

INSPECTION REPORT

GRANGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Harrow

LEA area: Harrow

Unique reference number: 102202

Headteacher: Ms N Rosewell

Reporting inspector: Paul Missin
19227

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th September 2001

Inspection number: 207963

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Middle deemed Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 8 to 12 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Welbeck Road Harrow Middlesex |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body, Grange Middle School |
| Name of chair of governors: | Vacant |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1998 |

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| 19227 | Paul Missin | Registered inspector | Science, information and communication technology. Equality of opportunity. | What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 19693 | Sally Hall | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 23434 | Marie Gibbon | Team inspector | English, history, music. Special educational needs. English as an additional language. | |
| 16492 | Bob Lever | Team inspector | Religious education, art and design, geography. | |
| 10808 | Alan Britton | Team inspector | Mathematics, design and technology, physical education. | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 22745 | Rosalind Johns | Team inspector | French. | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Grange Middle School is a community school which educates boys and girls aged eight to 12 years. There are currently 323 pupils on roll, 169 boys and 154 girls. This is broadly the same as other schools of the same type. One hundred and forty-seven pupils use English as an additional language (45.5 per cent). This is very high. Eighty-three pupils are supported by a special Government grant for ethnic minority pupils. Twenty-five of these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The largest ethnic minority groups are Indian, Black African and Black Caribbean. There are currently 51 refugees in the school (15 per cent) mainly from Somalia, Sri Lanka and Kosovo and there are five travellers. Ninety-six pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals (29.7 per cent). This is above average. One hundred and three pupils are on the school's special educational needs register (31.8 per cent) and seven pupils have statements of special educational need (2.2 per cent). Both figures are above average. In the last school year, 33 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 27 left other than at the usual time of transfer. This is high. About 20 per cent of each year group have not been in the school from the beginning of Year 4. The school has had a very high turnover of staff recently and has had significant recruitment and retention problems. Seven new teachers joined the school at the beginning of the current term and two of these are overseas trained teachers on temporary contracts whose qualifications are not yet recognised in this country. In March 2001, the school received a Good Achievement Award in recognition of progress made since 1996. When they enter the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are below those normal for their age. At the last inspection, attainment on entry to the school was judged to have been well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Grange Middle School is an effective school where the standards achieved in English, mathematics and science have improved. These improvements have been achieved through the good leadership of the headteacher and senior staff in the school and their focus on raising standards. The school has worked hard to secure these improvements despite significant disruption caused by staff recruitment and retention difficulties. The high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs are achieving good standards for their ability. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards achieved in the school are improving, so that in 2000, pupils attained standards in English, mathematics and science that were at the level of the national average and above those expected in similar schools in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher provides the school with good leadership and enables senior staff to take a full part in the management of the school.
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language allow these pupils appropriate access to the full National Curriculum.
- The good pastoral and welfare systems in the school enable pupils to feel safe, supported and well cared for.
- The school works hard to ensure the full inclusion of pupils of different races, genders, ages and disabilities.
- Good opportunities for extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum well.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved across the school in information and communication technology, design and technology and music are not high enough.
- The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, especially at Key Stage 2, is too high and it limits pupils' learning.
- The governing body does not have sufficiently rigorous procedures either to provide the school with clear strategic direction or to evaluate its effectiveness.
- Outside the classrooms, pupils are not always managed well enough to ensure the smooth and orderly running of the school.
- There are weaknesses in the use of assessment data across the school and in different curriculum areas.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since it was last inspected in November 1998, the school has made satisfactory overall improvement. The most significant achievement has been good improvement in the standards achieved across the school in English, mathematics and science. Since the last inspection, standards have also improved in religious education and geography. This has been achieved by the school's good response to the key issues at the last inspection which referred to raising standards, especially in mathematics. Good improvement has been made in revising leadership and management procedures and in the careful deployment of teachers. Progress has been made towards developing an effective whole school teaching and learning policy. However, some aspects of the key issues identified at the last inspection have not yet been satisfactorily addressed. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology continue to be below average, the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced but it remains too high, and pupils are not always managed effectively in classes and as they move around the school. The school's current achievements are good considering the recent staffing difficulties and the headteacher and senior staff have demonstrated a good capacity to ensure that these improvements are continued.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | |
| English | E | E | C | B | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E |
| mathematics | E | E | C | A | |
| science | E | E | C | C | |

Over the period covered by the table, standards were well below average until 2000 when significant all-round improvement was made. In 2000, average standards were achieved when compared with all schools, and above average standards in English and well above average standards in mathematics when compared with similar schools. Provisional indications are that this improvement has been broadly maintained into 2001. The school exceeded its targets for attainment in the English and mathematics tests in 2001 and further challenging targets have been set for 2002. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 6 and Year 7 are average in English, including literacy, and in mathematics, including numeracy. Standards are also average in science, religious education, history, geography, art and design and physical education. Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and music are below average. In design and technology and music, teachers do not teach the curriculum to a sufficient depth for average standards to be achieved. In information and communication technology, good leadership, satisfactory teaching and the use of the new resources have not had time to impact on standards achieved. In Year 7, pupils achieve average standards in French.

Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress to achieve average standards from a below average attainment on entry to the school. Pupils in Year 7 achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are taught and supported well and they attain good standards for their previous ability and make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|-------------------------|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Satisfactory overall, but variable. In some lessons pupils listen well and are fully committed to their learning. In others they chatter, call out inappropriately and lack concentration. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Satisfactory overall but there is some restlessness in the school. Teaching in a minority of lessons is spoiled by pupils' inappropriate behaviour, and at playtimes and when moving around the school, the orderliness of the school is sometimes disrupted. |
| Personal development and relationships | Satisfactory overall. Most pupils work together co-operatively when required and take the responsibilities of the school council seriously. Occasionally, attitudes to adults are not sufficiently respectful. The degree of racial harmony in the school is impressive. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. The attendance rate is just below the national average but has improved over the last three years. Unauthorised absence is above average, mainly caused by parents not notifying the school of the reason for their children's absence. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Years 4 – 6 | Year 7 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Quality of teaching | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in over half the lessons observed and in nearly four out of ten lessons, teaching was good or very good. However, in one in ten lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory. The strongest teaching was in Year 7 and the highest proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was in Years 4 to 6. A significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was by teachers new to the school and unqualified teachers on temporary contracts. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, pupils are involved well in their lessons and the importance of careful, well presented written work is emphasised. These features influence pupils' learning positively. Pupils are interested in their lessons, work well with their partners and are keen to do well. The main features of unsatisfactory teaching, which also influence pupils' learning adversely, are concerned with teachers' knowledge of the subjects that they teach and their skill in managing pupils in the class. In some lessons, teachers, particularly those who are new to the school, do not have a sufficient understanding of the subject they are teaching. Also, in a minority of lessons, pupils' inattention and repeated calling-out are not sufficiently challenged. As a result, pupils' learning is hindered. The quality of teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is also satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers are well prepared, pupils' learning targets are clear and attainable and there is good liaison between the teacher, support staff and other agencies as required.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. National Curriculum requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education are met. The school has a good commitment to inclusion. Provision for extracurricular activities and residential visits is good. These factors enhance pupils' learning. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The provision is well managed by an efficient and effective co-ordinator. Pupils' learning targets are clear and the good level of support provided enables them to make good progress. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Good. Pupils are well supported by teachers and support assistants. They are enabled to make good progress in their acquisition of English language skills. Many are quickly enabled to have a full access to the National Curriculum. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including cultural development | This is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' cultural and social development is good and for their spiritual and moral development it is satisfactory. Good opportunities are provided for the celebration of the cultures represented by the different ethnic groups in the school. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school's care and welfare provision is good and ensures that the school is a safe and caring community. "circle time" allows pupils the opportunity to discuss sensitive issues in a structured way. Arrangements for first aid are very good. The child protection policy has not been updated recently. Assessment procedures are not used consistently in all subjects. |

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are provided with clear information about the school's activities and several attend pupils' assemblies, curriculum evenings, concerts and open days. Parents feel welcome in the school and value the approachability of all the staff. This enhances the progress that pupils make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher's leadership of the school is good. She has a caring concern for all pupils and their families. She encourages senior staff well and they make a positive contribution to the work of the school. Work on the teaching and learning policy and the revision of the management structures in the school has been good. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are effective, but too many other subjects are being temporarily managed by the headteacher. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governing body does not give the school sufficient strategic direction and its support and monitoring functions are too informal. The lack of a chair of governors is a serious weakness. Individual governors, such as the special educational needs governor, give good support. Governors have not ensured that all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school evaluates its work well. The school development plan is clearly aimed at raising standards of achievement and careful analysis of previous test data indicated some underachievement by girls which has been addressed well by the school. The evaluation of support teachers' work and non-contact time by teachers has been good. |
| The strategic use of resources | Overall, the school makes good use of its resources. Grants received for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language are used well. They have a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. When major purchases are made, the school is concerned to ensure that it gets value for money. The school's finances are managed well. |

Staff are deployed well, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The accommodation is spacious, clean and attractive and the number of extra classrooms/bases provide good opportunities for specialised teaching, for example, in food technology and science, and for the support of individual or small groups.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards have improved over the last few years.• The school supports pupils and parents well.• Behaviour is dealt with positively.• Very good information is provided by the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework.• Information about pupils' progress.• The range of activities outside lessons.• Greater stability of staffing. |

The findings of the inspection confirm the parents' positive views of the school but not all the areas of concern. The provision of homework supports pupils' work satisfactorily. The school provides sound information about pupils' progress and a good range of extracurricular activities. The recent instability amongst staff has limited the school's capacity to achieve better progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, standards were average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools. However, when compared with similar schools standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. The results of the tests since 1996 show that overall standards had remained below and well below average until 1999 when significant all-round improvement was made and standards were raised to average levels. The school's successful implementation of the key issues from the last OFSTED inspection and the effect of the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have helped to achieve this. Preliminary data for the 2001 tests indicate that overall progress has been broadly maintained. These improvements have been secured against the background of significant problems in the recruitment and retention of teachers, which has limited the school's capacity for further improvement recently, and a high level of mobility of pupils.

2. The analysis of the data from national tests had shown significant underachievement by girls in English, mathematics and science. The school recognised this problem and introduced effective strategies to facilitate girls' access to areas of the curriculum and to encourage their full participation in school life. The most recent national test data and the findings of this inspection indicate that these initiatives have been successful and that there is now no significant variation in the attainment of boys and girls across the school. The school exceeded its targets for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the 2001 tests and revised targets appropriately for the 2002 year group.

3. The findings of this inspection are that the current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in English, mathematics, science, religious education, history, geography, art and design and physical education. In information and communication technology, music and design and technology, standards are below average. Since the last inspection, standards have been improved in English, mathematics, science, religious education, and geography. They have remained the same in physical education, art and design and history but have dropped in design and technology and music. Standards in information and communication technology are below average as they were at the last inspection. Improvements have been secured as a result of the successful implementation of the national strategies, and in subjects that are well planned and taught. Standards in design and technology and music have dropped because of a lack of a detailed curriculum and teachers' insufficient knowledge and expertise. Current standards in information and communication technology are below average but pupils are making good progress since the recent introduction of the new computer suite.

4. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 7 are the same as those found in most schools in English, mathematics, science, religious education, history, geography, art and design, French and physical education. Standards in information and

communication technology, music and design and technology are below average. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in English, mathematics and French, have dropped in design and technology and information and communication technology and have remained the same in all other subjects. In music, pupils are given insufficient guidance on how to improve their work. In design and technology, pupils have too few opportunities to use an appropriate range of tools and techniques and most do not pay enough regard to the quality of their finished products. In both subjects, there is a lack of overall co-ordination which limits pupils' achievements. In information and communication technology, the full and effective use of the newly installed computers and interactive whiteboard have not had time to impact fully on the standards achieved by the pupils.

5. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. When they enter the school at the beginning of Year 4, most are attaining standards that are below average for their age, especially in English and mathematics. Most make good progress in Key Stage 2 and, by the end of Year 6, are achieving satisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement and the progress they make in Year 7 are satisfactory.

6. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and some make very good progress. They reach good standards from their starting points in most areas of their learning. Pupils who have specific behavioural difficulties make good progress towards targets that relate to their personal and social development. The school feels justly proud of the progress made by a pupil who transferred into mainstream education at the beginning of Year 4 and has been successful in adjusting well to a very different learning and social environment.

7. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make good progress from their various entry points into the school, particularly in developing English speaking skills. Some pupils enter the school with very little knowledge of English. Most of these pupils are able to have appropriate access to the curriculum because there is good specialist support and teachers and support staff work closely together to plan their curriculum. Some individual pupils make exceptional progress. This is well illustrated in one pupil who, in less than one academic year, progressed from an initial learner to achieving average standards in the national tests.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils have maintained the satisfactory attitudes found at the time of the last inspection. The vast majority of parents who returned the OFSTED questionnaires said that their children enjoy coming to school. The pupils' attitudes are sometimes very good but occasionally they are unsatisfactory, and are often dependent on which teacher is taking the lesson. This was seen when a class responded well to a teacher who had established clear classroom routines, conducted the lesson at a brisk pace and set challenging work. The pupils listened attentively to their teacher, were keen to join discussions and got on with their work. When taught by another teacher, the same group of pupils were restless, did not listen properly, made inappropriate comments and caused disruption. This had a detrimental effect on their learning.

9. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' behaviour was judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then, it has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is usually appropriate and sometimes very good. They respond well to those teachers who have high expectation of behaviour and they enjoy getting rewards such as certificates. In some lessons, there is an air of restlessness when the teacher is talking. Pupils fiddle with pencils and rulers and some quickly lose concentration. In some classes, especially those taught by teachers who are new to the school, some pupils call out, move around the room and are noisy. Their classmates generally ignore this behaviour and get on with their work. The pupils are closely supervised during assemblies and their behaviour is very good. This helps to create an atmosphere for worship and reflection. Outside lessons, many pupils still behave in a boisterous manner as reported at the time of the last inspection. Several incidents of fighting and swearing were recorded last year and there were 15 fixed term exclusions. Two pupils were permanently excluded for violent and disruptive behaviour.

10. Pupils' personal development and relationships are satisfactory. Racial harmony is particularly strong. Pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds, cultures and faiths play and work well together, whilst respecting each other's values and beliefs. During a Year 7 class discussion, a pupil said, 'tolerance means respecting other people and treating them as you would like to be treated'. The older pupils generally work well together in groups. Some of the youngest pupils, who have only been in school for two weeks, have not yet learned to share equipment or join in group discussions. Occasionally, in the playground and in class, pupils' response to adults is not sufficiently respectful. Pupils accept responsibility and help willingly in the classroom. The school council is led by the deputy headteacher and the pupils' suggestions have had a positive impact on the life of the school. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of the wider community and raise funds for charities.

11. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and this judgement reflects the findings of the last inspection. The attendance rate for 1999/2000 of 93.5 per cent is below the national average but there has been a gradual improvement over the last three years. Over one per cent of absence is due to parents taking their children on holiday during term time, often for extended periods. The unauthorised absence rate of 1.9 per cent is above that found in similar schools. Truancy is rare, and the majority of unauthorised absence is because parents do not give reasons for their children's absence and the school rightly marks these as unauthorised. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection and the vast majority of pupils now come to school on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning across the school are satisfactory although, in about one in ten lessons, the effectiveness of pupils' learning is limited by unsatisfactory teaching. The school's drive to improve the quality of teaching has been significantly weakened by problems of concerning the recruitment and retention of teachers. By the end of the summer term 2001, the school still had four full-time teaching vacancies to fill, despite several advertising

campaigns. The recruitment of two overseas teachers, who only took up their appointments less than two full weeks before the inspection, eventually filled the vacancies. This, coupled with the fact that five other teachers were also new to the school, meant that there was significant disruption to the routines of the school. The good management structures and monitoring strategies were not able to cope effectively with this proportion of teachers new to the school and to the country.

13. Across the school, in 90 per cent of the lessons observed, teaching is satisfactory or better, and in 38 per cent, teaching is good or better. In one in ten lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when 83 per cent of teaching was at least satisfactory, and 17 per cent was unsatisfactory. Teaching is currently strongest in Year 7 where teaching is good or better in nearly half of the lessons observed. At Key Stage 2, in about one in eight lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory. A significant proportion of this unsatisfactory teaching is by teachers who are new to the school, and by temporary, unqualified teachers. The quality of pupils' learning closely mirrors these figures.

14. Across the school, basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, are taught well. At Key Stage 2, teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science and in all other subjects except music and design and technology where they are unsatisfactory. These features are the same for Year 7, except that teaching and pupils' learning in mathematics are good. Here, teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge, encourage pupils well to explain mathematical processes and emphasise the importance of carefully recording their work. These features influence pupils' learning positively. Other features of very good teaching which lead to very good learning were illustrated well in a science lesson to Year 6 pupils who were investigating forces acting on floating objects. The teacher introduced the lesson very effectively and quickly gained the pupils' attention. A series of challenging activities were set up as part of the experiment and good reference was made to the scientific principles being investigated. The effect was that pupils were enthusiastic and committed to their work. They supported and encouraged each other well and made very good progress in their understanding of forces and investigative procedures. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory. The below average standards that pupils achieve are because the impact of the better teaching and the use of the new computer suite have not had time to raise the standards pupils achieve. The quality of teachers' marking is too inconsistent across the school. This has already been identified by the school as an area requiring improvement.

15. The main causes of unsatisfactory teaching across the school are concerned with teachers' skill in managing pupils and their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are teaching. In a number of lessons, the effectiveness of teaching is limited by lack of appropriate responses from a significant number of pupils. Teachers do not secure pupils' full commitment to the activities and too much inappropriate calling out and lack of attention are unchallenged. On some occasions, teachers resort to shouting over pupils' noise rather than gaining their full attention. Some teachers, including those new to the school and to the country, do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the school's behaviour policy and its expectation of pupils' response. In other lessons, pupils' learning is limited by

teachers' limited subject knowledge and lack of appropriate curricular planning. For example, a teacher new to the school had an insufficient knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy to teach the lesson effectively. In music and religious education, some teachers' knowledge and lesson preparation were insufficient and, as a result, planned activities were not well matched to pupils' interests and abilities. In design and technology, teachers have not presented the pupils with sufficiently challenging work.

16. The school has started to make a positive response to the key issue concerning the quality of teaching identified at the last inspection. The revision of the management structure to strengthen year groups and subject teams for English, mathematics and science has been done well. The school had made it an important priority to devise a new teaching and learning policy which sets out clear expectations for pupils and teachers and includes a detailed procedure for monitoring teaching and pupils' learning. In-service training has been organised to discuss important issues, such as the organisation of lessons, the timing of lessons and pupils' behaviour. However, the effective introduction of these initiatives has been significantly impaired by the staffing problems experienced by the school over the past two years.

17. Overall, the quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language is good and, in some sessions during the week of the inspection, the teaching was very good. Pupils' learning is also generally good and sometimes very good. Teachers, support teachers and learning support assistants plan together to organise activities which are effectively related to pupils' needs and to monitor their progress. This close interaction is an important factor in the effectiveness of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language. Their individual education plans have carefully identified targets, which are closely monitored and regularly reviewed. Support teachers and learning support staff provide effective support in lessons, both in monitoring and supporting during whole class sessions and in working with groups of pupils in their literacy and numeracy lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was insufficient use made of learning support assistants in whole class sessions. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work on their literacy, numeracy and language skills, there is close attention to matching the work being done by other pupils in the class. This enables pupils to return to their classes and to participate fully in related lessons.

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

18. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum at both key stages and is broad and balanced. Religious education is provided according to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All issues raised in the previous inspection report regarding gaps in curricular provision, including information and communication technology, mathematics and science have been fully addressed. The judgement concerning insufficient curricular time at Key Stage 3, has been remedied by foregoing the afternoon break for Year 7 pupils, thus increasing their

curricular time by an hour per week. The school has a good commitment to inclusion and equality in education and there is a comprehensive policy for this aspect of its work. All the curricular and extracurricular activities are open to boys and girls of all age groups and a big effort is made by staff to encourage girls to participate in all aspects of classroom work and discussion. The results of national and internal tests are scrutinised and assessed carefully for gender and racial differences in performance.

19. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in all classes and this has partly been responsible for the rise in standards of attainment in English and mathematics throughout the school. This implementation has also had the effect of raising standards in mental mathematics and numeracy which was a key issue in the previous OFSTED inspection.

20. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language is good. There is good provision for pupils' literacy support through reading programmes emphasising the sound of letters, Additional Literacy Support programme and language support programmes developed by the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant support teacher. There is very good involvement of all support staff in curricular planning which ensures that pupils' needs are given a high profile in planning discussions. Pupils' own learning targets, which are set out in their Individual education plans, are well thought out and are reviewed regularly. Targets include goals for literacy, numeracy and social skills. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are met well and their annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. Pupils who have English as an additional language are supported by an appropriate range of bilingual resources and support in their first language offered by staff in the school.

21. The provision of extracurricular activities is good which compares with the judgement from the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupils of all age groups can participate in a tennis club, dance club, gymnastics club, choir, quad-squad, science club, and athletics club. Music lessons are provided during curriculum time by borough peripatetic music staff. There is a football club for Year 7 boys and two members of the non-teaching staff are currently setting up a girls' soccer club. The gymnastics club and after school club are run jointly with the adjoining First School. Although charges are made for some of the activities, the school ensures that no pupil is barred from them due to being unable to afford the fee. Visitors to the school and educational visits are important and regular features of the curriculum, especially in history, geography and science to provide a rich variety of experiences for all pupils. Year 6 and Year 7 pupils take part in residential visits: Year 6 to a residential camp site at Potters Bar and Year 7 visit Swanage in Dorset for a week.

22. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. This was also the overall judgement of the previous OFSTED inspection.

23. The last inspection judged spiritual development to be unsatisfactory and the school has made some progress in this area. Spiritual development is now satisfactory. The staff have received some training to make the most of the

opportunities to develop spiritual awareness in different subjects, but there little evidence of planned provision. Some good practice, however, was seen during the inspection. The school successfully conveys to the pupils a sense of self-worth and the importance of valuing other beliefs and faiths. Opportunities are provided in some acts of collective worship and “circle time” for reflection. For example, Year 7 pupils discussed how strong religious beliefs could possibly drive people to commit the recent terrorist attacks in New York. They then talked about the effects on the various ethnic groups represented in the school and local community. Collective worship does not meet statutory requirements, as it is not held on a daily basis and does not sufficiently enhance pupils’ spiritual development. However, opportunities for prayer and reflection were provided during the assemblies observed during the time of the inspection. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to celebrate their own and others’ successes.

24. The provision for pupils’ moral development is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, it was good. When there is an incident of anti-social behaviour, the pupils involved are asked to reflect on their actions and consider how they are going to sort it out. The Golden Rules and playground rules are displayed around the school. Pupils are involved in drawing up their own class rules.

25. The provision for pupils’ social development is good and has improved since the last inspection when it was sound. ‘Circle time’ is used appropriately throughout the school and issues such as bullying and racism are explored. The school is very successful at promoting racial harmony and a respect for others’ beliefs and values. Pupils with limited social skills are supported by staff and by a ‘circle of friends’. Pupils are democratically elected to the school council and make sensible suggestions to improve the life of the school. The school encourages pupils to raise money for charities and all pupils are invited to take part in school productions. The pupils’ social awareness is further developed through residential visits and extracurricular clubs.

26. The provision for pupils’ cultural development is good. The school is particularly successful in celebrating the rich diversity of cultures found in the school community. A display of ‘My Origins’ by Year 7 pupils enabled pupils to write with pride about their family, religion and heritage. In the entrance hall, pupils have written greetings in the twenty mother tongues spoken within the community. In an assembly, a pupil from Kosovo talked about his experiences of war. The school has a steel pan band and the dance club has performed Chinese and Asian dances. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Western culture are satisfactorily promoted through, for example, music, art and history. Pupils learn about other faiths in religious education lessons and visit local places of worship.

27. The provision for pupils’ personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator is in the process of checking where various aspects of the subject are being taught. ‘Circle time’ has been successfully established throughout the school and issues such as tolerance and bullying, health issues, the misuse of drugs, an awareness of medicines and sex education are treated sensitively. This work is introduced and taught through various topics and the science curriculum. Visitors from outside give valuable assistance with these

topics. However, at the last inspection, it was reported that there was no policy or formal scheme of work in place. This is still the case and so there has been insufficient improvement in this area.

28. The local community contributes to pupils' learning in several areas of the curriculum including, religious education, history, science, music and physical education. A whole school assembly is led in the spring term by a consortium of Harrow churches comprising of different denominations. Liaison officers from the police and fire brigade regularly visit the school. TransAge volunteers, a self-help group from the community, work in the school and a trained counsellor has recently started to visit the school during one lunch time period during the week.

29. There are good constructive relationships with partner institutions, including the First School, which shares the same site, and the local High School where the vast majority of Year 7 pupils are transferred at the end of that year. Regular joint staff meetings are held with the adjoining First School when co-ordinators and senior staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinators, can discuss various topics with their opposite numbers in the other school. Weekly visits to the High School are organised for Year 7 pupils during their final term, where they participate in a design and technology project. Some of the older pupils from the school also take part in a 'Mathethon' with their future schoolmates. There are regular exchange staff visits by teachers from all three schools to ensure that all pupils achieve a smooth transition from one stage of education to the next. Pupils from the High School also participate in a music, drama and dance evening performance initiated by the Middle School.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school provides appropriate educational and personal support for its pupils. The school is a safe and caring community. The headteacher is particularly supportive and shows a high level of concern for pupils and families who have difficulties. Other adults working in the school, including support staff and office staff, make valuable contributions to caring for the pupils. The after school club provides useful childcare facilities for parents and carers. A counsellor offers valuable support for pupils who have behavioural difficulties. The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Through activities such as "circle time", classes are encouraged to discuss sensitive issues calmly and in a structured way. Teachers understand the needs of the pupils and they write helpful comments about their personal development in the pupils' annual reports.

31. Overall, the school has good procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school's arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The child protection policy has not been reviewed since 1992 and does not include arrangements for training. Staff who are new to the school are not fully aware of basic procedures. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and carries out her duties very effectively. The arrangements for first aid are very good. The full-time welfare assistant co-ordinates first aid very effectively. She is qualified in first aid as are several

lunchtime assistants. Pupils who are ill or injured receive good care and attention in the well-equipped medical room. There are good procedures for the administration of medication.

32. The school pays good attention to health and safety and has a sound health and safety policy which the governors are reviewing. The caretaker, who is a member of the governors' premises sub-committee, is particularly vigilant of any potential hazards. Risk assessments have been undertaken and there are appropriate procedures to report any risks to pupils' safety. Minor concerns highlighted in the last inspection have been addressed.

33. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Registers are marked correctly and attendance data are monitored and analysed by teachers and the office staff. The headteacher works with the allocated educational social worker to monitor and support pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. The school has successfully improved punctuality since the last inspection. The high level of unauthorised absences was raised as a concern in the last inspection. This has not improved and the school has not been successful in ensuring that all parents let the staff know why their children are away from school. There are no rewards for good attendance.

34. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are generally satisfactory, but some issues raised at the time of the last inspection still remain as concerns. The school has a sound behaviour policy with clear rewards and sanctions. Some teachers have established clear classroom routines and have high expectations of behaviour. Other teachers, some of whom are new to the school, struggle to deal with calling out, chattering, fidgeting and disruption. Supervision outside the classroom is limited and there are insufficient measures to curb pupils' boisterous behaviour during lunch, in the corridors and in the toilets. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are generally satisfactory. The anti-bullying policy has not been reviewed for seven years and does not reflect current practice. Pupils and parents say that incidents of anti-social behaviour are usually dealt with effectively.

35. Overall, the care and support of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are good. Teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils they work with well. The ethos of the school is well reflected in the way in which all staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language have opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions in lessons are valued and their achievements are given good recognition. This is particularly true for those pupils who have statements of special educational need and ensures that these pupils develop their confidence well. Discussions with pupils who had little English on joining the school indicate that they have appreciated and benefited from, the support of their friends and their teachers. There is good and effective liaison with a range of outside agencies which give support to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.

36. Assessment information is analysed effectively and is used to identify areas for development and for raising levels of pupils' attainments. In addition to the statutory assessments, the school is currently using national test materials to make annual assessments. The school also makes ongoing assessments and keeps suitable records of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The information is used appropriately to identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties and is beginning to be used to set apt attainment targets for them. However, assessment data are not used sufficiently to identify and raise the standards for those pupils capable of higher attainment. Nor are data used to provide the school with clear evidence of the progress made by pupils as they move through the school. Some tracking of the progress of individual pupils is now in place but target setting is not consistent. The school reports that assessments on pupils joining the school are not sufficiently secure and additional tests are given on entry to give a clearer view of attainment on entry to the school. Portfolios of work, which have been assessed according to National Curriculum criteria, are beginning to be compiled but this initiative is still in the early stages. Record keeping and assessments in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not sufficiently established to inform curricular planning. This is not helped by the lack of co-ordinators. The marking policy is not consistently applied and, on many occasions, it is little more than ticks. There is some praise but little to indicate what pupils need to do to improve.

37. There are good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language and assessing the level of support required. Their needs are identified when they enter the school and they are quickly included in the school's register of special educational needs and/or the register for pupils with English as an additional language. Reviews of pupils' progress against their targets take place regularly and careful records are kept of their progress linked to National Curriculum levels.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The parents' views of the school are generally positive. The vast majority of parents who returned the OFSTED questionnaires say that their children are expected to work hard and they are making good progress. They feel that the teaching is good and that their children like school. Parents feel welcome in school and they value the way in which staff are approachable. A significant minority of parents who returned the questionnaire were unhappy about homework and, at the pre-inspection meeting, parents' concerns were mostly about the quality and relevance of homework in one Key Stage 2 class in the previous academic year. The findings of the inspection are that homework is satisfactory.

39. The school's links with parents and carers are good and have improved since the last inspection when they were satisfactory. The school makes parents feel welcome in school. The willingness of the headteacher and her staff to talk to parents about their concerns was noted by several parents. Parents whose children have special educational needs are invited to the Parents Partnership, a useful 'drop-in' session held each week when parents are encouraged to talk with support staff. The school sought the parents' views on the homework policy.

40. The quality of information which the school provides to parents is good. The combined prospectus and governors' Annual Report provide parents with helpful information about school life. Monthly newsletters are of a high quality; they give details of future events and celebrate pupils' achievements. The school sends parents valuable information about the topics their children will be studying during the term and gives helpful suggestions about family visits to relevant places of interest. The school invites parents to useful curricular information meetings, for example on numeracy. The pupils' annual reports are generally satisfactory. The teachers make comments about how pupils can improve their work in English and mathematics. In other subjects, some teachers only write about what the pupils have studied and make no comments about how well they are doing. The annual reports for pupils with special educational needs are good as the support staff make detailed and helpful suggestions about how parents can support their children. The school offers parents valuable opportunities to meet with teachers each term to discuss their children's progress. The school has appropriate links with parents whose mother tongue is not English. Some of the staff act as interpreters and the school offers to translate important documents.

41. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. Parent governors are supportive of the school. Parents value the opportunities to come to assemblies led by the pupils. They also enjoy attending concerts and open days and curriculum display evenings. The parent teacher association is run by a small but committed group who work hard to raise funds and organise social events.

42. Parents make appropriate contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. The school values the help offered by the small number of parents who assist in the classroom. Some parents listen to their children read at home, but the lack of a home/school reading record limits their involvement. Parents support their children with work at home and sign the homework sheets.

43. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and those parents who have English as an additional language, value the support they receive from the school and feel that they are well involved with the provision for their children. Staff at the school are available for discussion with parents on a daily basis if required, and there are additional weekly sessions for the parents of pupils who receive additional support. All parents are appropriately involved in reviews of their child's progress and kept informed, both formally and informally, where they are not able to attend themselves. The school makes effective use of the languages spoken by staff in the school and the local authority translation services to ensure that parents receive important information and to support parents who have more limited command of English. Some parents who are confidently bilingual give support to other parents whose first language is not represented in the school staff or by local authority representatives.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership of the headteacher is good. She has established some effective management structures, which have supported and encouraged staff and pupils and

have led to the significant improvement in standards achieved over the past two years. She is well organised, has a good understanding of all pupils and their families and ensures that the caring ethos of the school is demonstrated through all its work. The headteacher works hard to ensure that the governing body is well informed of all school activities. Senior teachers also contribute significantly to the work of the school. The deputy headteacher fulfils her role effectively and the senior management team, which consists of year group leaders and the special educational needs co-ordinator, provides an important forum for promoting school improvement. The roles and responsibilities of the senior teachers and curriculum co-ordinators are carefully defined and good levels of non-contact time have been provided for them to undertake their duties. A detailed and well thought out monitoring programme by which co-ordinators observe and support colleagues and sample pupils' work has been agreed in the school's teaching and learning policy. These management systems and planned monitoring procedures are good. These management initiatives are now closely focused on raising standards and they represent a good response to a key issue identified at the previous OFSTED.

45. However, the impact of these good management structures and planned monitoring procedures has been significantly weakened by the school's recruitment and staff retention problems. During the previous academic year, a combination of staff factors that included the movement from the school of senior teachers, teachers absent on long-term sick leave and the use of a non-class based teacher for information and communication technology, necessitated a considerable re-organising of staffing. These difficulties were compounded by the lack of response by senior teachers and newly qualified teachers to local and national advertisements placed during the year. By the end of the summer term 2001, there were still four teaching vacancies to fill and, at the time of the inspection, seven teachers were new and had only just begun teaching at the school. The effect of this is that the school has not had the continuity in staffing over the last two years to maximise the management and monitoring procedures which had been established. These factors have limited the school's capacity to improve further.

46. The school makes good use of its financial resources including specifically allocated grants. Funds for special educational needs and for English as an additional language are used effectively and influence positively on the good standards and progress made by these pupils. Funds provided as part of the Additionally Resourced Mainstream School project are also used well to provide effective support to pupils. The planning and management of the yearly budget are secure. The headteacher is well supported by the efficient school secretary who maintains clear and well managed records of funding allocations and spending patterns. Contingency funds are within recommended levels. The school ensures that it secures value for money when purchasing resources by ensuring that quotations are secured for building maintenance and improvement work.

47. The governing body has provided the school with insufficient support and guidance, particularly in its role as 'critical friend' and in providing clear strategic direction. A major weakness, through the previous academic year, has been the failure to appoint a chair of governors. The position of having just a nominated senior governor to act as a point of reference between meetings has been

unsatisfactory. The effect of this is that the work of the governing body has lacked overall co-ordination and the school and the headteacher have not received appropriate support during a time of considerable staffing difficulties. Indications are that a chair of governors will be appointed at the next meeting later in the current term. The governing body has not been able to provide the school with sufficiently clear, long term strategic direction. Although governors have appropriate input into the school development plan, they have an insufficiently clear view of the school's progress through the plan to enable them to be proactive in this important area of the school's work. A further weakness has been in the development of the governors' role as 'critical friend'. Individual governors support the work of the school well. For example, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs issues, who also works at the school, provides good and effective support in this area. However, the governing body does not have sufficiently rigorous procedures to enable them to monitor and evaluate the work of the school or to question its effectiveness. Procedures for visiting the school and reporting on its work are too informal. The governors have not ensured that all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship.

48. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is an effective and experienced practitioner who is a senior member of staff. She provides good leadership for the work of the school in supporting pupils with special educational needs and has an effective overview of the provision for pupils who have English as an additional language. Careful records are maintained of pupils' progress and dealings with outside agencies. The school liaises effectively with the First School and with the secondary schools pupils attend, to ensure that pupils' needs are understood before they transfer. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. The designated governor for special educational needs has a good understanding of her role, and provides clear reports to the governing body. The funds provided for pupils with special educational needs both by the school and the Additional Resourced Mainstream Schools fund are well used to provide experienced and well qualified support staff. Learning support assistants are well qualified and well motivated. They form an effective partnership with teachers to provide support both in and out of the classroom.

49. The support teacher who is responsible for the provision for pupils who have English as an additional language has a good understanding of her role and ensures that support staff are well informed of pupils' needs. Careful analysis is made of pupils' attainment in national tests and forms the basis of clear evidence for the good and very good progress that pupils make in acquiring their knowledge of English. There is good and effective liaison with the co-ordinator for special educational needs to ensure that the provision for pupils who have both special educational needs and English as an additional language is appropriate. Good use is made of the funding provided by the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant.

50. Overall, the staff have a satisfactory range of qualifications and experience to teach the curriculum. Support teachers, who do not have responsibility in particular classes, provide valuable assistance to colleagues. For example, they teach groups when pupils are divided into ability groups for teaching in numeracy. During the last year, there has been a high turnover of staff and a number of teachers were absent

from school due to long-term illnesses. The school has worked hard to appoint five new teachers on permanent contract from the start of the current term. Despite the school's best efforts, two other current appointments are temporary posts. There are not enough experienced teachers to lead and manage all the subjects and this hinders the work in curriculum areas. New staff have quickly felt 'part of the team', and the school has a satisfactory induction programme for newly qualified teachers. The administrative staff are welcoming and efficient.

51. The accommodation is good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The building is welcoming and is enhanced by colourful displays in the corridors, but some of the classroom walls are rather bare. The school is in good decorative order and is well maintained. The caretaker and cleaners work hard to achieve good standards of cleanliness. The classrooms are of a good size to accommodate the number of pupils. The refurbished library is attractive and adequately stocked. Open areas and extra classrooms provide good opportunities for staff to work with groups of pupils. Useful specialist rooms for science, design and technology and information and communication technology allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. Disabled access is good as there are ramps throughout most of the building and specialist toilets.

52. The range and quality of equipment and materials to support teaching are satisfactory. The school has addressed the shortages noted at the time of the last inspection. Resources to support pupils with special educational needs are good and help them to make good progress. The interactive white board and resources in the computer suite enhance the teaching and learning of computer skills. Resources for pupil have English as an additional language are good. There is a useful room which acts as a base and provides storage for both the co-ordinator for special educational needs, support teachers, including the support teacher for pupils who have English as an additional language, and learning support assistants.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to continue to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(1) Improve the standards achieved by pupils across the school in information and communication technology, design and technology and music.

See Paragraphs 3, 4, 78 – 81, 90 – 93, 98 – 100

(2) Improve the quality of teaching, especially in lessons where it is unsatisfactory, by ensuring that: See Paragraphs 12 – 17, 50, 77, 89, 100, 104, 108

- i) the best practice evident in the school is effectively shared;
- ii) teachers new to the school are quickly and effectively introduced to agreed routines and practices;
- iii) teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised;
- iv) the marking of pupils' work shows clearly how they can improve;
- v) co-ordinators for all subject areas are appointed as soon as possible.

(3) Increase the effectiveness of the governing body by ensuring that:

See Paragraphs 47

- i) a chair is appointed as soon as possible;
- ii) governors have a clearer view of the progress made through the school development plan;
- iii) monitoring and evaluation procedures are formalised and made more rigorous.

(4) Ensure a more consistent and effective management of pupils' behaviour around the school. See Paragraphs 9, 10, 34

(5) Improve the use of assessment data to:

See Paragraphs 36, 63, 73, 77, 83, 85, 89, 93, 100, 104

- i) set more rigorous and challenging achievement targets for pupils;
- ii) further inform teachers' planning;
- iii) monitor the attainment and progress pupils make in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

1. Ensure that all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship.
See Paragraphs 23, 47
2. Review and revise the child protection policy and ensure that all staff are fully aware of the procedures to be followed. See Paragraph 31

3. Provide a policy and a formal scheme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education programme. See Paragraph 27
4. Revise the school's anti-bullying policy. See Paragraph 34

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

| |
|----|
| 69 |
|----|

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

| |
|----|
| 21 |
|----|

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 10 | 16 | 36 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0 | 15 | 23 | 52 | 10 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Y4 – Y7 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 323 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 96 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Y4 – Y7 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 7 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 103 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 147 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 33 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 27 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| |
|---|
| % |
|---|

Unauthorised absence

| |
|---|
| % |
|---|

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 1.9 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 51 | 37 | 88 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 33 | 36 | 39 |
| | Girls | 24 | 24 | 23 |
| | Total | 57 | 60 | 62 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 65 (47) | 68 (39) | 70 (59) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 23 | 36 | 37 |
| | Girls | 20 | 25 | 24 |
| | Total | 43 | 61 | 61 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 49 (44) | 69 (41) | 69 (51) |
| | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69) | 79 (75) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 12 |
| Black – African heritage | 23 |
| Black – other | 10 |
| Indian | 50 |
| Pakistani | 14 |
| Bangladeshi | 6 |
| Chinese | 2 |
| White | 107 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|----------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 2 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 9 | 1 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Any other minority ethnic group | 99 |
|---------------------------------|----|

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 15.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21.1 |
| Average class size | 26.9 |

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 8 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 226 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|------|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 12.6 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 8.6 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 2 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Other minority ethnic groups | 4 | 1 |
|------------------------------|---|---|

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

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Financial year | 1999 - 2000 |
|----------------|-------------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 912,698 |
| Total expenditure | 906,353 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2682 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 57,701 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 323 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 62 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 47 | 45 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 39 | 53 | 6 | 0 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 18 | 63 | 15 | 2 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 15 | 45 | 21 | 16 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 37 | 53 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 32 | 44 | 16 | 3 | 5 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 58 | 34 | 6 | 0 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 48 | 48 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 34 | 48 | 10 | 5 | 3 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 42 | 47 | 6 | 0 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 42 | 47 | 8 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 27 | 48 | 15 | 3 | 6 |

Other issues raised by parents

- Standards had improved over the last few years.

- The school supports parents well.
- Behaviour is dealt with positively.
- Very good information is provided by the school.

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

ENGLISH

54. In Years 6 and 7, pupils achieve standards in all aspects of English that are similar to those found in most schools. This represents sound progress, as, in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2000, pupils' performance was at the level of the national average. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average including standards for higher attaining pupils. Initial indications are that standards in 2001 may not be as high as those in 2000. However, the trend represents a significant improvement on test results in 1998 and 1999 and is also an improvement since the last inspection when standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 were below average. This has been achieved by the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The school has set appropriate targets for pupils' achievement in the national tests for 2001 and 2002. Provisional data indicate that they have been achieved in 2001 and the school is on course to achieve targets for 2002. Pupils enter the school with below average standards and achieve well in Key Stage 2 to reach average standards at the end of Year 6. This is particularly significant when the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the high proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language are taken into consideration. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards in relation to their previous attainment, and individuals often make very good progress because their support is well organised and teachers and support staff have a good understanding of their needs. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well integrated into mainstream classes and all teachers and support staff are committed to their support and to the development of their language skills. Overall, they make good, and some make very good, progress. A few pupils make exceptional progress. For example, the school is justly proud of a pupil who entered the school with very limited English language and, in less than one academic year, achieved average standards in the national tests. The school has taken effective steps to address the underachievement of girls identified in the test results of 1998 and 1999 and in the previous inspection. The school continues to monitor their relative achievement closely.

55. Pupils in Year 6 attain average standards in speaking and listening. They are interested in responding to questions and participate confidently in whole class and group discussions. Their vocabulary is mostly based on a familiar range and few pupils use more varied and complex forms of expression. Most pupils read aloud fluently and a few use their voices expressively. Listening skills are more variable throughout the key stage. Although in most lessons, pupils pay good attention to both their teachers and each other, where the management of pupils is not so

effective some pupils are too easily distracted and chatter inappropriately. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to speak to different audiences through discussions and short presentations such as those in 'circle time'. During the week of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 considered the qualities of a good school council representative and past members of the council gave perceptive accounts of their experiences and reflections.

56. Pupils in Year 7 attain average standards in speaking and listening. Many pupils readily engage in conversations and offer ideas and relevant information when asked. Most are confident and open in their personal responses to characters and situations encountered in their shared reading. This was seen in a lesson when pupils made thoughtful comments on reading an extract from 'The Broken Triangle' which describes a young girl's reaction to her father's death. They are able to sustain a discussion and exchange ideas in a group and report in some detail about their findings as was seen in a lesson when pupils sequenced illustrations of Coleridge's 'The Ancient Mariner' before they had read the poem. However, some pupils' listening skills are weaker and they are not always able to listen productively to their teachers or to each other. There were no opportunities to see and hear pupils' speaking in more formal situations during the week of the inspection but such opportunities are evident in the planned curriculum.

57. Standards of reading in Year 6 are average. Pupils read their own chosen books on a daily basis in school and talk readily about their reading. Most pupils are competent readers and they are able to discuss their favourite author and characters in the books, sometimes in good detail. Younger pupils in the key stage are confident in using their decoding skills to read unfamiliar words but their understanding of a more complex vocabulary is not always secure. Their range of reading is generally appropriate for their age but some above average pupils are not reading a sufficiently challenging range of texts. Although most pupils use the school library on a regular basis not all are confident about explaining how to find non-fiction books independently. Useful opportunities are given to pupils to acquire and develop their research skills; however, there are too few opportunities for them to develop their independence as learners and to conduct and present their own research. The school has recently extended and renovated the library area adjoining the new information and communication technology suite. The school now plans to develop pupils' experiences and skills through more effective use of these areas.

58. Standards of reading are also average in Year 7. Most pupils read confidently and many fluently. They are able to talk about the books and texts they are reading and mention favourite authors. Some above average pupils are able to discuss their preferences in some detail and most can make thoughtful predictions about the characters and events in their reading. Most pupils are interested in the texts they read and willingly engage in classroom activities related to their reading. For example, in one class, pupils were interested in discussing the response of characters in Anne Fine's *The Flour Babies* to the task of caring for a 'flour' baby and considering how they could conduct a similar experiment. Some average readers are not reading sufficiently challenging texts in their own reading and are happy with comfortable familiar texts.

59. In Year 6, pupils achieve average standards in their writing. They write for an appropriate range of purposes, including formal and informal letter writing, book reviews, diary writing, script writing, narrative and discursive writing. In the best writing there is an interesting range of vocabulary and a lively use of language to create planned effects. This was seen in pupils' writing of 'rap' in the style of Benjamin Zephaniah. They used lines such as 'I'm talking furious! I'm talking crazy! I'm talking berserk, delirious, demented! I'm talking MAD!' Above average and some average pupils are beginning to use paragraphs appropriately and consistently in their writing. They write generally with accuracy but where there are weaknesses they are evident usually in the spelling of more complex words. Below average pupils often use language, which is lively and interesting, but often need support with developing ideas and maintaining accuracy. Pupils' writing shows evidence that work is planned and edited, particularly where work has been word processed but evidence of systematic planning drafting and refining is more limited. Average and lower attaining pupils use mainly familiar vocabulary and do not sufficiently draw upon the wider range of vocabulary they encounter in their reading.

60. The analysis of pupils' written work in Year 7 indicates that standards are broadly average although writing is the weaker element in pupils' literacy skills. Many pupils are developing a lively confidence in their use of language but their use of more formal structures and expressions is sometimes limited. The good qualities of pupils' writing were seen in the work done around the theme of 'Origins' where pupils described their earliest memories and some of their childhood and family histories. There were interesting details and an effective use of descriptive language which brought the writing alive. Above average pupils are beginning to use more complex forms of punctuation, such as in the use of quotations and punctuation within the sentence, and to spell both simple and complex words accurately. However, the range of general accuracy in both average and below average pupils is more variable. In a very good lesson with a small group of pupils with special educational needs, there was a real sense of excitement in creating vivid descriptive images. With very good and effective encouragement, pupils created such sentences as 'it was so hot inside that ice-cream was melting in the cones' and 'the sun was like a big bright ball shining in the sky'.

61. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. During the week of the inspection, some good and very good teaching was seen in both Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In the previous inspection, teaching was judged to have been good overall but some poor teaching was also observed. One of the key features of all the literacy teaching in the school is the very effective inclusion of pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Teachers and support staff work well together to ensure that pupils' needs are met and that they are able to take part fully in lesson activities. Where teaching is good and very good, a productive pace is established from the beginning of the lesson and activities are given clear time limits. This helps to provide a good level of challenge. This was seen to good effect in a Year 7 lesson which opened with a crisp, well organised revision of pupils' understanding of abstract nouns. All pupils were well involved in the activity because the pace was tight and the teacher managed the movement around the room effectively. The teacher responded quickly to pupils'

achievement giving appropriate praise which created a positive atmosphere in the classroom and gave good encouragement for pupils to make their best effort. Other features of effective teaching were observed in a Year 4 lesson where the teacher was developing pupils' understanding of how to create interesting and imaginative ideas and language in their story writing. She told them that she had found a very special and mysterious bottle in her garden, building up the detail and atmosphere effectively. When she finally produced the bottle, there was a 'magic' hush in the classroom. In the discussion which followed, pupils' interest and attention were sharp and completely focused and their ideas significantly enhanced.

62. Although teachers across the school generally maintain good relationships with the pupils in their classes, where teaching has weaknesses, it is often the result of less effective management of the pupils and inconsistent expectations for such behaviour as inappropriate calling out and chatter. The occasional distraction caused by such behaviour affects the pace of the lesson and pupils' concentration. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson and a Year 7 lesson where, although the teachers managed the pupils well generally, calling out was not sufficiently quickly curtailed and some pupils' concentration, and, therefore, their learning, were affected. Analysis of pupils' written work indicates that the use of marking to identify how pupils can improve their work and the use of individual targets to help pupils improve, are too variable. Teachers are generally very supportive of pupils when marking their work but this sometimes results in indiscriminate praise when the standard of work does not merit it.

63. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and literacy is taught daily. Literacy makes a satisfactory contribution to work in other curriculum areas. The National Literacy Strategy framework forms the basis of the good scheme of work and incorporates all the elements appropriately. Good use is made of a programme emphasising the importance of letter sounds and the Additional Literacy Support programme helps pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Although planned assessment procedures are good, they are not fully implemented, nor is their use fully effective in supporting curriculum planning or teachers' planning. This is not sufficiently effective in raising standards. The co-ordinator is giving good leadership in the subject but long term absence due to illness last year has meant that some developments in the subject have been delayed. A significant level of staff change has exacerbated this effect. However, the co-ordinator has already established clear relevant priorities for the coming year and these include the induction of new staff to ensure that whole school systems, such as assessment and target setting, are fully effective. Although some monitoring procedures had been established earlier, the monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is not sufficiently well developed to support the full implementation of the school's systems. Resources in the subject are generally satisfactory. The school had identified the need to improve standards of presentation and pupils' handwriting. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that the school is addressing this issue effectively. Standards of presentation are generally good across the school. Pupils organise their work to a clearly understood format and take a pride in writing and presenting their work neatly. Pupils' writing has a high profile in the school and well formed and neat writing is celebrated. Some good quality resources are in place for literacy and some fiction of a similar quality

has been purchased to use in the recently refurbished and attractive school library. However, some of the fiction stock in classrooms is less attractive. The library is not used well to support pupils' independent research skills. Opportunities to use information and communication technology in the subject are not sufficiently developed.

MATHEMATICS

64. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are similar to those found in most other schools. This is the same standard as the pupils achieved in the end of key stage national tests and assessments in 2000. Provisional indications are that the results of the 2001 tests may not be as high as those in 2000. Pupils' standards of attainment compared with similar schools are better, especially for pupils of above average ability. This judgement shows an improvement on the previous OFSTED inspection when it was judged that attainment was below average. Trends in performance over the last four years show a dramatic improvement in standards in the last two years, 2000 and 2001. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support in the subject and accordingly make good overall progress. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils' achievement is good in Year 7 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2.

65. Pupils in Year 7 attain standards that are also similar to those found in most other schools. The number of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is well above the national average. This finding shows an improvement on the judgement of the previous OFSTED inspection when the standards of this age group were below national expectations.

66. Most pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding and knowledge of their multiplication tables up to ten and use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten or 100 quickly. Some pupils explain their mental strategies well but overall this skill is relatively under-developed. In their work on measurement, they convert pints to litres and have a sound knowledge of 12 and 24 hour time. They use estimation principles appropriately before measuring angles and can state the difference between acute, obtuse, reflex and right angles. They collect data and use a range of graphs to display the information. They use their measuring skills in physical education and design and technology, read thermometers in science, and use time lines in their historical work. Their use of information and communication technology in their work on data handling is being further developed.

67. Most pupils in Year 7 employ written methods using the four operations to solve ordinary and decimal problems. They are beginning to use algebraic principles to express formulae and understand the concept of the 'nth' term. Most have good mental recall of multiplication facts to ten and use this knowledge well to develop their mental strategies. They order fractions and calculate the fraction of a certain amount of money. However, most pupils find difficulty in working out and understanding decimal equivalents to the fractions. In their work on data handling, they understand and use the mean of separate data, for example, in their dice throwing, goals scored and temperature data work. The results of the tallying and

data collection are also used to construct line graphs. The pupils convert metric to imperial measures and can reverse this process. They use this knowledge to solve everyday shopping problems. In their work on shape and space, they understand, and can measure and calculate, perimeter, area and volume. Some pupils are able to calculate the sum of the interior and exterior angles in a shape and work out the size of any unknown angles in the shapes.

68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but is generally good in Key Stage 3. This overall judgement is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers show a good commitment to improving pupils' numeracy and mental arithmetic skills, which was a key issue in the previous inspection. However, some lessons, especially at Key Stage 2, lack appropriate pace and challenge. In a good Year 5 lesson, the pace was increased by the mental activity of multiplying seven and 14 by five, six and seven to see which group finished first. The teacher asked, 'Which column did you find the most difficult, and why?' This led to a discussion and explanation from pupils about the mental strategies they had used. In nearly all classes, teachers share the learning intended in the lesson with their pupils but do not always use the discussion at the end of the lesson well to ascertain what pupils have learned. In all year groups, clear and comprehensive planning ensures that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils. Thorough support is given to pupils with special educational needs and to those with English as an additional language to enable them to make good progress. A very good Year 6 lesson with lower ability pupils was planned and executed very well by injecting a note of competition into the lesson but making it fun. The problem was 4000 multiplied by ten, 'I don't believe anyone will solve that,' said the teacher giving good praise and encouragement when they did. In a Year 7 higher ability group lesson, the teacher assessed very quickly that the initial planned activity was too easy for the pupils and pushed the lesson on in order to stimulate and challenge them.

69. The co-ordinator, currently on maternity leave, manages the subject well in partnership with a 'shadow' teacher in the school. She is well qualified and experienced, monitors planning and pupils' work and has monitored the teaching of the numeracy hour in most classrooms. She successfully managed the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy which has resulted in an improvement in teaching and learning and a rise in standards. Before to the Numeracy hour was introduced, a very successful parents' evening was arranged which was well supported. Effective assessment procedures are in place and the information from them is used to guide curricular planning and to place pupils in the appropriate numeracy set. For example, a scrutiny of national test results indicated that boys' attainment was well above that of the girls. This difference in performance has now been remedied, and in the last two national tests, there was very little gender difference in standards. The school has a comprehensive action plan for the continued development and improvement of the subject. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to work in other subject areas, such as science. All aspects and requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met.

SCIENCE

70. In Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are similar to those found in most other schools. This is broadly in line with the school's results in the national tests for 2000 and the provisional scores for 2001. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection. Analysis of recent national test data indicates that, until 1999, standards achieved were below and well below average. But, in 2000, pupils achieved standards that were average compared with all and with similar schools. In this group, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was well below average, but, when compared with similar schools, the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was well above that expected. Across the school, most pupils achieve satisfactorily, but those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well.

71. In Year 6, pupils undertake appropriate experiments, for example, as they investigate the speed at which different liquids evaporate. They consider the processes of germination, pollination and seed dispersal in plants and distinguish between reversible and non-reversible changes. They have a sound understanding of physical processes as they consider and explain the formation of shadows. In Year 7, pupils attain standards that are average for their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupils develop sound investigative procedures as they set up experiments to show that leaves convert glucose to starch. They have a good knowledge of the names and functions of important organs in their bodies and distinguish confidently between balanced and unbalanced forces. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language attain good standards according to their previous ability and make good progress towards their own learning targets.

72. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are satisfactory. This was also the judgement of the previous inspection. At Key Stage 2, although the overall quality is satisfactory, teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. A lesson to pupils in Year 6, considering the forces acting on floating objects, showed several features of very good teaching and illustrated the positive impact which this has on pupils' learning. The pupils were settled and challenged by an effective introduction. This set the context of the lesson well, consolidated pupils' previous understanding and prepared them well for further learning. The teacher asked challenging questions to develop pupils' interest and understanding of the science of floating by referring to the Dead Sea and Samuel Plimsoll and she allowed pupils appropriate time to discuss and investigate in small groups. The effect was that pupils' appreciation of floating and sinking was developed well. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the teacher struggles to gain the attention of the majority of pupils and makes insufficient reference to the scientific principles behind the lesson. In Year 7, teachers introduce specialised vocabulary well. They question pupils carefully and ensure an appropriate pace to the lesson. In a very good lesson to test pupils' lung capacity, they were encouraged to devise a good range of hypotheses and to set up their own investigations. Work was done carefully and thoroughly and pupils' learning was enhanced.

73. Improvements have been made to the subject since the last inspection which have helped to improve the standards that pupils achieve. The previous inspection commented that, at that time, the subject was not taught as a discrete subject, but

part of a wider topic cycle and that pupils were not being sufficiently prepared for the national tests. Both of these weaknesses have now been addressed successfully. The subject is now well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is being effectively supported by a 'shadow' colleague. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the developments required and has outlined them on a useful subject action plan. One of these actions includes a revision and updating of the policy and guidelines statement. A good range of assessment data is produced which includes the results of pupils' tests at the end of each science unit, teachers' own assessment of attainment and the results of national tests. However, these data are only just being used to set targets for pupils' achievement. Planning follows the nationally recommended scheme of work. A shortcoming in planning is that the learning intended in each activity, which is clearly identified in teachers' daily and longer term plans, is not always sufficiently closely related to National Curriculum requirements. Therefore, teachers do not have a sufficiently clear view of the National Curriculum level which the activity is aimed at, or of how to extend pupils' understanding as far as possible. There are insufficient planned links with information and communication technology and mathematics or reference to how the subject can be used to develop pupils' literacy skills. Interest in the subject is enhanced by the yearly whole school focus during 'Science Week' and by the opportunity provided in the after-school Science club. The subject fully meets National Curriculum requirements.

ART AND DESIGN

74. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 attain satisfactory standards. This judgement is based on evidence from the lessons and from sampling pupils' previous work. This shows a maintenance of standards since the school's previous OFSTED inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making sound progress as they go through the school. However, there is still very limited evidence of three-dimensional work and work with clay as reported at the previous inspection.

75. The quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is satisfactory. Previous work from last year's Year 7 shows appropriate use of sketchbooks and a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. Pupils had been soundly taught to look at tones, shades and hues and produced interesting portraits using only the primary colour and its complementary colour. They had learned the key features of caricatures and produced some lively examples of their own. Sketches to investigate the features of the eye showed sound teaching and pupils worked carefully observing detail. There is a good display of work using line and tone, which indicates skilled teaching. In their study of cathedral builders, pupils have learned that the design and form of buildings reflect their function. Previous Year 6 work shows pupils have been introduced to a range of artists and there is pleasing work in the style of Matisse and some printing in the style of William Morris. Work sampling and display evidence show that pupils are given an appropriate range of opportunities to develop their skills progressively.

76. In the lessons seen, Year 4 pupils made sound progress in producing visual notes and understanding the concept of symbols. In one of the classes the teacher

made good use of Aboriginal art to show symbolism and teach that symbols have meaning to the artist. In the Year 5 lessons, sound teaching led to pupils making steady progress in developing their skills of sketching. They were able to shade showing gradation using solid shape and cross hatching. The teacher encouraged them to show light and shade and gave appropriate support. In the other Year 5 lesson, the teacher consolidated sketching and encouraged pupils to draw only what they saw in a still life composition. Previous work in Year 5 shows sound teaching in the study of the work of Henri Rousseau and pupils painted a section of 'The Tropical Storm with a Tiger' to produce a good corridor display. Across the school, pupils use sketch books to practise techniques but there is a limited amount of work evident in some years.

77. Leadership of the previous co-ordinator was good. She was well qualified and had a clear understanding of the subject's needs. As a temporary measure, the headteacher is now overseeing the subject. This arrangement does not currently provide effective direction for art and design. There is sound use of art to support other curriculum subjects, particularly in history. Art contributes soundly to pupils' overall personal, social and cultural development. Assessment in the subject is underdeveloped. There are no agreed systems for assessing or recording pupils' progress through the National Curriculum. Pupils have visited the National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Gallery but have not received visitors to the school to enhance the subject. There is little use of information and communication technology for research or for experimenting with computer generated art. Displays are generally attractive.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78. During the course of the inspection, due to the way in which the timetable was organised, only one lesson was observed. Evidence gained from this lesson, and from an analysis of a very limited amount of previous work on display, teachers' plans and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that, in Year 6 and Year 7, pupils attain below average standards for their ages. At the last inspection, standards were average at both key stages. This indicates a fall in standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have not made satisfactory progress.

79. Although the quality of teaching and pupils' learning was satisfactory in the one lesson observed, indications are that the quality of teaching and the quality of learning has been unsatisfactory overall at both key stages. They were satisfactory at the previous inspection. From a scrutiny of previous work and discussion with pupils at the beginning of Year 7, it is evident that, by the end of Year 6, pupils have not been given sufficient opportunities to evaluate a range of familiar products or to generate and develop their ideas in sufficient depth. Work shows limited increase in complexity of design and making activities. The opportunities to use a range of tools, equipment and materials have also been limited and the quality of finish is also below average for pupils' ages. Design has been at a simple level with little evidence to show consideration of the user or real evaluation as the design progresses. This indicates a low level of teachers' expectations resulting from limited knowledge of the demands of the subject and skills in teaching them.

80. In the lesson seen in a Year 6 class, although it was the first time the teacher had taught design and technology, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The teacher gave a clear introduction to the topic on shelters and, with the support of another adult, encouraged pupils to look at and sketch shelters around the school. However, the study of previous work shows that it is not challenging enough to extend pupils' skills. Last year's Year 6 pupils had designed and made slippers but the finished products and design sheets were below the standards found in most other schools. The school's own evaluation indicated below average skills of sewing. In Year 5, pupils had designed and made musical instruments and had used simple cams. In their completed products, however, the quality of finish was below average for their age. Previous Year 7 work on simple buggies and siege engines, based on a simple frame were below the average standards for this age group both in terms of designing and making.

81. The co-ordinator acknowledges that the subject is at a new beginning. He has now introduced national guidelines in all classes, having tried them in some classes last year. The topics planned show how skills are to be taught and systematically built on, and assessment arrangements are now in place to record pupils' skills at the end of each unit. The co-ordinator has introduced the new scheme of work and has ensured that resources are in place to support it. He has recognised that some staff are more skilled than others and need further training and support to implement the new scheme of work. The school enjoys good facilities. There is a technology room and a room for food technology but there is little display of work around the school to motivate or enthuse pupils. There is no evidence of the use of information and communication technology within the subject to design or to control.

GEOGRAPHY

82. Standards in Year 6 are average for the age group. This represents an improvement on the judgement of the previous OFSTED inspection when standards were found to be below average. Although only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection, judgements are made following a thorough scrutiny and analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of planning and discussion with teachers and pupils. In their work on river features, Year 6 pupils show a sound understanding of the importance of location in the settlement of people by the side of rivers. They describe the various features from the source of rivers to the sea, including estuary, meander, confluence and tributary. Most pupils understand the effect of people's settlement by rivers on the environment including both opportunities and problems in this country and across the world. Nearly all pupils are able to identify continents, countries, rivers and mountain ranges in various parts of the world using atlases and other text books. Across the school, most pupils achieve satisfactorily, but those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well.

83. Standards in Year 7 are average, which is the same judgement as that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. Although no geography lessons were observed in this year group during the inspection, the judgement is based on a thorough scrutiny of pupils' work, classroom displays and discussion with teachers

and pupils. Pupils use their enquiry skills to propose suitable geographic questions for study in their residential visit to Swanage. They indicate a sound ability to investigate places and environments when comparing Swanage with their own urban area of Harrow. In discussion with pupils, they indicate a sound knowledge of the use of primary and secondary sources of investigation on a field trip using appropriate geographical vocabulary. Across the school, the use of information and communication technology for research is relatively under-developed.

84. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory. This judgement shows an improvement from the last OFSTED inspection in Key Stage 2, where teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. Lesson plans are comprehensive and take into consideration the ability range within the class. Teachers use classroom support well, when available, to assist pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. In a good lesson, observed in Year 4, the teacher used cards with statements about the village of Chembakoli in India to test pupils' knowledge and understanding of the way of life in that region. The class was organised in groups to enable discussion on whether the statements were appropriate. Encouragement for discussion was particularly suitable in a class containing a large number of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. A useful discussion at the end of the lesson gave pupils an opportunity to reconsider any views they had of life in Chembakoli at the beginning of the topic.

85. A useful policy for the teaching of humanities, including history and geography, has been produced giving teachers useful and helpful guidance on the teaching of geography. There is no co-ordinator for the subject, at present, due to a large turnover of staff at the end of last term. The headteacher has taken over the role temporarily along with responsibility for several other subjects but has already given consideration to new co-ordinator appointments in the near future. The scheme of work is suitably based on materials provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Field visits are incorporated into the scheme of work and these include visits to Chorleywood by Year 5 pupils, a Year 6 outdoor activities visit to a camp site at Potters Bar and a week's residential, regional studies visit to Swanage and the surrounding area by pupils from Year 7. Year 5 pupils also participated in a traffic survey in South Harrow where they were able to use their mathematical data handling skills to good effect. Teachers' short and medium term planning is sound and is formulated within weekly year group meetings which enables some use of assessment information in planning lessons. However, assessment in the subject is underdeveloped as there are no agreed systems for assessing or recording pupils' progress through the National Curriculum. There is currently no portfolio of pupils' work in each year group or photographs of classroom displays to encourage interest in the subject. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall, but there is insufficient software material to encourage the use of information and communication technology for research purposes.

HISTORY

86. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are average. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. A scrutiny of previous work

and observation of lessons show that pupils have average knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject. They demonstrate a good factual knowledge of the Victorian period in Britain and the everyday life of a working child at that time. They also indicate a sound ability to select and link information from secondary and primary sources. In their work on 'The Fifties' the pupils show a good ability to compare life then with their own lives and recognise changes within and across them. In their written work, there is a good link with their literacy lessons and they are beginning to use appropriate historical terms and dates when recording their findings.

87. Although no lessons were observed during the inspection in Year 7, a thorough scrutiny and analysis of previous pupils' workbooks, discussion with teachers and pupils indicate that standards in Year 7 are average. At the last OFSTED inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in this year group. All pupils now make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language benefit from the effective support that they often receive from support staff. Pupils in Year 7 demonstrate an increasing factual knowledge and understanding of the Norman Conquest and Medieval England. They have a sound understanding of the sources of evidence available to study history, including primary and secondary sources. Most pupils show a developing ability to evaluate historical sources and select those relevant to answer specific questions. They understand the importance of the Church during this period and its role in helping to maintain law and order. They are beginning to link causes and effects of events and changes leading up to the French Revolution and show appropriate understanding of events in France in the 1780s.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages with one example of very good teaching in a Year 6 class. In this lesson, the teacher showed good knowledge of the Victorian period and could quote from the experiences of her father when talking about coal mining. She made very good use of resources to demonstrate to pupils in a practical way about a child's life in the mines at that time. For example, a cardboard tube was used to illustrate the size of the tunnels that children had to crawl through. A sack of coal was also produced to give pupils an idea of the weight that children had to carry. The use of practical examples motivated pupils of all abilities into a keen interest of the subject and enhanced their knowledge and understanding very well. Evidence from other Key Stage 2 observations indicate that teachers possess a sound knowledge and understanding of history and appropriate expectations for their pupils' ages and abilities. Pupils are generally well managed and organised but sometimes the progress that pupils make slows down towards the end of lessons when a small number are off task and without support.

89. The history co-ordinator left the school during the last academic year and the headteacher has taken over the role temporarily. It is intended that a teacher will shortly be designated with responsibility for co-ordination of the subject. A useful policy has been produced for the teaching of humanities throughout the school which offers useful guidance to new staff members. A scheme of work is in place using recommendations and materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum

Authority. Resources are satisfactory although resources to enable pupils to use information and communication technology in the subject are not adequate. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are adequate but the use of assessment information to plan further work is under-developed, partly due to the absence of a co-ordinator in the subject. Visitors to the school, outside visits and residential school journeys strengthen the history curriculum. A theatre company gave a presentation to Year 4 pupils to support their work on the Tudors and a member acted as a Victorian school teacher to support Year 6 studies. Year 6 have also visited Apsley House and St Mary's Church in a linked history/religious education topic. Year 7's residential visit to Swanage includes history topics in the surrounding Dorset countryside, including Corfe Castle. Improvement in the subject since the school's previous inspection is satisfactory as standards are similar and there is some high quality work in all year groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 achieve standards that are below average for their age. This is similar to the judgement of the last inspection for Year 6 but represents a drop in standards at Year 7 when average standards were achieved. Currently, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, do not achieve satisfactorily. However, across the school, standards have risen significantly since the introduction of the computer suite from Easter 2001 and the use of the interactive whiteboard from September 2001. These new resources, and their use, are significantly raising standards.

91. Across the school, pupils are introduced to basic word-processing functions. Pupils, for example, create headings and captions in a variety of colours and styles, writing and recording their work in different fonts and using their skills to present their work attractively. This was seen during the inspection in work done on 'My Origins'. However, they have had insufficient opportunities to use and develop their skills in a range of contexts to enliven the presentation of their work. Pupils are also developing a satisfactory understanding of data handling facilities. Most are aware of the construction of databases and are beginning to appreciate how to interrogate data effectively. Some are developing a good appreciation of the limitations of data displays. For example, a Year 4 pupil recognised that it would be more appropriate to display a survey of the pupils' birthdays in the class, rather than a graph showing all their names. However, these skills have not been used in a sufficiently wide range of contexts. Pupils' understanding of monitoring and modelling is less well developed because these features are currently only available on the computers which are not within the computer suite. A scrutiny of further curricular planning shows how these features and E-mail and Internet connections are to be introduced and taught later in the term.

92. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning across the school that was observed in the inspection was satisfactory. At the last inspection, teaching was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 3. The current judgement recognises the increased effectiveness of teaching since the introduction of the new computer suite and the impact that this is already having on pupils' learning. At Key Stage 2, teachers demonstrate a sound understanding of the school's new technology,

although some who were new to the school were unfamiliar with some elements of it. This limits the effectiveness of their teaching. Teachers organise pupils well, ensure that instructions are clearly understood and give pupils appropriate time to investigate new program and to discuss findings with their partner. In the small proportion of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, lesson planning is brief, insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to develop information and communication technology skills and the pupils' interest and concentration are not sufficiently challenged. In Year 7, in the single lesson observed, the teacher demonstrated good, confident subject knowledge, explained instructions clearly and provided appropriate opportunities for pupils to become familiar with the new technology at the beginning of term.

93. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She produced a detailed and successful bid for national funding in the previous year and is a member of the Local Education Authority's information and communication technology steering committee. She has a good understanding of the developments required in the subject. The school's overall staffing and recruitment problem has significantly limited progress in this subject. The school's intention was to release the co-ordinator from whole class responsibility during the previous academic year to manage and support the introduction of the computer suite. However, this had to be hastily re-arranged when she was obliged to resume class and year group responsibility. Aspects of assessment are good; others are being developed. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce an assessment test for Year 4 when they enter the school which will be used as a baseline on which to measure pupils' progress. However, there are currently no agreed procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress in the subject which are matched to National Curriculum criteria. Planning follows the nationally recommended scheme of work. Because the school was in one of the later groups to receive national funding, teachers have not yet been involved in their staff training. It is to begin later in the current term. A shortcoming in provision is the lack of planned use of information and communication technology to support work done in other curriculum areas such as literacy, numeracy, science and other subjects. A further weakness is that the computers which are available in corridors around the school are not being used sufficiently to enhance curricular provision in each class.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

94. Standards in French are average in Year 7. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were reported to be below expectations. At this early stage in the school year, evidence for the judgement of this inspection was taken from an analysis of work of the previous Year 7, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils as well as classroom observations.

95. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning French and talk enthusiastically of their enjoyment of the language, culture and customs of France. Most of them are careful and responsive listeners and speak confidently although, in many cases, their pronunciation is weak. Their skills in reading and writing usually outpace their oral work. Achievement is satisfactory and pupils generally develop a sound understanding of language structures, and how to use them. They use an

increasing range of appropriate vocabulary covering topics like home and daily life, food and drink and finding the way. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily, compared with their earlier attainment. During the inspection, no differences in attainment were noticed between boys and girls.

96. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 7 is satisfactory. In the previous inspection, the teaching of the specialist teacher was good but that of other teachers was variable. The present co-ordinator, who is a native speaker, provides a very good model of language for pupils but the expertise of class teachers is inconsistent. To overcome this problem, the co-ordinator is working very hard to build up the confidence of non-specialist teachers who give good support to pupils during her initial input. Pupils start studying French in Year 6 and, in Year 7, are taught by the co-ordinator who incorporates class in-service training for teachers into her lesson. The class teacher then takes their second lesson of the week. Strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning of French in the school were illustrated in a Year 7 lesson where pupils were learning to tell the time in minutes, half and quarters of an hour. The teacher's well-organised use of a variety of clocks stimulated learning well and ensured pupils' interest in, and enjoyment of, the activity. Her good rapport with the pupils gave them confidence to make simple conversation and mistakes were used sensitively as learning points. Clear objectives stated by the teacher set the scene well, and focused pupils' attention on specific learning. A good review session helped them to evaluate how successful they had been and which aspects they would like to revisit. As a result, most pupils made sound progress in their confidence and ability to tell the time and in practising new vocabulary associated with the topic. However, the accelerated pace of the lesson, due to time constraints, meant that many mistakes of pronunciation were left uncorrected and that not all pupils were fully engaged in the activity so that their concentration waned. Too much ground was covered in the lesson so that there was no real consolidation of work and vital learning was lost especially for less able pupils.

97. The subject is satisfactorily led and resourced. The present organisation of the curriculum whereby pupils are taught for two half an hour sessions a week on consecutive days is unsatisfactory as pupils have too much time to forget what they have learned and language skills are not consistently reinforced. The co-ordinator monitors planning and marks the work of all pupils but does not monitor classroom teaching. An effective scheme of work is in place supplemented by other material appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to improve language skills. Assessment procedures are sound. There are no visits, visitors or links with France to support teaching and learning in the subject and to enable pupils to use their growing knowledge and enjoyment of French in real life situations.

MUSIC

98. Standards in music are below average for pupils in Years 6 and 7. The school's previous inspection found that standards were good at Key Stage 2. No judgement was made about standards at Year 7. Judgements from this inspection have been

based on classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils' written work, teachers' planning, assemblies and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils' attainment and learning in the subject have been adversely affected by the lack of specialist co-ordination in the subject over the last two years. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make unsatisfactory progress.

99. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning at both Key Stage 2 and Year 7 is unsatisfactory. In the previous inspection, teaching throughout the school was generally sound. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staff changes and there are currently no music specialists in the school. Across the school, teachers do not demonstrate sufficient expertise and confidence in the subject to improve pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher's hesitancy in moving through the stages of the lesson and inappropriate resources led to a slowing down of pace and pupils' attention and listening were weakened. In a Year 7 lesson, too much time was spent on restoring an effective level of attention and, as a result, pupils learnt very little during the session. Individual skills are not taught progressively. For example, although the school organises a singing assembly for the whole school each week, pupils are not given sufficiently clear instruction to help them use their voices effectively and harmoniously. When such advice is given the resulting improvement is immediately apparent as was seen in older pupils' singing practice and in the extracurricular choir which is being established under the guidance of an interested parent. In some lessons, the management of pupils is less well established and pupils do not have well developed listening skills. When this is combined with teachers' lack of confidence in delivering subject specific elements, teaching becomes unsatisfactory. However, when pupils are confidently managed and lessons are carefully structured, individual lessons are effective. Such a lesson was seen in a Year 7 class where the teacher clearly established the intended learning outcomes at the outset of the lesson. The lesson was well structured in order to improve pupils' abilities to appreciate different elements in music to which they were listening. The teacher had recognised that pupils needed to clarify their understanding of such elements as instruments used, style, dynamics and tempo. As a result of the teacher's energetic enthusiasm and supportive resources, by the end of the lesson, pupils had consolidated and developed their understanding well.

100. There is currently no coherent scheme of work for the subject and although staff make use of units of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and a previous scheme of work, lesson planning does not sufficiently provide opportunities for the sequential development of pupils' skills. The headteacher, who is currently managing the subject, has a clear understanding of what is needed to improve provision in the school. In the light of the high level of staff mobility over the last two years, she has recognised the need to develop the staffs' confidence and expertise. She has already applied to the Local Education Authority for support to develop teachers' expertise and to develop a coherent curriculum for the subject. Systems for recording pupils' written work in the subject and for assessing their progress are not fully or consistently in place. Resources for the subject are generally satisfactory and there is an appropriate range of tuned and untuned instruments and recorded music, which are accessible for all classes to use. Pupils

are offered an appropriate range of additional experiences to enhance their learning. Concerts are given each year by peripatetic staff and there are regular annual school productions which have a musical element. Approximately 30 pupils have tuition from peripatetic staff. They are taught to play a range of brass and woodwind instruments, the guitar, violin, harmonica and tabla and steel pans. The subject does not make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101. In Year 6 pupils attain standards that are similar to those found in most schools. This judgement is the same as the findings of the previous inspection. In swimming, at least 85 per cent of pupils of this age group are able to swim for at least 25 metres safely and unaided using a recognised swimming stroke. In their games activities involving the use of hockey sticks and balls, most pupils are able to pass a ball and dribble in a limited space. They show a basic understanding of the rules of the game and the correct way to hold and use a hockey stick. Across the school, pupils of all abilities, genders and ethnic groups, achieve satisfactorily.

102. In Year 7, the only aspect of physical education observed was a games lesson concerned with a series of lessons on cricket skills. This observation indicated that pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are average for their age. In the previous OFSTED inspection there was insufficient evidence to provide a judgement. All pupils practise and improve their throwing and catching ability showing good co-ordination and control. They perform safely in a limited space in pairs or larger groups and demonstrate a sound ability to use simple tactics in small team games.

103. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages with one example of good teaching in a Year 5 lesson. In this lesson, the teacher organised and managed a lively 'warm up' session and was actively involved giving a demonstration of good practice. He also explained to the pupils the reason for the 'warm up' indicating a good knowledge of health and safety factors. An element of competition was introduced in team games to enhance all pupils' large ball passing skills and to develop their awareness of team tactics. Teachers generally show a sound awareness of safety in the subject and are careful to ensure that their pupils are suitably clothed. However, weaknesses in teaching include the way that pupils' skills in evaluating their own and others' performance are developed in order to improve their own performance. Nearly all teachers insist that pupils move quietly and sensibly from their classrooms to the hall or playground and this insistence leads to a quiet, disciplined start to lessons.

104. There is no subject co-ordinator at the moment due to a large turnover of staff at the end of the summer term. The post is being temporarily taken over by the headteacher. This is unsatisfactory as it affects the development of the subject, especially in teaching and the standards that pupils attain. However, the use of a new, commercial scheme of work for games and gymnastics has ensured some continuity between the various year groups. A subject policy is also in place, but it has not been recently revised to ensure that all new staff are conversant with dress

code, safety measures and the use and storage of apparatus. Assessment procedures for the subject are under developed. A new programme for dance, using tapes, has been recently purchased to increase teachers' confidence in teaching this aspect and to promote multicultural dance. Sporting opportunities both within the school day and as extracurricular activities, considerably enhance the physical education curriculum. Swimming is taught to pupils in Year 6 and is based on the Harrow Schools Criteria and the Amateur Swimming Association. Certificates are awarded to encourage success and range from beginners to intermediate awards for swimming and life saving. Athletics becomes high profile in the summer term and all pupils are given the opportunity to compete in the local schools' athletics heats and finals. In after school clubs, there are opportunities for girls and boys of all age groups to participate in tennis, dance and gymnastics and soccer for the older pupils. Year 5 pupils also benefit from coaching for one afternoon per week for five weeks by a Middlesex county cricket coach.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. In Years 6 and 7, pupils' knowledge and understanding are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. At the previous inspection, standards were below average at Key Stage 2 but average at Key Stage 3. Judgements in this inspection are based on one classroom observation, analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays, and discussions with teachers and pupils. All pupils make steady progress as they go through the school. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective support that they often receive from learning support staff and this consolidates the progress that they make. Most pupils with English as an additional language are able to work successfully with others of similar attainment although, where necessary, they receive suitable help. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is generally satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 as it was at the previous inspection. This is evident from the discussions with pupils who showed appropriate knowledge and understanding for their age. The Year 7 pupils are on course to attain average standards by the end of the year, based on the evidence of their level at the end of Year 6. They were able to explain the rituals and artefacts of Islam, which was studied last year, and explored the similarities and differences of all the faiths studied. Although they were recalling work from as far back as Year 4, they were able to talk confidently about the main beliefs, festivals and religious symbolism of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. The analysis of work shows a sound coverage of the required topics but there is still too much use of work sheets and low level recording sheets. This means that the subject does little to extend pupils' writing. Often the same work is given to all pupils and is not always appropriately marked. This is indicated by such comments as

'You need to keep up with me', for a pupil with identified special educational needs and inappropriate praise for a higher attaining pupil for some non challenging task.

107. Recent work shows generally sound teaching and learning across the school. In Year 7, pupils have begun the term with an awareness of their own talents and identify a range of their own and others' personal traits. They used this in a

successful and thought provoking assembly. In Year 6, pupils have started the year by creating a personal timeline reflecting important events in their life. They identify how different faiths have traditions associated with initiation into adulthood and faith. Year 5 have been soundly taught that the Bible is a collection of varied writings and, in Year 4, they have identified the Qur'an as the Muslim holy book. They have watched a video clip of Muslims washing before prayer and their resulting poster showed sound understanding. In a lesson observed in a Year 4 class, the teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. The teacher's knowledge was insecure and she relied heavily on the printed sheet. The pupils listened passively and some lost concentration. Many found the matching exercise too difficult, some were unable to read the captions and there was insufficient learning.

108. The headteacher is performing a holding role in the absence of a co-ordinator. The Local Education Authority has just introduced a new syllabus and the school has included this in its planning. There is an appropriate range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. The school makes contacts with the community and receives visitors from various faiths. There is little use of information and communication technology to research the subject or to present pupils' work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show good respect for the feelings and beliefs of others and, through the study of religions, are learning the teachings of right and wrong. The study of different faiths contributes well to pupils' multicultural awareness.