

INSPECTION REPORT

ELM WOOD SCHOOL

West Norwood, London

LEA area: Lambeth

Unique reference number: 100597

Headteacher: Ms C. Eames-Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr Stephen Lake
22191

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th October 2001

Inspection number: 216036

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Carnac Street
West Norwood
London

Postcode: SE27 9RR

Telephone number: 0208 670 1621

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Appropriate authority: The governors

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S. Bateman

Date of previous inspection: 13 – 16 September 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22191	Stephen Lake	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Science Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19660	Deborah Pacquette	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How good are the links with parents?
030705	Graham Stephens	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education	
18283	Sandy Brown	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Music	
30691	Kathleen Coupland	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized school of 212 pupils situated in an inner-city area. The school serves an area of mixed socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, including some refugee families. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language at an early stage of language acquisition is around ten per cent, which is well above average. Thirty two per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Attainment on entry to the school varies but is generally below average by the end of the reception year, although this year the attainment of children entering the nursery is higher than in previous years and is close to what is normally expected for children of this age. Over the last two years the school has had a succession of temporary teachers but now has a stable teaching staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that is very well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Teaching is sound with many strengths and as a result pupils learn well and achieve good standards. The school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed by a very effective headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Standards attained in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- The quality of education in the early years is good as a result of the very good provision.
- The good quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 enables pupils to learn effectively.
- The school has good procedures for assessing the progress made by pupils.
- The school has good links with parents.

What could be improved

- Standards are below expectations in religious education by the end of Year 6 and well below national expectations in information technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. *(This was an issue in the last report and is addressed in the school improvement plan.)*
- Standards in writing are below average at the end of Year 6. *(This is addressed in the school improvement plan.)*
- Pupils' skills of scientific investigation are unsatisfactory. *(This is addressed in the school improvement plan.)*
- The standard of presentation in all subjects is unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1999 and was found to have serious weaknesses. The improvement since that inspection has been good. Until the beginning of this term the school has had considerable difficulties in obtaining a stable suitably qualified teaching staff. The teaching staff is now stable and the quality of teaching has improved. Issues

arising in the last report have been dealt with systematically and rigorously. The initial focus on the core subjects has proved sensible and standards have risen significantly in English, mathematics and science. Subject managers have been appointed and schemes of work are available for all subject areas. Procedures for assessing pupils have improved and the data is used effectively to improve learning. Standards in religious education have improved at Key Stage 1, but it is too early for the effect of this to be seen at the end of Year 6 and standards there remain below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards in information technology remain very low as this area has yet to be fully addressed in line with the school's improvement plan. Taking all things into consideration the school is soundly placed to bring about further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table shows that in 2001 the school's results in mathematics were in the highest five per cent when compared to similar schools, although compared to all schools nationally they were well above average in mathematics and average in English and science.

The inspection finds that standards at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly in the last year and the 2001 results are much better, with attainment in English, average, attainment in mathematics, well above average and attainment in science, above average. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are below expectations at present, but compared to the attainment of these children when they entered the nursery this represents good achievement. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in mathematics, average in reading and average in writing. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average in mathematics and average in English, although writing is unsatisfactory. Standards in science are average, but, although pupils' knowledge is satisfactory, their investigative skills are unsatisfactory. Standards in information technology are well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and standards in religious education are below expectations at the end of Year 6.

Standards are rising in line with the national trend over time but over the last two years have been rising faster than the national trend. Challenging targets for improvement been set and in the 2001 national assessments the school exceeded them as a result of the detailed assessments and subsequent targeting of areas for improvement. Assessment results show that minority ethnic groups are achieving well and there are no significant differences between groups of pupils. In relation to their prior attainment, all pupils are achieving well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils appear to enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Many pupils behave well, but a significant minority of pupils, mainly boys, present some very challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good in many areas, but too few opportunities are provided for independent learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory despite the good efforts of the school to improve it. Nevertheless attendance has improved since the time of the last inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

When all factors are taken into account the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Half of the lessons observed were good or better and only one lesson in 12 was unsatisfactory. This is a clear improvement from the time of the last inspection, when more than one lesson in four was unsatisfactory and teaching overall was unsatisfactory. Teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics is good throughout the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good with three out of every four lessons observed being good. In Key Stage 1, two out of every three lessons observed was good and just over one in five was very good. At Key Stage 2 one in every three lessons was good but three out of 19 were unsatisfactory. Strengths of the teaching observed in the school are the way in which the needs of different ethnic groups are met and the good use of assessment by teachers. Pupils from different cultures and backgrounds are provided for well and pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Areas for development in teaching are the teaching of information technology and science investigations and teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work. As a result of the good teaching in English and mathematics pupils learn well in these subjects. Learning in most other areas is satisfactory apart from the development of investigation skills in science and most aspects of information technology.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school plans a broad and balanced curriculum, but limitations on equipment are currently limiting the delivery of the curriculum in information technology. A suitable range of extra-curricular activities take place.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is a strength of the school. Detailed assessments are carried out, parents are very involved and pupils are given good support. However, the support from outside the school for pupils with behaviour problems is not enough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils receive good support both in and out of classrooms and as a result they achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Good opportunities are planned for pupils' personal development. The school council is an important part of this provision. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect and develop a sense of awe and wonder. They have clear rules to guide their moral development and the school is good at developing their social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a supportive environment in which pupils are respected and cared for. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are a strength of the school.

The school has a good partnership with parents and works closely with them in many areas to support the learning of pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good leadership. They are supported well by a team of subject managers in which English, mathematics, science, the Foundation Stage and special educational needs are managed particularly well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. All statutory requirements are met and the current governing body has a suitable vision for the school. Although governors seek best value in many spending decisions, they do not always assess the impact upon standards. Financial planning has been focused on raising standards but has relied too much on the use of money set aside for contingency. Budget planning needs to be based on a longer view than one year.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has identified suitable priorities for improvement.

The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Resources are sufficient, except in information technology, and most are used appropriately, although computers are underused. Teaching and support staff are sufficient to support the school's aims and are used satisfactorily. Accommodation is good, particularly the area for the early years.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school. • The school expects children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities offered by the school.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments of the parents, but given the location of the school and the support offered by parents in running activities the inspection team does not agree that the range of activities is unsatisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection, in 1999, attainment was judged to be a serious weakness of the school. Weaknesses were in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. Since that time the school has focused first upon raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Some attention has been given to religious education, but improvement in information technology has not yet been addressed. As with the last report, this inspection took place very early in the school year. Coupled with the timetabling arrangements whereby certain subjects are taught at different times of the year, this means that reliable judgements about standards can only be made in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Some indication of standards in other subjects is possible from work kept from last year, and examination of planning and discussions with pupils.
2. Efforts to improve attainment have been hampered by the difficulties that the school has had in attracting and retaining suitable teaching staff. It is only since the beginning of this term, four weeks ago, that the school has had in place a permanent team of suitably qualified and experienced teachers. This has made it difficult to establish a systematic approach to the professional development of teachers to enable an improvement in overall standards of attainment. Appointments over the last two years have gradually enabled improvements in the quality of teaching that have impacted upon standards of attainment. The professional development of teachers in information technology has proved difficult due to the changes in teaching staff, and the school is only now in a position to enable this training to take place. This, coupled with the decision to focus first upon English, mathematics and science, has limited opportunities to improve standards in information technology.
3. The standards of achievement in the Foundation Stage noted in the last report are being maintained. Children enter the nursery at three and display wide variations of attainment; however, the majority display standards that are below the Lambeth average and, despite the good progress that most make, they do not attain the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy, by the time they enter Key Stage 1. For a minority, English is a second language and these children receive additional support and consequently make very good progress.
4. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are improving. It is not clear why this is so although one suggestion put forward by the school was that parents were now seeing the school as more successful and therefore choosing the school. Another suggestion is that the socio-economic make up of the area may be changing. Children in the Foundation Stage are currently entering school with levels of attainment just below those normally found with children of a similar age. This is an improvement since a few years ago and the current Year 2 pupils entered the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment well below those normally found among children of that age.

5. At Key Stages 1 and 2 standards have been rising steadily in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Although standards had fallen at the time of the last report, the improvements since then mean that the trend in the school's results over time is broadly in line with national trend. However, improvement over the last two years appears to be above the national trend. Currently, overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. The tables below show how standards in those areas tested in national assessments have improved since the last inspection:-

For pupils in Year 2

Subject	1999 report	2001 national assessments	Current cohort of pupils judged by inspectors	Achievement in relation to prior attainment
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Reading	Well below average; 72% achieved Level 2 ¹ or better compared to national figure of 82%.	Above average at 93% Level 2 or better compared to national figure of 84%.	Attainment is in line with national expectation.	Good. Records show that this group of pupils was below average at the beginning of Year 1.
Writing	Well below average; 65% of pupils achieved Level 2 or better compared with the national average of 83%.	Average. Although 71% obtained a Level 2 or better compared with national average of 86%, all of these obtained a Level 2b. Nationally only 59% obtained a Level 2B.	Attainment is in line with national expectations.	Good. This is a significant improvement on attainment at the beginning of Year 1.
Mathematics	Well below average. 65% of pupils achieved Level 2 compared with a national average of 87%.	Above average, with 96% Level 2 or above compared with the national average of 91%.	Attainment is above national expectations.	Good. Attainment was close to average at the beginning of Year 1.
Science	Not applicable; teacher assessment only.	Not applicable; teacher assessment only.	Attainment is in line with national expectations	Pupils' investigative skills have clearly improved since the time of the last inspection.

When the results are compared with those in similar schools, pupils' achievements are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

¹ On Levels: By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

Attainment at the end of Year 6

Subject	1999 report	2001 national assessments	Current cohort judged by inspectors	Achievement in relation to prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1
English	Well below average.	Average. Reading is better than writing.	Broadly in line with national expectations.	Satisfactory. Pupils have made appropriate gains in relation to their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.
Mathematics	Well below average.	Well above average, with 96% achieving Level 4 or above compared to 71% nationally.	Above national expectations.	Very good. At the end of Key Stage 1 the attainment of this group was in the bottom 5% nationally.
Science	Well below average.	Average, with 97% achieving Level 4 or above compared to 87% nationally.	Close to average. Knowledge is above average. See below.	Not applicable as no national assessments are made at Key Stage 1.

6. Attainment in speaking and listening is average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Speaking is stronger than the listening element. A significant number of pupils do not concentrate fully when listening to their teachers' explanations in class, and they sometimes find it difficult to listen for sustained periods; for example, in the first part of the literacy hour. When the low attainment on entry to Key Stage 1 is taken into account pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are achieving well.
7. Although attainment in science at the end of Year 6 is at least average in pupils' knowledge as measured by national assessments, their understanding of the investigative process is unsatisfactory.
8. When reading the tables above it must be noted that in the 2001 Year 6 cohort over a quarter of the pupils had joined the school since the time of the Year 2 national assessments for this group. Many of the pupils that moved into the school came from overseas. When the achievements of the pupils who have been in the school from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 are examined, the records show that this group achieved well. This is a very clear improvement since the time of the last inspection.
9. Inspectors found that all groups of pupils are making good progress over their time in the school and achievement is good. Children enter the school with below average attainment and leave with standards that are at least average, and in

mathematics better than average. The 2000 national assessments showed a significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in Year 2 and Year 6. In 2000, boys outperformed girls by the equivalent of almost one year. The school argues that this was a characteristic of that particular cohort of pupils. In the 2001 national assessments there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. This is against the national trend, where girls outperform boys. The school takes great care to ensure equal opportunities. The detailed monitoring of attainment by the school and the setting of realistic targets for each pupil are a reflection of the way the school tries to include every pupil and make sure that they achieve as well as possible. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well as a result of the good support that they receive. Set against this background the performance of the boys in 2000 is not easily explained other than by the fact that the school has tried very hard to raise the attainment of African-Caribbean pupils, many of whom are boys and the records show this to be successful.

10. Information technology was judged below expectations at the time of the last inspection. Since that time the national expectations set out in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study have changed and it is not possible to make a direct comparison. Currently attainment in information technology is well below national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. This is largely due to weaknesses in teacher confidence and knowledge in this subject. The large turnover of staff has contributed to this situation. Standards are starting to rise in a few classes where teachers are more confident in this subject, but more improvement is unlikely before the teachers receive their training under the National Opportunities Fund that is planned for next term. Currently information technology does not support learning in other subjects.
11. Standards of attainment in religious education were judged unsatisfactory in the last report. Standards are starting to improve and, at the end of Year 2, are now in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It is too early for the improvements to have worked their way through to Year 6, as these pupils have missed significant parts of the syllabus in previous years. As a result attainment at the end of Year 6 remains unsatisfactory.
12. In all other subjects where it is possible to make a reliable judgement, standards attained meet national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
13. A weakness in the standards of work observed across all subjects is the quality of presentation. Pupils' writing skills are below average, as noted above, and too few opportunities are taken in other subjects to use and practise these skills. For example, science books at Key Stage 2 were poorly presented and records of investigations were not set out well. Handwriting is inconsistent and in some cases the use of pens to draw diagrams results in work crossed out or badly smudged. In religious education very little work is recorded in books and as a result this subject makes very little contribution to the development or practice of writing skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Overall, pupils' attitudes to school and learning are satisfactory. The standards that have been maintained throughout the school are also satisfactory. Most pupils continue to be motivated and interested in learning, and participate well in the many activities of the school. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who

also have positive attitudes to learning and are well integrated into the life of the school.

15. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and when moving around the school is satisfactory. There are, however, some pupils who during lessons cannot sustain concentration for very long periods and who find working independently difficult. These pupils' needs are being well identified and the school has clear and positive strategies for managing their behaviour. Teachers work closely with learning-support assistants, volunteers and the coordinator of special educational needs to ensure that the disruption to the rest of the class is minimal. Parents support the view that the school works hard to promote good behaviour. No litter or graffiti are present in the school. Pupils respect and care for the school's property and environment.
16. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors, greeting them warmly, holding open doors and offering directions when asked. When invited to do so, they speak freely about life in the school and willingly share their experiences. Most pupils are honest and trustworthy, and show due respect for school property and that of others. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are reinforced by the way good examples are rewarded and by the consistent and positive support for pupils' efforts by the staff.
17. The personal and social development of pupils is good. Pupils are secure and confident about rules and routines, and enjoy undertaking responsibilities when given the opportunity. For example, pupils successfully participate in the school council program, assemblies and delivering registers. When required to work in pairs or groups in lessons, most pupils do so successfully. They co-operate well with each other and share resources responsibly.
18. The relationships formed between pupils are good. The relationships between pupils and adults are also good. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and are often observed helping and supporting each other. The good relationships also exist between pupils and the premises officer, classroom support staff and volunteers. There is a good degree of racial harmony in the school. Pupils are tolerant towards each other and show respect for each other and adults.
19. Pupils' attendance continues to be unsatisfactory and below the national average. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. However, there are a significant number of unauthorized absences and late-comers to school, which have a direct impact on the school's attendance records. The school works closely with the education welfare officer to monitor attendance. Strategies such as the Early Birds Awards Scheme have been implemented to improve punctuality and attendance in general. The resulting improving attendance has begun to make a positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The last report found that the quality of teaching was a serious weakness that affected the attainment of pupils, with over one lesson in four unsatisfactory. Since the time of that report considerable effort has gone into appointing permanent teachers and providing professional development for all teachers employed. The result of this action has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. During the inspection half of the lessons observed were good and only one lesson in 12 was unsatisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and In Key Stage 1

was good. Three lessons in four in the Foundation Stage were good and two lessons out of three in Key Stage 1 were good. When all factors are taken into consideration teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall.

21. Strengths of the teaching observed are:-
 - the consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1;
 - the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. These make a significant difference to the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, and reflect the professional development that has taken place in the school;
 - the way in which assessment information is used to identify the needs of pupils and focus teaching.
22. The factors above are the reason why standards in English and mathematics are improving. Teachers are now making sound use of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy in English lessons and mathematics lessons, and this is having a positive effect upon standards of attainment. Assessment information is used particularly effectively to plan work matched to the needs of the pupils in English and mathematics. Teachers set challenging targets for pupils and monitor their progress towards these targets.
23. Classroom management is good and, despite the challenging behaviour of some boys, teachers ensure that pupils remain engaged in lessons and learn effectively. Throughout the school the teachers continually challenge pupils to improve. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 teachers employ a wide range of strategies to motivate and stimulate pupils. This makes a good contribution to learning. At Key Stage 2 the range of strategies employed is less wide and, although standards are rising, some of the strategies are more effective with boys than with girls. As a result, in some classes boys are attaining better than girls. However, throughout the school, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to work independently; for example, researching material for history or geography, or carrying out investigations.
24. The major areas for improvement in teaching are:-
 - teachers' knowledge and expertise in information technology;
 - teachers' understanding of the investigative process in science;
 - the use of information technology to support teaching, learning and administrative tasks.
25. The school has already identified these as areas for improvement and suitable action is planned in the school improvement plan.
26. The steps taken by teachers to include all pupils of whatever background or ability help pupils learn well. In all classes teachers work effectively with learning-support assistants and this close partnership makes a significant difference to the attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The very detailed assessment procedures enable teachers to monitor the quality of learning and adapt their teaching accordingly. This was seen well in mathematics lessons with the oldest pupils.
27. Homework is used effectively to reinforce what is learnt in school. The youngest pupils take books home to support their reading, and teachers use this as an additional means of communication with parents to discuss and encourage

progress. However, this is not consistent and some homework is mainly learning or revising facts without the opportunity to deepen understanding.

28. Only a few pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from class for teaching. In these instances work is well targeted to their needs, and teaching methods and approaches to learning are carefully selected. In all classes teachers are aware of the range of special educational needs, and the choice of strategies used, especially in group work, reflects these needs. Individual pupil's targets are taken into account in lessons.

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

29. At the time of the last inspection, a number of curricular items were identified as being unsatisfactory. Most of these have now been addressed. All statutory requirements are now in place, including those for drugs education, which were missing at the time of the last inspection. The breadth and relevance of the curriculum are good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in both Key Stages 1 and 2.
30. At the time of the last inspection provision for children in the Foundation Stage was good. It is now very good and a strength of the school. Two teachers, a nursery nurse and a learning-support assistant, who work well as a team, teach children in a nursery and a reception class. The result of the good teamwork is that the curriculum is matched well to the needs of children by teaching at times in separate classes and at other times across both classes with the whole team working together effectively. The good teaching the children receive, along with the detailed planning, observations and records kept of learning, ensure that they make good progress. Led well by the Foundation Stage coordinator and well supported by the local education authority, the school has responded positively to the revised guidance for the early years. Activities are planned with care, and resources used well to provide an environment that is interesting and stimulating to the children.
31. Time is used well and great care has been taken to ensure that children in the reception class have daily access to the facilities and equipment provided in the nursery. The daily interaction between the groups also ensures that the children gain socially as the older, more experienced children can often be seen supporting and guiding the younger children in the routines of the school. Also younger children have access to several adults, gaining in confidence as a result. This interaction is very carefully regulated and contacts between the groups decrease towards the end of the summer term as the reception children are prepared for transfer to Key Stage 1.
32. There are up-to-date policies for all subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when they were judged to be out of date. Except in physical education, good school specific schemes of work are now in place for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Planned progression is built into schemes of work, so that targets, which are clearly identified for them as they move up the school, increasingly challenge pupils. At the time of the last inspection planning for the long and medium term was satisfactory, but short-term planning was unsatisfactory. Short-term planning now identifies clearly the specific learning objectives for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught and the activities that will facilitate learning. It is now based on assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do and there are opportunities for children of

all abilities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Planning is monitored regularly in accordance with the rolling programme that the school has agreed in the school development plan.

33. A good level of support is available in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and its focus is clear. Arrangements for collaborative working with class teachers are well established, and roles and responsibilities are well understood, so pupils' learning opportunities are often maximised.
34. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Pupils are supported in the classroom from the earliest stage and targeted support is made available throughout the school. A small number are withdrawn from the classroom where appropriate.
35. Teachers are using the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to guide mathematics teaching and as a result pupils are achieving well in mathematics at both key stages. In Year 2 the high level of challenge and lively presentation engage all the pupils, who are eager to learn and reluctant to end the lesson. Mental mathematics lessons are lively and exciting; for example, in Year 2 pupils count confidently in sequences of ten up to 100 and back to zero. They accurately complete addition and subtraction sums involving numbers with two digits. In Year 6, the National Numeracy Strategy is well implemented and pupils display rapid recall of multiplication and division facts and use them appropriately in mental calculations.
36. The provision of extra-curricular activities is now satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There is a wide range of sport and music activities, involving many children. In conjunction with the Crystal Palace Sports Development Council, Key Stage 2 pupils participate in rugby, netball, kwik cricket and athletics, and a mini-games project is held annually. Reception pupils visit the Tate Gallery, and local artists are involved in Batik workshops to promote pupils' interests. Musical activities in which the school is involved include a termly school recorder and brass concert for parents, singing workshops and an annual pantomime for parents. The pupils' learning and personal development are substantially enhanced by a visit to Vauxhall City Farm for Foundation Stage pupils, a trip to Bird World for Years 1, 2 and 3, and for older pupils in Key Stage 2 a residential trip to the Kingswood Residential Centre. Various local short trips for younger pupils; for example, to the library, the recycling centre, the fire station and the shops, contribute to their learning across the curriculum. An after-school club provides a range of structured activities and is open to all pupils.
37. The school's links with the community are positive and well developed, and they contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Pupils participate in a number of visits, including residential trips, which are linked to the curriculum. In addition, community representatives visit the school regularly and contribute to the many activities of the school.
38. At the time of the last inspection, not all pupils had equal access to the curriculum. The current position is that the school has a policy for inclusion and curriculum provision ensures that all pupils now enjoy equal opportunities and equal access.
39. The policy for personal and social development is of good quality and includes many initiatives that help develop pupils' sense of community. A particularly good

area is the active school council, that has suggested ways of improving attendance and punctuality and makes a report to the governing body. This also makes a strong contribution to the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

40. The school's provision for spiritual development is good and is woven into many aspects of school life. In assemblies pupils reflect on friendship and teamwork, with the headteacher and deputy providing the example of just how important it is. Celebration assemblies are held every Friday when staff and pupils celebrate each other's achievements. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on the wonders of life and this is often given expression through art that is valued and well displayed throughout the school and also through poetry, inspired by visiting poets; for example --

***'I crash against the rocks with foam like whipped cream,
And when the sun shines I flash and then gleam.'***

The 'Gold Book' is available in which all pupils can write down their feelings and appreciation of others, and it is well used, containing comments such as, 'I would like to thank Mrs Jones for liking me' and, 'I would like to thank for being a good friend and for being there for me.'

41. Good provision is made for pupils' moral education. The school tries hard to equip pupils with a clear set of moral values that encourage them to be discerning and self-regulating in their behaviour. **All** staff, well led by the headteacher, who leads by example, set good role models in the respect and support they show for each other, and this is reflected in classes. For example, when the Year 2 teacher says, "You know you're sometimes too clever for me", it epitomises the relationship she has established with her class and they respond by trying even harder to succeed and earn her appreciation of their efforts, both in terms of their work and behaviour. All classes review school rules and establish their own for their classes at the beginning of the school year. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors, and keen to share their work and achievements. The regular opportunity for pupils to discuss their feelings and other issues that are important to them through the provision of 'circle time' is an important aspect of the school's provision for their moral development.
42. The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' social and interpersonal skills. Boys and girls mix and play happily together, and pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well integrated into the school community. Social issues are addressed through circle time, assemblies and discussion with teachers at the beginning of sessions and reinforced by school routines, residential visits and the peer-mediation scheme run by older pupils. The school council has elected representatives from all classes, with the exception of the Foundation Stage and Year 1, and its formation is a good lesson in democracy and citizenship. The elected members set the agenda after discussing issues in classes and the headteacher, who attends all meetings, gives pupils additional responsibility by allowing them to chair the meetings.
43. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school has pupils from several cultural backgrounds and actively celebrates the cultural diversity they represent. Visitors to the school include musicians, artists and dancers and during the week of the inspection the school was celebrating 'black history week.' The part-time music teacher draws on a wide tradition of songs representing a variety of

cultures. The school has well-established links with 'L'Ouverture,' a multiethnic, multicultural group from Goldsmiths College, who supported the pupils in preparing for and presenting a play. Assembly themes are drawn from many cultures, and all major religious celebrations are recognised.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There is a staff member with overall responsibility for child protection, and all members of the staff team are trained and are aware of lines of accountability. Pupils are supervised well by staff during the entire school day. The provision for medical care and first aid is good. The school undertakes regular routine checks of the premises to identify and eliminate any health hazards. A rolling programme of maintenance is in place, which is being implemented adequately. The school has very effective measures to ensure that it cares very well for its pupils.
45. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. They are systematic and well implemented. The school uses good strategies to encourage good attendance. For example, attendance is monitored weekly and targets are set and regularly reviewed, to improve attendance. Also, regular contacts with the education welfare officer and follow-up letters to parents are organised. The procedures for marking registers are followed adequately.
46. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote acceptable behaviour and to eliminate bullying. These have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. Self-discipline and inclusion are promoted through a variety of strategies that involve rewards and sanctions, one-to-one counselling, comprehensive individual educational plans, and working in partnership with parents. The school has clear rules to ensure good conduct and discipline. These outline in a positive way the school expectations of pupils' behaviour and make a significant contribution to the standard of behaviour throughout the school.
47. Educational and personal support and guidance in the school are good. They are consistently of a high standard and take account of parents' and pupils' views. Pupils have reading records and homework journals which contain written comments from parents. The school offers good pastoral care for the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and their needs are addressed fully. Parents support the view that the school cares effectively for their children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents have very positive views of the school. They are pleased with the school and the progress that their children are making. They feel welcome in the school and a part of the school's community and their children's learning. Most parents feel that the school is well led and managed and their children are making very good progress. The quality of links between the home and the school are very good.
49. The school actively encourages parental involvement. Parents are happy with the daily activities of the school and the 'open door' policy that is in operation. Staff, including the headteacher and the premises officer, are present at the beginning and end of the school day to greet parents. Some parents participate as volunteer helpers in the school, helping in classrooms, the library and on various trips. The

school has a parents' association – 'Friends of Elm Wood' - which is successful in fundraising and organizing social events. Parents of pupils of with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are also encouraged to be involved in supporting their children's progress. Opportunities are arranged for parents to discuss and sign all individual education plans as they are reviewed. Overall, parental involvement has a good impact on the standard of pupils' education.

50. In general, information provided for parents is good. They receive regular letters, newsletters and reports about their children's progress and are invited to parent/teacher conferences, open evenings and other meetings. In addition, there are a number of notices boards placed strategically around the school. New parents are well inducted into the school and similarly parents of Year 6 pupils leaving the school are well informed about transfers to secondary schools, in order to make the transition period smooth. The governors' annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements.
51. The parental contribution to pupils' learning at school and home is good. This is done mainly through the many parents who help in the school, the home/school schemes, i.e. work-shops, information explaining to parents how to assist their children in a number of subjects, and the school's homework policy.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. At the time of the last inspection the headteacher had only recently been appointed and, although influencing the standards in the school, had not been in post long enough to bring about substantial change. The governing body had not always been working harmoniously and was due to be reconstituted. Overall, the quality of the leadership and management was judged to be sound.
53. The inspection team now finds a clear improvement since the time of the last inspection. Overall the quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective team and together provide very good direction for the work of the school. They share a common vision, based upon the good school aims, to take the school forward and achieve the best standards possible in all areas of school life. They are supported well by the other member of the senior management team, who has a clear vision for the Foundation Stage and is ensuring that children entering the school have a good start to their education. As a result the quality of education is improving and standards are rising throughout the school. It is too early yet for all of the changes that have taken place to be completely effective. The senior managers are aware of this and this is reflected in the good school improvement plan. At the time of the last inspection the school improvement plan extended over just one year. The plan now extends over three years and has a clear and structured approach to school improvement that is guiding further improvements. Areas for improvement are identified through the rigorous self-evaluation procedures that are in place, and the senior management team have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A particular strength of the self-evaluation is the way in which the school seeks to ensure equal opportunities through monitoring the attainment of all of the different groups attending the school.
54. The school is receiving support from other agencies that is carefully targeted at raising standards. The local authority has provided a great deal of support since the

time of the last inspection and this has supported school improvement in many areas. In discussion with a small group of local schools and a secondary school, the school has entered a mini education action zone. This has only been in existence for some weeks but has already laid plans to support the school in improving a number of areas:-

- transfer to secondary school;
- attendance and punctuality;
- improving teacher subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science. (especially investigative skills)

It is too early to comment on the effectiveness of this support, although the areas covered are very applicable to this school.

55. The reconstituted governing body is satisfactory with many areas of strength and some areas for improvement. Governors are involved in the production of the school development plan and make use of it to guide decisions in many of the committees. For example, the curriculum committee refers constantly to the plan when making its recommendations to the full governing body, and the personnel committee base their decisions upon identified priorities. This can be seen in the way in which the curriculum committee identified the need to improve the provision for special educational needs that became a priority in the school development plan. The personnel committee then took the time to ensure that the person eventually appointed met the needs identified in the plan. However, although governors are keen to see that they spend money to the best effect in the school, they do not take enough account of the effect that the expenditure has on standards. The chair of governors has not been sufficiently active in ensuring that the governing body monitors the work of the committees to ensure that the budget set by the governors is based upon prudent financial planning.
56. Governors do not have effective means for checking on the implications of spending decisions on standards or on the overall budget of the school. The school has been well funded in recent years and has been fortunate to have money carried forward. The money spent on raising attainment in English, mathematics and science has been effective in raising standards in these subjects. However in some areas money has not always been spent to best effect. For example, although information technology was a key issue at the last inspection, the school still does not have enough resources for information technology. In the current year governors have planned to spend almost all of the money, leaving too little available for emergencies. If all of the money is spent it could leave the school in a difficult situation for next year as currently the budget set is over £35,000 more than income. In this current year the amount set aside for the professional development of staff has reduced. Given that new staff are present in the school and several areas for development have been identified for development in teaching, this limits the ability of the school to provide sufficient support. Without a contingency to draw upon next year the school needs an increase in income in order to maintain the current level of expenditure. Many governors did not seem aware of the possible implications of their spending decisions. For example, governors were unaware that in several areas of expenditure, such as the amount spent on clerical and administrative staff, expenditure was very much higher than in similar schools. Governors do not know what impact this has upon standards or whether the expenditure is appropriate. The situation has been made more difficult for governors by two additional factors:-

- information from the local authority is not always accurate and in the past has often been late;
- the information provided for governors to monitor the budget is presented in a complex format that is difficult to understand without training. No simplified budget is presented to governors to enable them to match the report to the priorities of the school development plan or their own budget setting.

A new chair of finance is in post and has already grasped the potential difficulties that the budget could present. Discussion with some of the governors involved shows that, although they had not been aware of all of the implications of the budget setting last year, they are now more alert to potential problems and resolved to improve the quality of budget planning and monitoring. Inspectors are convinced that enough members of the governing body are now aware of this problem and seeking ways of addressing it for this to now be a minor area for improvement when set against some of the other improvements that have been made in the last two years and the fact that during the coming year the mini education action zone will be providing additional support to the school to develop the teaching. Nevertheless this remains an area for improvement for the governing body.

57. A major factor affecting standards and quality at the time of the last report was the number of temporary teachers in the school. From the beginning of this term, just four weeks ago, the school now has a full complement of permanent teachers with a suitable range of qualifications and experience. The procedures for inducting new teachers into the school are appropriate and ensure that all have a sound understanding of the principles and ethos of the school. The headteacher and deputy monitor the quality of teaching carefully and professional development is planned to take into account the identified needs of teachers. For example, the deputy headteacher, who is also the subject manager for science, has identified that teachers are not secure in their knowledge of scientific investigation, and training in this area has already been planned for later in the year. A team of learning-support assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of education. The school has a very generous allocation of clerical and administrative staff that provides appropriate support in an unobtrusive manner. Day-to-day management of the school is sound.
58. Subject managers are now in place for all subjects and generally fulfil their roles effectively. Particular strengths of the middle management are the good monitoring of attainment and planning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The Foundation Stage and the provision for special educational needs are also managed well. The nominated governor for special educational needs works with the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure the best possible provision for pupils with special educational needs. The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator is efficient and effective. She manages the special educational needs provision well, ensuring that consistent support is available throughout the school to support pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties.
59. Accommodation is good, although the school does not have sufficient access to outdoor sports facilities. The school is bright, airy and well maintained by an effective site supervisor. As a result the environment is conducive to learning. Classrooms are well planned, and corridors and walls are enlivened with displays and examples of pupils' work and other significant information. A particular strength of the accommodation is the very good provision for the Foundation Stage. Resources are satisfactory overall, except in information technology, where the school does not have enough computers or enough suitable programmes to use on

them. The resources available are used appropriately to support teaching and learning, apart from information technology equipment, which is not used effectively or efficiently.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to build upon the improvements made the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (1) improve standards of attainment in information technology (paragraph 10, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers receive appropriate professional development in information technology;
 - improve the resources available, including the number of computers and suitable software to support all subjects of the curriculum;
 - ensure that all schemes of work identify where information technology can be used to support learning;
- (2) improve standards in religious education (paragraph 11) by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring that all teachers follow the school scheme of work;
 - improving the quantity and quality of written work in this subject to provide a suitable record of pupils' progress and raising the status of this subject;
- (3) raise standards of writing in Key Stage 2 (paragraph 76) by:
 - teaching handwriting skills in a systematic and consistent manner;
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation in all work;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in all subjects;
- (4) improve pupils' skills of scientific investigation (paragraph 7) by:
 - improving teachers' knowledge of scientific investigation through suitable professional development;
 - planning a systematic programme that gradually introduces simple investigation early in the school and moves to a better understanding of fair testing by Year 6.

A number of minor issues that governors may wish to include in their action plan are identified in paragraphs 13, 23, 56, 59, 62, 63, 76, 79, 80, 89, 94, 96, 112, 127.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	16	15	3	0	0
Percentage	0	6	44	42	8	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	18	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	7	9
	Girls	17	13	18
	Total	26	20	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (80)	71 (84)	96 (84)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	8
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	23	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (74)	93 (80)	89 (92)
	National	85 (84)	98 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	19	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	8
	Girls	15	19	18
	Total	22	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (71)	96 (61)	93 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	14	19	18
	Total	20	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (46)	93 (61)	93 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	74
Black – African heritage	25
Black – other	16
Indian	6
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	86
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	631,483
Total expenditure	636,258
Expenditure per pupil	2815.3
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,000
Balance carried forward to next year	37,025

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	23	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	33	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	40	10	0	0
The teaching is good.	77	20	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	30	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	20	0	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	33	10	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	23	3	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	83	11	3	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	33	20	3	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

61. The personal and social development of many children is at a very early stage of development when they first come to the nursery. However, a significant minority show a mature attitude to both adults and their peer group, as demonstrated outside when a boy on a scooter said to his friend on a bicycle, 'Please don't go too fast or I won't be able to keep up!' By the time they leave the reception class most have made very good progress and reach the Early Learning Goals. This is a situation similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. All staff expect children to behave well and routines are well established, which helps promote order and consideration for others.

62. On entry to the nursery, children quickly adapt to routines and respond well to adults, willingly sharing activities with them, such as the boy who, having carefully arranged a large number of wooden blocks on the floor, said, "This is a plane. You can sit there if you like. We're about to take off!" Younger children play independently but are positively influenced by the older children, who co-operate well when working; for example, on the computer, playing with Lego or playing in the playhouse. All adults consistently encourage children to share and show consideration for others; for example, children were observed willingly giving up their turn on the bicycles and scooters when asked to do so in order to let their friends have a turn. Resources are well prepared to encourage social interaction such as the play-house set up to represent the house of the 'Three Bears', complete with three very appropriate bear costumes which children used to good effect to represent the main characters. Many children, especially in the reception class, are impatient to make themselves heard in class discussions, but they respond well when reminded to raise their hands and wait their turn. Pupils are also expected to assume some responsibility for the equipment that they use, but too often they allowed adults to complete the clearing away, especially the older pupils, who have yet to develop a greater sense of responsibility when clearing away between sessions.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Teaching in this area is good and, although they make good progress, most children do not achieve the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception class. Many can write their names, and a minority make very good attempts at writing simple sentences such as "I can fly my kite over the houses." However, the majority use *initial* letters accurately and then write letter strings of both upper and lower-case letters in their attempts to write for different purposes. Many can begin to recognise individual letter sounds as a result of good teaching. In the reception class the learning-support assistant works with a small group, tracing the letter 'd' in the air, which the children copy. Together they make the shape of the letter from plasticine and then look for words beginning with the letter in the picture dictionary. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with their teachers. In the nursery, children develop a sense of rhythm and rhyme through the use of large picture books, and go on to recite the verses and correctly identify the colours and animals. However, books in both classes are not displayed in a prominent enough

place to encourage children to browse and share them with friends as well as adults. All staff encourage the children to speak about their experiences in a variety of situations through skilfully asking open questions and by giving them opportunities to 'read' their writing. For example, the reception teacher supports the children well. They read their 'speech bubbles' in the voice of the character represented, and the rest listen and try to guess the name of the character.

Mathematical development

64. Teaching is good and as a result children make good progress in mathematics, but the majority do not achieve the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception class. Higher attainers count to 20 and work confidently with numbers to ten, completing simple problems involving addition and subtraction. The majority, however, are not secure in this knowledge and need to continue working with groups of objects to help reinforce their understanding. Teachers take every opportunity to use numbers every day; for example, building towers of bricks during registration and encouraging the children to count them in the nursery and to use their fingers to represent the numbers in 'One Man Went To Mow,' as it is sung in the reception class. Mathematics is linked very securely into themes; for example, a boy explains that the three bowls, each of a different size, in the sand tray belong to the three bears and that he is sorting them by size. The staff constantly refer to 'the smallest', 'the biggest', 'the tallest' and 'the shortest' when telling the children the story of 'The Three Bears'. Teachers use a computer program comparing shoe sizes to help the children develop further their understanding of 'size'. In another session in the reception class the vocabulary of measurement is very successfully introduced. Two children weigh fruit and vegetables on scales in the 'greengrocers' and explain that 'When the bucket is down it is heavy and when the bucket is up it is light.' Another group work in the hall with ribbons of different lengths, busily measuring objects and deciding whether they are longer or shorter than the ribbons. Another reception pupil builds a train with 15 carriages and is very pleased when he successfully counts the total accurately. Two children make plasticine snakes but struggle when asked to say the word that is the opposite of 'long'. Numbers are in evidence around the walls in various displays and some involve the children themselves such as the sets of those children who are four and those children who are three that are used as part of registration.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Teaching in this area is good and the planned activities are very good. Consequently, children make good progress, with many achieving the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception. Outside, a tray of bark and bark chippings provides a home for mini-beasts; leaves and berries representing the colours of autumn are collected and painted; displays of photographs show the children using their five senses; they use clay with the appropriate tools; they make puppets, shakers and racing cars out of wool, toilet rolls and sticks; they make robots, trains and houses out of boxes which they paint and they use the computer to play games to support work in English, mathematics and art.
66. In the reception class the teacher talks about breakfast and the children's favourite cereals. They go on to taste the different cereals, explaining their preferences. Another group makes toast, and the teacher seizes the opportunity, through skilful questioning, to get the children to explain the differences between their toy toaster and the real one that they will be using. As a result they understand more about the

dangers of electricity and what they should do to stay safe. In the nursery careful thought has been given to the provision of 'dressing up' clothes that include a wide range of costumes representing different occupations, characters from stories, and different cultures.

Physical development

67. Despite the lack of a field, the children have ample opportunities to develop their physical skills and most achieve the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception class. This is similar to the judgements made at the time of the last inspection. The school is well resourced with a very good range of wheeled vehicles, plenty of fixed climbing equipment, a wide variety of plastic crates and boxes which can be lifted and used to create different environments through which the children crawl, a large hall and a play area on different levels giving the children the opportunity to climb up and down the steps as they play.
68. Children in the reception are excited as they enter the hall and some talk across the teacher as she begins the lesson. They understand why they need to warm up, as one explains, 'When I warm up my heart beats faster.' Some children do not listen carefully to the teachers as others continue to move noisily around the hall and this reflects the immaturity of many of the children as they fail to focus clearly on the teacher's instructions. Outside, the children from the nursery move confidently on the climbing apparatus, and the learning-support assistant sensibly intervenes when two boys become over-confident in their climbing abilities. Spontaneous games such as 'Follow my Leader' on bicycles are initiated and all the time the nursery teacher moves among the children, ensuring that all are included and that equipment is shared fairly.

Creative development

69. Opportunities for children to express themselves are good and this, combined with good teaching, means that the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception class. The organisation of the day means that children from both classes make choices and the careful monitoring by all staff ensures that a balance is achieved, with every child having numerous opportunities to sing, paint, model and print. Children make a plane carefully, ensuring that the wings *slope* appropriately. They look closely at flowers and attempt to mix the colours to represent those they see before painting them. Children work confidently with large brushes as they mix colours and paint the three bears. Their work is valued by the nursery nurse, who also encourages the child who has English as a second language and who responds with a smile and remains engrossed in the task. Children make faces using different mathematical shapes and generate colourful designs using the computer. They make patterns by making 'tracks' in paint, and a variety of costumes and equipment both inside and outside encourages the children to take part in role play, which they do. In both classes teachers sing with the children, sometimes at the beginning of the session when the songs reinforce counting skills, or refer to children's names at registration or throughout the day when familiar nursery rhymes and other songs are sung.

ENGLISH

70. The tests given to the pupils as they move from the reception year to Year 1 show that attainment is below that normally found with children of this age. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 standards of attainment are in line

with national averages. At Key Stage 2 achievement is satisfactory overall and, by the end of Year 6, attainment is in line with national averages overall.

71. Attainment in speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1 is average. Speaking is stronger than the listening element. Pupils read their work aloud, as in the Year 2 lesson on 'the magic box'. Pupils in each year group have difficulty listening to their classmates or their teachers for a sustained length of time. For example, in one lesson a teacher had to shorten a lesson because pupils were finding it difficult to listen to each other in a plenary session. In some cases this is due to the number of pupils with English as an additional language.
72. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils attain average standards in reading. More-able pupils can read texts that are appropriate for their stage of development, although average and lower-attaining pupils show little understanding of what they have read, have not yet developed adequate reading strategies to help them with meaning, and struggle to decode texts. Higher attainers are developing accuracy, fluency and understanding, and can discuss characters and select main facts from the text.
73. Standards in writing are average at the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage most pupils recognise spelling patterns and can spell a range of common words correctly. Handwriting and presentation skills are underdeveloped. Too little emphasis is placed on developing a cursive style. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply the technical skills that have been taught. By the end of the key stage pupils are beginning to produce simple pieces of writing, some punctuated with full stops and capital letters, although not always correctly.
74. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national average. Throughout the key stage pupils are prompted and taught to listen carefully. Teachers speak clearly to pupils and listen carefully to them. A significant number of pupils do not concentrate fully when listening to their teachers' explanations in class, and they sometimes find it difficult to listen for sustained periods; for example, in the first part of the literacy hour. Teachers provide good opportunities for questions and answers, but there are few opportunities to enable pupils to express themselves in a more sustained way. For example pupils do not spend enough time recounting experiences in science or religious education.
75. Standards in reading are average for 11 year olds. The introduction of books associated with the literacy hour is beginning to have an impact on pupils' interest in reading, as they experience a wide range of literature in a variety of forms. Very few pupils are advanced readers or choose to read a range of books with advanced narrative. Higher-attaining pupils talk about the plot and characters in stories by popular authors such as Roald Dahl. Most of the reading from these pupils was mechanical and lacked expression, even though it was accurate. Average-attaining pupils can re-tell stories they have heard previously, and use a range of strategies to correct their mistakes. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, read slowly. They describe what is happening from the clues in the text or the picture and can talk about their favourite parts of the story. Sometimes they need help with unfamiliar words. Research skills develop slowly, but by the end of the key stage most pupils understand about contents, glossary and index. There is little evidence about the development of skimming and scanning skills, or the use of the library for private research. Very few pupils make

sufficient use of information technology to obtain information. Problems with the connection to the Internet have not helped here.

76. Standards in writing are below average at the end of the key stage. Pupils experience a range of styles and purposes for writing. Work builds progressively through the key stage, extending pupils' knowledge. They learn, understand and can use correct technical terms, such as 'connectives', 'adjective' and 'adverb'. However, most pupils find it difficult to produce a sustained piece of writing with the variety of language and accuracy expected. The lack of opportunity to use writing sufficiently in other subjects such as science and religious education contributes to this. The redrafting of work is not developed sufficiently to extend and challenge the skills of the pupils or to enable them to attain the appropriate levels for their age.
77. Throughout the key stage pupils fail to achieve a satisfactory standard in the writing skills of grammar, spelling and punctuation. In Year 6 a few higher-attaining pupils achieve above average standards, but most pupils do not use full stops and capital letters reliably. Writing follows a basic plan. Grammar and punctuation are not used consistently. Handwriting and general presentation are poor. The majority of pupils have not developed a joined handwriting style. This affects the presentation of their writing, which is a weak feature throughout the school.
78. Pupils who receive additional literacy support in small groups enjoy the sessions and make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for through differentiated work and make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound, and sometimes good, progress when they benefit from regular support.
79. Pupils' attitudes to English are generally satisfactory, and where teaching is lively and enthusiastic the response of the pupils is very positive. However, a minority do not listen to the teacher and become restless, talk unnecessarily and behave inappropriately. On these occasions they learn little and progress slows. Pupils respond well to the familiar routines of literacy hour. However, they rarely show initiative in checking or extending their work and are too often satisfied with a minimum standard in their work. This limits opportunities to improve attainment further.
80. Lesson planning is thorough. A strength of English teaching throughout the school is the consistent approach that the literacy hour has brought. The introduction of standardised plans means that lessons have appropriate structure, balance and pace. In most lessons teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage them well. In a minority of lessons the strategies employed for behaviour management mean that impetus and pace are not maintained, and progress is slowed. In the best lessons the match of work is good, and teachers' expectations are high. The good demonstrations by teachers focus pupils' attention upon teaching points. In a few instances where pupils are not clear about their group tasks or when the task is too easy or too difficult pupils become restless and unfocused. In some group activities, pupils work individually, rather than in pairs or a group. In this way opportunities are missed for pupils to discuss and check out their thinking with each other, improve their speaking and listening, and rates of learning.

81. The school has made strategic plans to continue to raise the profile of literacy. The action plan is set out clearly and identifies targets and resources. A programme to raise standards by targeting specific groups of pupils has been introduced in Years 3 and 4. School assessments records show that this strategy is proving successful booster classes are in place for Year 6 and play an important role in improving the attainment of those pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language.
82. The management of this subject is an important factor in the improving standards. The curriculum manager manages the National Literacy Strategy effectively. She has monitored and analysed the work of colleagues and is aware that some teachers are more confident than others. She gives good advice on planning and monitoring, and supports the quality of teaching and the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

83. At the time of the last inspection in 1999, standards in mathematics were unsatisfactory. The results of the 2001 national assessments indicate that attainment was well above average at both key stages. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls or that of pupils of differing ethnic origins.
84. Throughout the school the beginning of each lesson is successfully dedicated to the development of numeracy skills. Pupils are given good opportunities to enhance their abilities to manipulate numbers quickly and accurately when solving mental calculations. Plenary sessions are used very effectively to reinforce learning, and pupils are given opportunities to debate and discuss their work.
85. Throughout both key stages, all pupils are making good progress and achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have English as an additional language, also make good progress as a result of the good support given by the coordinator of special educational needs and learning-support assistants.
86. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils count to and from 20 accurately and order numbers to ten correctly. The majority of pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of numbers up to 100. They count confidently in sequences of ten up to 100 and back to zero. They use standard units of centimetres to accurately measure lengths of lines and can distinguish between shortest and longest measurements. When challenged to find the appropriate resource to use for measuring the waist of a teddy bear, they correctly identify a tape measure and use it effectively.
87. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils understand that the clock face is divided into five-minute segments. Pupils in Year 4 are competent at using relationships between familiar units of length. Year 5 pupils successfully recall times tables and use them accurately in their work on fractions. Most pupils in Year 6 readily convert an improper fraction to a mixed number and vice versa.
88. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is always satisfactory and sometimes good. This generally good teaching is having a positive impact on standards as teachers have high expectations of behaviour and ability, and work is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively, helping and

supporting each other. Pupils are quite clear about what they are to learn, show interest in the activity, concentrate hard and show pride in their learning.

89. In Key Stage 2, overall, the teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons pupils are well managed, resources are well used, and the pace of the lesson is brisk. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, enabling them to match work correctly to the pupils' varying abilities. In these lessons, pupils generally concentrate well and apply themselves well to the work set. In lessons where teaching is less successful, pupils are not well managed, expectations of behaviour and the assessment of pupils' abilities are not high enough, and inappropriate tasks are set. As a result pupils become bored and do not concentrate well. Some disaffected behaviour interrupts the flow of the lesson and limits the learning opportunities for the rest of the class.
90. Throughout the school there are several areas for development.
- Pupils' written work is seldom neatly presented and marking rarely draws attention to this.
 - Almost no use is made of information technology to support learning in mathematics.
- These factors affect overall attainment and prevent achievement rising any further.
91. The coordination of mathematics is well managed and the quality of teaching and learning is carefully monitored. The policy for mathematics is up-to-date and curriculum planning is detailed and well set out. Assessment procedures are fully in place to track pupils' progress and ensure that they reach their predicted targets. Specialist training, targeted use of booster money, and the involvement of parents are all factors which have contributed to the progress made throughout the school. Homework is set regularly and assists pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

92. The last inspection report found that standards were well below average and had fallen at Key Stage 2. This situation has improved and standards now meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 national assessments for 2001 show science to be average. However, pupils' knowledge of the investigative process is unsatisfactory.
93. At Key Stage 1 pupils experience a suitable range of activities to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding. They sort materials according to a range of criteria and know the differences between living and non-living things. They make good use of prepared worksheets with spaces for their prediction, hypothesis and findings (writing frames) to support their recording of investigations and are already learning that scientific investigation is about asking the right question.
94. At Key Stage 2 great emphasis is put upon improving pupils' knowledge and this is effective. Pupils remember the facts well. For example, by the end of Year 6 they know that the earth revolves around the sun and that gravity is a force. They know the basic concepts of a food chain and understand the terms 'producer' and 'predator'. However, pupils in Year 6 do not understand the concepts of prediction, hypothesis and fair testing. This is largely due to unsatisfactory teacher knowledge of the investigative process. For example, they include 'finding out how bones grow' as an investigative activity that they can conduct in the classroom. In an activity to investigate the difference between soluble and insoluble materials, the record in an

able pupil's book merely lists the activity followed by a conclusion without any hypothesis or prediction, no discussion of why what happened, or any attempt to discover whether this was a fair test. Much of the work on this module consists of answering questions similar to those that might be asked in a test as preparation for national assessments. Whilst this ensures pupils' knowledge it does not support the development of understanding.

95. Discussion with pupils shows that most, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, remember facts, but only the most able pupils have an understanding the notion of a fair test.
96. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory in the lessons observed, an examination of pupils' past work indicates that teacher subject knowledge is a key area affecting standards overall at Key Stage 2, as teachers are clearly not sure of the main elements of a science investigation for pupils of this age. Alongside this, many of the books are poorly presented and too much work is unmarked. The acceptance, by some teachers, of poorly-presented work and the use of very limited records of investigations mean that teaching in this subject does not support the development of pupils' writing skills. Little or no use is made of information technology to support learning in this subject and insufficient opportunities are taken to use pupils' mathematical skills in recording information.
97. The coordinator is very aware of the areas for development and recently she has developed a series of writing frames to support the recording of investigations. Improving teachers' knowledge of investigations is an appropriate key area in the school improvement plan. The recently-formed education action zone has identified this area as a weakness in all of the schools covered, and a science consultant is to work with the school over the coming year to address the issue.

ART AND DESIGN

98. During the inspection, art and design were not taught due to the timetabling arrangements. Only a small amount of work was available from last year, mainly on display. The quality of the work on display was of satisfactory to good quality, with some very good pieces. For example, batik work done with a visiting artist was of very high quality. Some displays from last year contained sound examples of observational drawing and another display included examples of three-dimensional work in the form of clay tiles. Examination of teachers' planning and the school schemes of work show that art is planned for appropriately and the development of skills is identified in the planning. This evidence together with the few examples on display and the comments of pupils indicate that provision is satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, and therefore a secure judgement cannot be made. Judgements on attainment and achievement are based on discussion with pupils and teachers, a scrutiny of pupils' work on display and an examination of teachers' planning. Inspection findings are that standards are in line with those generally found for pupils of this age, at the end of both key stages.

100. In Year 1 pupils make model houses for book characters. These are carefully planned and the result of collaborative working. In Year 2 pupils make puppets using gluing, sewing and stapling techniques.
101. At Key Stage 2, pupils design and make purses for a variety of people. These are made to a specification with an action plan and were tested for suitability of use. Year 5 worked with theatre designers "L'Ouverture Trust" to design and make puppets and to stage a performance. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about this experience which has clearly helped pupils' learning in this subject.
102. The co-ordinator has produced a good comprehensive planning manual with lessons and their necessary sequence to ensure that skills are taught systematically. This includes the food technology strand. Tools and materials are easily accessible and stored in labelled drawers. They are all in good condition.

GEOGRAPHY

103. No geography lessons were seen during the period of inspection. However, based on a range of evidence, including the sample of work and discussion of work, attainment in geography is judged to be in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory. The school has adapted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authorities' scheme of work and the curriculum manager is currently reviewing this to ensure that it links appropriately with other areas of the curriculum.
104. By Year 2 pupils can follow simple routes, draw maps of the immediate locality and point out local landmarks. They are developing basic geographical vocabulary. By Year 6 pupils are able to understand major climate structures and use a range of instruments to measure weather conditions and compare features and life in contrasting localities. Presentation of work is variable and this does not support pupils' writing skills. However, in other areas the contribution of geography to literacy is significant; for example, the poems of Year 6 outlining the journey of a river.
105. Information and communication technology is not used efficiently to support geography; for example, using the Internet for maps and CD-ROMs as sources of data.

HISTORY

106. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection, but discussions with pupils, interviews with staff, and scrutiny of displays and work show that, overall, teachers are successfully encouraging an interest in history. Evidence indicates that pupils at both key stages attain standards that are generally in line with those expected. Progress is satisfactory for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
107. In the actual lessons seen, the teaching was judged to be good at both key stages. In the Year 2 class, resources are carefully selected and appropriate, pupils are well managed and there are high expectations of pupils both in terms of oral response and of their behaviour. A good pace is maintained throughout the lesson. In the Year 6 lesson, the good use of resources, including a video, ensures a lively introduction to the topic of evacuation, and pupils are eager to take part in follow-up activities.

108. In Year 2, pupils carefully observe the differences between the clothes worn in the past by the Victorians and the clothes of today. 'Victorian clothes were long, heavy, thick and hot and uncomfortable to wear, whereas today our clothes are short, light, thin and keep us cool.' They discuss how fashions change and how women rarely wear hats today.
109. In Year 6, pupils accurately identify the feelings evacuees would have experienced as they left major cities for the countryside; for example, the feelings of apprehension, excitement and adventure, and also of fear. Pupils understand the need for evacuation, for their personal safety, since cities were more likely to be targeted than the countryside. They talk knowledgeably about changes evacuation brought about; for example, the need for rationing, because of shortages. Pupils gain an understanding of what war meant not only for the people of our country but also for those in Germany, who also faced hardships and fear of the Nazis.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. Information technology was considered a weakness of the school at the last inspection. Currently standards are well below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Changes to teaching staff and the priority given to improving standards in English, mathematics and science mean that information technology has not received detail attention yet. The changes to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study that have taken place since the last inspection have raised expectations in this subject. As a result standards now appear lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, although this is not the case.
111. The youngest pupils in the school use the computer regularly to support their learning in the Foundation Stage. They learn how to use the mouse to control events on the screen, as when using simple counting games to support mathematical development. Some simple art work is done by pupils in Key Stage 1 using programmes such as Colour Magic. However this work is quite basic as pupils are only just becoming familiar with the programme and teachers have not yet received training in the use of the programme. At Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to use the computer suite and the computers in the classrooms for simple word processing. This is at a very simple stage, with pupils only just starting to use the computer to cut and paste text or insert clip art into a piece of writing. In most cases pupils are working on this at a level normally found with pupils at least two years younger. A few pupils, who have access to computers at home, are proficient, but the majority of pupils are not secure in this task. Delays in bringing the computer suite into action and problems with some of the equipment means that pupils in Year 6 have not had enough access to information technology farther down the school and are now having to learn skills that are currently planned for pupils much younger.
112. Problems with equipment have limited the use of the suite for email and Internet access and this is compounded by the shortage of computers. Part of this is because governors have not given sufficient attention to this area of the curriculum since the last inspection. This is partly due to the great urgency of raising standards in English and mathematics which has taken a great deal of the available funding. However, the coordinator has not been sufficiently active in pressing the governors for more support. The school has not received a great deal of money from the National Grid for Learning which has made it difficult to obtain more computers. This is changing and during the course of the inspection several more computers became available. Currently the ratio of pupils to computers is 17:1, well below the

recommended 11:1. In addition the space in the suite is very limited and only eight of the computers were in working order during the inspection due to problems with the support available. In order to use the suite effectively teachers have to split classes and this requires the support of a classroom assistant. Even when only half a class is working in the suite, space is still very limited and teachers do not have access to large screens or LCD projectors that would make it easier to teach a group.

113. A significant factor limiting attainment in this subject is the low level of teacher confidence and expertise. Information technology is a focus of the school improvement plan, and teacher expertise has been identified as an area for development. Suitable training for teachers has been organised for next term, using funds available under the National Opportunities Fund (NOF). The coordinator has identified that a key element required in this training is how to use computers effectively to help pupils learn in other subjects, and the NOF trainer has been chosen with this in mind. Schemes of work in other subjects do not reflect sufficiently the role that information technology can play. This is a weakness and an area yet to be developed as teachers seek to raise standards and make effective use of information and communication technology equipment. Alongside this, access to suitable software is limited and this restricts further opportunities for using information technology to support learning. Information technology does have a higher profile in the current school development plan in order to address the issues highlighted above.

MUSIC

114. No lessons were observed during the course of the inspection and therefore no judgements can be made about either teaching or standards at either key stage.
115. Pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies to the sound of music and they sing with gusto and enthusiasm. Some teachers also sing with their pupils in class, as seen in Year 2 when all concerned enjoyed the 'improvised concert'. A display of photographs also showed pupils performing in the 'Colourscape Balloon' at the Crystal Palace, with some tuning their instruments and others performing solo parts. This provides good opportunities for pupils to share their talents and develop their enjoyment of music.
116. Two music specialists visit the school each week. One teaches individual pupils to play a brass instrument and the other visits for half a day a week, working with classes throughout the school. An additional specialist worked with pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the summer term and it is planned for this provision to be available this year for older pupils in order to improve attainment and progress in music. Pupils who play brass instruments and recorders are given opportunities in the concerts and demonstrate the progress they make.
117. The music policy is based upon ensuring that all pupils get suitable access to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The guideline of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are used as a basis for the curriculum and this is to be adapted with the support of the specialist teachers, to meet the needs of the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Evidence indicates that pupils at both key stages attain standards that are generally in line with those expected. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when standards were found to be unsatisfactory.
119. Although only one lesson in Key Stage 1 was observed, information gained from discussions with pupils and interviews with staff shows that teachers are successfully encouraging an interest in gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. In the lesson observed in a Year 2 class, the teacher has a good understanding of the subject and aptly challenges the pupils with appropriate activities. The lesson is conducted at a brisk pace and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, use the opportunity well to demonstrate their skills in performing a sequence involving movement and balance. They respond to the stimuli of music and, accordingly, alter the rhythm, speed, level and direction of their movements to create and successfully perform a sequence which includes two balances in their dances. They can feel the muscles stretching at the back of their legs as they twist and furl to the speed of the music in various directions.
120. Pupils in Key Stage 2 regularly participate in swimming lessons at Dulwich College and a fully qualified coach is employed to instruct them. By the age of 11, all pupils reach the expected standard in swimming.
121. Pupils work with enjoyment and enthusiasm in physical education lessons, and this helps to develop their positive attitude to school.
122. The curriculum now provided is broad and balanced. An up-to-date policy takes account of changes in the curriculum. A scheme of work is yet to be developed, as is in-service training for all staff. Pupils' work is regularly assessed to ensure that the work provided for them enables them to attain new skills.
123. At the time of the last inspection there was little provision for extra-curricular activities. A new co-ordinator who has specialist knowledge of this subject has been appointed to lead the subject and, together with the Crystal Palace Sports Development Council, the school now participates in a range of extra-curricular activities. These include coaching for basketball, netball, rugby, kwik cricket, mini-games and athletics. The school takes pride in having won three trophies in the Lambeth Schools Football League. The premises officer plays an important role in assisting the co-ordinator in training pupils for these events. Pupils in Key Stage 1 take part in healthy exercise events supported by Bromley Council as an additional boost to their attainment and learning in this subject.
124. Guidelines for the safety of physical education are very clearly written and provide a good focus for newly-qualified teachers, newly-appointed staff and learning-support assistants.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. Standards in religious education were low at the time of the last inspection in 1999. A new scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus for religious education was introduced in 1999, but there has not been enough time in the two years since then for the scheme to be fully implemented throughout the school. Consequently, although standards at the end of Year 2 are now broadly in line with expectations, the standards at the end of Year 6 remain below average.

126. Suitable strategies are in place to support the development and improvement in this subject. For example, the school now has visiting specialist teachers who work with children to develop their understanding of Christianity. Much of the work currently done is oral and therefore little evidence was available to support judgements. Discussion with pupils and an examination of wall displays reveal that pupils are aware of the three basic faiths studied by the school: Christianity, Islam and Judaism. By the end of Year 2, pupils are aware that there are different faiths and these faiths all have their own special books. By the end of Year 6, pupils are aware of the major places of worship of Christianity, Islam and Judaism and know the main festivals of the Christian calendar. However, pupils in Year 6 do not know enough about the main tenets of the faiths studied and are unaware of the principle of religions as rules to live by.
127. The fact that much of the work is oral means that religious education does not support the development of literacy skills and no use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in this subject. As a result very little work is recorded that can be used to assess pupils' progress.