

INSPECTION REPORT

CHAMBERSBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117214

Headteacher: Mr A George

Reporting inspector: Mr M H Cole
3369

Dates of inspection: 28th January – 1st February 2002

Inspection number: 221678

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hill Common Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Rutherford
Date of previous inspection:	February 2000

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3369	Mr M Cole	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13981	Mr T Morgan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1696	Mr R Sharman	Team inspector	Mathematics Art History Foundation Stage English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28071	Mr A Williams	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	
17182	Dr M Farrell	Team inspector		Special educational needs unit

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average size primary school of 209 boys and girls aged four to eleven, together with a further thirty children aged three to four who attend a nursery class in the mornings only. Inspectors judge the social and economic circumstances of the residential area from which pupils come to be broadly average. The attainment of children starting at the school is also average overall. About 12 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic background. Some of these have learnt English as an additional language but only a very small number need and receive extra support in acquiring basic competence in English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is average. However, there are six pupils with statements of special educational needs, a high proportion. Five of these pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties for which they are supported by a special unit within the school. An exceptional feature of the school in the last two years has been a very high turnover of staff. Seven of the school's eight classes are taught by teachers new to the school since its previous inspection in 2000. The headteacher and six other teachers joined the school at the beginning of the present school year in September 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school which has made marked progress in the last five months under the strong leadership of the new headteacher. The largely new staff shows a clear, shared commitment to support the drive to raise standards. Standards of work are improving and are currently average in most subjects. Attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils are now achieving well in most of their lessons in response to improved teaching which is now of overall good quality, and shows some areas of considerable strength. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is of good quality overall and very good in the Foundation Stage¹ where teaching of language, literacy and communication skills in the reception class is excellent.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in response to effective provision and those attached to the special unit benefit from very good provision.
- Pupils show interest and enthusiasm, behave well and make good relationships.
- Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development, their care and welfare, and the means for promoting good behaviour are especially good.
- Parents are kept very well informed and have positive views of the school.
- Leadership and management of the school are now good overall, with very strong leadership by the new headteacher and good support from governors.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics at age seven, and in information and communication technology at age eleven, which are improving but not yet satisfactory.
- Standards in art and design and in design and technology, where too little time is devoted to the work.
- Girls' attainments in National Curriculum tests, which are significantly lower than boys'.
- Outdoor accommodation and resources for children's learning at the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

¹ **Foundation Stage:** education before pupils enter Year 1, i.e. in the nursery and reception classes

At its previous inspection in March 2000 the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. The school no longer has serious weaknesses. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is judged to be satisfactory, with areas of both good and insufficient improvement. *More significant, though, are the many signs of rapid improvement in the present school year since the appointment of a new headteacher and several other new teachers.* Standards in English, mathematics and science, especially for pupils aged five to seven, were matters of concern at the previous inspection. Significant improvement has taken place here to make standards mostly satisfactory, though further improvement in mathematics for pupils aged five to seven is necessary. Teaching in these areas, and in the school as a whole, has improved but some of the improvement is too recent to have yet had a full impact on raising standards. Teaching is now good overall whereas it was satisfactory at the previous inspection. Amongst concerns at the previous inspection were the standards and curriculum in information and communication technology. There has been some improvement here but the high turnover of staff has interrupted improvement both in this subject and in design and technology, with the result that the standards in both subjects remain unsatisfactory for the oldest pupils. A major programme of staff training in information and communication technology is about to start. An appropriate emphasis on raising standards in English and mathematics, and the loss of staff with specialist knowledge, have also meant that previous strengths in the work in physical education and music have not been maintained, though standards remain satisfactory. Previous weaknesses in assessing pupils' progress, in checks on learning and in governors' involvement in leadership of the school have been resolved. Assessment is now satisfactory and governors and senior staff now work well together to keep a good check on the school's performance. *Good improvement in management processes, very strong leadership by the new headteacher and the firm commitment of a united staff team mean that the school now has a very good capacity to improve further.*

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 ¹
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	C	C
mathematics	E	E	C	C
science	E	E	D	E

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

¹Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

The table shows improvement in all three subjects since 2000. This is confirmed by the quality of the oldest pupils' work seen during the inspection which, like the test results, is close to the national standard in English and mathematics. Test results met the school's realistic targets for English and mathematics, but fell short of the local authority's targets which inspectors consider to have been unrealistic. In science, too, the work seen now matches the national standard, indicating recent improvement in this subject. Work seen in geography, music and physical education was in line with the attainment expected nationally. However, within physical education a good standard is achieved in swimming. In religious education pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. In history there was too little recent evidence for standards to be judged. Work in art and design, in design and technology and in information and communication technology falls short of the levels expected nationally.

When seven-year-olds took the 2001 standard National Curriculum tests, their results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Work seen during the inspection, though, shows marked

improvement, with reading and writing attainments in line with the national standard, and mathematics below, but no longer well below, the standard. In science and almost all other subjects, work seen was broadly in line with the standard expected nationally. However, in art and design too little recent work has been done for standards to be judged.

Recently improved standards for pupils aged five to eleven reflect improved teaching and the good achievement pupils demonstrate in most lessons. Children at the Foundation Stage also achieve well. They attain the early learning goals officially defined for this age-group, and in communication, language and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, the children are well on track to exceed the national goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils are interested in their work and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall and around the school, and very good in many lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils develop responsible attitudes, make good relationships and show independence. Progress in these respects is especially good in pupils' early years.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching shows all-round strength. Good planning of appropriate, interesting work and effective management of pupils leads pupils to behave well, work with concentration and make good progress. Teaching is now good throughout the school in English and mathematics, with development of basic literacy and numeracy skills being soundly supported with work across the curriculum. Teaching at the Foundation Stage is of consistently good or better quality. Teaching throughout the school meets the needs of pupils across the range of ability and provides well for pupils with special educational needs. The school's many support staff make a good contribution to the teaching, particularly when supporting pupils of lower ability or with special needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory at the Foundation Stage but unsatisfactory in Years 1-6 where the curriculum, though broad, is unbalanced. There has been an emphasis on English and mathematics at the expense of art and design, and design and technology, to which insufficient time has been devoted.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is well managed; well-planned individual work for pupils combines with good teaching and with effective help from support staff. The provision made by the special unit is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small number of these pupils is well supported.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, but good for moral and social development. Cultural development does not pay enough attention to the breadth of cultures in our society or beyond.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good care is shown and good support provided; the strategy for promoting good behaviour is especially effective.

Provision of care and support for pupils is helped by the good relations and communications the school maintains with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher gives very strong leadership to a united and committed team of staff. There is good management of the Foundation Stage, of provision for special needs and of the work in literacy. Teachers are very well supported.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are performing well. They are supportive and well informed. They are well aware of the school's strengths, and of where improvement is needed, and they are effectively holding the school to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Procedures for keeping a check on the school's performance, especially the quality of teaching and learning, are now effectively promoting school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are efficiently used. Principles of 'best value' are well used to see that financial decisions make the most efficient use of funds.

The school has an adequate number of teachers and a good number of support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory except for the significant lack of a suitable outdoor area for Foundation Stage activity. Resources for learning are mostly satisfactory but there is insufficient equipment and material for art and design and for design and technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>That their children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like school • make good progress • behave well at school • become more mature and responsible <p>That the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is well led and managed • provides good teaching • expects pupils to work hard • is approachable with questions or problems 	<p>A small minority of parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would like a different amount of homework • would like more activities outside lessons

Inspectors support all of parents' positive views. They judge the homework arrangements to be satisfactory. There is a good number of sporting activities outside lessons, but inspectors agree that in other respects the range is narrow.

TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT

Ages	Years	also known as	Curriculum stage
3 to 5	Nursery and Reception classes		Foundation Stage
5+ to 7	1,2	Infants	National Curriculum Key Stage 1
7+ to 11	3,4,5,6	Juniors	National Curriculum Key Stage 2

JUDGEMENTS OF ATTAINMENT

Inspection judgements of pupils' *attainment* focus mainly on:

- Pupils completing the *Foundation Stage*, at about age **5**
- Pupils in *Year 2* completing *Key Stage 1*, at about age **7** - this is also when pupils take standard National Curriculum tests (SATs)
- Pupils in *Year 6* completing *Key Stage 2*, at about age **11** - this is also when pupils take standard National Curriculum tests (SATs)

PART B: COMMENTARY

NOTE

Comparisons with the previous inspection report

At the time of this inspection seven of the school's eight classes were taught by teachers new to the school since its previous inspection in 2000. The headteacher and six of the present class teachers started at the school at the beginning of the present school year. In terms of its staffing this is, therefore, a largely new school. As a result, comparisons made in this report between inspectors' present findings and those reported following the previous inspection are of limited significance.

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Attainment of pupils at age eleven as they leave the school

1. In the summer of 2001 pupils aged eleven took standard National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. Compared with the national picture, their results were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Detailed analysis of results shows that, in all three subjects, these results were a considerable improvement over the 2000 results which had, in turn, been much better than those in 1999. A trend of rising standards appears to be established. This is also borne out by the more recent evidence from the work seen during the inspection. A significant improvement in science standards means that pupils now achieve the national standard in all three subjects.
2. Work seen during the inspection was in line with the attainment expected nationally in geography, music and physical education. Within physical education, though, a good standard is achieved in swimming. In religious education pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. The planned curriculum does not provide for teaching of history in Year 6 in the first half of the year and there was therefore no evidence of the oldest pupils' work on which to base a judgement. Work in art and design, in design and technology and in information and communication technology falls short of the level expected nationally because pupils' understanding and skills are underdeveloped. Too little time is devoted to these subjects, partly reflecting the school's priority of raising standards in basic literacy and numeracy skills. The many changes of staff over the last two years have also seriously hindered the attempt to improve teaching and raise standards in these subjects.

Attainment of pupils at age seven

3. When seven-year-olds towards the end of Year 2 took the 2001 standard National Curriculum tests, their results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. There was some improvement in reading and mathematics results between 1999 and 2001, but results in writing in 2001 were lower than in any of the previous four years. The school's own teacher assessments of pupils' attainment in science showed the standard of science to be above average. However, since the teacher assessments in English and mathematics proved to be rather higher than

pupils' test results, inspectors doubt the reliability of the science assessments. The school's present senior management agrees with this view.

4. The work of present Year 2 pupils seen during the inspection paints a very different picture from the previous year's test results. Inspectors judge pupils now to be achieving average standards in reading and writing while standards in mathematics are a little below average. In all three basic skills standards have clearly risen sharply in a short time. This trend is consistent with the good teaching and good pupil progress evident in lessons observed and in pupils' recent written work.
5. In science and almost all other subjects of the curriculum, work seen during the inspection was broadly in line with the level of attainment expected nationally. However, in art and design there was too little recent work for a judgement of standards to be made.

Attainment of pupils in the reception class (the Foundation Stage)

6. Children start school with broadly typical attainment, although their standards in communication, language and literacy are somewhat below average. They achieve well, especially in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children presently in the nursery and reception classes are well on track to exceed the standards set nationally for five-year-olds in these areas. Attainments in mathematical, personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development are in line with those expected nationally.

Achievement throughout the school

7. Pupils' past test results in English, mathematics and science suggest that pupils' past achievement has generally been unsatisfactory between ages five and seven, but mostly satisfactory between ages seven and eleven. When pupils' test results last year are compared with those in similar schools, as defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school's results for eleven-year-olds are average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Results for seven-year-olds are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
8. A similar picture of achievement for older pupils comes from comparing each pupil's past test results at age seven with their later results at age eleven. This comparison shows that most pupils leaving the school in 2001 made the progress to be expected. A significant number, though, made less progress than to be expected, especially in the case of more able pupils.
9. A more positive picture of pupils' achievement emerges from the limited but more recent evidence of lessons seen during the inspection and from recent written work examined. This shows marked improvement in pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2. Here, well-planned, well-managed and challenging teaching is promoting pupil industry and good behaviour and resulting in good achievement. The improvement is less marked in Years 3-6, where achievement was already satisfactory, but here, too, achievement seen in lessons and recent work is generally good.

Comparing groups of pupils

10. Taking several years' test results and inspectors' observations into account, there are

no clear and consistent differences in achievement between pupils from different social or ethnic backgrounds, or between pupils of different ability levels. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. However, there are significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Taking results in national tests in English, mathematics and science over the last three years boys have done markedly better than girls relative to the national pattern of results. The causes of this discrepancy are not evident at the present time, but inspectors judge that the school needs to take compensatory action to ensure girls' achievement improves.

Progress of pupils with special educational needs

11. Some classes have a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and provision for these pupils is good. Good collaboration between the co-ordinator for special educational needs, staff and learning support assistants ensures pupils' needs are identified and well targeted work is provided for them. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, which have clear objectives that allow pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their personal development are good. This was also the judgement at the last inspection. Attendance is also good.
13. Throughout all classes most pupils have a positive approach to learning and enjoy being in school. Almost all parents say that their children like coming to school. In lessons, most pupils listen carefully to instructions, work well independently or in co-operation with others and show an enthusiasm to do well. They respond eagerly to questions and accept that others may have a different point of view. Pupils of all ages contribute when asked to do so in whole-school assemblies. Almost all respond well to challenge and persevere when they find things difficult, learning from their mistakes. Most pupils can explain what they are doing and are keen to show their work. The enjoyment of learning is frequently evident – in a Year 3 numeracy lesson, when pupils were challenged to make a three-dimensional figure from straws and pipe cleaners, one pupil was heard to say, ' This is good fun!'
14. Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour and inspection judgements support these views. Both parents and pupils say that there has been a great improvement in behaviour since the introduction of the new behaviour policy last September. Pupils are well aware of the standards expected from them; they appreciate the rewards for good behaviour and understand the escalating system of sanctions. In most classes, pupils are polite to staff, visitors and, usually, to each other. When instances of unacceptable behaviour occur, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. There is no evidence of bullying this year and pupils are aware of what to do if they encounter any. Last year, there were five fixed period exclusions and one permanent exclusion – all involving just two boys.
15. Relationships throughout the school are good. The staff, teaching and non-teaching, are good role models and make every effort to form positive, helpful relationships with all pupils. There are some close friendships between pupils in classes and many pupils of different ages play amicably at break-times. Some older pupils specifically look after younger ones in the playgrounds. Pupils co-operate well in pairs when working in classes and collaborate effectively when required to engage in group or whole-class activities. They show an interest in what other pupils are achieving and appreciate the efforts of those less able than themselves. In the extra-curricular clubs and sports

practices, pupils of both sexes and a range of ages mix together very well.

16. Pupils show respect for those who are somehow different from themselves, for example in ability, gender, ethnic or social background. Pupils with special educational needs show the same positive attitudes as other pupils and are included in the co-operative and supportive relationships found amongst pupils.
17. The personal development of pupils is good. Almost all parents say that the school is successful in encouraging their children to become mature and responsible. The opportunities for responsibility, given in all classes, are eagerly sought and effectively discharged. Pupils in Year 6 are appropriately given more responsibility such as running the library, setting up and operating equipment at assemblies, assisting the youngest pupils with their meals at lunchtime and acting as 'Buddies' in the playground by looking out for upset or lonely pupils. All pupils are divided into four houses, which gives rise to keen competition for the cup that is awarded weekly. The residential visit for older pupils provides experience of a different social environment and a variety of challenges, both academic and physical, which contribute greatly to their personal development.
18. The level of attendance, at well above the national average, is good. Registers are completed correctly in accordance with requirements. Punctuality is very good. Efficient registration ensures a prompt start to lessons, which has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching in the school is good for pupils aged five to eleven and very good at the Foundation Stage. Three-quarters of the fifty-five lessons seen during the inspection were of at least good quality and the remaining quarter were all satisfactory. The quality of teaching in a third of all lessons was very good or, in the case of three lessons seen, excellent. There are examples of good and very good teaching in all parts of the school but the consistently good quality of teaching at the Foundation Stage, including excellent teaching of literacy skills in the reception class, justify the view that teaching here is very good overall. At the previous inspection teaching was good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for pupils aged five to eleven. Present judgements therefore show teaching to be improved throughout the school. As a result pupils are now achieving well in most subjects.
20. Teaching at the Foundation Stage shows a very good understanding of what and how young children should learn. Planning is very thorough but in addition to this the teaching takes full advantage of incidental opportunities to promote learning, particularly in basic skills. Teachers and support staff work very closely together to manage stimulating activities and to provide firm but encouraging management of pupils. The result is a calm, happy and busy learning environment where pupils make good and sometimes very good progress.
21. The teaching for pupils aged five to eleven is good in most subjects of the curriculum, and *especially* so in English and mathematics. Lessons in these subjects use guidance from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Effective adjustments have been made in implementing the literacy strategy to give more time for writing where the standard needed particularly to improve. Good use is beginning to be made of links across the curriculum so that work in a range of subjects gives good support and practice in literacy skills. For example, recent work in science in Years 4 and 6 has provided good consolidation of pupils' writing skills. Good questioning and

encouragement of answers in many lessons gives good support to pupils' use of speaking and listening skills. In a Year 3 science lesson, for example, some pupils were successfully encouraged to give extensive explanations about their planning of an investigation. Science and geography teaching, in particular, give some sound opportunities for pupils to practise mathematical skills of measurement or handling data, as when Year 2 pupils during the inspection measured hand spans in centimetres and constructed a block graph to show their results. There is also some use of information and communication technology to support work across the curriculum but there are also some missed opportunities, for example in the oldest pupils' handling and presentation of data from science investigations.

22. Planning of lessons is generally good and shows a clear sense of what pupils are intended to learn. The lesson objectives are almost always shared with pupils at the beginning of the lessons and pupils are usually invited to evaluate their own progress at the end of their lessons. At the end of a Year 1 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils were asked to say where they felt they had understood and where they felt they needed to have more help. These strategies, together with teachers' skilful use of rewards, means that most pupils take a responsible attitude to their learning. They are keen to learn, behave well and concentrate well on work which they undertake at a good pace. The school has recently begun to tell pupils about targets set for them to achieve in their work in literacy. These are pasted at the front of their exercise books as a reminder. Some targets are a little hard for pupils to understand and the school recognises that these strategies need to be evaluated and further developed. Planning of the work usually makes the teaching interesting and many activities are imaginatively presented to make them fun as well as challenging. This is another reason why pupils work and behave well, and why lessons are orderly, relaxed but purposeful events.
23. The setting of appropriate and challenging tasks is aided by the sound assessments of pupils' day-to-day progress which teachers make. Pupils' work is conscientiously marked, often with encouraging comments or reward symbols, but pointers to improvement are not often given, except in the Year 1 class, where marking is especially good. Teachers know individual pupils' abilities and needs well and can thus provide for them. Work is suitably adapted and presented to meet the needs of less able children. Planning benefits from the clear guidance on strategies to be employed with pupils with special educational needs which is contained in their individual education plans. There is a strong commitment to ensuring all pupils, including those with special needs or those for whom English is an additional language, are given the individual help needed to make proper progress. These pupils frequently benefit from individual or small-group aid from support staff who are well briefed through close co-operation with the class teacher. Support staff are almost always very effective in these situations, managing pupils well, being challenging but very supportive and thereby promoting good progress, especially in basic literacy and numeracy skills.
24. Although the work given to pupils is almost always well matched to their level of attainment, occasionally a very small number of the most able pupils in the class are not fully challenged by their tasks. The school is aware of this and has appointed a senior teacher to co-ordinate provision for gifted and talented pupils. Strategies for setting special targets for these pupils are being piloted in two classes, in preparation for a whole-school approach.
25. Although in most respects the teaching provides well for the range of pupils' ages, abilities and needs, it is not taking sufficient account of the need to tackle the underachievement of girls revealed by the school's national test results in recent years. The present teaching staff are not consciously creating the disparity but they are not

doing enough to compensate for the fact that some girls appear to come to some lessons with lower expectations of themselves or less motivation to succeed than they should. In some lessons seen in Years 3 and 6, for example, girls generally tended to be less involved in class discussion than boys. Boys pushed themselves forward as contributors to discussion more assertively than girls and the teachers unwittingly responded to this with the result that boys answered more and were thus rewarded for their answers more. The hectic pace at which discussion was conducted in these lessons contributed to this tendency.

26. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods which they choose well to suit particular objectives for the learning. In most subjects, teachers show good knowledge of the subject which leads to clear, confident and sometimes enthusiastic presentation, explanation and demonstration of ideas. Confident knowledge enabled the teacher to present a very lively Year 6 science lesson to which pupils responded enthusiastically. Similarly, Year 4 pupils were able to make good progress in understanding during a writing lesson when taught very clearly about the use of connecting words in sentences. Good knowledge is also apparent in the good questioning of pupils found in many lessons and which succeeds in challenging pupils' understanding. Teachers are resourceful in finding and devising teaching methods. In Year 3 science and design and technology lessons, effective use was made of opportunities for pupils to consult with each other in pairs, for a minute or two before responding to a difficult question posed by the teacher. This was effective in giving all pupils time to think, to seek support from their partner, and plan what they had to say. This resulted in many thoughtful and extensive contributions to the whole-class discussion afterward.
27. Satisfactory use is made of homework to allow pupils to extend and consolidate their learning at home. Regular work, appropriate to pupils' ages, is given in basic literacy and numeracy skills and there are occasional open-ended tasks which encourage pupils to practise skills of finding out information for themselves. Most pupils respond to encouragement to read at home and their reading diaries are often used well as a channel for dialogue between teacher and parents. Most parents value the homework arrangements although a few refer to inconsistencies, which may reflect the newness of the procedures and of many staff.

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

28. The school provides its pupils with a broad curriculum which complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum, the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. However, it is not sufficiently balanced and is therefore unsatisfactory overall. Not enough attention is given to art and design and to design and technology and standards in these subjects are below average. Pupils learn about other faiths in religious education but the curriculum as a whole does not pay enough attention to providing pupils with opportunities to learn about cultures that are different from their own.
29. National initiatives to raise standards in writing and numeracy have been enthusiastically implemented by the staff new to the school and the effect is seen in the good teaching in these subjects. Emphasis has been commendably placed by the new headteacher and senior management team on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Curriculum planning has led to arrangements where art and design are taught each term in a half term block. However, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that these arrangements have not been effectively implemented. The problem is compounded by the lack of written guidance in these

subjects about the skills pupils should develop as they move through the school. Consequently pupils do not systematically develop the skills needed if they are to reach the standards expected nationally. In addition, the new curriculum planning arrangements mean that in history, Year 6 pupils go for almost a year since they were last taught the subject. It was not possible to judge the effect of this decision on standards during the inspection. Apart from these planning problems, the school effectively promotes equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils and is keen to identify any potential barriers to their learning.

30. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is hindered, though, by the poor quality of the provision for outdoor play. Planning takes good account of the national Foundation Stage guidance and of the National Curriculum to which children progress. A feature of the curriculum is the careful way the teachers plan the curriculum so that areas of learning are effectively linked together. For example, during the inspection the focus in developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world was learning about their senses. Accordingly, teachers planned the role-play areas around a medical theme and a visit has been made to a local doctor's surgery. Such planning of the curriculum enhances children's learning.
31. Schemes of work have been adapted and developed to take account of the revised National Curriculum. The school has now implemented well the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this is reflected in the predominantly good teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy now seen across the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in lessons in other subjects is satisfactory and pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use information and communication technology in most other subjects. The curriculum is enhanced through well-planned visits to places of educational interest in the local area and through visitors to the school such as musicians and 'Tudor soldiers'. These arrangements contribute significantly to pupils' learning. The provision for activities outside lessons is satisfactory. At the moment these are mainly focused on sport but plans are in hand to widen the range of activities.
32. The curriculum needs of pupils with special educational needs are carefully considered and the overall provision is good. All class teachers, helped by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, write good individual education plans for pupils and ensure the plans are followed during lessons. The plans set targets for their progress and indicate clearly the strategies teachers should use to meet each pupil's needs.
33. The school's links with the community give satisfactory support to the curriculum. Use is made of the local area in connection with lessons and projects – such as the visit of the whole of the reception class to the local doctors' surgery where they got ideas on how to act in their 'surgery' in the classroom. Visitors to the school cover a wide spectrum of topics including the Methodist minister who came to talk about baptism and a Jewish parent who explained the Jewish New Year.
34. There are satisfactory links with partner institutions. Pupils from Year 6 visit the adjoining secondary school in their final term and Year 7 pupils come across to talk about their experiences in the senior school. There is regular liaison between the headteachers and class teachers of the two schools and some facilities at the secondary school, such as the technology laboratories, science equipment and the sports hall, are made available on occasions. The school is fully represented and involved in the various groupings of Hertfordshire schools.
35. The governors are well informed about the curriculum through the performance and curriculum committee and the pairs of governors who are linked to individual subject

co-ordinators. The governors have approved a policy for sex education which is satisfactorily implemented. Pupils are satisfactorily taught about the dangers of the misuse of drugs and of smoking.

36. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. Religious education gives pupils insights into the values and beliefs of other religions including Judaism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured through whole-school and class assemblies when they have the opportunity to briefly reflect on people who help us. A sense of reverence was brought into one whole-school assembly when a candle was lit to aid reflection. Children in the Foundation Stage were given the opportunity of watching a candle flame whilst the significance of candles to Christianity was explained to them. In assemblies pupils enjoy their singing, which is of a good standard. Their weekly hymn practice supports spiritual development with opportunities to discuss the text. Visits to places of worship and visitors into the school from different religions contribute well to pupils' spiritual awareness.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The good relationships that exist in the school and the good examples set by all who work in it support moral development. Teachers consistently reinforce the recently introduced behaviour code, clearly displayed in all classrooms, and pupils learn right from wrong. The weekly achievement assembly makes a strong contribution to this aspect because pupils are rewarded not only for good work but also for kindness, putting others before themselves and putting others' welfare before their own. In this way pupils further develop a good sense of right and wrong.
38. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' social development. The youngest children are taught to play co-operatively and are taught to use resources well. Older pupils are given responsibilities such as helping at lunchtimes and as 'Buddies' when they befriend pupils who may be feeling lonely. The range of sports activities outside lessons gives older pupils opportunities to mix with other pupils outside their own class and to meet pupils from other schools. Residential trips make a valuable contribution to use new skills in a new setting and learn to get along with each other away from home. Teachers routinely use pair and group as effective teaching strategies, which encourages pupils to work well together and to share ideas. Pupils from the special needs unit are integrated well into main school.
39. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. As part of religious education pupils have learned about the richness and diversity of other cultures; for example Islam and Judaism. Pupils have opportunities to listen to music from other cultures. Pupils in a Year 1 music lesson listened well when they contrasted traditional British folk music with some music from Indonesia. The limited curriculum currently followed in art and design is restricting pupils' cultural development. On the residential trip to Wales, pupils will be taught some simple Welsh phrases so as to be able to carry out simple conversations with the neighbours of the centre. English country dancing and Maypole dancing, together with the crowning of the May Queen and the parvane, a Tudor dance which Year 6 pupils are learning, make a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of their own culture. However, opportunities for cultural development are missed in displays around the school, in assemblies and in many lessons. In general, too little is done to convey routinely to pupils the fact that they live in a society and a world of cultural diversity and to help them to appreciate and respect cultures other than their own.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The safe, supportive and caring environment provided for the pupils is a strength of the school. The good provision reported in the last report has been maintained. Pupils are well known by staff and there is an evident concern for their welfare and development. During lunchtime and other breaks, as well as in the classrooms, pupils are supervised sensitively and effectively. This makes a significant contribution towards the pupils' feeling of security and their enjoyment of school life, which has a substantial effect on pupils' achievements.
41. Teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils in their own class very well and are always striving to provide a learning environment in which each pupil feels valued and fully included in all class activities. There are good procedures for the introduction of children into the nursery and reception class with parents being involved appropriately. The programme of personal, social and health education is still being developed by the largely new staff but it already underpins the development of fully rounded junior citizens. Targets for personal as well as academic achievements are set in a variety of ways – sometimes for the whole class and at other times for groups or individual pupils. Targets are always discussed at parents' open evenings and are written in pupils' annual reports. There is satisfactory monitoring of personal development through class teachers' detailed knowledge of their own pupils, daily diaries and records of rewards such as house points. Much appreciated by the pupils is the reward of someone from each class 'sitting on the chair' next to their teacher at the Friday assembly.
42. The quality of support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff are alert to the needs of pupils with particular emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties and take swift action to support such pupils. There are good links with a range of support agencies such as the educational psychologist, behaviour support team and the speech therapist. Collaboration between main school staff and the special unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is close and effective.
43. There are satisfactory procedures for child protection with staff being reminded about them regularly. The health and safety policy is good with clear responsibilities and well detailed school procedures. The headteacher carries out a formal safety walk around the school every term and two other members of the staff have responsibility for doing independent, random safety assessments. Very good procedures are in place for the monitoring of pupils with chronic health conditions and there are good systems to ensure the routine servicing of fire, electrical and physical education equipment. There are good links with a range of professionals responsible for education, welfare and health.
44. The school also has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Teachers chase up any unexplained absences swiftly. The registers are examined weekly by the secretary who alerts the headteacher to any unusual patterns. The education welfare officer is involved appropriately. A strong line is taken on holidays in term time with the result that such disruptions to pupils' learning are relatively few.
45. The procedures for monitoring discipline and encouraging positive behaviour, and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour such as bullying, are good. The new behaviour policy, introduced last September, is very clear with an emphasis on praising good behaviour and a defined system of rewards and sanctions. The policy, which is consistently applied by the staff and midday supervisory assistants, is backed up by

class rules agreed by the pupils at the start of the year. Particularly noteworthy, is the 'Privilege Table' at Friday lunch when pupils, nominated by the supervisors in the dining hall for their good behaviour in the week, sit at a decorated table with a member of the staff. The headteacher keeps detailed records of incidents or concerns about an individual's conduct and involves parents at an early stage.

46. There has been satisfactory improvement in the school's arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in learning; these are now satisfactory overall. They include the establishment of detailed and manageable procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The assessment in these subjects is generally good. However, a weakness in assessing progress from results of national tests has been insufficient analysis of variations between different groups of pupils, especially boys and girls. As a result, the school has not recognised a strong indication from recent years' test results that boys do better than girls, relative to the national pattern. A useful start has been made to assessing pupils' progress in science. Assessment in the other subjects is underdeveloped, but is sufficient to enable teachers to make judgements as to how pupils are getting on in order to report this to parents at the end of the year. The information from assessment is used satisfactorily to identify targets for pupils to reach at the end of each year in English and mathematics. Effective use is made of nationally standardised tests to check individuals' progress towards these targets and, where necessary, changes are made to the support given to pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are assessed annually by staff from the local authority and where necessary additional and appropriate support is provided.
47. In the Foundation Stage, emphasis is placed on ensuring that the individual needs of the children, including those with special educational needs, are met. Effective arrangements are in place to assess pupils when they start school and throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes. This information is used satisfactorily to plan work.
48. Assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is developing a good procedure for the early identification of special educational needs and several staff have received additional training in this. Pupils' individual education plans are well reviewed regularly by class teachers and the co-ordinator to monitor progress towards the targets. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a good overview of needs within the school and of the progress of individual pupils on the school register of special needs, which is constantly updated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Overall, the school's partnership with parents is good. The impact of parents' involvement with the school is satisfactory. The quality of information provided for parents is very good.
50. Twenty parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 28 per cent of questionnaires were returned. Almost all views supported what the school is doing. Parents spoken to during the inspection reinforced the positive opinions. Many parents supported the view that the staff, several of which are young and new to teaching, have quickly become an enthusiastic team that works together very well. Particular praise was given for the teachers' attendance at out of school activities and for the staff pantomime that was described as very impressive and great fun for pupils and parents.
51. A large majority of parents say that their children like school, they make good progress both academically and in personal development and that the teaching is good with high

expectations of pupils' abilities. Inspection evidence supports these positive views.

52. Some parents have concerns about homework, mainly a matter of consistency in setting, and the range of activities outside lessons. A new homework policy was introduced last September and it has taken time to implement it fully, but it is now considered to be satisfactorily in place. Activities outside lessons are satisfactory although the range is currently dominated by sport.
53. A very few parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with them and that they are not well enough informed about the progress of their children. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Some teachers are available in the playground at the start of the day when urgent matters can be mentioned. Parents are encouraged to make appointments to see teachers for more formal discussions and these can usually be arranged at short notice – the same day if necessary. The headteacher makes himself readily accessible to parents, usually without the need for an appointment. Parents are quickly involved if the staff have any concerns about their child.
54. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has established and maintained good links with parents. Communication is good and arrangements for review meetings are well organised.
55. The quality of information provided for parents is very good – this is an improvement since the last inspection. Parents of children who are about to enter the nursery or the reception class are invited into school to look around their new environment and, at the start of the year, every class has a 'Meet the Teacher' session at which plans and ideas are shared with the parents. Formal parents' evenings, with appointment times, are held in the autumn and spring terms. Curriculum evenings are arranged, such as the literacy presentation for reception parents in the autumn term. A newsletter in a friendly, attractive format is sent out every two weeks and other well written letters are sent out as frequently as required. Annual written reports on pupils are very good; they give a very clear, detailed description of what the pupil has achieved and how progress can be made in the future in personal development as well as academic subjects. The governors' annual report to parents is good with a variety of presentation making it more readable as well as informative.
56. Parental involvement with the school and their children's work at home is satisfactory and is seen to be developing. It was decided, from the beginning of the school year, not to ask parents to help in classes at present so that the largely new staff and their learning assistants could develop their co-operative teaching procedures – which they have done successfully. Parents do help on visits and their expertise is well used to support projects and topics. There is good use made of the home-school reading diary with many useful comments by parents – particularly, as would be expected, for those in the younger classes. Homework is supported satisfactorily.
57. The 'Friends of Chambersbury School' play an important part in the life of the school. A variety of activities are organised by a hardworking group of parents and staff. Although fundraising is the main aim, most of the events have a social element and some involve the pupils. A large amount of money is raised each year and has been used for such as purchasing playground equipment and books and for giving each class teacher an annual cash fund to be spent on class facilities or projects. The efforts of 'the friends' make a major contribution to the school's facilities and the general development of the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The overall quality of the leadership and management of the school is good but it also has some very good features, the most significant of which is the very strong leadership which is being provided by the new headteacher. In little more than one school term the headteacher has promoted many effective developments. These are already making a significant impact on the standards of pupils' work and behaviour, and on the quality of their education, although it is too soon as yet for the full benefits of changes to be apparent. Very good leadership is seen in the headteacher's personal example of determined and energetic pursuit of school improvement. This is importantly supported by his success in bringing together the many new teachers and the existing staff, both teachers and support staff, to form a united and hardworking team who share his determination to improve the school. School staff give good support to each other, benefiting from each other's ideas and expertise in a shared willingness to evaluate their own professional practices and improve them. Teamwork is strong and morale is high. All of these features mean that the school now has both a strong commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to achieve it.
59. Taking a long-term view, inspectors find that the school has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection when it was found to have serious weaknesses, especially in the standards achieved and in management. However, of greater significance is the rapid improvement seen in the present school year. After the previous inspection, there followed a period of 'reasonable improvement'. This was the view of the team of local authority personnel reviewing the school's progress as part of its substantial programme of support for the school. However, there followed a period of great staff instability as many teachers left the school often to be replaced by temporary or short-stay staff. The high turnover of staff seriously hindered the process of school improvement until the appointment of the present headteacher and several new staff at the beginning of the present school year.
60. With the headteacher and several other teachers starting at the school it was important for there to be clear guidance on procedures. The headteacher met this need most successfully. Policies and practices for the breadth of school life were established and in most cases are already being consistently and effectively implemented. Success here has been achieved by a good process of consultation followed by firm expectations that agreed practices are followed, supported by checks to see that this is the case. A very good example of this is in the management of behaviour where staff consultation at the beginning of the year made improving behaviour a priority. Although historically a good feature, the standard of behaviour is said by staff, parents and pupils to have declined during the period of high staff turnover last year. A detailed strategy for managing behaviour was agreed and the effectiveness of its implementation is seen in a rapid improvement in behaviour.
61. A further positive feature of the school's leadership and management is the effectiveness with which some specific aspects of the school's work are co-ordinated. The clearest examples are in the very good management of the teaching of English, of the provision for special educational needs and of the Foundation Stage and the two key stages. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has written a draft policy in response to the new national Code of Practice that is inclusive and comprehensive, and the school has made good progress on some of the major changes involved.
62. At the previous inspection weakness in the work of subject co-ordinators was identified as hindering improvement. Despite the major upheavals in staffing, improvement has taken place and several co-ordinators both new to the school and to the role are growing in understanding of the part they must play and showing an enthusiasm to

move forward. Development in information and communication technology and in design and technology, though, has definitely suffered from lack of continuity in co-ordination and staffing since the previous inspection.

63. A weakness in the management of the school at the previous inspection was the lack of a 'clear whole-school approach to managing improvement of standards'. With much support from local education authority advisers the situation has been reversed and the school now has a good approach to raising standards. In particular, good checks are made on the quality of teaching and learning by headteacher and senior staff. A close check is kept on teachers' planning, on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and on the work pupils produce as a result. Appropriately, the emphasis to date has been very much on the main subjects of English and mathematics. The headteacher, in particular, has observed many lessons since his appointment and effectively identified strengths and weaknesses in the teaching. Checks are followed by appropriate consultation and support to help staff improve their performance. The several teachers new to teaching as well as to the school have been thoroughly supported and guided and as a result they are already making a very positive contribution to raising standards.
64. Governors, too, now join conscientiously with senior staff in keeping a check on the school's performance, thus answering well a criticism made at the previous inspection. Again, the local authority has given good guidance and training, for example to help governors develop skills of analysing data as a basis for keeping a check on improvement. Governors are now kept very thoroughly briefed by the school through meetings with the headteacher, and sometimes other senior staff, and are visiting the school regularly. Governors are given particular responsibilities, for example to keep a watch on particular subjects or year groups and they have good procedures for reporting back their findings to their colleagues. Through such means governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths, and of where it needs to improve. This allows them to make a very good contribution to planning for school improvement and to hold the school to account for its performance very effectively.
65. Although governors and senior staff are using pupils' test results soundly to check the school's overall performance, too little attention has been paid to differences in the results of different groups of pupils, whether defined by gender, ethnic origin or ability. As a result, the school has previously overlooked the fact that girls have been achieving poorer results than boys when compared with the national pattern. This is the only area of the school's performance where its planning for future improvement has not tackled a clear need. In other respects, planning for the future shows a very clear and appropriate sense of priorities and precise actions to be taken are very carefully considered.
66. The headteacher feels that in taking on the challenge to improve the school he personally, and the school generally, have been well supported with advice and guidance from the local authority. However, the senior management feels that sometimes its work is hindered by the need to deal with what appears to them to be weak communication between different departments within the local authority, particularly in relation to provision for pupils with special educational needs. The authority's locally based centre providing support for special educational needs is, though, seen as effective. Improvements to, and maintenance of, the building, which are managed by a private-public partnership arrangement, are carried out satisfactorily but only after long delays while the company concerned seeks quotations and arranges contracts. An example of the consequences was the leaking roofs evident during the inspection.

67. The school's financial planning is good, with careful attention given to linking the development plan to budget costs. The governors are much more involved in financial planning than at the time of the last inspection, and this is an improvement. The day- to-day management of finances is good. The school's very efficient secretary acts as finance officer using good procedures and providing the headteacher and the governors with up-to-date information to enable careful monitoring of the budget. There are effective procedures in place to ensure cost effectiveness of goods and services that are purchased. The school seeks several quotations for major items of expenditure before making a choice.
68. The funding for the development of information and communication technology has been spent appropriately and has improved the provision so that standards are rising. However, the use of new technology is currently unsatisfactory in that attainment is still below the standard expected nationally for pupils aged eleven. New technologies are embraced in some areas of school routines, such as spreadsheets and wordprocessing.
69. Additional funds for raising standards are used effectively to target and support teachers' professional development. The budget allocated to support pupils with special educational needs is targeted effectively and used well. The latest auditor's report raised no concerns about financial procedures. The costs of educating pupils at the school are high, but given the rapidly rising standards, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
70. Following the many staff changes, the school now has a settled and strong team of teaching staff with a good range of expertise and some areas of substantial strength. Longer-standing staff have benefited from a considerable amount of training since the previous inspection. The new national procedures for appraising teachers' performance and planning their development are properly in place.
71. A distinctive feature of the school is the very good number of support staff to support teaching of the youngest children, to give extra support in literacy and numeracy, to help provide for special educational needs or to help generally in classrooms. These staff make a very valuable contribution to the school's work. This is made possible by the considerable amount of appropriate training they have received and the very good collaboration between teachers and support staff in planning their contributions to the teaching.
72. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall but the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory in that it is too small and does not provide a variety of surfaces and facilities for the development of the children. Vandalising of some of the equipment such as the playhouse has been a problem. All the classrooms are of sufficient size and having toilets integral to each classroom is a good feature. The hall is just sufficiently large to permit whole-school assemblies and most of the indoor physical education curriculum. The standard of decoration is satisfactory and the environment of most of the classrooms is enhanced by attractive displays. Quite a lot of the furniture is new and the standard of the older furnishings is satisfactory. The outdoor areas are of a good size with both the hard surfaces and grass fields in satisfactory condition. The site is very open, making it very difficult to prevent it being used as a shortcut, particularly as there is no division with the adjacent secondary school.
73. Overall, the school has sufficient learning resources. However, in art and design and in

design and technology, resources are inadequate and this contributes to the below average standards pupils attain. The provision of books in the library is satisfactory and the school makes satisfactory use of loan services which add to the stock.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1) Raise standards in mathematics at age seven, and in information and communication technology (ICT) at age eleven by:

- pressing ahead with existing plans for development in information and communication technology, raising teachers' level of expertise, keeping clear records of pupils' progress, and ensuring greater use of ICT to assist learning in subjects across the curriculum;
- providing pupils with more opportunities in mathematics to use informal methods of calculation, and ensuring the most able pupils are always challenged by their tasks;
- setting targets for raised standards in both subjects and monitoring progress towards them.

(Paragraphs 138-143)

2) Raise standards in art and design, and in design and technology by:

- giving more time to the work and checking that the whole curriculum in each subject is adequately taught in all classes;
- providing useful written guidance about the skills pupils need to learn as they move through the school;
- improving the resources so that pupils have the necessary tools and materials;
- setting targets for raised standards in both subjects and monitoring progress towards them.

(Paragraphs 120-127)

3) Raise the level of girls' attainments in National Curriculum tests by:

- investigating the causes of girls' underachievement compared with boys through monitoring of teaching and learning and through analysis of their progress and achievements;
- using the results of investigation to devise strategies to raise girls' expectations, their involvement in learning, and their progress;
- setting targets for improved achievement by girls and measuring progress toward them;
- checking the effectiveness of strategies through further monitoring of lessons.

(Paragraphs 10, 25, 65, 108)

4) Provide proper outdoor accommodation and resources for children's learning at

the Foundation Stage and check that they are effectively used to promote progress toward early learning goals.

(Paragraphs 72, 95)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Extending the good practice recently begun of setting short-term personal targets for pupils and reviewing their progress towards them in the marking of their work; *(Paragraph 22)*
- now that good practices for assessing pupils' progress exist in English and mathematics, providing a manageable procedure for assessment in other subjects, too; *(Paragraph 46)*
- continuing and extending the developments recently begun in identifying and providing for the needs of gifted and talented pupils; *(Paragraph 24)*
- providing more everyday encouragement for pupils to understand that they live in a society and a world of cultural diversity and to help them to appreciate and respect cultures other than their own; *(Paragraph 39)*
- extending the range of activities other than sport outside lessons.*(Paragraph 31)*

THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT

74. While the attainment of unit pupils is below national expectations for pupils of the same age, this relates to their special educational needs (SEN) which are designated as emotional and behavioural difficulties and may also include difficulties with speech and language and co-ordination. Pupils achieve well, making very good progress in English and mathematics particularly in literacy and numeracy. This is assisted by careful assessment procedures enabling the teachers to build on the prior learning of pupils.
75. In mathematics, pupils aged five to six years old begin to classify objects (five favourite items), begin to name numerals to five and count five objects. Pupils aged six to seven recognise odd and even numbers and are beginning to add money. Older pupils aged eight to nine years add money using priced items (such as $10p+3p+7p$), check their results and, with support, work out change from amounts up to 20p. In English, pupils aged five to six recognise their own name in text, are working on writing their name, join in nursery rhymes and listen for short periods of time. Pupils aged six to seven are beginning to recognise speech marks in text and recognise words with the opposite meanings such as hot and cold. They write simple words and talk about things that interest them. Older pupils aged eight to nine share in the reading of a text with the teacher, identify speech marks and dialogue in text and listen actively to adults and other children. At the time of the inspection there were no pupils aged ten to eleven in the unit. The presentation and quality of pupils written work in science, history, religious education, information and communication technology booklets, and other work, reflects the levels at which pupils are working in English and mathematics.
76. Teaching is very good. This is because teachers: convey to pupils high expectations of their behaviour and learning; explain clearly to pupils what they are expected to learn; organise the lessons carefully while still allowing flexibility; choose stimulating resources; use warm praise and pupils make very good progress. For example, in an

English lesson for pupils aged seven to nine years old, the teacher's explanations ('antonym is a posh word for opposites') gave pupils confidence to tackle the task. Within the well-organised and supportive environment, pupils help each other and show thoughtfulness as when a pupil went to get a box of tissues for a child with a cold without being asked.

77. When pupils are included in lessons in the 'mainstream' school, the support of the unit staff is very effective. Staff combine ready support to the pupil when it is necessary with giving the opportunity for the pupil to work unaided when appropriate. This encourages very good progress while still allowing the pupil to develop a degree of independence. For example in a design and technology lesson for pupils aged six to seven, the learning support assistant ably supported a unit child in sewing a puppet when necessary but left the pupil to work alone once he was confident. This enabled the pupil to participate fully in the lesson and he was able to explain unequivocally what he was doing ('I'm making a puppet. It's not a purse').
78. Because unit pupils have their English and mathematics sessions in the mornings the same as all other children in the school and are then included in the other lessons of the curriculum in the afternoons with other children, they have the same access to the school curriculum as other pupils. Assessment procedures are thorough and contribute to pupils' progress by helping to refine the level at which work is pitched.
79. Unit pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) and additional IEPs focusing on behaviour are linked to the requirements of statements. They set targets that are sufficiently clear for pupils to be reminded of them. They are regularly reviewed and monitored and shared with parents through annual reviews. Parents are also kept informed through home-school diaries.
80. The school's approach to including unit pupils in the life of the main school is effective in that it supports the 'access' subjects of English and mathematics while allowing flexibility in supporting pupils as necessary in other subjects. All teachers in the school are committed to including unit pupils and value the contribution of them to lessons. Unit pupils participate fully in whole-school assemblies and receive credit for their achievements along with other pupils.
81. The unit is well led by an enthusiastic teacher-in-charge and benefits from the effective work of another teacher and a learning support assistant. The team works closely with the school's educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist and others. The suitably qualified and experienced team attends in-service education and training courses to ensure that they are up to date with developments connected with their work. Accommodation is spacious and attractive and the unit benefits from a wide range of suitable resources.
82. The unit provides for up to eight pupils in the local education authority area who are brought in by taxi or minibus. While pupils usually have a statement of special educational needs (SEN), occasionally pupils who are being assessed may not have undergone a statutory assessment. The unit is supported by the school's educational psychologist who is also the head of the local education authority's behaviour support service. The work of the unit, which is effectively monitored by the headteacher and the governing body, is reported in governing body meetings.
83. Since the previous inspection, there have been improvements in the unit in terms of achievement and progress while the unit has maintained the good levels of inclusion with the rest of the school, the previously very good quality of teaching and pupils'

positive attitudes to learning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	23	14	0	0	0
Percentage	5	28	42	25	0	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 nearly 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)	11	191
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	39

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	12	18	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	7	12
	Girls	15	12	14
	Total	25	19	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (77)	63 (80)	87 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	16	12	17
	Total	27	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (80)	77 (87)	97 (87)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	21	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (71)	79 (57)	89 (71)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	14
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (69)	82 (63)	86 (74)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	146
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)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	27.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	229.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	31.25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	14
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
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

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	3	1
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	556,467
Total expenditure	546,821
Expenditure per pupil	2,388
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,024
Balance carried forward to next year	23,670

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	209
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	26	5	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	55	36	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	43	7	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	52	10	7	2
The teaching is good.	45	45	0	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	59	10	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	29	7	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	24	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	34	48	9	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	48	38	0	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	29	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	33	16	14	22

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

84. The children start school in the nursery after their third birthday. They transfer to the reception class in the September or January of each year depending on their birthday. At the time of the inspection the children in the nursery attended the school for the mornings only and those in the reception class attended full time. Most children in the reception class attend the school's nursery. The nursery and reception class are very well managed and organised to provide children with a good start to their time at school. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good, and at times in reception it is excellent. The teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants involved in the classes work together very effectively as a team and this ensures that children settle quickly into the school routines. In the two years since the last inspection there has been considerable disruption with several changes in personnel. Both teachers have recently joined the school. It is a credit to their hard work and very good teamwork with the existing staff that the good provision reported at the last inspection has been restored and teaching has improved.
85. When children start school, the standards they attain are broadly similar to those found typically, although their standards in communication, language and literacy are somewhat below. The children respond well to the very good teaching and their achievement is good, especially in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world where the children are well on track to exceed the standards set nationally for five-year-olds. Standards in mathematical, personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development are in line with those expected nationally. The children with special educational needs make good progress, as do the few with English as an additional language.

Personal, social and emotional development

86. Teachers emphasise children's personal development in this early part of the term where many of the children have just entered the nursery or moved to the reception class. Careful assessments of each individual child have been made in both classes and this has enabled the teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistant to develop strong relationships with the children and know them well. This has meant that pupils who need extra support either because of their special educational needs or because they have English as an additional language have the support they need. The very good teaching has ensured that all the children including those with special educational needs and the few that speak very little English when they arrive, settle quickly and gain self-confidence in their new environment. This enables them to work confidently on their own, for example playing in the 'hospital' or the 'doctor's surgery'.
87. Well-established routines enable the children to develop a sense of belonging successfully. For example, during 'snack-time' in the nursery, groups of children sit calmly round a tablecloth eating their fruit and drinking their milk. They have a conversation with the adult who is with them about the activities they have been doing and politely take their fruit and tell the person sitting next to them that they have finished and that it is their turn. In reception, the children regularly sit in a circle to discuss what they have been doing. In lessons known as circle time they successfully learn to talk about their feelings as they pass happy and sad faces round the circle. It is much to the credit of the adults that the atmosphere in lessons is one of calmness and purposeful learning.

88. Children confidently make decisions about what they are going to do as teachers very carefully provide opportunities for them to do this. In the nursery, children have sheets on which the activities on offer are illustrated. They make their choice and this is recorded by an adult to ensure that over time the children have a suitable range of experiences. These skills are developed further in reception where children regularly make choices, both in the activities they will work at and in the materials and tools they will use.

Communication, language and literacy

89. The teaching in the nursery is very good and it is excellent in reception. Although the teachers only joined the school in September, the children are making rapid progress, with a third of the children in reception about to start on the National Curriculum having already attained the standards they are expected to reach at the end of the year. Good support is provided for children with English as an additional language who are at an early stage in learning to speak English. The children in both classes listen attentively to their teachers, especially when they share books and read to them. They respond well and are keen to retell stories they have heard. In the nursery, a group working with the nursery nurse was keen to use a farmyard and animals to retell a story she had read to them in great detail. When they play, children use language confidently. For example, in reception a child was on the phone in the 'hospital' and commented 'Doctor, do I need to see this patient?'
90. In both classes, emphasis is placed on reading books with children and teaching them the sounds letters make. Children make good progress in learning to read. For example, in the nursery the teacher showed the children a collection of objects that all started with the letter 'p' and carefully taught them how to sound out the letter. They enjoyed this, responding with gusto and making actions that they associated with that letter. The teacher reads well-chosen books and through very good questioning helps the children to predict what will happen next. They are delighted when they are right. The effective questioning encourages children to explore ideas in other areas of learning. For example, when the teacher read from 'The Wheels on the Bus' the children were asked why buses needed windscreen wipers. Children make a good start in writing, for example as they copy their names on the computer.
91. The teaching in reception is excellent, reflecting the very considerable expertise of the teacher. Very good and sensitive use is made of the format provided by the National Literacy Strategy. Children successfully learn the sounds letters make, 'phonics', as the teaching places great emphasis on this. The excellent teaching enables children to use this knowledge effectively in their reading and writing. Children are becoming confident readers successfully using their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words and to build up knowledge of commonly used words they recognize by sight. Children use their rapidly growing phonic knowledge to spell accurately the simple words they often use and to make good attempts at more complex words. For example, when writing about a crocodile in a story the teacher had read to them they wrote 'The crocdiel is narstee'. A feature of the excellent teaching is the confidence it gives the children and this encourages them to write. When the teacher effectively shows or 'models' writing she uses a 'magic pen' so that it is this that makes the mistakes and not the children who thoroughly enjoy correcting the pen as it makes a mistake such as failing to leave a space between words or to miss starting a sentence with a full stop.

Mathematical development

92. Children respond well to the very good teaching and make good progress in their mathematical development, particularly in their recognition of numbers. In the nursery, the children enjoy singing songs and rhymes that are about numbers. They correctly identify the numbers one to five when the teacher lays out cards with these numbers and successfully place five apples on the card with that number. They distinguish correctly between objects using language such as 'big' and 'little' and are interested in shapes as they play with bricks and other constructional materials. In reception, the large majority of children count to ten, with higher attaining children having a good understanding of the value of different numbers to ten. Most children are developing a sound understanding of measures such as weight. They correctly distinguish between two objects using the words 'heavier' and 'lighter'. They correctly predict which side of a pair of scales will contain the heavier item. More able children have successfully made a start in weighing objects using non-standard weights such as conkers. Many name commonly found two-dimensional shapes correctly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

93. As a result of the very good teaching, children in both classes make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and are on track to exceed the standards set nationally for children of their age. The two teachers often combine the classes for work in this area to the benefit of the children. This reflects the very good teamwork between all the adults who work in the two classes. Children learn successfully about journeys and the routes they take to school. For example, when they work with a teacher to program a small robot to follow a route and when they take a 'cyber dog' for a walk. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn about their bodies. In the nursery, children learn about sight and link this with their mathematical development when they learn about the number two. Later in reception, they learn about the links between taste and smell as they taste a range of foods and then taste them again with their noses held. They know that the skeleton is an important part of the body. When working on the computer, the older children use the keyboard and mouse competently to work on games to improve their skills in areas such as reading. With help from adults, they successfully use a program that enables them to draw and paint, for example poppies. Good use is made of educational visits. For example, as part of their work on the human body the children visited a local doctors' surgery and use this experience well as they work in their own 'surgery' in the classroom.
94. Very good attention is paid by the teachers in helping the children to learn about each other's cultures and faiths. Both classes regularly get together each week for an assembly in one of the classrooms. This happened when the chosen theme was that of belonging to family or a faith. The teacher carefully showed the children the signs that religions adopt and a large 'church candle' was lit to explain the Christian festival of Candlemas. In reception, this was then taken further as the children sat in a circle with a candle in the middle and the teacher sensitively explained that Christians lit candles because they believed that Jesus was the light of the world. Children respond well to these experiences.

Physical development

95. There is an area designated for outdoor play but it is in a poor state. In the past it has been subject to vandalism. The tarmac playground area used by children in reception is large enough but is not suitably fenced so that when children have a lesson using balls these frequently run off the playground and run underneath parked cars in the adjacent car park. Despite these problems the teaching is satisfactory as teachers use the

school hall and overall provide satisfactory opportunities for children's physical development which is on track to meet the required standards. In the nursery, children show good control of large toys as they drive them round the play area. They show increasing control of tools and materials as they work with constructional materials. The children in reception move freely as they dodge and turn when playing games, adjusting their speed to avoid each other. Most are making a sound start in learning to throw accurately and to catch large balls. They handle scissors, glue, paintbrushes and crayons competently.

Creative development

96. Teaching is very good overall and most children are making good progress and are likely to reach the standards that have been set nationally. In both classes they have a wide range of interesting activities provided by the adults. A particular strength is the opportunities provided for children to paint and to draw. In the nursery, children had been looking at a painting that drew heavily on the style of Van Gogh. They used the wide range of materials provided to paint their own sunflowers using materials such as porridge and flour to give their paintings a good texture. In reception, pupils develop their skills further as they look closely at the paintings of poppies by Georgia O' Keeffe and describe the texture as having a 'crumpled up feeling'. The adults help them to look closely and the children use charcoal effectively to draw their own pictures of poppies. Good opportunities are provided for children's imaginative play through the well planned role-play areas that are carefully linked to work about the human body. One child, dressed as a paramedic was on his way to an accident. He was clear what he would do when he got there but explained that when they got to the hospital 'they usually had a heart attack and died!' In both classes children regularly sing well-known songs enthusiastically and successfully explore the sounds made by a suitable range of simple musical instruments.
97. The teaching is very good and is reflected in the good progress made by children since September when the new teachers started in the school. The classrooms are very well managed and organised with teachers, and the skilled nursery nurse and teaching assistant working effectively together to build on what the children know, understand and do. This enables teachers and the other staff to be well deployed, working with the whole class, groups or individual children. Planning is very good and takes full account of the areas of learning set nationally and the 'stepping stones' to enable pupils to make progress. Children at the early stages of learning to speak English are well supported both by the teachers and by the specialist teacher who works alongside the child on a weekly basis. Good support is provided for children with special educational needs. Children's special needs are identified and extra support is provided in line with the children's education plans.

ENGLISH

98. The 2001 National Curriculum test results for seven-year-old pupils show that their attainment in reading matches the national average whilst their writing is well below the national average. There has been an improvement in the standard of reading from that reported at the time of the last inspection. For pupils aged eleven the 2001 National Curriculum tests in English show that these pupils reached the national average. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school attainment is now improving satisfactorily and pupils are now achieving well. There are a number of factors that have helped bring this about: extensive training in the literacy strategy, resulting in better teaching, the majority of which is now good or very good; better planning; very good leadership of the subject and the good use made of classroom

assistants. The largely new, enthusiastic staff is committed to raising standards. Pupils are also now leaving the Foundation Stage with good standards of literacy and this provides a very good basis for further raising of older pupils' standards in the long term.

99. At ages seven and eleven pupils' attainments in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 speak clearly and confidently in small and large groups because teachers give good opportunities for pupils to express themselves. Pupils ask and answer questions in such a way as to show they have listened well. In a Year 2 lesson pupils used a tape recorder, making good links to their information and communication technology lesson, to record themselves reading poetry and playing the results to the other pupils, who listened well. In Years 3 - 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. In a good Year 6 lesson pupils were given the opportunity to debate whether humans should use animals for their own benefit. Pupils in the debate prepared their arguments well and spoke confidently and with clarity. They listened well to the different views put forward and with respect for other pupils' views.
100. Standards of attainment in reading are satisfactory for most pupils at ages seven and eleven. Seven-year-olds who attain more highly read with fluency, expression and talk knowingly about the characters in the story. They have a good knowledge of words and can work out unfamiliar ones. They enjoy reading and express opinions about the book they are reading, and whether they would recommend the book to their friends, and why. Less able pupils read more hesitantly. They know most of the sounds that the initial letters make and can make a start at sounding out new words. Eleven-year-old pupils who attain more highly are fluent, confident readers, using expression well to emphasise meaning. Some choose challenging texts to broaden their range of reading, increase their vocabulary and widen their range of expression. Pupils of average or lower ability use their knowledge of sounds, 'phonics', to work out new words they are unfamiliar with. Both of these groups make corrections to their reading as they go along. All groups of pupils enjoy their reading and read regularly at home so helping them make satisfactory progress. They offer opinions about books and more able pupils are able to talk about their favourite books and authors. Most eleven-year-olds can find information in a non-fiction book using the contents or index pages. More able pupils are able to find a particular fiction book using the author's name and a non-fiction book using the Dewey system.
101. At ages seven and eleven pupils achieve the national standards in writing and they are making good progress. Standards of handwriting are high and most pupils make good progress. Pupils are beginning to take pride in their work and can see it improving. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills during their English lessons and they are using these and other literacy skills well in other subjects, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Average and more able seven-year-old pupils' spelling of frequently used words is usually accurate and reflects the words they know by sight or their knowledge of letter sounds. Lower attaining pupils use fewer strategies for spelling accurately, usually not going beyond the first few letters in a word. Pupils in the Year 2 class make good use of the 'tricky words' display to help spell correctly. They write successfully in a range of forms such as poetry, imaginative stories and factual writing. Relatively little use is made of information and communication technology to support work in writing.
102. Average and higher attaining eleven-year-old pupils write well in a range of forms. Year 3 pupils are able to update traditional stories such as, 'Little Red Riding Hood', or, 'Three Little Pigs', into a modern setting. Year 6 are knowledgeable about specific literacy vocabulary such as introduction and paragraphs and are able to follow a model for producing good, balanced arguments when writing whether dogs should be banned

in parks. Higher attaining pupils' punctuation is usually correct and they can organise their writing well into paragraphs. Lower attaining pupils' writing is punctuated simply and correctly. Their writing is less exciting and they use far fewer adjectives and adverbs, but they make good progress, especially when supported by the classroom assistant. Their spelling of the most frequently used words is mostly accurate. Higher attaining pupils' spelling is good and they make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus.

103. The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good with some examples of very good practice. Classroom teachers plan and work well with classroom assistants. This helps provide good support for pupils who may have special educational needs or use English as an additional language so that they progress well. Teachers' lesson planning is good and they are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They match carefully activities to pupils' needs and this helps sustain interest and enthusiasm. Teachers use questions well to give all pupils the chance of answering, and classroom assistants quietly encourage pupils with special educational needs to speak in front of the whole class by trying out the answer first with them.
104. The teaching of pupils in Years 3 - 6 is good overall and ranges from very good to satisfactory. Pupils in a very good Year 4 class had to add suitable adjectives to make more exciting their writing about a witch. Their use of adjectives, or 'juicy words', as pupils call them, enabled pupils to show very good progress in the literacy lesson that followed the homework. As in Years 1 and 2, teachers work effectively with classroom assistants to enable pupils to make good progress. As a result pupils behave well, concentrate on their work and try hard. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework to encourage pupils to practice their reading, spelling and writing and this helps pupils make good progress.
105. All aspects of the National Literacy Strategy are managed well. Teachers introduce the lessons with interesting and appropriate text that makes pupils interested. The Year 2 class was actively engaged in talking about the poem 'Simon Grundy', and then read it well together with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils make good progress when they work in groups with the teacher or classroom assistant. Teachers end their lessons well. They draw on what pupils have learned and use these as examples to reinforce the main teaching points of the lesson. This allows further development of pupils' speaking and listening skills and allows teachers to use this final session of the lesson to assess what pupils have learned. Throughout the school teachers assess pupils' progress well and use the information to guide their planning and grouping of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and this helps pupils to make good progress.
106. The co-ordinator gives very good leadership and support to colleagues and, together with the headteacher and local education department's advisory staff, has been monitoring teaching and learning in the subject. The result of the monitoring is that teachers have a clear idea of the literacy strategy and know how to improve their teaching. She is a leading literacy teacher with the local authority and shares her expertise with teachers from other schools. She has carried out good training for the teachers at Chambersbury and the good teaching that has resulted from this is helping the rapid improvement in standards. She has reorganised the small but satisfactorily stocked library and written a draft policy for its use. Books are classified using the Dewey system and books for guided reading are colour coded according to pupils' abilities, well catalogued and stored. Good use is made of the library service to borrow topic books for work in different areas of the curriculum. This allows the school to be efficient in its use of funds so pupils have sufficient books but the school does not have

to buy them. The results of pupils' English tests and teachers' assessments of pupils' learning are analysed well and used to inform the target-setting process, select pupils for additional literacy lessons in Year 6 prior to taking the National Curriculum tests and to identify underachievement. Governors are kept informed of developments within literacy by detailed and clear reports from the co-ordinator.

MATHEMATICS

107. The achievement of the eleven-year-olds is satisfactory. The results of the national tests in 2001 were average and the work seen during the inspection paints a similar picture. Standards have improved over the past two years. Since September, the achievement of the seven-year-olds has been satisfactory and standards are rising. The standards are still below average but this is an improvement on the well below average results in national tests over several years. This improvement, and that in Years 3 – 6, is due in no small measure to the good teaching and the good use made of the structures provided by the sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
108. Of concern is the considerable difference in attainment between boys and girls. Nationally boys do slightly better than girls. However, in this school the difference is considerable with the eleven-year-old girls not achieving as well as they should. Whilst most of the more able pupils are given extension work to do in lessons, a few of the more able pupils do not have enough opportunities to think in different and more challenging ways and so do not always attain the standards they are capable of. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, often by the skilled teaching assistants and they make good progress. The few children with English as an additional language achieve well.
109. Teachers use the daily mathematics lesson well to encourage pupils to practise counting and calculating regularly. By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound understanding of what each digit represents in whole numbers up to 100. They correctly add and subtract single and two digit numbers and have a sound knowledge of the addition and subtraction facts for numbers up to ten. They are not as confident in their understanding that subtraction is the opposite of addition. Through regular practice the seven-year-olds have a satisfactory grasp of the two and ten times tables. The seven-year-olds use standard measures competently and have a satisfactory grasp of the names and properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils are not confident enough in solving mathematical problems, especially those relating to everyday life. The teaching does not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to use informal methods of calculation when they are having difficulties with the standard written methods. This hinders their progress.
110. By the age of eleven, most pupils confidently multiply and divide decimals and numbers to 1000 by ten and by 100 as this is stressed by teachers in the oral and mental work that usually starts most lessons. Pupils usually correctly carry out the addition and subtraction of numbers involving decimals and successfully carry out short multiplication and division of numbers, including decimals. They usually estimate an answer reasonably well before calculating, as teachers emphasise this. Most have a sound understanding of fractions and, to a slightly lesser extent, of percentages. They correctly identify the factors in numbers and have a sound understanding of what a prime number is. Most pupils confidently use measures accurately and correctly calculate the area of shapes such as a rectangle. Pupils are not as confident in their solving of mathematical problems, especially those involving ratio and proportion. They do not readily identify the appropriate operations to use when given written problems.

111. The teaching and the resulting learning are good throughout the school with no unsatisfactory teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers make good use of the format provided by the National Numeracy Strategy. Good attention is given at the start of lessons to developing pupils' mental strategies. For example in a lesson in Year 6, pupils were given numbers which they had to make by dividing a two digit number by a single digit, and then by adding or subtracting any other number. The pupils enjoyed the challenge and tried harder and harder to find more complex ways of answering the question. Through good questioning the teacher provided useful opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking. 'I have a different way', exclaimed one pupil with pride. These opportunities enhance pupils' learning. Rarely are more difficult questions given to the pupils who have been identified as having higher abilities.
112. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subject and plan their lessons well and this enables them to explain clearly to pupils at the start of lessons what the lesson is about and what they are to learn. Effective questioning by teachers recaps earlier work and usefully consolidates and probes pupils' understanding. This happened in a lesson in Year 4 where pupils were learning about symmetry. The imaginative use of a short clip of video caught the pupils' interest and effectively consolidated what they had learnt earlier. Throughout the school, teachers use questions effectively, but insufficient attention is given to dealing with errors and pupils' misconceptions. This is particularly the case in the session at the end of lessons where teachers focus on what pupils have learnt during the lesson. Teachers effectively introduce the main part of lessons where pupils work in groups. Most pupils quickly settle to their work and concentrate on the tasks they have been given. This is an improvement. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology in these sessions where pupils practise mathematical skills they have already gained. Often, skilled teaching assistants who have been well briefed by the teacher, provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
113. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked profitably with staff from the local authority and this collaboration has contributed significantly to the improvement in standards. Sound arrangements are in place to assess pupils' attainment and to set targets for them to aim for. Pupils' progress towards these targets is regularly checked and the information is used well to identify pupils who need extra help in 'booster' or 'Springboard' groups. There has been systematic monitoring of teaching and planning but the usefulness of information gained has been somewhat lost due to the considerable changes in staff since the last inspection. Resources are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

114. Although the 2001 national test results for pupils aged eleven were below average, the present work of pupils of similar age is in line with the national standard. A steady trend of improving standards since the previous inspection is being further extended this year. Test results over recent years show girls do significantly less well than boys.
115. The oldest pupils show a sound breadth and depth of scientific knowledge, for example about the parts and functions of the body or processes of plant growth. Sound understanding of solids, liquids and gases is evident and they can explain well how to separate sand from water by filtration or by evaporation. They have a firm understanding of the skills and processes of investigation. Asked to evaluate an imaginary investigation they are quick to identify why it was not a 'fair test', referring to a

range of variables that needed to be 'kept the same' while only one was altered so that cause and effect could be determined. A significant improvement since the previous inspection is the quality of pupils' writing about science when they describe investigations they have undertaken and explain conclusions.

116. Standards are also improving, and markedly so, for pupils aged seven. Work seen during the inspection meets the national standard whereas it was judged to be well below that level at the previous inspection. These pupils, too, show sound knowledge and a good understanding that science involves recognising important similarities and differences as a basis for classifying natural phenomena. In a Year 2 lesson seen, pupils showed a good understanding of the need to make accurate measurements and record them systematically. Most were able to put the results of measuring hand-spans in centimetres into an accurate block-graph from which they could then extract information correctly as a basis for making and testing a further prediction. These skills, too, represent an improvement since the previous inspection.
117. The improvement in standards throughout the school reflects an improvement in the quality of the teaching which was satisfactory at the previous inspection but is now good. Teachers show good knowledge of the subject and of the range of demands of the curriculum. This helps them to explain and demonstrate ideas clearly and to frame very good questions for pupils, to challenge them to predict, reason and explain. This was clearly seen in lessons observed in Years 3 and 6 which also benefited from the infectious enthusiasm of the teaching. Lively, interesting teaching leads to the considerable enthusiasm that pupils show for the work. Teachers' good use of rewards to encourage and manage pupils also explains the good behaviour, concentration on work and good progress found in lessons and is evident, too, in exercise books. Teachers make good use of investigations to promote understanding of scientific ideas like 'force' or 'evaporation' as well as to develop investigative skills. Good questioning of pupils and opportunities to write about their experiments give good support to development of pupils' literacy skills, while opportunities to make and record measurements and present them as graphs consolidates mathematical skills. However, little use is made of information and communication technology in the subject.
118. Improved standards and teaching reflects well on the management of the provision for the subject. Present practice represents a good response to weaknesses identified at the previous inspection, for example in better use of written work. An exception, though, is the Year 5 class where overuse of commercial worksheets means that pupils, especially more able ones, are constrained to brief answers to fill boxes when they could write or explain in greater detail. In other classes the work is soundly adapted to the range of pupils' abilities. Throughout the school, extra help, often from support staff, enables the less able or those with special needs to progress well.
119. Work in the subject is presently co-ordinated by the headteacher in collaboration with a new teacher who is preparing to take full responsibility in due course. Though both are new to the school, their examination of teachers' planning, sampling of pupils' work and a few lesson observations, have led them to a sound appreciation of some strengths in the work and some areas for improvement. They have introduced an interim procedure for assessing pupils' progress in the subject and have plans to introduce shortly a more substantial one as a basis for identifying means for promoting still further improvement. Sharing of equipment with the neighbouring secondary school and plans for staff collaboration are promising moves.

ART AND DESIGN

120. The achievement of the eleven-year-olds is unsatisfactory as the standards they attain are below those expected for pupils of this age. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards attained by the seven-year-olds. Pupils across the school are not making enough progress. Standards have slipped since the last inspection. This is partly due to the considerable turnover of staff in the two years since the last inspection, including the subject co-ordinator. In addition, the emphasis being placed on raising standards in other subjects, especially English, mathematics and science, has led to pupils not having enough opportunities to systematically develop their skills, such as drawing and painting. The recently introduced scheme of work that teachers now use ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met.
121. The eleven-year-olds have not developed sufficiently the important skills needed to reach the standards expected for pupils of this age. For example when pupils in Year 6 draw, many are hesitant, as they do not know how to develop light, shade and texture in their work. The lack of a suitable range of drawing pencils exacerbates the situation. The few examples of these pupils' paintings showed little improvement in the use of colour and texture from work completed by much younger pupils. However, when they are taught a skill, they listen attentively, are keen to try and begin to have confidence in their own work. This happened in a lesson in Year 6, where pupils were shown techniques for developing perspective in drawing. The pupils were enthralled, following each line that was drawn. The very limited sample of seven-year-olds' work showed that pupils had not built successfully on the skills shown by the pupils in the Foundation Stage.
122. Only one lesson was taught during the inspection and that was satisfactory, largely due to the effective collaboration between the teacher and the teaching assistant who was able to use her considerable expertise to teach important skills. A positive feature of the teaching was the emphasis placed by both adults on helping pupils to improve as most were not used to evaluating their own work.
123. The new co-ordinator already has a good understanding of what needs to be done if standards are to rise. A useful action plan has been drawn up and a sound start has been made. A scheme of work is now in place which details clearly what is to be taught in each year. A significant weakness in the current arrangements that affects standards is the lack of clarity of what skills are to be taught and when, so that pupils are able to build effectively on what they have learnt before. This is to be addressed in the action plan as the number one priority. However, as a result of the new scheme, pupils often go for half a term without having opportunities to practise and further develop the skills that they have developed. This hinders their progress. Resources are limited and are not sufficient to support the curriculum and this also hinders pupils' progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. The previous inspection found little evidence of work in this subject taking place and judged that standards throughout the school were below those expected within the National Curriculum. However, inspectors at that time did not highlight the subject as an area for the school to improve and consequently the subject did not feature in the school's post-inspection action plan to promote improvement. Instead, other subjects and concerns have taken priority in the school's attempts to improve. Despite this and the hindrance of the high staff turnover, there has been some improvement. Standards for younger pupils up to age seven are now satisfactory and more work is being done in the school as a whole. The standards of the oldest pupils though, remain

unsatisfactory. This arises from the fact that insufficient work is still undertaken beyond Year 3 and that where it is tackled there is an emphasis on the 'making' part of the subject curriculum and too little attention to the 'design' aspect. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 do not, for example, have books or folders in which they could record work in both designing items and in evaluating their products after making them. Only two lessons took place during the inspection and no overall judgement about the quality of the teaching is therefore made.

125. Although the overall evidence is of unsatisfactory achievement, in the two lessons seen pupils achieved well. In one well taught lesson seen, Year 2 pupils could explain their designs for the puppets they were setting out to make. They showed a clear understanding of the techniques they were using to join the parts together. This reflected the teacher's clear explanations and the full support given where pupils needed it. A good, orderly working atmosphere and the teacher's high expectations meant that pupils worked with care and produced sewing of a sound standard.
126. In a very well taught lesson in Year 3 pupils were effectively encouraged to take a very lively interest in developing their existing designs for a 'monster' puppet through use of a pneumatic device to make a part of the puppet move. The teacher's clear explanation and demonstration helped almost all pupils to a clear understanding of how the pneumatic mechanism, constructed from washing-up bottles, syringes and tubing, worked. Good, open-ended and challenging questions from the teacher promoted pupils' thinking and gave the ablest opportunity to extend themselves. Pupils responded with many thoughtful answers, their enthusiasm effectively promoted by the teacher's good use of praise and reward. However, an opportunity was missed here when the teacher explained the application and working of the pneumatic device rather than asking pupils for their ideas.
127. In the Year 3 lesson pupils showed their attainment to be satisfactory but this useful basis is not being followed up in later years where the work is insufficient in quantity and quality. These inconsistencies reflect poor past management of the subject provision. This was a problem at the time of the previous inspection and became a greater one with the many staff changes. Since the appointment of the new headteacher at the beginning of the present school year he has himself taken on the role of co-ordinator with the assistance of a new teacher who has some expertise in the subject and evident enthusiasm to promote improvement when taking full responsibility for the subject in the future. To date there has been no formal assessment of pupils' progress in the subject or monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to show how improvements can be made. However, there is a clear understanding of the need to move forward and a commitment to do so.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Geography is taught only within certain blocks of time during the school year. Limited evidence of pupils' attainment was therefore available and only one lesson took place during the inspection. Judgements are based on examination of planning for the teaching and of pupils' past written work, on the one lesson observed and on discussion with pupils. This evidence suggests that pupils are working at an appropriate level in the subject and achieving satisfactorily.
129. By age seven pupils are able to recognise important differences between their home area and an island they study, referring to geographical features such as buildings and vegetation. They know that weather has an effect on the ways people live. Discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils showed that they have some sound geographical

knowledge and understanding. Their recall of work on rivers from the beginning of the year was good. They name and define a range of river features such as source, tributary and meander and they understand the part rivers play in the water cycle. The more able also give a good explanation of the process of erosion that can cause a meander to develop sufficiently to cause two banks to meet so that the river straightens and an 'ox-bow lake' is created. Most pupils can also give a sound explanation of how to use grid references to find places on maps.

130. In the one lesson seen, in Year 3, pupils began by showing satisfactory recall of earlier work by stating the school's location within county, country and continent. Teaching of this lesson made effective use of a school governor as a source of information about long-term change in the local environment. Pupils were keen to ask questions and assemble evidence of how much their locality and the uses of local land had changed over time.
131. Too little direct evidence was available for a judgement to be made about the overall quality of teaching. However, the one lesson seen was soundly taught and discussions with the oldest pupils suggest that the teaching succeeds in promoting a positive attitude to the work.
132. Because of the high level of staff turnover in recent years, co-ordination of work in the subject has suffered from a lack of continuity. The school's priority for development in basic literacy and numeracy has also meant that development in geography is waiting its turn as a focus in school improvement. There has been no formal whole-school procedure for assessing pupils' progress or for observing lessons to evaluate teaching and learning. The role of co-ordinator is currently shared by a senior and a new member of staff in preparation for the latter to assume full responsibility in future. Both have a good awareness of processes for managing improvement and show enthusiasm in anticipating the opportunity to implement this understanding.

HISTORY

133. Currently, the teaching of history in Year 6 is concentrated into the summer term. Consequently it was not possible to make a judgement on the standards attained by the eleven-year-olds. However, history is taught more frequently in the other year groups in Years 3 - 6 and here pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain the standards expected for pupils of their ages. The seven-year-olds attain average standards and this reflects their satisfactory achievement. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. However, despite the considerable changes in staff there has been satisfactory improvement. Much of this is too recent to have yet made an impact on raising standards. Teaching is good throughout the school, reflecting the enthusiasm of the new co-ordinator and headteacher, both of whom have a considerable knowledge and interest in the subject, which is now firmly established in the curriculum. The good teaching helps pupils to make good progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, usually by the skilled teaching assistants and make good progress.
134. Across the school, pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of important people and events in history, such as Florence Nightingale and Queen Victoria. A strength is that pupils throughout the school successfully develop important historical skills as teachers place emphasis on this in their teaching. The seven-year-olds recognise that things change over time and successfully make comparisons between life in the past and today. For example, as part of their study of Florence Nightingale they explain how hospitals have changed and patients are now put to sleep if doctors

have to cut a leg off. In Year 4, pupils have a good understanding of the differences between the life of the rich and that of the poor in Tudor England. Because of teaching which at times is excellent they know that rich men usually fought on horseback whilst poorer men fought with pikes.

135. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. On occasions it is excellent. This happened in a lesson in Year 4 as part of a study of life in Tudor England. The class had two 'visitors'; one dressed as a rich officer and the other as a more humble pikeman. In reality these were the headteacher and a governor, both members of a national historical society. Pupils listened enthralled as the visitors enacted life for soldiers of the period and learnt a great deal when the headteacher came out of his role to explain why they were dressed as they were and how the weapons were used. Pupils were amazed to see how far an archer could fire his arrows. The class teacher consolidated pupils' learning effectively with her very good questioning. Experiences such as these bring history to life and lead to very good learning.
136. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use it well to plan work that captures pupils' interest. At the start of lessons, teachers explain clearly the purpose of the lesson and frequently finish with effective questioning that consolidates pupils' learning. In all classes, teachers promote and develop literacy skills satisfactorily. Teachers encourage pupils to use descriptive language. When showing pupils in Year 4 how soldiers fought with a buckler, the headteacher took the opportunity to introduce the expression 'swashbuckler' and to explain its use. In Years 1 and 2, opportunities are taken to consolidate pupils' knowledge of letter-sound relationships (phonic skills). Good use is made of video to enhance learning and the use of information and communication technology is satisfactory.
137. The co-ordinator is newly in post. The topics to be studied have been reviewed in the light of past experience and pupils' interests. Plans are in hand to monitor teachers' planning and to observe teaching. In Year 5, pupils' work is assessed effectively at the end of each topic. However, across the school assessment is underdeveloped. Overall, resources are satisfactory but more historical artefacts are needed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. There has been a considerable improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Now pupils in all year groups are making at least satisfactory progress during lessons and over time. Pupils aged seven are attaining standards expected for their age. However it takes time to strengthen all the skills necessary for pupils to reach the standards expected nationally by the age of eleven. Resources have improved since the last inspection. There is a good range of software to support the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Staff are becoming familiar with the resources and are beginning an extensive period of training, but the older pupils have not had the opportunity to extend their skills sufficiently over a long enough period. As a result standards of attainment for eleven-year-olds is below that expected nationally.
139. All classes now include information and communication technology in their weekly timetables, and during these lessons the learning support assistant for information and communication technology provides valuable support for pupils using computers, and this, together with teachers' increased confidence, are having a significant effect on raising pupils' attainment.
140. The school is using recent national guidance well as a basis for teachers' planning of their lessons to introduce new learning and build on what pupils already know and

understand. Older pupils are currently covering the work of younger pupils. This is sensible because they have not had the previous opportunities to gain the skills necessary to tackle the more complex work. This is why standards are not at the expected levels. Also many pupils do not have a computer at home and are very dependent on what the school provides.

141. Pupils are eager to use computers, calculators and tape recorders. They work well with each other in pairs and co-operate fully, without fuss, when teachers, other staff and pupils demonstrate what to do.
142. Although information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection there is room for improvement. During this inspection examples of all classes using computers were seen. Eleven-year-olds used the Internet to research Manchester. The class teacher made the telling point about checking an information system for accuracy as most of the pupils assumed, incorrectly, that the work was connected with Manchester, England, when it was in fact about Manchester in the United States. Year 1 pupils are confident in their use of a mouse and giving commands and could successfully extract information from a chart. Year 2 pupils learned how to use a tape recorder and used the skills they learnt well in a subsequent literacy lesson. Year 4 pupils used computers to produce pictures in the style of the artist Seurat and his pointillism method by using the mouse well to put small dabs of colour on their pictures.
143. The post of co-ordinator for information and communication technology is shared between two teachers who have recently taken over this area of the curriculum. They are knowledgeable and work well together. They have successfully managed the increased hardware and software resources and all classes now have access to the Internet. Together with the headteacher and governors they have ambitious plans for the establishment of a computer suite. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology is underdeveloped and standards need raising, especially for the oldest pupils. However systems are in place and the training teachers are to receive will ensure standards will rapidly rise. The co-ordinators currently provide satisfactory leadership.

MUSIC

144. Following the previous inspection the school lost key staff in music, there have been many staff changes and there has been an appropriate concentration on raising unsatisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science. As a result the previously high standards in music have not been maintained. Nonetheless standards are currently satisfactory throughout the school. Amongst the newest school staff there is a high level of musical expertise which is beginning to have effect in restoring the previous quality of the work.
145. Much of the work seen during the inspection involved singing. In both lessons and assemblies pupils almost all join enthusiastically in singing that is lively and expressive. The singing also shows pupils to have good awareness for their ages of rhythm and of the possibilities to make performance interesting through variations in volume and tempo. Some striking effects are achieved in these ways. Pupils are also able to handle syncopations that make the rhythm of a song tricky to sing. The majority of pupils sing with accurate starts and stops, again achieving very good effect with a crisp ending to a song followed by awesome silence. Most pupils also sing with accurate pitch but a significant minority do not sing consistently in tune. At times a large choir meets outside of lessons, for example in preparation for Christmas festivity, giving further opportunity

for development of singing skills. A small number of pupils also take up the option of weekly tuition in playing the recorder.

146. Singing in assemblies is led enthusiastically by the headteacher who provides a good model for pupils with his own vocal performance and guitar accompaniment. These events exploit the headteacher's musical expertise very well and are successful in helping to establish a feeling of community amongst pupils. Opportunities are well taken on these occasions to develop musical understanding and skills, including singing in parts. However, the large number of pupils present means that the teaching cannot effectively provide for the full range of pupils' abilities and needs.
147. The oldest pupils have undertaken little recent work in composition. However, in discussion with an inspector they respond soundly when set the task of planning a piece of film music to create a mood of sadness. They appreciate the range of musical dimensions to be considered such as tempo, rhythm, dynamics and instrumentation and they make appropriate choices for each in representing sadness. They show a reasonable knowledge of the range of musical instruments that could be used. A challenging lesson for Year 5 pupils showed a sound understanding of the idea of ostinato and an emerging appreciation of harmony which they could represent through singing in parts.
148. Only a few examples of the quality of teaching could be observed during the inspection. All were at least satisfactory, some were good and one was very good. In all cases appropriate work was planned and expectations of what pupils could achieve were high. Teaching was lively and conducted at a good pace with pupils responding with interest, enthusiasm, concentration and good behaviour. A very good lesson for Year 1 pupils exploited the teacher's very good expertise in the subject in promoting very good progress in appreciation of rhythm and beat. Pupils were also given the opportunity to appreciate music from an unfamiliar culture as they listened to Indonesian 'gamelan' music. Pupils were responsive to the feel of this music, which one described as 'spooky'. By encouraging pupils to try to dance to the music the teacher helped them to a firm awareness that the music lacked a regular beat. This became clearer still when they saw how much easier it was to move to the pronounced pulse of 'The Grand Old Duke of York' or to a sample of country dance music.
149. Following staff changes, the new headteacher assumed the role of subject co-ordinator at the beginning of the year, supported by a new teacher who is very highly qualified in music and who is expected to take over full responsibility for the subject in the future. Already they have a sense of some strengths and weaknesses in the work and good plans for development. They recognise the limits to planning improvement imposed by the present lack of systematic assessment of pupils' progress in the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. While the school has been concentrating on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, developing physical education has not been a major priority. As a result standards have slipped since the last inspection but they remain satisfactory. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils' standards of attainment are those expected nationally for their ages. Standards remain good for swimming for older pupils where the majority of pupils can already swim 25 metres and more. Not all aspects of the curriculum were seen during the inspection but over the year the full range is taught.
151. Teaching is good overall with teachers planning lessons well and pupils making good progress. Planning is detailed and thorough. Seven-year-olds make satisfactory

progress in their ball-catching and passing skills and in developing their gymnastic skills. Pupils and teachers dress appropriately for physical education lessons and they warm up and cool down after lessons in a controlled way. Satisfactory links are made with history, for example, when Year 6 learn a dance from the Tudor period, concentrating well in their movements. All teachers have satisfactory class control and pay due regard to health and safety. Pupils share equipment sensibly and are supervised well when preparing large apparatus for lessons. The school makes full use of its facilities and that of the nearby swimming pool.

152. The long established co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. He has introduced a new scheme of work from which teachers plan their lessons. The plans are monitored by the co-ordinator who plans to produce a new policy document to replace the existing one. He has worked well with enthusiastic colleagues to develop competitive games against other schools and has helped coach teams to success. During the inspection a girls' football team won their match against another school. The good extra provision for physical education outside lessons allows pupils to develop and practise their skills and makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when pupils mix with others from different classes and schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Pupils aged seven and eleven reach standards that are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make good progress because teachers plan well from the scheme of work, have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and use effective teaching methods. The two lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactorily taught.
154. By the age of seven pupils know about symbols and signs in religion such as the cross, and begin to learn about Islam. Good links are made with literacy when in a Year 1 class the teacher used 'The Baby's Catalogue', to illustrate points when pupils learn about welcoming a new member to the family. Pupils are able to relate the story when they have had a new member in their family and some know how different faiths celebrate this fact. Year 3 pupils display their knowledge of Christianity well when one pupil writes, 'Jesus is our role model because he is kind and caring', whilst another linked the love she received from her parents by writing, 'My mum and dad are my role models because they love and care for me'. A third pupil chose another pupil in the class as her role model because 'she is kind, helpful and sensible'. Pupils in Year 5 know about Judaism and their learning is enhanced by a parent from that faith displaying artefacts for them to see and by talking to them. By age eleven pupils understand the differences and similarities of different religions as a result of the studies of Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Pupils respond thoughtfully to others' views on religious and moral issues.
155. All teachers stress the importance of respect for the beliefs of others and this develops pupils' understanding and attitudes well. Teachers often question pupils to find out what they know but they do not record this regularly enough. Not all teachers collect enough information to be sure what pupils know and understand. This means they are not certain that they are building on what pupils can do. Resources are used well but the use of information and communication in the subject is underdeveloped. Visits and visitors, such as the visit to the Gurdwara, give pupils firsthand experiences of other faiths and makes a good contribution to understanding what faith can mean to people.

156. The newly appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and has realistic plans for raising standards of attainment in the subject. She is planning a wider range of visits and visitors to increase pupils' understanding.