praise and encouragement and each child is valued. They motivate the

children to learn and are good at encouraging the children to try. Consequently, the children are self-confident, mix well with others and develop self-esteem. Teachers draw out children's responses in discussion times and encourage the children to put up their hands when they want to speak and to listen when it is not their turn to speak. Children are encouraged to be kind and helpful towards others and to begin to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The diversity of languages and cultures of the children is seen as valuable and is celebrated by both the Nursery and Reception teachers.

Language and Literacy

82. The majority of children entering the Nursery communicate in a language other than English. From this starting point, most children make good progress in the development of language and early literacy skills and, although they do not achieve the expected standards by the time they are five, many strive to communicate in English. They can follow instructions and are keen to contribute to group discussions. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are provided with a wide range of practical activities and purposeful free play to support the development of language and literacy skills. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to talk with an adult while they undertake their tasks and actively seek to extend their vocabulary. Many children understand and learn to use essential vocabulary, such as their names and the names of objects, and, by the age of five, most can express their thoughts and convey meaning in English to adults. Children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and join in with the telling of a story. By the age of five, many children know how books are organised and that print in books is what is read, not the pictures. They begin to associate sounds with letters and some recognise familiar words in simple texts. However, the learning of most children is still at an early stage and many have difficulty in using 'book language' when talking about a story. In writing, children make good progress. In the Nursery, children experience mark making on paper and, with guidance, attempt to copy their own name. They begin to show an awareness of the relationship between speech and writing by providing words for adults to write down for them. In Reception, the older children write their names independently and some higher achieving children write sentences to go with their pictures that are phonetically plausible, such as 'I wi go to tawn in my helicopter'. In general, their pencil control is satisfactory and most children can either trace over adults' writing or are beginning to copy underneath.

83. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good in language and literacy. A strength of the teaching is the very good interaction between all adults and children, whether it is in English or in the children's home language. All Nursery and Reception staff understand the importance of language development and use a wide range of strategies to extend the children's vocabulary. In the Nursery and Reception, children are provided with good opportunities for purposeful role-play to develop a wider vocabulary and self-expression. The teaching of reading is well structured, from sharing books in the Nursery to the more formal introduction to reading and regular phonic practice in Reception. Children have regular opportunities to take home a book to share with a member of their family or carer. Reception teachers have recently introduced a daily time for the teaching of phonics to groups of children. This is successful in raising the children's knowledge of sound-symbol relationships and increasing their ability to read words. The book focus time is used appropriately to develop the children's understanding of books and heightens their awareness that print in books carries meaning.

Mathematics

84. The attainment of the majority of children on entry to the school is well below average. Children make good progress in their mathematics development and, although attainment is below what is expected by the time they are five, in general, this is due to the difficulties that children encounter with the understanding of the language. In the Nursery and Reception, a good range of practical activities is thoughtfully prepared by the teachers and assistants that enables the children to encounter mathematical experiences in their everyday routines. For instance, in the Nursery, children count the number of 'play people' they put in their model cars, make comparisons between which strips of paper are longest or

shortest and investigate with water to see which bottles are full of water and which are empty. They know colours and match the colours of the clothes they are wearing to coloured stickers, which they then count and find the corresponding number on a number line. Mathematical language is widely used by staff to promote the children's understanding. For instance, when drawing pictures of different forms of transport, the children are asked, 'How many wheels in your drawing and should the wheels be on top of the bus or at the bottom?' They use number apparatus and games for everyday sorting and counting and know a range of number songs that use numbers to five. Children in the Reception classes build on these rich experiences. The older children count, recognise and write numbers to ten. However, few children have developed an awareness of number operations. For instance, in a mental mathematics session, they found it difficult to understand the concept of 'one going away, how many left?' They compare the weight of 'teddies' and learn that 12 teddies are heavier than ten. As a class, they carry out a traffic survey on Cephas Street, which is used to make a picture graph, where the children begin to understand mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than'.

85. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good, overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of very young children ensure that there is a good variety of practical activities before working on a more formal curriculum. The work is well planned to meet the specific needs of all children. Resources are carefully prepared and all staff use questions effectively to promote the children's use of mathematical language while at play. In the Nursery and Reception, play both indoors and outdoors allows children to explore many mathematical concepts. For example, exploring the properties of shape by sorting them and fitting them into the correct Post Box; threading the correct number of cotton reels onto a numbered lace and investigating how many 'teddies' would fit in differently sized containers. In Reception, the teachers provide a short time each day for mental mathematics, which, in general, is used well to help children consolidate their understanding of numbers. However, teachers have to work hard to settle the children to these whole-class sessions, after they have been so busy in the preceding activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. The children's developing knowledge and understanding of the world around them are appropriate for children of this age. They make good progress and the many children for whom English is an additional language respond well to the wide range of experiences provided both in the Nursery and Reception classes. Discussion forms an important part of the work in both the Nursery and Reception and children are encouraged to explain and describe what they are doing. For example, while children in the Nursery are bathing the dolls, they are asked questions, such as, 'What do we need to dry the baby?' and 'How do we put on the napkin?' Consequently, the children not only learn how to care for a baby, but also develop a greater understanding of how to describe their actions. In Reception, they investigate what happens when they add water to soapflakes and use magnifying glasses to observe the features of objects such as shells and pine cones. They draw pictures of themselves and label parts of their body. The curriculum also provides children with knowledge of the days of the week and observation of the weather. In general, however, children have difficulty in understanding the passage of time, as when discussing yesterday, today and tomorrow. In the Nursery, they look at photographs of different houses and are introduced to the language associated with the features of houses. In Reception, they develop the theme by making pictures of their own family and stick them into the rooms of their model houses. They make models of toy cars and negotiate them along the roads marked on a play mat and have produced class pictures of a busy street that show houses, shops and the traffic. All children use a variety of construction and modelling materials in play situations and learn how to join reclaimed materials to make models of houses, vehicles and shakers for music. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy using the computer and, by the time they are five, confidently click and drag with the mouse control to move items on the screen.

87. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good both in the Nursery and Reception classes as seen in the range of very well planned practical experiences that are relevant to the children in the world around them.

Physical development

88. Most children control their larger scale movements well and are on course to meet the nationally agreed learning goals that are set for children to achieve by the age of five. In the Nursery and Reception classes, there is very good provision for the children to develop their physical skills in the outside areas. They are given many opportunities to run, play ball games, negotiate climbing structures and to ride wheeled toys in the spacious outside play area. Outdoors, the children move around confidently, have a good awareness of space and show a high degree of skill with the equipment provided. However, in physical education lessons, children in the Reception classes are less secure about moving around all the space in the hall and some find physical movement, such as hopping and skipping, quite difficult. Manual dexterity is well promoted within both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children develop increasing hand control through cutting and making activities, through fixing jigsaws and manipulating construction toys. Progress is good and many children use pencils for drawing, brushes for painting and scissors for cutting with confidence by the age of five.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in this area and best use is made of all the available resources. All staff work well together to promote effective learning. On-going observations of children's responses to the activities and the progress they make enable teachers to plan carefully for future experiences. However, planning for and the use of the very spacious outside area is an aspect that the Early Years co-ordinator has rightly recognised as requiring further development in order to maximise its impact on children's learning.

Creative development

90. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make very good progress in acquiring skills in this area of learning through a wide range of opportunities in art, music and imaginative play. As a result they exceed expectations by the age of five. Children use the role play areas daily and enjoy both home play in the Nursery and the John Scurr Accident and Emergency centre in Reception. Purposeful play is a strong feature in the Nursery and Reception classes and the many imaginative activities provided, both indoors and outside, stimulate the children's learning. For instance, the large variety of play toys, such as building bricks, small world figures and construction equipment, facilitate exploratory play. All children are given the opportunity to extend their imaginative play outdoors. They thoroughly enjoy using the telephones in the wooden playhouses, taking part in imaginative role-play in the 'boat', building sand models in the large sandpit and using the 'garage' to buy fuel for their wheeled toys. Children often choose to sit outside in the covered areas to look at books, draw pictures and make models. Inside, the children are encouraged to explore freely with paint, mix colours and use their senses when working with play dough. For example, in the Nursery, the dough was scented with lemon. The wealth of work on display indicates that the children are becoming confident with the use of paints, crayons, chalks and pencils. They use pasta to decorate a frame that contains their photograph and make necklaces by threading the pasta on to a string. In Reception, they mix colours, make icing sugar pictures, make tyre and bubble prints and create collage pictures. Their observational drawings of faces show a good attention to detail. The children make good progress in music, because they sing together several times each week and have regular opportunities to use the percussion instruments and make their own music. They remember the words of a wide range of songs and most can remember the tunes. Children respond well to music and enjoy singing. They build on their experiences and benefit from the teaching of the music co-ordinator, who takes them for a weekly music session.

91. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good overall, and all staff plan for and provide a wide range of valuable experiences for the children. The staff are very good at supporting the children in this aspect. They explain carefully and enable children by showing them how and what to do.

ENGLISH

92. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in Year 6 achieve standards in English that are similar to those found in most other schools. This represents very good progress and very good achievement, since most pupils in the school learn English as an additional language, many of them having entered the school with no knowledge of English. There is also a high level of absence as many pupils take extended leave to visit relatives abroad. This judgement represents a significant improvement on the 1999 national tests, when results were well below those of most schools. There were significant differences between the last year group and the present Year 6, including the level of pupils with special educational needs and the number of extended absences, which account for the lower results last year. This year's achievement also reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and no significant differences were observed between boys and girls in this year's results. This judgement also represents an improvement over time, since standards were also below those of most schools in the previous two years and well below the average in 1996. The school has set challenging but realistic targets, which it expects to achieve this year, in the national end of key stage assessments for 2000, and further targets for following years based on assessment information for the relevant year groups, together with goals for improvement. All teachers are committed to developing fully the language skills of those pupils whose first language is not English, which are most pupils in the school. These pupils are very well integrated in mainstream classes, where they receive very good support from both class teachers and specialist teachers. They make very good progress in their acquisition of English as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress, and achieve standards that are very good relative to their previous attainment, as they receive very good support in class.

93. By the age of 11, pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening. They are confident in speaking, and offer ideas and responses easily. They enjoy taking part in discussions or reporting back to the class at the end of a lesson. Pupils are able to ask questions and to express their own thoughts and ideas satisfactorily. Teachers use small group discussions and working with a partner to extend the range of speaking and listening activities in a number of lessons in different subjects, and technical vocabulary is well taught and learned.

94. Overall, standards in reading by the end of Year 6 are above average. Higher achievers read at levels well above those expected in the primary school, some already reading adult texts. They are able to discuss their preferences among a range of genres, and to explain and discuss texts in a critical and comparative way. Most pupils read accurately, and with good expression and understanding, from an appropriate range of texts. They can discuss the main points of the plot and refer to the characters in the stories. Lower achievers are confident in tackling unknown words, and they generally read accurately and with understanding. All pupils enjoy reading, and regularly take books home from school, or sometimes bring their own books to school to show, use or share. Across the key stage, independent research skills using a library are relatively undeveloped, and specific library skills are not consistently acquired.

95. Standards in writing by the end of Year 6 are below average. However, the level of attainment in writing achieved this year shows an improvement on that in previous years, and indicates an approach towards the average level. Higher achievers write at levels well above that expected for age, with maturity, thought and selectivity, often with a lively sense of style. Most pupils write in an organised

way, present their ideas and thoughts coherently, and choose appropriate vocabulary. Lower achievers, although they can express ideas and present information, write more simply, with less precise choices of vocabulary, and often in shorter amounts. All pupils are able to write for a very comprehensive range of purposes and readers, including diaries, reports, recounting stories, creating stories, poetry, myths, play-scripts, recipes, instructions, letters and descriptions. All have tackled extended writing assignments. Most pupils make very good progress in spelling, punctuation and grammar, but lower achievers sometimes find grammar and spelling difficult. Throughout the key stage, planning of written work takes place and there is very good emphasis on drafting, editing and refining. Handwriting is generally very neat, and presentation is very good. There is excellent bookmaking, presenting work in exciting formats, which all pupils have produced, and which are most attractive for the reader to explore. Exciting recent work includes making a newspaper, writing stories in the style of Rudyard Kipling, and making a synopsis to act as a publisher's blurb for pupils' own books, including a 'cliff-hanger' to attract the prospective reader. Writing non-fiction as well as fiction is given good attention, as also is persuasive writing.

96. In Year 2, the findings of the inspection show that standards in English are below those found in most other schools. Taking into account the pupils' below average attainment by the age of five, this represents good achievement. This judgement also shows an improvement on the results in the end of key stage national assessments for 1999, when they were well below those of most schools. This results from improved teaching, especially in phonics and spelling. The end of Key Stage 1 results show a generally improving trend, although last year's results in reading showed a drop, due to the wide range of ability in the year group. There are no significant differences between boys and girls.

97. The findings of this inspection show that in Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are still below average. The very high proportion of pupils entering the school with English as an additional language means that some pupils have a very low starting point with little or no English. Support for these pupils is very good and, by the time they reach the end of Year 2, standards have risen from well below the average on entry, to just below the average. Teachers act as good models for speech, and there is a strong focus on listening skills. Pupils listen attentively to stories, rhymes and explanations, and make simple and appropriate responses in class. Some pupils have a limited range of words, but higher achievers express their thoughts confidently and use a growing vocabulary. Teachers take every opportunity to encourage confidence in speaking, and to reinforce and extend pupils' language. This was seen in a Year 2 celebration of poetry, when pupils presented their favourite items of humorous verse, much to the enjoyment of the audience. This experience contributed well to building pupils' confidence and self-esteem, as efforts were recognised and publicly praised.

98. Standards in reading in Year 2 are below average, although there is evidence of higher attainment, and of the range of reading performance coming closer to the average range than previously was the case in the last two or more years. Pupils generally read simple texts with accuracy and enjoy reading sessions with their teachers. Through their work in the literacy hour, they have a good understanding of how books are organised, and handle them appropriately. Pupils take their books home to read or to look at, every day. Higher achievers confidently tackle relatively difficult words, using their phonic knowledge, and read with fluency and appropriate expression. Other pupils draw on their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words, whilst others may need some support. All pupils, however, are confident in tackling unknown words, and generally read their books accurately, since texts are well matched to their capabilities. Pupils generally understand what they read, and enjoy their discoveries of story and information.

99. Pupils' writing in Year 2 is below average. Some higher achievers write at length, with accurate spelling of simple and familiar words, and appropriate punctuation. Some are already introducing the use of complex sentences and have a lively sense of language. Their longer pieces show a knowledge of story structure. Most pupils can write a simple version of a story, or the beginning of a story, even if,

as for lower achievers, it is very short. Handwriting is carried out carefully, and is often neat, but not always, particularly with the lower achievers, regular and consistent.

100. At both key stages, standards in literacy reflect those found in English, and the same is the case with literacy skills across the curriculum. Work in other subjects contributes also to the development of literacy, and there is often good integration of subject topics with English. Technical vocabulary is introduced well in other subjects. There are good links with history, art, religious education, and science.

101. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good in English at both key stages. At Key Stage 2, pupils' learning accelerates as their fluency in English increases. In the previous inspection, teaching was reported as being satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and variable in Key Stage 2. In this inspection, teaching was found to be very good at both key stages, and to be consistently very good overall. The previous inspection report mentioned that too much time was spent on organisation rather than direct teaching, which is no longer the case, whilst no spelling aids were in use, and there was little organisation in pupils' writing. Both of these weaknesses have been addressed: spelling aids are used very well all the time and organisation in pupils' writing is very good indeed. More opportunities for collaborative work in speaking and listening are another example of very good improvement. Particular improvement in teaching has taken place in teaching sounds and spelling in Key Stage 1, and in the organisation and support for writing, including extended writing, in Key Stage 2. There are many strengths in the teaching of English. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and understanding, and they set clear goals for each lesson so that pupils know exactly what the purpose of the lesson is. Accurate ongoing assessment of pupils' work influences the planning of future experiences, and teachers carefully adapt tasks to match pupils' levels of capability and their previous learning. Teaching is enlivened by teachers' imaginative ideas and their infectious enthusiasm, which inspire and challenge pupils to learn. Lessons usually have a good pace, maintaining pupils' interest, and motivation is increased by involving pupils actively in their own learning. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils, and are committed to enabling them to achieve these goals.

102. There is very good teamwork and partnership teaching, where specialist staff providing for pupils who are learning English as an additional language are working with class teachers. Across the curriculum, there is constant use and reinforcement of vocabulary, and effective support for higher achievers to ensure that they are challenged. Attractive displays celebrate the writing produced by pupils, and drama, assemblies and presentations are used well to develop language skills and confidence in speaking. Excellent teaching was seen in Year 6 where pupils were planning and writing a 'blurb' for their own books about a Greek myth, which they had already produced. This was effectively combined in a very skilled way with the reinforcement of some recent new learning about the structure of complex sentences. Although the pace of the lesson was brisk, and the content important, the sense of fun created during the lesson increased the involvement and appreciation of the pupils.

103. The English curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The format of the literacy hour has been very well established, and teachers show confidence in managing its different components. There is very good documentation for the subject, as well as the framework of the National Literacy Strategy, and all three strands of the subject have separate policies and guidelines or schemes. These provide for developing sequences of skills and knowledge, which aid the planning of pupils' learning, and its assessment, and ensure progression in learning. Assessment procedures in English are very good, and include use of nationally designed assessments in every year, for both reading and writing, and also the assessment of a piece of writing from each pupil every term. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' reading skills and knowledge of sounds and spelling patterns. However, there is no whole-school approach or structure for assessment in speaking and listening. The school is already aware of this and has planned to address it next year, combining it with the fluency assessments and records used for pupils with English as an additional language. There is a good marking policy, which is consistently used, and comments made by teachers

help pupils to improve their work. Teachers set individual targets for pupils and use this to track their progress.

104. The English management team, headed by the co-ordinator, all have excellent subject knowledge and, together, they have teaching expertise across the whole age range within the school. The monitoring of planning and of teaching has been systematically carried out, and continues to be so. All teachers have had lessons in English observed; observations have been carried out by the English co-ordinator, members of her team, the headteacher and also, on some occasions, by advisers from the Local Education Authority. Written work is sampled, and a portfolio of pupils' work has been established, which has been assessed and agreed by staff. Resources in English, in terms of textbooks, reading books, and sets of group readers, are good. Class fiction books are adequate. However, stock in the two library areas is inadequate, both in terms of fiction and non-fiction, for a school of this size. The libraries are used more as resource areas for teachers than to develop pupils' research skills. This is a drawback and means that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to browse and to borrow books, for older pupils to engage in independent research activities, and for pupils to be taught library skills on a consistent basis.

105. The subject is enriched by additions to the literacy programme such as visits to the theatre, theatre groups acting for pupils in school, visiting poets who stimulate the writing of poetry, book days and book weeks.

MATHEMATICS

106. The findings of this inspection indicate that, in Year 6, standards are similar to those found in most other schools, with a significant minority of pupils achieving above average standards, especially in numeracy. This represents very good achievement in relation to the pupils' previous attainment. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was 'below expectations', and an analysis of the results of the national tests for 11 year olds over the past four years shows that attainment has improved more than the national trend. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching throughout the school and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the end of key stage national tests for 11 year olds in 1999, the pupils' results in mathematics were well below the national average. When compared with those of similar schools, the pupils' performance was above average. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive well-targeted support and are making very good progress. The school has set challenging targets to continue to improve standards.

107. By the time they are 11, most pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of the multiplication tables up to ten, convert percentages to fractions and use and explain their mental strategies well. They find the circumference of a circle and measure angles accurately. They use their knowledge of percentages well in relation to everyday life, for example, in their work on selecting and pricing a meal from a menu when there is both a ten per cent and 15 per cent discount. Pupils use non-calculator methods for long multiplication and long division, including the multiplication and division of decimals. They are able to solve problems involving both distance and time and to give reasons for the approach they have used. Most pupils can recognise the differences between finding the mode, median and range of a set of collected data and relate it well to statistics. Pupils make good use of information technology in data handling work, and transfer these mathematical skills to data work in geography and science.

108. Evidence from lesson observations, examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils during the present inspection shows that pupils attain average standards in mathematics in Year 2. The implementation of the daily mathematics lesson is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Standards in numeracy are similar to those found in most other schools. This judgement is in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' results were well below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. Trends over time indicate below average performance. The inspection found no significant variation in attainment between girls and boys.

109. By the age of seven, pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 mentally and understand the place value of numbers up to 100. They recognise halves of two dimensional shapes and numbers. They sort curved and straight edged shapes into sets and record these on a Venn diagram. In their work on shape and space, pupils identify most two-dimensional shapes and explain which ones tessellate. They identify and create symmetrical and non-symmetrical shapes. Most pupils use estimation well in measuring activities and can measure well using standard and non-standard measures. Pupils are able to measure their height in centimetres. They know how to use a grid reference to find their way around a treasure island and use information technology to follow and create grid references. They understand the terms, 'heavier than' and 'lighter than', using estimation well. They can also use kilograms to make a chart of pupils' weights. Pupils are beginning to develop the ability to explain their methods of working in mental mathematics.

110. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is very good. This, together with the very good provision made for the high proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, and those who have special educational needs, is having a positive effect on pupils' learning of mathematical concepts and skills. Pupils are also making very good progress because of the very good quality of teachers' planning and their very good use of assessment to confirm that pupils have made progress with their learning. The teachers' planning makes their pupils well aware of what they are expected to learn by the end of the lessons. Initial mental mathematics sessions move along very briskly, with the teachers asking questions at appropriate levels to match the differing needs of the pupils. In one lesson, the teacher sets a 'problem of the day' very effectively and pupils are eager to select a strategy to reach a solution. This contributes to the good standards found in mental mathematics. Teachers encourage pupils to have confidence and to explain their calculations. Emphasis is placed on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and, in a class collecting data, the teacher reminds pupils that the correct word is 'least' and not 'less'. Pupils are given the opportunity to use their mathematical skills in other areas. For example, in geography, pupils collect data on the amount of litter on the playground at various times of the day and compile a graph using information technology. Pupils in a science lesson measure their resting pulse rate and record their findings. They also estimate the weight of a human heart.

111. The quality of teaching and learning is very good at Key Stage 1. This is having a good impact on pupils' progress. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to use the correct mathematical terms and to explain how they work out their answers. The differing needs of pupils are met through a very effective use of appropriate questioning and work that is well matched to the varying capabilities of pupils. In one lesson, the teacher made good use of a describing game for pupils to decide which coin had been chosen. A very imaginative approach was used by one teacher who had the pupils clapping rhythms to introduce the idea of repeating patterns. Well-chosen activities have a very good impact on learning. Support staff and teachers are well used and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language make very good progress. Teachers use the session at the end of lessons very well to consolidate and reinforce learning.

112. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced and fully covers the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils of all ages and abilities. It gives excellent equality of access to all pupils throughout the school. A comprehensive subject policy is in place and the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced in all classes. A scheme of work has been formulated in conjunction with the Strategy. It is well linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum, to ensure very good

progress in learning for pupils of all abilities throughout the school. The joint subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and experienced. They give very good guidance to other members of staff, both formally and informally, and have monitored the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. The information gained from the use of assessment by teachers is very well used by the mathematics team to monitor standards across year groups, and to identify where further support is needed. This very good use of assessment and monitoring contributes to the very good progress being made by pupils. All staff were given training before the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy into classrooms. Resources for the subject are good with a range of books and practical equipment available in all classrooms to provide easy access for teachers, support staff and pupils. Information technology is used widely and well, especially in data handling topics, to broaden pupils' understanding of the subject.

SCIENCE

113. Standards attained by the pupils in Year 6 are above those found in most other schools. This represents very good achievement in relation to their previous attainment and is a considerable improvement on the school's results in the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, where standards were well below the national average. However, when the school's results for 1999 are judged against similar schools, they are broadly in line. Although the trend has generally been one of improvement over the last four years, the results in 1999 were considerably lower than this general trend. The findings of the previous inspection were inconclusive overall about standards, with results well below average in national tests and standards in lessons reported as very high. Due to the very considerable work on curricular development, the attention to investigation and the system the pupils use to record their findings, science has made very good improvement. A particular strength now is that pupils take responsibility for their own work and are often happy to work with the minimum of involvement from the teacher. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils in general, including those who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress.

114. By the age of 11, pupils have developed a very positive attitude to science and, in many cases, are able to carry out investigations in groups, share their findings and record them, without the need for the teacher to intervene. They analyse their fieldwork findings very well and are able to draw conclusions from their observations. For example, Year 6 have studied different habitats for dandelions and discussed crowding by other plants, lack of light, or loss of nutrients. They classify living things using information such as having a bony skeleton, or being warm blooded. They understand the various systems of the human body, such as the digestive and reproductive systems, and the properties of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils successfully conduct experiments with electrical circuits and are able to 'troubleshoot' if the bulb does not light up.

115. In Year 2, standards are similar to those found in other schools, which represents good achievement in relation to pupils' previous attainment. Although teachers' assessments at the end of the key stage in 1999 showed attainment to be well below the national average, when compared with similar schools, the results were broadly average. The findings of the inspection are, generally, an improvement since the last inspection. By the age of seven, pupils compare materials and record their work. They understand that some materials change, such as water freezing, and that some change irreversibly such as when they mixed mortar and made excellent bricks. They construct simple electrical circuits, and most pupils can identify parts of plants such as leaves, roots and stem.

116. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good at both key stages. In the lessons observed, teaching was either good or very good. Teachers have developed very good questioning techniques that enable pupils to develop further understanding of their work. A Year 6 lesson

illustrated this well. Pupils had been on a field study visit, and with the teacher's questions they were able to analyse and interpret their findings to a greater depth. " Why do we need to study dandelions of the same stage of development?" asked the teacher, in order to establish the idea of a fair test. Teachers encourage pupils to conduct their own investigations, and all science lessons now contain an element of this independent learning. The outcome of this is that the school is encouraging "young scientists", full of enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers have established very good relationships and, as a result, they have very little need to correct behaviour, which is usually very good. All lessons start with the teacher sharing the lesson's aims with the pupils, and they usually end with a review, altogether, of what they have learnt. Expectations are very high, and are shared by all.

117. Resources are good for science, and although the use of information technology is not fully developed, there are opportunities for pupils to use CD-ROMs and to record their findings on computers. The subject is very well led by two teachers. A very competent review of the science curriculum has led to excellent development and improvement in the time spent on science, as well as the involvement of pupils in their own learning. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are being addressed very well and results of the national tests are thoroughly analysed in order to help teachers plan for the future. All teachers are committed to making science successful, and work very well as a team. The very good leadership and curricular development has led to considerable improvement in science since the last inspection, and it is now a vibrant and interesting subject, very well planned for and taught. The pupils thoroughly enjoy science and their active involvement in the work.

ART

118. Standards in art in all years are well above those found in most other schools. This is very good achievement. Pupils undertake a wide range of activities, which increase their expertise as they progress through the school. The judgements of this inspection are an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report, when standards of attainment met or exceeded national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make very good progress and achieve high standards.

119. At Key Stage 2, pupils show increasing confidence in using a variety of media, which includes pastels, pen and ink, paint, clay, wire and textiles. Their observational skills develop well and examples of work from many of the pupils are of a high standard. They use pencils with skill and produce sketches of high quality that show great attention to detail, line, pattern and form. They have a good understanding of the range and use of colour and blend and mix colours well to produce different tones and textures. Their skills at printmaking develop from using a sharp instrument to make marks in polystyrene to creating an effective paint block for printing. Pupils then progress to using their own sketches of flowers to produce a design that has suitably clear lines, in preparation for making a lino print. They show confidence in using a roller and printing on paper and fabric. Pupils recognise ways in which works of art can reflect the time in which they are made. For instance, in Year 4, pupils created their own icon paintings and used egg yolk as a finish to varnish and protect their work. Their work with pens to make patterned quilts in connection with their topic on Bangladesh shows great care in developing their skills more widely. Older pupils develop their appreciation of the richness of a variety of cultures by exploring Islamic patterns and Aboriginal art to produce innovative and highly detailed work of their own.

120. At Key Stage 1, pupils use tools well and develop the skills of simple colour mixing and close observation. Their sketches of musical instruments using pastels and applying a colour wash were good examples of this. Pupils record confidently both their ideas and their feelings and draw and paint what they observe, remember and imagine. By Year 2, pupils achieve particularly good work using charcoal

and chalk to produce portraits of John and Julia Scurr that show increasing knowledge of how to achieve the effect they want. The print work that developed from using black and white photographs of themselves is very effective and uses expression to portray their emotions. All pupils develop a great love of art, speak enthusiastically about their efforts and show extreme pride in their work.

121. Across the school, pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists. Pupils in Year 1 understand and talk knowledgeably about the work of Andy Goldsworthy and produce their own 'pictures' using man made and natural materials, such as nuts and bolts and pine cones, that show great originality and creativity. At Key Stage 2, pupils have focused well on the techniques of Alberto Giacometti and have successfully produced sculptures of figures from wire and papier-mâché that are similar to his style. They learn to recognise work from a range of historical periods, such as the Tudors, the Ancient Greeks and the Romans. Throughout the school, many very good examples of pupils' art work are attractively displayed. From an early age, the pupils use sketchbooks skilfully to develop their ideas and record their designs.

122. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good. In the previous inspection, too few art lessons were observed to make a judgement. During this inspection, excellent and very good teaching was seen in four out of the five lessons observed. Teachers inspire the pupils by their knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. All lessons are well prepared and teachers use time effectively to guide pupils' progress. Similarly, the very good teaching achieves a suitable balance between the teaching of skills and techniques and the opportunity for pupils to explore various media, which effectively contributes to their attainment and progress. Examples of this occurred in most lessons. Teachers clearly set out what is to be learned in each lesson and share this with the pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them. The activities are correspondingly purposeful and challenging. This was observed in the majority of lessons. For instance, in a lesson where pupils were using their sketches of flowers to produce a design to be used for a lino print, they were encouraged to repeat their design until it showed their understanding of the need for clear uncluttered lines. The partnership between class teachers and teachers funded under the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant is very strong and enables pupils with English as an additional language to make very good progress and achieve well. This was particularly noticeable in the two lessons observed at Key Stage 1 where pupils in Year 2 were introduced to creating portraits using chalk and charcoal and in Year 1, where they were creating their own 'living' pictures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. All classes are well managed, which allows pupils to apply themselves to their work and make the best use of the time available. Pupils take a pride in their work and are very receptive to the learning experiences provided by the teachers.

123. The co-ordinator for art is knowledgeable and provides very good leadership for the subject through supporting his colleagues, monitoring their practice in the classroom and taking a keen interest in all the art activities throughout the school. The scheme of work provides a good framework for teachers' planning and ensures a steady progression in the teaching of skills throughout the school. Samples of pupils' work are kept to show the progress they have made. Sketchbooks are used well to assess the pupils' progress in drawing. Art is very well integrated into many subjects across the curriculum. Very good examples of this were seen in history, religious education, geography, design and in literacy, where pupils had incorporated some very strong visual silhouettes into their writing. The curriculum is enriched by visits to such places as the National Portrait Gallery, the Tate Gallery, Oxford House and the Barbican Gallery. Visiting artists such as Charles Hustwick also enhance the pupils' experiences. There are very good resources for both two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Art is clearly a significant strength of the school that is celebrated well, as seen in the high standard of pupils' work on display.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. At the time of the inspection, design and technology was not being taught in either key stage, and there was little evidence of pupils' previously completed work. An analysis of a few examples of work and planning documents, and a discussion with the headteacher, who is acting as temporary co-ordinator for the subject, provided insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards of attainment or the quality of teaching. In Year 6, pupils have recently designed and made books and book boxes as part of their work in literacy. These have been constructed with great care and meticulous attention to detail, and pupils have achieved high standards in finishing and presenting their work. Other evidence includes making bricks and mallets on a recent school residential journey. Pupils in Year 4 designed and made Celtic shields and Roman necklaces as part of their history topic, and Bangladeshi houses and dolls to support learning in geography. In a combined art and design project, they created intricately designed patterned quilts in the Bangladeshi style. At Key Stage 1, there was evidence of pupils learning different methods and techniques for joining materials together, as when they used paper fasteners to join different parts of a cardboard body. Planning documents show that pupils in Year 2 designed and constructed houses for 'The Three Bears' and were involved in a joint 'Partners in Education' project to create designs for lamp posts and paving stones around the local area. Pupils' sketchbooks show evidence of designing Victorian samplers in Year 3.

125. For the most part, design and technology is incorporated within the work planned for other subjects. For example, there are very close links with English, art, geography and history, and there is evidence that pupils are taught to use a range of materials and techniques, and different ways of assembling, joining and combining materials. No evidence was available of pupils incorporating simple mechanisms into their designs or disassembling products in order to learn how they function, although these are included in the scheme of work.

126. The headteacher has continued to oversee the subject since the last inspection. There has been no improvement in the subject because the school has focused its attention on raising standards in English and mathematics and has not been able to recruit a specialist in the subject to lead its development. Consequently, design and technology has a relatively low profile within the school's curriculum. Although there is a scheme of work, it is not being implemented consistently throughout the school to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed by building effectively on their previous learning. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. A new co-ordinator has already been appointed for September 2000 and plans are in place to produce a new scheme of work and provide training for staff to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning in the subject.

127. The school's provision for design and technology is enhanced by its involvement in the Globetown Partners in Education initiative, through which pupils in Years 5 and 6 work alongside pupils from three other primary schools and one secondary school on joint projects. Pupils in Year 5 are currently participating in the 'Dreamspaces' project at the Barbican Centre, as part of which they are designing and making 'Dreamboats' to sail candlelit on the Barbican Lake during a musical performance. In the recent past, pupils have participated in designing and making a huge textile map of the local area.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Standards throughout the school in geography are similar to those found in most other schools and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These judgements are based on the few lessons seen during the inspection and also on the analysis of pupils' work, discussion with teachers and pupils and the examination of teachers' planning and records. There was no clear judgement on standards in the previous inspection report. At Key Stage 2, pupils use an atlas successfully to find climatic regions of

the world. They devise questions to explore in their study of Bangladesh and use reference books and information technology successfully to find and record their answers. Pupils devise and undertake an investigation into their school environment and organise the undertaking of this work in groups. At Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of their home address and some pupils can show their route to school. They know the difference between quiet and busy roads. They are able to use grid references to find locations on a map of the local area. Research skills are used well at Key Stage 1 for pupils to gain an understanding of their local environment, and, at Key Stage 2, for pupils to undertake a sustained piece of work on geographical investigation, using the school site.

129. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good at both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide stimulating lessons for their pupils. An excellent lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 where pupils accessed a web-site during an information technology lesson to collect information to help them to develop their geography project on improving the school's environment and recycling. Good use is made of the local vicinity when planning work and good use is made to plan for several curriculum areas to be covered during these lessons. In conjunction with the 'Partners in Education' project, flagstones have been placed around the locality and are used by pupils in Key Stage 1 to consider their likes and dislikes. Teachers plan well to develop pupils' literacy and art skills in these lessons, when pupils record their findings in both sketches and poetry. Much of the geography teaching takes place through practical activities in the wider community.

130. Pupils make good progress in lessons as a result of the stimulating and challenging work that is provided. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress. Work is planned and adapted well to enable pupils of differing capabilities to progress appropriately. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed and applied well in geography through factual writing and drawing together data to make graphs. Information technology is used very well to support learning. Work is well presented.

131. The pupils show good attitudes towards their work in both key stages. Pupils work well on the tasks they are given and at Key Stage 2 are able to work independently at a variety of sites around the school. They take good care of resources. The co-ordinator for the subject shows very good management of the subject. She is adapting the good schemes of work to take account of the new guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and to prepare teachers for the implementation of the new curriculum in September 2000. Her monitoring of teachers' plans and pupils' work is good, but she has not had the opportunity to observe colleagues' lessons. She supports staff well with their subject knowledge and lesson planning. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development.

HISTORY

132. During this inspection, due to timetabling factors, it was only possible to observe two lessons in history, both in Year 5. Teachers' planning documents and pupils' work were analysed, discussions were held with teachers and pupils, and displays were noted. However, the evidence was not sufficient to form a secure judgement about standards and the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. In the previous report, standards of attainment in history at Key Stage 2 were judged to be good. Indications are that they are now similar to those found in most other schools. Throughout the school, pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their previous attainment.

133. By the time they leave the school, pupils have gained factual knowledge and some understanding of the way of life of people in Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Tudor times, and Britain in the 1930s. Pupils are able to understand how the Egyptians were dependent on the River Nile for survival through irrigation for their crops, and how the gods influenced the lives of the Ancient Greeks.

They understand something of the feelings of an evacuee during World War II, and realise the need for gas masks, for instance. They use and understand time-lines, and show an appropriate understanding of chronology. Pupils acquire a suitable range of specialist vocabulary, such as “pharaoh”, “pyramid”, and “hieroglyphics”, and to write in increasing detail. There is good emphasis in teaching on independent study and the use of sources from which pupils can make their own deductions. Higher achievers have plenty of scope for writing their own versions and interpretations of aspects of life and of events.

134. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, and evidence was sparse, so that no judgement can be made about standards. However, in a Year 2 class, there is an interesting and appropriate display of items used before electricity became available, including a flat iron, a storm lamp, a washboard, and a copper kettle. This is an excellent introduction to the way that people used to live without modern powered aids, and allows pupils to handle and observe these artefacts carefully.

135. Throughout the teaching, planning and work seen, there was good emphasis on the value of first-hand experience, the use of sources, and the provision of opportunities for pupils to explore and discover for themselves, as well as to inform and explain. These are good teaching qualities.

136. A sound policy and guidelines support the teaching of the subject, and the school also makes good use of the units of work in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines. The co-ordinator for history has produced a very useful grid which shows how these two sets of guidelines are combined. History is taught in blocks of time and is part of an integrated approach shared with geography. Links with other subjects are good, and include both English and art as strongly integrated areas. This is both stimulating and a valuable use of time; examples include work on the stories of the Greek gods in English, some attractive drawing studies of species roses in connection with the Tudor rose, and some very effective fabric collages representing life in the 1930s and 1940s.

137. The co-ordinator has played a leading role in recent in-service training within the local school cluster, with a focus on the value of integrating history with other subjects. The co-ordinator monitors colleagues’ planning, and has carried out some analysis of pupils’ work through displays and discussions. Monitoring of teaching through lessons observations has not taken place as the emphasis has been on other key subjects. Another area that has been identified for future development is assessment, which has no whole-school approach at present. The co-ordinator’s role is relatively undeveloped in these ways, thus reducing the opportunities for sharing expertise with colleagues. Resources are adequate to support teaching and learning, and are well supplemented by local loan services. Good ranges of artefacts are available to support pupils’ learning in each aspect of the subject. Classroom displays are attractive and well presented, and there are plenty of experiences provided by the school, such as visits to local museums.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards in information technology are well above those found in most other schools. This judgement is a very good improvement on that made in the school’s previous inspection, where attainment was judged to be in line with expectations. The pupils’ achievements are very good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make very good progress in their learning throughout the school.

139. In Year 6, pupils are competent in gaining access to the Internet and searching for information to support their work in other subjects. For example, they quickly gain access to a website and extract information about recycling to support their learning in geography. After locating relevant information, pupils take notes to be used in future lessons. Pupils combine text and graphics when designing pages for a magazine or a website, and produce articles for a newspaper. In Year 5, pupils use a spreadsheet

well to plan and cost a party, entering information into cells and using the 'sum' formula to calculate totals. Pupils in Year 5 use a graphical modelling program to create two and three-dimensional plans of a room and explore the limitations of the package. Pupils in Year 4 enter information gained from a temperature sensor to record temperature changes over a 24-hour period in the form of a line graph. In Year 3, pupils demonstrate confidence in sending and receiving e-mail messages and use the computer to compose a piece of music.

140. In Year 2, pupils type in text, using the backspace key to correct mistakes and the shift key to type capital letters. They use the return key to insert line breaks when typing a poem. Pupils select and use different tools and functions to create pictures. They program a floor robot to follow a path, entering a sequence of instructions that includes 90 degree turns to left and right. Pupils use a CD-ROM encyclopaedia to find information. Pupils in Year 1 create pictorial graphs to illustrate how many examples of different modes of transport they spotted in a picture. They enter information from a tally sheet and print their completed work.

141. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are very good at both key stages. In four of the lessons seen, two at each key stage, teaching was excellent, and it was never less than good. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. The reasons for the very good improvement in teaching and standards are the excellent resources in the computer suite, the excellent leadership and training provided by the co-ordinator and the excellent scheme of work, which builds very effectively on pupils' learning from year to year and provides a very high degree of challenge. As a result of the very well planned deployment of the co-ordinator to support all staff in learning to use the computer suite effectively, teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they are generally confident in teaching the subject. The co-ordinator continues to provide support for those who are less confident through team teaching, which is also very well planned and carried out. One of the outstanding features of the teaching is the very high expectations that teachers have of pupils' ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. Exceptionally good organisational strategies ensure that all pupils have a user name and password so they can log on to the network without needing to wait for the teacher's help. As a result, lessons move at a swift pace and no time is wasted as pupils quickly become engaged in each activity. This applies to pupils in Year 1 through to Year 6 and was an impressive feature of each lesson seen. The outcome of this is that pupils learn at a very productive pace and sustain interest and concentration throughout. Another excellent feature of the teaching is the highly effective use of a large demonstration screen to show pupils how to use different programs. This ensures that all pupils have a very good view of what is happening and are then able to go to individual computers and carry out the procedures for themselves. The assessment procedures for the subject are excellent and show clearly how well each pupil has achieved in each stage of the planned work within a topic. Teachers use these very well to track pupils' progress and enable future teaching to take account of any difficulties that were encountered. The work of individual pupils is saved to a folder on the computer's hard drive and this forms a comprehensive record of their achievements.

142. An excellent lesson in Year 6 contained many outstanding features. Highly effective team teaching involved the class teacher and deputy headteacher in conducting a whole-class lesson which was designed to develop pupils' skills in gaining access to the Internet and finding information from websites to support and extend their learning in geography. Excellent subject expertise and planning ensured that the lesson moved at a challenging pace and that pupils were given very clear instructions using the demonstration screen. Both teachers supported pupils at their workstations very efficiently, quickly spotting where help was needed and offering guidance as required. This ensured that all pupils were fully engaged in the task and able to progress at a very good rate. Both teachers had studied the website in depth before the lesson and this allowed them to focus pupils' attention on key features and vocabulary to ensure that they got the most out of the activity. An excellent period of consolidation at the end of the lesson gave pupils the opportunity to share and reinforce what they had learned, including

the obvious 'Americanisms' used in the website. Teachers capitalised on the opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of American and English equivalents and pupils were fascinated to learn that an American 'bottle bank' is known as a 'recycling igloo'. The lesson was an outstanding example of the successful use of information technology as a cross-curricular tool for learning.

143. Although the quality of teaching and learning in the computer suite is very good and often excellent, the school is aware that teaching in individual classes as part of other lessons is not always as good. This has been identified by the co-ordinator as the next priority to be addressed. Part of the problem is that teachers do not always have appropriate software to support pupils' learning. For example, some pupils in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson were observed to be using inappropriate software which was too advanced for their stage of learning. However, when using the computer suite, teachers make very good use of information technology to support learning across the curriculum. There was evidence of pupils using computers to extend their understanding in mathematics, science, art, design, geography, music and English.

144. The state-of-the-art computer suite was opened in January 1999 as a result of the school developing a partnership with an international news agency, which not only funded the conversion of a former swimming pool into the computer suite, but also furnished and equipped it and donated computers for each classroom. The school's excellent range of high quality equipment, including a digital camera, overhead projector and demonstration screen, and sensing equipment, makes a significant contribution to the very high standards achieved by the pupils. An excellent feature of the school's partnership with the news agency is that agency staff come into school every week to work with pupils at a 'computer partners club' one lunchtime. To date the 'partners' have worked together to create a magazine and have recently launched a school website. The co-ordinator also runs a computer club on one afternoon each week. The school's involvement in the small Education Action Zone has enabled it to fund a computer technician on one day each week to ensure that the network of computers operates efficiently and causes the minimum of problems for teachers.

145. The excellent leadership and management of the subject make a very significant contribution to its development throughout the school and to the very high standards achieved by the pupils. Added to this, the enthusiasm and hard work of all staff have ensured that an excellent new resource is being exploited to the full for the benefit of all pupils. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and the subject makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' personal development through promoting independent learning. The subject maintains a very high profile in the school and makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning across the curriculum.

MUSIC

146. In Year 6, standards in music are very good, and are well above those found in most other schools. The pupils' achievement is very good. This is an improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection where they were said to be good. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs also achieve very good standards and play a full part in music-making. Gifted pupils achieve excellent attainment.

147. In singing, pupils are enthusiastically and fully involved, producing a good melodic tone, appropriately good volume and very good rhythm. They respond very well to the cadences and mood of the music. They are able to sing in three and four parts, either in rounds or in separate harmonic sequences they have learned. They are able to maintain their parts while appreciating everyone's contribution to the whole effect. Singing styles range from African themes, through modern hymns and songs, to Tudor madrigal forms. In a music workshop, the culmination of a course led by staff and students of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, pupils were able to sing melodies and harmonising parts, and accompany these with rhythmic sequences using body percussion and

sometimes orchestrated oral sounds. In groups, they were able to compose variations on the original themes, and to perform these as part of a whole, orchestrated presentation of sound, melody, harmony and rhythm. Interpretations included the effects produced by the use of different musical elements, such as duration, pitch, dynamics, timbre and pulse. This was a most exciting workshop, with a dramatic production presented to the school as a final performance. Graphic notation is introduced carefully at the beginning of Key Stage 2, and pupils are able to use this to record and to read and perform musical sequences. They are aware of the basic note values and their names. From Year 4, all pupils learn conventional notation, and in Year 4, all pupils learn the recorder, and some continue with this, receiving specialist tuition in Years 4, 5 and 6. Some of the pupils learning the recorder take national examinations, so far entering for the first and second levels which is a good achievement.

148. In Key Stage 1, no music lessons were seen due to timetabling factors, and it is not possible to form a judgement about attainment at the end of Year 2. However, standards are very good in Key Stage 2, and the inference is that a sound basis at least must exist for building on in Key Stage 2. Planning for both key stages is very good and reflects appropriate coverage of the programmes of study.

149. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is very good. The music co-ordinator takes singing throughout the school, and has very good teaching techniques and excellent subject knowledge and understanding. She is able to impart enthusiasm for, and enjoyment in, music to her pupils very well indeed. Expectations of pupils are very high, but careful teaching and plenty of feedback and praise ensure that goals are reached. Some teachers in the school, especially at Key Stage 1, take their own music lessons in addition to the singing sessions. At Key Stage 2, especially in the upper classes, music is taught in a block of time for certain periods in the year, and specialist teachers visit to take these lessons. The quality of the pupils' learning is further enhanced by the input from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama teams, who produce workshops for Years 5 and 6. This is providing music teaching at an excellent and exciting level, and enables pupils to attain standards in some aspects of music that are very high for their age. Pupils react to the excellent input with huge enthusiasm and great delight in their music making. Listening and appraising are planned for and are also an important part of the music syllabus.

150. The co-ordinator is very experienced and has very high levels of expertise. She has helped to create documentation for the subject for the Local Education Authority for the use of all local schools. Although the reduced time for music, due to curricular changes, has been a problem, school-based in-service training has been held in different year groups to offset this, and to ensure an appropriate balance and breadth in the programme covered. The co-ordinator sees all teachers' planning, and, where outside music specialists are brought in, provides a brief for teaching the lessons specified, thus keeping the coverage of the subject appropriate. There are school guidelines for the subject, but these are being updated for the new version of the music curriculum next term. Members of the teaching staff have been alerted to this already, and discussions have taken place on this topic. The co-ordinator has not taken part in systematic monitoring of lessons, but is prepared to undertake this when the opportunity arises.

151. Resources are generally very good for the subject, including a range of instruments, singing books, and other music texts, and a selection of music for use in listening and appraising activities. Extra-curricular music tuition is available in steel pans, at the school, and for woodwind and brass at the local secondary school, and some pupils take these opportunities. In addition to visiting specialist music teachers and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, there are performances by visiting musicians and pupils have the opportunity to participate in concerts at the Barbican and the Royal Festival Hall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152. Standards are above those found in most other schools at Key Stage 1 and well above at Key Stage 2. These judgements are based on the observation of lessons and the evidence of sporting achievements in the wider community. There has been good improvement at Key Stage 1 and high standards have been maintained at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 2, the pupils travel in varied ways on the floor and on mats and low equipment with very good levels of control. They vary speed and direction and work very well with a partner and in groups. Pupils are able to evaluate their own and others' performance very well and, as a result, achieve high levels of attainment. Pupils are able to build up a dance movement both in groups and as a class. At Key Stage 1, the pupils learn how to use a bat and ball with good control. They can balance the ball on their bat while travelling around the room and hit and catch a ball in pairs. Pupils are able to throw a ball accurately into a hoop. They respond well to instructions and this contributes to the very good standards they achieve.

153. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is very good at both key stages. Teachers start lessons promptly and in a well-organised manner. Warm-up activities are appropriate and interest the pupils, who are motivated to work at a good pace. Pupils' learning is developed by challenging and varied activities which are related well to the aims of the lesson and which encourage them to work hard and to sustain concentration. Teachers show good subject knowledge and are able to demonstrate skills they want the pupils to learn, as well as using pupils themselves to demonstrate movements. This helps to ensure that pupils understand what they are doing and acquire new skills. In addition, teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their own ideas. All pupils are given enough time and space to participate well in activities and, as a result, they make very good progress.

154. The pupils show very good attitudes to physical education. They behave very well, form constructive relationships and work in a very good atmosphere. The subject makes a very good contribution to the social and moral development of pupils as they learn to understand the benefits of teamwork. The management of this subject by the co-ordinator is very good. She offers support to teachers and monitors the subject to ensure that pupils make good progress. The monitoring of the subject is good. Good schemes of work are in place and there are very clear lesson plans which show exactly what pupils are expected to learn. The co-ordinator provides very good support for pupils in enabling them to participate in a very good range of competitive sporting activities in the wider community. The school has three good-sized halls and a large hard surfaced area. There is a good range of resources to support the teaching of the subject. The statutory requirement to teach swimming at Key Stage 2 is met.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. In Year 6 and Year 2, pupils reach standards that match the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The previous inspection found that standards were below average for pupils at both key stages and the subject did not fulfil statutory requirements, as there was no formal syllabus and no co-ordinated approach to teaching the subject. In this inspection, only a limited number of lessons could be seen, and analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school and planning documents have also been used to form judgements.

156. By the age of 11, pupils attain standards that meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. They express their feelings and thoughts about some of life's more difficult areas. For example, Year 6 have been looking back on past experiences and trying to look forward to the ways that they might take. They have used the Biblical story about the Lost Son to consider these topics, and developed their understanding further through an assembly about a moral maze. They considered how it was easy to go wrong, but going back and starting again was possible.

Pupils study what it means to be a Christian and a Muslim, and they have an awareness of the significance of festivals such as Divali, Hanukkah or Eid. Some pupils have studied art in religion and the stories and beliefs it can convey. For example, pupils in Year 4 heard stories from the Hindu tradition and produced pictures and patterns to illustrate these. They studied icons, stained glass and Hindu patterns and pictures and know that Islam uses many varied patterns in mosques and prayer mats. Pupils understand about special places and journeys such as hajj, or a pilgrimage to Lourdes. They know about special foods such as Easter eggs, halal and Pesach. They understand the importance of central figures in various religions such as Abraham, David, Muhammad and Jesus.

157. At Key Stage 1, pupils listen to stories, and know about the Biblical story of creation. They know about Abraham and Sarah, the Flood, and creation stories from the Maori and Aboriginal peoples. Year 2 have learnt about Allah in Muslim stories and heard tales from North American Indian culture.

158. Pupils experience religious culture and faith across several world religions. For example, they have celebrated Chinese New Year, studied religious buildings such as a Sikh gurdwara, and know the layout of a synagogue. They have many opportunities for relating religious education to other subjects, such as with history when they studied Egyptian death masks and the burials of the pharaohs. They link a study of life cycles in science with rites of passage such as birth, marriage and death. Overall, pupils, including those with special needs and those who have English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning.

159. The quality of teaching and learning in the small sample of lessons seen was good. No judgement was made in the previous report about teaching. Teachers convey their enthusiasm well to pupils, and hold their interest in stories and lessons. This results in good levels of learning and involvement by pupils in the content of the lesson. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were totally absorbed in the teacher's retelling of the creation story and offered their own ideas and suggestions about the sequence of events. Teachers' planning is good and ensures that lessons build upon pupils' previous learning.

160. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and experienced teacher. A great deal of work has been done to improve the curriculum which now matches the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Assemblies are well planned to enrich the curriculum, picking up and developing the themes or topics from religious education lessons. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In particular, pupils are given the opportunity for reflection, and the chance to express their feelings. They study the 'rules' and expectations in world religions such as food laws, and they understand customs and ceremonies about naming children, marriage and death. Religious education features in the school development plan. At present, there is a lack of sharp enough focus and organisation, with too few opportunities for pupils to write and express their ideas or record what they have learned. Resources are adequate but are not sufficiently matched to the curriculum. Assessment, although mentioned in overall curricular planning, has not been addressed. It is intended that all these aspects will feature in the attention that the subject is due to receive.