

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **BEECHOLME FIRST SCHOOL**

Mitcham

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102631

Headteacher: Ms Julie Hillman

Reporting inspector: Theresa Mullane  
15138

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224134

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Edgehill Road Mitcham Surrey
Postcode:	CR4 2HZ
Telephone number:	(0208) 640 4795
Fax number:	(0208) 646 6043
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr David Darling
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Theresa Mullane 15138	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Susan Pritchard 9519	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? Support: How well is the school led and managed?
Terence Aldridge 27426	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?
Suzanne Gerred 23385	Team inspector	Under fives Science Design and technology	Support: How well is the school led and managed?
Wendy Thomas 12764	Team Inspector	English Music Religious education English as an additional language	Support: How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Capital Inspections

Chaucer Buildings  
Canterbury Road  
Morden  
Surrey  
SM4 6PX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5 - 8</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9 - 12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12 - 14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14 - 16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>18 - 19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19 - 20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22 - 25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26 - 40</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Beecholme First School is an average sized primary school in the London Borough of Merton. There are 282 pupils on the school roll. The school has a nursery that provides part-time education for 90 children. The children's attainment on entry to the school is just below average. Most pupils enter the school in the nursery or reception classes and leave at the time of transfer to the middle school at age 8. Whilst the school receives pupils from a range of social backgrounds, overall their socio-economic circumstances are average. The school receives additional funding to support pupils with special educational needs. Just over 14 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is lower than average. No pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is below average. Nearly 33 percent of pupils come from ethnic minorities and the predominant countries of origin are Sri Lanka, India and Nigeria. Over 21 per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The main languages that are spoken, other than English are Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati and Twi. The school receives additional funding to support pupils learning English as an additional language and 3 per cent of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards in reading, mathematics, science, design and technology, religious education. The results from the Key Stage 1 national tests have shown a marked improvement between 1999 and 2000. Overall, pupils' learning and attitudes are satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and in a third of lessons it is good. The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher has a very good vision for the school and her systematic planning for the new challenges the school faces is a real strength. Many staff have new responsibilities but nearly all have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the subjects they have to manage. The day to day financial management of the school is effective. Pupils make satisfactory progress by the time they leave at the age of eight. Overall, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- Relationships are good and the school cares for its pupils well.
- The school promotes the pupils' personal, social and moral development well.
- Teaching in reception is consistently good.
- The school has developed good links with parents.

#### **What could be improved**

- The school needs to improve pupils' speaking and writing skills.
- Standards need to be improved in information and communications technology.
- The pupils' cultural development needs to be developed more effectively.
- Standards in art, history, geography and music need to be higher.
- Some aspects of teaching in the nursery need to be improved.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory progress since its inspection in 1998 when the school was identified as having serious weaknesses to address. Good progress has been made since the school's subsequent inspection in 1999. There have been significant improvements in two areas where serious weaknesses were identified in 1998. The leadership and management of the school are now good and the quality of teaching has improved, although it still needs to be better. The school has also improved its procedures for supporting and monitoring teaching and learning. Schemes of work have been developed for all subjects and these are now starting to provide effective support to teachers. Some areas that were identified as weaknesses at the last inspection still need to be improved. These areas include some aspects of provision in the nursery and standards in writing, art, history, geography and

information technology. However, standards have improved in mathematics, science and design technology. In 2000, there was a significant improvement in the results from the national tests for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	C	D	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	D	E	D	D	
Mathematics	C	D	C	C	

At Key Stage 1, results in the 2000 tests show that standards in reading are average, but in writing they are below average. The school's results for reading and writing are below average when they are compared to those being achieved by similar schools. Between 1997 and 1999 standards achieved in reading and writing deteriorated. However, there was a marked improvement in the standards pupils achieved in both these tests in 2000. The proportion of pupils reaching the average level for their age in the mathematics tests is close to the national average. The mathematics results are also average when compared to those being achieved by similar schools. Standards in mathematics have improved steadily over the last two years. The statutory teacher assessment for science shows that the standards pupils achieve are below those achieved nationally and those achieved by similar schools. However, during the inspection, pupils were seen to be achieving average standards in science.

Standards are slightly higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection. However, standards in all subjects throughout the school should be higher. A greater proportion of average and higher attaining pupils should be achieving at the higher levels expected of seven year olds in the national tests. Standards in art, history, geography, information technology and music need to be improved further.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to work. They set about their work well, but do not always maintain interest in what they are doing.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Most of the time, pupils behave well, but, sometimes, when they lose interest in their work, their behaviour deteriorates. Around the school pupils behave in an orderly way.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and pupils show a satisfactory level of personal responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The new procedures for checking absence have improved levels of attendance.



In the majority of classes, pupils behave well. However, where teachers provide less effective guidance and control, good behaviour is not maintained to the end of lessons. The school is doing effective work in promoting collaboration amongst pupils, including those who find it difficult to sustain positive relationships.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the school's previous inspection. In 90 per cent of lessons, teaching was satisfactory or better. However in just under 10 per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory and this needs to be improved. Unsatisfactory teaching was confined to one class at the end of Key Stage 1 and to some teaching in the nursery. Overall, teaching in the nursery is satisfactory, but, in the reception classes, is consistently good. In the nursery, the teaching of language and literacy is satisfactory, but, in reception classes, it is good. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, teaching in English is satisfactory, overall, but some unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one Year 2 class. In the nursery, the teaching in mathematics is unsatisfactory, but it is good in the reception classes. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, over half the teaching in mathematics is good. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects. Throughout the school, teachers use questioning skills effectively to teach mental mathematics. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is always satisfactory and often good. Teachers do not always provide specific activities to meet the language needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. These pupils receive effective support when they are withdrawn from their classes to work in small groups with a teacher who specialises in teaching English to those learning it as an additional language. The learning support assistants who work with pupils in classes provide very effective support and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. In some English and mathematics lessons, it was observed that higher attaining pupils were not challenged sufficiently.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum that satisfactorily meets statutory requirements. Much good work has been done on improving the structure of the curriculum as a whole.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they have full access to the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory. When pupils receive specific support for English as an additional language it is well planned and meets their needs. However, when they are taught in their class groups, teachers do not always provide specific activities to meet their language needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is satisfactory, overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school promotes the pupils' moral and social development well, but provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has developed good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development, behaviour and attitudes.

The partnership with parents is good. The parents have a good view of what the school provides for their

children. Parents are included in a range of school activities and they make an effective contribution to the work of the school. The curriculum does not reflect the pupils' cultural diversity and there were instances when the resources being used confused the pupils because they were unfamiliar with them.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher is providing a clear vision of how the school needs to improve. In this, she is well supported by the new deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective and carries out its statutory responsibilities well. Governors make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its strengths and weaknesses well and effectively uses this information to plan developments.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of the financial resources allocated to it. The budget is monitored effectively. Priorities for development are appropriately identified and funds are allocated to these in the school development plan.

The new headteacher has a very good vision for the school and this is providing the school with a clear sense of direction and leadership. She is developing a strong team of committed, hardworking and dedicated staff. The governors have developed their role very successfully since the school's previous inspection. The school has sufficient levels of staffing and there are suitable arrangements in place for the induction of new staff. The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for teacher appraisal and performance management.

The accommodation is adequate. However, the open plan design of the school allows noise to travel from one area to another and this sometimes affect pupils' ability to concentrate on their work. The internal accommodation is clean and is mostly well maintained. The displays of pupils' work create a pleasant learning environment. The playgrounds need resurfacing. Overall, resources are satisfactory, but there are insufficient computers to teach information and communications technology effectively. The school is developing satisfactory procedures for applying the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are happy at school.</li> <li>• They find the school a welcoming place.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school develops good attitudes in their children.</li> <li>• The school has good expectations of their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wider range of activities offered to pupils outside lesson time.</li> <li>• Information about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The amount of homework given to children.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with many parents' positive views about the school. The school is very welcoming and pupils are friendly and mostly have good attitudes to work. The inspection team agrees that parents should receive more information about what their children are being taught and the school has already recognised that more needs to be done here. The parents' views are not always in agreement with one another about homework. Currently, the school has satisfactory arrangements in

place for providing pupils with homework. The school provides a limited range of activities outside lesson times and inspectors agree that more could be offered to the older pupils in the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Standards achieved in English by seven and eight-year old pupils are below average. However, in both mathematics and science, seven and eight year old pupils achieve average standards.
2. Results from the 2000 Key Stage 1 national tests for English show that pupils' attainment was average for reading but below average for writing. The school's results for reading and writing are below average when they are compared to those being achieved by similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age in the mathematics tests is close to the national average. The mathematics results are average when they are compared to those being achieved by similar schools. The statutory teacher assessment for science shows that the standards pupils achieve are below those achieved nationally and those achieved by similar schools.
3. Most children enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are just below average. This is partially reflected in the information from the baseline assessments that are carried out as the children approach five years of age, but is also confirmed by observations during the inspection. Children make good progress overall towards the nationally recommended learning goals. By the age of five, most children in the current reception classes will reach the expected levels for their age in all the areas of learning. The children are on course to attain average standards in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and social development.
4. Whilst seven year olds achieve average standards in the national tests for reading, the standards achieved in the writing tests are below average. Between 1997 and 1999 standards achieved in reading and writing deteriorated. However, there was a marked improvement in the standards pupils achieved in both these tests in 2000. In the mathematics tests, seven-year-old pupils achieved average standards this year. Standards in mathematics have improved steadily over the last two years.
5. The standards achieved in English by seven and eight year old pupils are broadly similar to those seen during the school's previous inspection in 1998. During this inspection, seven year-old pupils were attaining below average standards in speaking, although they listen well. Pupils attain average standards in reading, but their standards in writing are below average. This judgement reflects the results from the Key Stage 1 tests. By the end of Key Stage 1, seven year old pupils listen well, but do not readily engage in discussions or respond to questions. They read with an average level of accuracy, but they lack confidence and have a limited range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. Pupils are starting to develop a consistent joined style in their writing, but, generally, demonstrate a limited range of skills in their work. By the age of eight, pupils attain average standards in reading. Their reading is more accurate and pupils are reading with a greater degree of fluency. In their writing, they are starting to write for a wider range of purposes, but standards are still below those achieved by pupils of a similar age. Throughout the school, few pupils attain at the higher levels normally expected at each age.
6. Standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in all aspects of mathematics is average. Pupils explain their ideas, describe number patterns they see and add and subtract numbers up to 100 accurately. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and know about some of their properties. The standards observed during the inspection reflect the outcome of the 2000 Key Stage 1 mathematics tests. In the past two years, the standards achieved in these tests have improved significantly. By the age of eight, pupils attain average standards in mathematics. They solve simple number puzzles and can talk about simple equivalent fractions and double and halve numbers up to a hundred. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers and know what the terms mean. They are starting to tell the time, using the 12-hour and 24-hour clock. No evidence was seen of pupils' attainment in data

- handling because this work was due to be completed later in the term. Few pupils attain at the higher levels normally expected at age seven or age eight.
7. In the 2000 statutory assessments for science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels in science was well below average. When the school's results are compared to those achieved by similar schools, they are well below average also. However, during the inspection, high proportions of pupils were seen to be attaining average standards in science. The school has given priority to science this term and this has led to a significant improvement in standards achieved throughout the school. By the age of eight, pupils achieve average standards. Pupils are developing an understanding of a 'fair test' and are developing knowledge of the earth and beyond. Standards in this subject have improved since the previous inspection.
  8. Attainment in information technology is below the national expectation for seven and eight year old pupils. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were also judged to be achieving standards that were below the national expectation. By the age of seven, pupils learn basic skills such as using the mouse and simple commands such as 'shift', 'delete' and 'spacebar'. However, few know how to change font or size of letters. By the age of eight, many pupils know about using the Internet and send e-mails, but many lack basic keyboard knowledge and skills. In religious education, seven and eight year old pupils fully meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in religious education are broadly similar to those seen during the previous inspection. In design and technology and physical education, seven and eight year old pupils achieve standards expected nationally. In art, geography, history, and music, seven and eight year old pupils are not meeting the expected levels for their age. The school has recently put in place new schemes of work for all subjects that are improving the standards that pupils achieve. However, there has been insufficient time between introducing new schemes of work and the start of the inspection for standards to be improved to the nationally expected levels.
  9. The last inspection noted that pupils made different rates of progress in some subjects. Many of the variations identified in this inspection are similar to those observed during the previous inspection. Pupils' progress in writing is still unsatisfactory. The weaknesses identified during the previous inspection in promoting children's learning in language and literacy in the nursery still need to be addressed. Progress is still good in reception. Currently, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in listening, reading, mathematics, science, design technology, religious education and physical education. In speaking, writing, art, geography, history, information technology and music, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.
  10. Overall standards throughout the school in all subjects should be higher. A higher proportion of average and higher attaining pupils should achieve at the higher levels expected of seven year olds in the national tests. Standards in information technology need to be improved. In the 2000 tests the school's results improved significantly and standards seen in science during the inspection were in line with national expectations.
  11. The school analyses the results from the national tests carefully. They have identified that, whilst girls and boys achieve similar results in reading and writing, in mathematics girls do less well than boys. This is being monitored carefully by the mathematics co-ordinator and governors on the curriculum committee. The school has evaluated its data rigorously this year and used the information to inform its school development procedures and to set targets for pupils in English and mathematics.
  12. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes because they receive appropriate support. By age seven and by the end of Year 3, pupils with special educational needs have made at least satisfactory progress. Pupils receive good support from the learning support assistants especially in literacy. This helps their confidence and self-esteem to grow, thus improving their willingness to tackle their work. The school has a high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. When pupils enter the school, many are at the early stages of learning English. These pupils make good progress and, by the age of seven and when they leave the school at the age of eight, their attainment is similar to that of other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language listen well in lessons and try hard with their work. As they move through the school they grow in confidence, but their speaking

skills remain below average.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. The previous inspection found pupils' attitudes to their learning to be sound. Current findings show that the attitudes of pupils have been maintained at a satisfactory standard. Most pupils set about their tasks with interest and enthusiasm, but, on occasions, fail to sustain their concentration to the end of the lesson. Although this is a relatively untypical type of response, it is plainly linked to the small minority of lessons where a lack of clear guidance and control from the teacher leads to pupils failing to understand what is expected of them and learning little. However, the provision of a discussion period called Circle Time is developing awareness amongst pupils of how they, as individuals, can affect their own progress and development. Pupils are beginning to understand the link between positive attitudes and good progress.
14. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, respond particularly well when the work is explained to them in an enthusiastic and lively manner and is carefully matched to their attainment and appropriately challenging. Their attainment in speaking is, however, similar to that of other pupils. This was exemplified in a Reception class mathematics lesson, where the teacher skilfully engaged all pupils in an enjoyable session of identifying 3-dimensional shapes by using just the right balance of demonstration, games and the pupils' own findings to make learning clear-cut and enjoyable. Partly because of their enthusiasm, all pupils made very good progress in the lesson. The reverse was true in a Year 2 history lesson. Here, unimaginative and ill-prepared resources, including dull photocopies of old photographs, failed to motivate and stimulate discussion amongst pupils in a way that would bring history alive to them. Consequently, the pupils found it difficult to express an understanding of the difference between 'then' and 'now'.
15. Relationships are good. The school succeeds in promoting effective collaboration between pupils, including those who often find it hard to sustain positive relationships. Whilst working in pairs and groups, pupils often help each other by exchanging their ideas and methods of working. There is a good rapport between pupils and staff. Teachers rarely exclude a pupil from their class and there have been no permanent exclusions from the school. Pupils respond particularly well to their teachers who have high expectations of their capabilities and their potential, who know their strengths and support their weaknesses. The Reception class teachers are particularly successful in this respect. They provide activities that promote positive relationships and motivate even the most hesitant learners. For example, in a Reception class physical education lesson, pupils worked together exceptionally well both as a group and in pairs on a lively, but quite precisely structured, dance routine which they all enjoyed immensely.
16. The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Although, on occasions, a few pupils take advantage of lapses in the teacher's control of the class, the school's good procedures for behaviour management successfully prevent any pupil who behaves in an unacceptable way from seriously impinging upon the learning of others. Lessons are not disrupted by unruly behaviour. Pupils are good at exercising the right amount of self-discipline to behave at their best in assemblies and when given specific responsibilities such as collecting and tidying resources. Governors, parents and visitors see the school as an orderly community with satisfactory standards of discipline and the inspection evidence would support this view.
17. Pupils' personal development is good. With well-timed intervention from their lunchtime supervisors, pupils behave responsibly in the dining hall and demonstrate good social skills. The vast majority of pupils respond positively to the instructions and play happily together in the playground. Pupils confidently report to their supervisors if they feel someone is being unkind either to them or their friends. Most pupils recognise when others are feeling happy or sad. They will seek help for a friend who is unwell or upset and will share in a sense of pride when work and deeds are recognised as worthwhile by their teachers and classmates. Pupils empathise with

each other and most arguments between pupils, however serious at the time, are short-lived and quickly forgotten. When the argument is more serious, the intervention of the headteacher invariably results in the pupil apologising to those they have upset and then amending their behaviour. A very high proportion of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children liked school.

18. Pupils' show a satisfactory level of personal responsibility although their ability to debate and discuss issues is not strongly developed. In school, the more carefully planned lessons enable pupils to contribute their own thoughts, ideas and methods of working. The recently introduced programme of personal, social and health education targets is helping pupils form a rational and level headed approach to their decision-making. There are everyday examples of pupils operating and thinking independently in lessons, particularly when they are required to act and respond quickly, as in, for example, their daily sessions of mental mathematics. Parents play their part by supporting and encouraging their children's revision and personal study at home. This helps their children to make progress. Most pupils show that they can organise their free time to include regular reading practice sessions. Pupils respond positively to the satisfactory level of opportunities that they have where they can show initiative. This assists the smooth running of the school. They carry out routine tasks with minimal reliance on adults. A good example of this is the self-registration process that children follow independently in the nursery.
19. The pupils' attendance is satisfactory. In the year before the inspection, the overall rate was below that achieved in similar schools with a rate of authorised absence above the national average. However, the new procedures for attendance have brought about improvements. Over the past year, the average daily attendance has been 93.7 per cent and, although this remains below the national average, the figures taken directly from the computerised attendance registers show an upwardly improving trend. The majority of authorised absences are because pupils are unwell, although a significant minority are due to families taking their holidays during term time. Teachers continue to be concerned about the adverse effect these holidays have on the progress of a small minority of pupils at school. The rate of unauthorised absences is on the decline with more parents notifying the school of the reason for their child's absence. Pupils' punctuality is satisfactory. Most pupils arrive in good time for registration and well before the start of their numeracy or literacy lesson. The registers are an accurate reflection of the attendance of pupils in school.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the reception classes the quality of teaching is consistently good. It is satisfactory in the other key stages. Ninety per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better and 41 per cent of teaching is good or better. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced from about 26 per cent to just under 10 per cent since the last inspection. The unsatisfactory teaching was confined to one class at the end of Key Stage 1 and to some teaching in the nursery. During this inspection, 13 per cent of teaching was very good, whereas only seven per cent of teaching in this category was observed during the school's previous inspection.
21. The quality of teaching in basic skills is satisfactory. Teachers use the school's schemes of work for literacy and numeracy effectively. The teaching of language and literacy is satisfactory in the nursery, but good in the reception classes. At Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, teaching in English is satisfactory, although there are variations in teachers' skills. In one-third of lessons the teaching was good. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson. In the Nursery, the teaching of mathematics is unsatisfactory, but it is good in the Reception classes. In the remainder of the school, teaching in mathematics is mainly good. Teaching was satisfactory in all other subjects.
22. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory, overall. In the nursery, the teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory, but in reception classes teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and use this effectively to promote the children's learning. Teachers' subject

knowledge in the majority of subjects, including English and mathematics, is satisfactory. However, not all teachers have a secure understanding of the needs of bilingual pupils and how to cater for their needs in some lessons where no additional support is available. In mathematics, in Key Stage 1 and Year 3, teachers' subject knowledge is mainly good and this is starting to promote pupils' learning well in most classes. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary well as they explain work or discuss it with pupils. This helps pupils to understand what the terms mean and use them in their own discussions about their work. There were instances in a small number of science lessons where teachers' understanding of the processes involved in developing pupils' understanding of science investigation was unsatisfactory. This led them to tell pupils what they should do step by step to carry out a test fair, rather than discussing how a 'fair tests' could be set up. This prevented pupils from recognising the issues involved in setting up a 'fair test' and why it is a necessary scientific procedure.

23. Teachers' planning is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception classes. In the nursery, whilst a wide range activities are planned, they lack depth and challenge for the children. This leads to children flitting from one activity to another without achieving very much. In reception, teachers' planning ensures that tasks are matched carefully to the range of abilities within their classes and provide the pupils with a good range of well-structured activities. This enables pupils to effectively develop knowledge and skills in these subjects. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, teachers' planning is satisfactory. Long and medium term planning for English and mathematics consistently sets out objectives for the year or term. The quality of short-term planning is more variable and this leads to tasks being offered to pupils in a minority of classes that are not well structured or not well matched to pupils' abilities. In one Year 2 mathematics lesson, tasks were not clearly matched to pupils' abilities. Higher attaining pupils were not suitably challenged by their number work and it was not entirely clear whether lower ability pupils were engaged in a mathematical task or cutting and sticking activity. Where teaching is mainly good, planning makes a clear link between what pupils are expected to learn and the activities they are given. This planning is effective and it ensures that tasks are matched to more closely to pupils' abilities. When pupils receive specific support for English as an addition language, this is well planned and meets their needs. However, when they are taught in their class groups, teachers do not provide specific activities to meet their language needs. This means that there are times when the activities set are not well matched to their fluency in English and this does not support their progress. In all classes, teachers plan effectively for pupils with special educational needs and this ensures that they make satisfactory progress in their learning. A common weakness in a minority of lessons is that higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. This limits the progress that these pupils make.
24. Teaching methods are broadly satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception classes. In the nursery, adults do not engage children in extended conversations and this means that opportunities to develop the children's language are missed. In reception, adult-led activities promote good learning through the careful use of questions and discussions with the children. At Key Stage 1 and Year 3 teachers' methods are satisfactorily, overall. In all mathematics lessons, effective questioning and explanations in oral sessions help to develop pupils' mental calculation skills well. However, in a minority of mathematics lessons, when pupils worked on tasks in groups, the lesson lost pace and pupils started to lose interest in their work. This was because the teacher worked with one group, but gave little encouragement to the others. In a minority of science lessons, teachers' questions encouraged pupils to predict what would happen and then provided opportunities for pupils to experiment and find out for themselves. In physical education lessons, teachers reviewed pupils' work regularly throughout the lesson and this enabled them to reinforce the main teaching points very effectively. However, time was not always given so that pupils could improve their work and this limited the progress they made.
25. The teachers' management of pupils is satisfactory, overall. In the nursery, the management of pupils is satisfactory when tasks are well structured and supported effectively by adults. This enables the children to sustain their concentration in what they are doing. However, when there is little to be achieved in a task, children flit from one activity to another and the overall management of them then is unsatisfactory. In reception classes, the management of pupils is consistently good. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, the management of pupils is satisfactory and in a significant



number of classes it is good. However, in a small number of classes, pupils set about their work with interest and enthusiasm, but the guidance and control from the teacher are insufficient to ensure that pupils maintain their concentration until the end of the lesson. This leads to pupils having a less positive attitude to their learning.

26. Teachers use support staff and resources satisfactorily. Support staff are deployed so that they give pupils good levels of personal support in the nursery, but, as yet, they do not have a clear idea about how they need to interact with children so that they promote learning effectively. The support given to pupils with special educational needs helps them achieve their targets and to have access to the National Curriculum. Where learning support assistants work in classes with groups of pupils learning English as an additional language, they provide very effective support and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers use resources with varying degrees of success. In the nursery a wide range of resources is available, but they are not used effectively to structure children's learning. In all mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1 and Year 3, a good range of resources were used for the oral session, which engages the pupils' interest and motivates them to respond to the teachers' questions. In some history and geography lessons resources such as artefacts, photographs and atlases are used effectively and promote learning well. In other lessons, resources were not used successfully to support learning, because they were so unfamiliar to the pupils that they cause confusion.
27. Teachers have satisfactory expectations of their pupils. In the nursery, there are limited expectations of what children will achieve when they are working independently, although expectations are higher in adult-led activities. In the reception classes, pupils are challenged effectively in all the areas of learning. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, teachers' expectations of their pupils are satisfactory, overall. In a significant number of lessons where teaching was good or very good, teachers consistently had high expectations of their pupils. In lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils were given work that was insufficiently challenging.
28. Procedures for assessing pupils in the nursery are good, but the information is not always used effectively to plan learning. Assessment is used well in reception and this enables teachers to match work and structure activities for the children very effectively. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3 the use of assessment is satisfactory. In English, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across year groups. In mathematics, there was evidence of termly assessments being used effectively to group pupils. Teachers varied these groups when it was clear from work completed the previous day that pupils needed more support and help. However, in both English and mathematics, teachers' on-going assessment was not ensuring that higher attaining pupils were being challenged sufficiently in the majority of classes.
29. The provision for homework is satisfactory. Children from the nursery onwards take home reading books and older pupils have tasks that help them to develop skills in English and mathematics. The range of work supports the pupils' learning satisfactorily.

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

30. The school provides a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, sex, health and drugs education and meets statutory requirements. However, the practice of alternating history and geography means that pupils do not build progressively on previously learnt skills, as the subjects are taught infrequently. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and is accessible to all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Subject policies are in place, but most are currently in the process of review. The school has worked hard during the past six months to revise and put in place schemes of work, which was a major area of weakness in the previous inspection. The school has adapted guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and referred to Curriculum 2000 in developing these. However, the school needs to closely examine schemes of work to ensure that they are relevant to the experience and needs of the pupils, especially in religious education, art, history and

geography.

31. The school gives high priority to developing basic skills and has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This is beginning to have a positive effect in raising standards. The time allocated to most subjects is broadly in line with national recommendations, except in information and communications technology, which is well below that recommended.
32. The last inspection report identified the need to monitor curriculum planning by senior management and this has been addressed. The headteacher undertakes monitoring of teachers' short term planning and subject co-ordinators receive copies of teachers' medium term planning in order to check that what is to be taught matches the school's long term plan and schemes of work.
33. The school has a high regard for equal opportunity issues and there is a clear statement about its equal opportunities policy in the school booklet. All pupils have equal access to all the opportunities offered in school.
34. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, as their needs are appropriately supported. At Key Stage 1 curriculum provision is sound, although teachers do not always provide tasks that are matched to pupils' abilities in all subjects. All pupils identified as having special educational needs have individual education plans and the register is regularly updated. These are retained by the special needs co-ordinator in comprehensive individual files containing past plans, reviews and letters to agencies, but not copies of letter to parents. Copies of current plans are held by teachers and used as working documents by all members of staff who have contact with the pupils. Most targets are appropriate, attainable and measurable. Pupils have full access to the National Curriculum, although special needs pupils are not always identified or specifically addressed in teachers planning. The school has due regard to the requirements of the Special Needs Code of Practice.
35. Planning for continuity across year groups is satisfactory. Teachers in parallel classes plan closely together and this ensures equality of opportunity and that pupils receive similar experiences. Sex and drugs education is implemented soundly through the science curriculum and personal, social and health education lessons. The school has plans in place to take part in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative. Homework arrangements are in place, but activities are not always targeted to raise specific achievement for groups or individuals.
36. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, with a gymnastics club and other after school sports clubs. There are plans to develop clubs further. Currently, these activities are for the older pupils and are well supported by them. There are good, inter-school sporting activities which provide effective social interaction. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Sound opportunities are provided in most classes for pupils to discuss issues about relationships and codes of behaviour. Pupils assume a range of responsibilities in all classes and older pupils also help with registers, milk distribution, provide help in classrooms during wet playtimes and in assembly preparation.
37. Health education is effectively provided through the science curriculum and the school nurse and dental hygienist visit. Other visitors from the local community, such as the police and rail safety officer come into school to support pupils' learning beyond the classroom. A wide variety of other visitors come in to the school to speak to pupils and this extends their knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Useful visits are made to places of interest such as museums and other places of interest to support curriculum areas. Visits from theatre and musical groups further enhance the curriculum.
38. The school has maintained the sound levels of provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development seen at the last inspection. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There is a good spiritual element to most assemblies. The daily act of collective worship is of a broadly Christian character and meets legal requirements. Pupils are given good time for reflection. However, planned opportunities for developing spirituality in lessons is less well developed. Opportunities in literacy, science, art and music are not explored and opportunities are

missed

39. The provision made for pupils' moral development is good and parents feel that the school promotes moral values well. Pupils are very aware of right and wrong and are rewarded with stickers for good behaviour and good work. They participate in formulating class rules and these are displayed in classrooms. Adults take time to explain how thoughtless words or deeds can upset others and pupils respond positively to this. Good moral development is shown in the way that older pupils care for younger ones. The virtues of being repentant, faithfulness and loyalty are emphasised in assemblies and pupils also have the opportunity to reflect on people less fortunate. The school is well involved in charity fundraising for specific causes, such as gifts for Romania and 'Cry in the Dark' There is also an annual Harvest Festival service.
40. There is a strong sense of community within the school, reflecting the good provision for pupils' social development. Adults act as good role-models for the pupils. They speak to them in a kind and considerate way and this is mirrored in the way most pupils treat each other. All children are encouraged to help each other in work and play. There is a sound range of extra-curricular and enriching social interactions with other schools through inter-school sporting and artistic meetings.
41. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. There is some satisfactory provision through music, art displays and visits to museums and other places of interest. For example, in art, pupils learn about famous artists and, in music lessons, pupils have opportunities to listen to a selection of musical works. In religious education, they learn about festivals of Christianity and other major faiths represented in Great Britain. However, the school does not make effective use of the wide range of cultures represented within the school. This is unsatisfactory and was identified as a weakness by the parents. There is a lack of books that represent other cultures and traditions', or written examples of other languages and music. The school needs to do more to reflect the multicultural nature of the school and the wider society in which pupils live. The school does not yet have access in classrooms to the Internet to use this means of further broadening pupils' awareness of other cultures.
42. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils who have special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils in their classes. They are given the opportunity to take a full part in all lessons and other activities provided by the school.
43. Relationships with local middle schools are sound and transfer arrangements are started early in the pupil's final year in school. Information is provided and visits made so that the transition to the next phase of education is as easy as possible. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in several ways. A number of local service providers, such as the police, rail safety and fire services support the school with expertise. Musical and theatrical groups regularly visit the school and representatives of the health service come into school regularly to support the school's programme for personal, social and health education. The school regularly participates in fund-raising activities which add to the opportunities for moral and social education and prepare pupils well for adult life. However, links with local business are less well developed and recognised by the school as an area for development.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. Parents have a great deal of confidence in the staff, who all show a genuine interest and concern for the pupils' personal needs. Pupils know they can turn to any member of staff for support. The trust they have in the security and support they receive helps them concentrate on their learning.
45. Pupils are provided with a good quality of support and advice through the good procedures to monitor their personal development. The good examples set by staff in their relationships with each other are the basis of the pupils' progress in their personal and social development. Teachers listen patiently to pupils' oral responses in the conversations they have with them so that they can acknowledge and rectify their mistakes and misunderstandings. A new emphasis has

been placed on furthering pupils' personal and social skills and helping them think and make decisions for themselves. This is promoting their personal development well. Teacher intervention at appropriate points in lessons and assemblies contributes to raising the pupils' self-esteem by making them suitably aware and proud of their individual achievements. Pupils have opportunities in lessons to discuss and negotiate ideas and initiatives with their teachers, which they do with a fair and reasoned sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Teachers make effective use of the information they have acquired on the pupils' personal and social development to provide evaluative comment to parents at consultation evenings and in the annual reports on the pupil's progress.

46. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' good behaviour and attitudes in school have improved from the satisfactory level evident at the time of the last inspection and are now good. The school operates a structured system of rewards and sanctions to maintain a satisfactory standard of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to care for one other and show kindness and tolerance to all individuals. In this respect, pupils are developing a good sense of equality and fairness in their dealings with each other. Parents at the meeting and responding to the questionnaire agreed that the school manages the behaviour of pupils in an appropriate way. The lunchtime supervisors exercise a satisfactory level of pupil control in the playground, although managing behaviour is mostly left to the teaching staff. The teachers follow well-known procedures to ensure that incidents such as bullying and harassment, when they do occur, are dealt with effectively and consistently. Records are kept and used effectively to reduce the likelihood of such behaviour recurring. Parents are reminded of the school's policy on behaviour through the home/school agreement. Teachers regularly praise and openly recognise those pupils who behave or act particularly well. These procedures help all those connected with the school to understand what is expected in terms of good behaviour and how it contributes to the smooth running of the school.
47. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality in school. The procedures have proved effective in reducing the previously higher than average incidence of unauthorised absence. Parents are now more inclined to notify the school when their children are absent and are beginning to take heed of warnings not to take pupils on holiday during term time. The school realises that there is more work to be done before the attendance of their pupils equals that achieved by primary aged pupils nationally. An improved system of monitoring and tracking pupil lateness has recently been introduced. Accurate register printouts help the educational welfare officer identify concerns and take the necessary action to quickly get pupils back into school on a regular basis.
48. Although the designated member of staff dealing with child protection issues has undertaken training for her role, most of the lunchtime supervisors have only a basic knowledge of what constitutes good practice in this area. This is a minor weakness that the school plans to address by providing the necessary training. Pupils are, however, given good information to raise their awareness of how sensibly to care and look after their bodies.
49. Procedures for promoting pupils' well-being and health and safety are satisfactory, overall. The risk assessments are sufficiently thorough to identify areas of potential risk around the school site and buildings. The headteacher and governors assess the individual risk element when deciding on the order of priority for work that needs to be done.
50. Procedures for administering first aid are good, with two members of staff member having undergone the comprehensive 'First Aid at Work' training to provide the customarily recognised statutory certification. The office staff keep a record of the more serious injuries and accidents involving pupils, although this does not always record the subsequent contact made with the parents of the sick or injured child. The first aid room offers comfort and privacy when pupils are unwell or injured. The health and safety issues highlighted in the previous report have been satisfactorily addressed.
51. The school's assessment policy was updated in 1998. Assessment procedures are currently under review and are to be further developed over the next year by the assessment co-ordinator.

Assessment in English, mathematics and science is monitored by the curriculum co-ordinators. The procedures are good and information is used well to monitor pupils' progress. However, writing assessments are not as accurate as those carried out in mathematics and science. This means that pupils' progress in writing is less effectively monitored.

52. The school has started to analyse the information from baseline assessments and Key Stage 1 tests in terms of the attainment of boys and girls. They also look carefully at the attainment of different ethnic groups and pupils who are learning English as an additional language and to track whether pupils are making the progress that might be expected. These initiatives are newly in place, but they are enabling the school to start to see where pupils may need additional support. Currently, the school does not have procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress in other subjects, but this is an issue that curriculum co-ordinators are addressing. Currently, there is inconsistent use of systems to monitor the development of pupils' skills in subjects, such as art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communications technology, music and religious education. This means that teachers do not have a good indication of how well pupils are progressing. Marking is usually done regularly and, although teachers' comments are generally positive, areas for improvement are not always clearly indicated. Parental consultations are held termly which provide parents with information as to how pupils are achieving. Satisfactory written annual reports are sent out at the end of the summer term. The reports provide sound information about pupils' progress, but the setting of targets for improvement is inconsistent.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Good progress has been made in developing the satisfactory partnership with parents evident at the time of the last inspection. The partnership is now good. The school is a welcoming place and parents have a good view of what the school provides for their children. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and the impact parents make on the work of the school is good, with parents included in a range of school activities. Parents make a good contribution towards their children's learning. The quality of information provided for them is satisfactory.
54. The parents' meeting with the inspectors and the parents' questionnaires showed strong support for the school. This was echoed in the comments made by parents interviewed during the week of the inspection. Where there were instances of parents expressing a negative view, there was a contrary and more widely held positive view from other parents. The exception to this was the observation made by a significant minority that insufficient written information is provided about what their child is being taught. Although the school has made progress in this respect by providing good information by way of open evenings and curriculum workshops for parents, there remains a lack of clarity in the general written communications about what pupils are expected to be learning at school and at home. For example, some parents are unsure as to whether their children should be regularly taking spelling books home to work with.
55. The quality of other information available and presented to parents is of a satisfactory standard. Parents take a keen interest in their children's progress at school. They cite homework, hearing reading and formal and informal conversations with teachers as prime ways in which they keep themselves informed about their child's progress and learning. Although most parents feel that the amount of homework provided is appropriate for the age of their children, some are uncertain as to the extent of the homework required. A dozen or so parents have now joined a school-based family literacy programme to help them gain an insight and an understanding of how to help their children progress their reading skills. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in a partnership to support their children. Parents of younger pupils, including those with English as an additional language are now borrowing the story sacks and using them as visual and tangible aids to reinforce familiar story themes. The end of year reports on pupils' progress meet statutory requirements and include a number of useful indicators to parents on what their children's need to do to improve, particularly in English and mathematics. However, there is no space for either parents or pupils to add their written evaluations of the report, thus missing an opportunity for additional, useful dialogue between parent, school and pupil. The current edition of the school prospectus and the governors' annual report provide all the information that must be given to parents by law.
56. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and home is good. Parents welcome and respond enthusiastically to the regular opportunities that they have to work alongside teachers in school. This gives parents an insight into certain teaching techniques that can help them support their children's learning out of school. Their positive response to the school's commitment to improving attendance is beginning to show in the improved figures for the current year. Parents help maintain the satisfactory standard of pupil behaviour in school by showing a desire to problem-solve through discussion. Regular opportunities for an active and constructive dialogue with parents are provided through the recently established headteacher and Chair of Governors 'surgeries'. The school appreciates the input of parents on school matters and the headteacher informally canvasses the views of parents at events organised by the Parents' Association and by being available before and after school. Parent/teacher consultation sessions are well attended and parents give enthusiastic support at all events that directly involve their children. By showing a keen interest in these occasions, parents promote a positive feeling amongst their children that their schoolwork is valued and individual success is attainable. This has, overall, a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to their learning.
57. The school has recently started a family literacy project and this has been targeted at pupils for whom English is an additional language. As this is a new initiative it is not yet possible to assess its impact, but it is well attended and parents already speak highly of its value.

58. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Many give freely and generously of their time and are frequently seen in and around the school, helping reorganise the library, assisting in classes or in supervising pupils on their educational visits out of school. In one good lesson, the teacher had fully briefed the parent helpers on the part they would play in the lesson. This helped to ensure that the most effective use was made of their skills and voluntary support. Parents have good fund-raising abilities and have provided a range of additional resources in school. They provide a satisfactory level of support for their children's education at home by helping listen to their children read and helping develop their information technology skills. The assistance given by parents to the work of the school is good and has a positive impact on the pupils' personal, social and academic development.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

59. The leadership and management of the school are good. The serious weaknesses in leadership and management, identified during the previous inspection have been fully addressed by the school. The new headteacher has a very good vision for the school and this is providing the school with a clear sense of direction and leadership. This has meant that a number of serious problems have been addressed very effectively in a relatively short time so that the school is now well placed to make even more progress. The headteacher is developing a strong team of committed, hardworking and dedicated staff and she enjoys the respect of staff, pupils, parents and governors. The headteacher is well supported by the new deputy head and together they are addressing areas where the school needs to improve further. The day to day management of the school is very efficient.
60. Many staff with management responsibilities are new to the school or to their current responsibilities. Whilst all co-ordinators have produced appropriate action plans for developing the areas where they manage, there has been insufficient time for some of these plans to have an impact on provision within the school. Senior and middle management roles have been carefully defined. Senior and middle managers work together co-operatively and a consistent management style is developing that is increasingly providing staff with good levels of support. Monitoring of teaching and the curriculum takes place regularly, but whilst this has been successful in raising standards in mathematics and science it has not yet made an impact on standards in writing or in subjects such as history, geography or information and communications technology.
61. The governing body is effective and the deficiencies identified at the time of the last inspection have been fully addressed. The governors meet regularly, have established an appropriate structure of committees and monitor aspects of school life regularly. All this is enabling them to have a satisfactory overview of school life. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
62. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities for development and this provides a clear agenda for improvement. The weaknesses identified in development planning identified during the previous inspection have been fully addressed. The improvement plan sets out systematic procedures for developing the school over the next three years and includes a good amount of detailed planning. In order to secure a high level of commitment to the plan the headteacher has involved staff, parents and governors in drafting it. Priorities for this year include clear targets for improvement in writing, mathematics and information and communication technology. However, less emphasis is placed on the development of creative subjects such as art and music or the aspects that would promote the cultural development of pupils where there are weaknesses in provision. In planning for the longer term, the plan shows how the school is preparing for re-organisation into a one-form entry primary school and a shadow management structure is being developed.

63. The school has been effective in meeting its targets in both English and mathematics. The school has introduced target-setting procedures for all classes and this is helping teachers to focus on the progress their pupils are making.
64. The aims of the school and much of the documentation refer to the need for equality of opportunity. The school tries hard to translate this ideal into practice. The special needs co-ordinator is well qualified for the post and provides good leadership. She is currently in the process of reviewing the policy. There is an active named governor for special educational needs who meets at least termly with the Special Needs Co-ordinator to discuss issues and provide good support. The special needs co-ordinator is effectively involved in review meetings with staff, parents and external agencies for those pupils with statements, but has little involvement with those who do not. Reviews for these pupils take place termly or more frequently, if required, but there is insufficient monitoring by the co-ordinator to ensure that parents are involved and necessary paper work is in order. Individual education plans are written by the special needs co-ordinator and copies held by class teachers. They are updated regularly by all within the school who have access to the pupil, but not all show parental involvement in the review and target setting process.
65. The school has only recently taken responsibility for the administration of the government's Ethnic Minorities Achievement grant and this has been undertaken efficiently. A part time teacher for English as an additional language took up her post in September 2000. Appropriate targets are set for pupils and the arrangements for supporting pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory.
66. The school has sufficient teachers who are qualified in the primary phase and are suitably experienced to teach the National Curriculum. There is a satisfactory balance of experienced and more recently qualified teachers. Teachers are appropriately supported by a sufficient number of suitably experienced and qualified support staff. This support has a good impact on the work in classrooms.
67. The school has satisfactory arrangements for teacher appraisal and performance management. Some of the recently identified targets for staff development are beginning to have a positive influence on the quality of teaching and learning.
68. There are currently no newly qualified teachers on the staff. However, suitable procedures are in place for the induction of new staff and the school is in an acceptable position to be a provider of initial teacher training.
69. The school's accommodation is adequate. The internal accommodation is clean and mostly well maintained, despite some shabby areas. Displays of pupils' work contribute well towards a vibrant and stimulating environment. All areas of the school are accessible to wheelchair users. However, the open plan design of interconnected classrooms allows noise to travel from one area to another and there are occasions when this hinders pupils' powers of concentration. Although the playing field is in good condition and of a good size, the hard play areas need to be resurfaced. Large puddles form there after periods of heavy rainfall. A planned programme of site maintenance and refurbishment to improve any presently dull and dreary areas will largely take effect on the appointment of a school caretaker. Additional classroom partitioning is planned for when the school becomes a one-form entry primary school.
70. The school makes satisfactory use of the financial resources allocated to it. Funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. The school also makes good use of funding allocated under the government's Ethnic Minorities Achievement grant. Priorities for development are appropriately identified and funds are allocated to these in the school development plan.
71. The budget is monitored effectively. The very efficient finance officer provides regular statements for the governors' finance committee which meets monthly in addition to full governing body meetings. Day to day financial control is effective and the recommendations of the recent audit report have all been successfully addressed.
72. The school is developing procedures to ensure that prices and contracts are compared and that



the principles of best value are properly applied. The school has a register of interests for governors. Good use is made of information technology for controlling the budget and administration of the school. The systems in place ensure that the school runs smoothly and that monies are handled securely. Income and expenditure are securely recorded. Office staff work in a calm and professional manner which supports the school's work very well.

73. There have been improvements in financial planning and control since the previous inspection and the school now provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. In order to improve the school further, and raise standards to higher levels, the governing body, headteacher and staff should::
- a) Raise standards in English by:
    - improving the opportunities given to pupils to develop their speaking skills (paragraphs 5,12, 92);
    - teaching writing skills systematically and ensuring that pupils are given the opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes (paragraphs 2, 5, 9, 52, 61, 94, 97);
    - developing pupils' writing skills across the curriculum (paragraphs 130, 136).
  - b) Raise standards in information and communications technology by:
    - implementing the school action plan (paragraphs 8, 9, 63, 140, 146);
    - developing teachers skills to teach the subject (paragraphs 143, 146)
    - making better use of the school's existing computers to develop links across the curriculum (paragraphs 104, 130, 132, 145, 146)
    - improving the provision of computers in the school (paragraphs 144, 146).
  - c) Improve the provision for cultural development by:
    - drawing on the cultural diversity of the school and reflecting it in all aspects of school life (paragraphs 42, 63, 158);
    - ensuring that opportunities for pupils to appreciate cultural diversity are planned across the whole curriculum (paragraphs 30, 42, 43, 117, 137, 149).
  - d) Raise standards in history geography art and music by ensuring that the school implements its new schemes of work and that these subjects receive adequate allocations of curriculum time (paragraphs 8, 9, 63, 115-116, 119, 125-126, 129, 132, 139,147).
  - e) Improve provision in the nursery by:
    - planning independent activities in greater detail, so that adults are clear about what they expect the children to learn from the daily, independent activities (paragraphs 23, 25, 27, 28, 79);
    - providing more varied and challenging activities, in order to enable children to concentrate for longer periods of time and to extend their mathematical and investigative skills (paragraphs 23, 79, 85):
    - setting up role play areas, to provide opportunities for children to speak, write and use mathematical language in more imaginative contexts (paragraphs 82 and 83);
    - ensuring that there are more frequent participation and interaction by adults in children's activities in order to promote the development of speaking and listening skills (paragraphs 9, 26, 80).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	28	49	10	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	45	237
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	46

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	61

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	26	35	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	26
	Girls	22	29	35
	Total	43	54	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	84 (73)	95 (79)
	National	86 (82)	85 (83)	91 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	25
	Girls	31	34	28
	Total	56	60	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (81)	94 (82)	83 (89)
	National	84 (89)	88 (85)	88 (86)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	18
Black – African heritage	18
Black – other	0
Indian	14
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	75
Any other minority ethnic group	38

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y3**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.2
Average class size	29.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y3**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	45

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	68

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
--------------------------------	----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	647,047
Total expenditure	638,968
Expenditure per pupil	2,068
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,884
Balance carried forward to next year	49,963

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	69

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	52	42	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	54	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	42	14	7	3
The teaching is good.	46	45	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	52	16	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	32	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	42	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	32	52	12	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	49	43	3	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	49	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	22	23	7	26

## **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**

75. There are three intakes to the nursery and two intakes to the reception classes each year. Children whose fourth or fifth birthday falls between the start of September and the end of March are admitted in September. Those born between the start of April and the end of August enter at the beginning of the spring term. Children in the nursery attend part-time either for morning or afternoon sessions. At the time of the inspection, there were 72 children on roll in the nursery. There were 35 children on roll in 2 reception classes. At the time of the inspection, four children had been registered as having special educational needs and four others are being monitored closely because there is some concern about their progress. All these children make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them.
76. Many children begin nursery with poorly developed skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal independence. Although their gains in learning are satisfactory in the nursery, attainment is still below that typical for this age by the time that children transfer to reception classes. This is confirmed by initial assessments conducted with these children in reception. Children make good progress in reception classes. They achieve well and, currently, are well on course to attain the national early learning goals in all the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

77. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given an appropriately high priority in both nursery and reception classes. This approach is effective and learning in this area is strong. Children learn to trust the staff and relax into routines quickly. At the beginning of the day, children settle happily on the carpets or to the tabletop activities and most are unaffected as their parents leave. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good, overall. A welcoming and happy environment is created with consistent routines in both nursery and reception classes. This makes children feel secure and helps to build up their confidence. The children respond positively to the care of the staff and to the good role models that they provide, enabling them to develop their social skills well. In the nursery, children play happily alone or alongside each other. As they gain confidence, they start to play co-operatively. Children enjoy the activities provided. However, in the nursery, there are not always enough varied and challenging, independent activities indoors. This means that children 'flit' from one activity to another and few develop the ability to concentrate for any length of time, unless supervised. Other personal skills are developing well. For instance, children in the nursery can put on coats and shoes, wash their hands and settle to whole class activities, such as stories and assemblies. Staff in reception classes maintain these good relationships with children and provide a good range of challenging activities so that they develop good levels of concentration and work with sustained concentration individually, in a group or as a class. Reception teachers provide opportunities for children to play collaboratively. They set up situations in which children can engage in conversations and collaborative role-play, for example, in Shoe-Shops and Travel Agents. In both the nursery and reception classes, children are made to feel valued and to learn right from wrong in a positive way, which enhances their self-esteem and encourages respect and consideration for others. Teachers encourage children to take responsibility by providing opportunities for choice and by involving them in tidying their classrooms at the end of sessions.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

78. On entry to the nursery, a significant number of children have difficulty in expressing themselves and in articulating questions and answers. Currently, approximately 42 per cent of children in the nursery are from homes where English is an additional language and many of these children are at very early stages of learning English. With the additional support provided for them, these children

make satisfactory progress and their achievement in this aspect is satisfactory. Children enjoy listening to stories, when they are read with enthusiasm and enjoy it when the teacher uses visual aids to bring a story to life. They concentrate and listen well, for example, as the teacher describes the contents of her “mystery box” in order to encourage children’s understanding of descriptive language, such as “soft and furry”. Children handle books reasonably carefully and turn the pages correctly, recognising the front and back. Literacy skills are developed through sharing books together as a group, by looking at the initial sounds in their names and through opportunities to practise writing, such as party invitations and little books. By the time they transfer to the reception classes, most children recognise their own names, but few can write them independently and attainment in writing is below that typically expected for this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, nursery staff could do more to develop language and communication skills for all the children. Currently, there are not enough opportunities for children to write in more imaginative contexts, such as shops, offices or hospitals. There are insufficient participation and interaction in their imaginative play and tabletop activities. Adults are not engaging children in extended conversations by carefully phrasing questions, so that children are required to give more than one word answers. Children are not being given sufficient help to speak more fluently because adults do not remodel their responses and answers fully when this is needed.

79. Children’s achievement in the reception classes is good and they are on course to attain the early learning goals in language and literacy. Every opportunity is taken during activities across all the areas of learning to develop children’s understanding of language, to extend their vocabulary and to encourage them to speak. For example, in a lesson where children were designing and making shopping bags, the teacher very effectively challenged children to speak, by posing questions such as, “Can you ask her a question about her bag?” and “Can you perhaps say that in a better way?” Adults talk to children and tell stories in an animated and enthusiastic way. They participate with children in actions to illustrate a story and this effectively promotes their speaking and listening skills, as well as developing their interest in books and writing. Children respond with enthusiasm to this and are eager to participate in reading rhymes, such as the one about Timothy Pope. Literacy skills are well developed through the teaching of spelling and punctuation, guided reading and writing. Children listen and respond to questions with increasing levels of concentration. They gain confidence as speakers. They are becoming familiar with a range of letter sounds and can match an object to its opening sound. Most children write their names independently and are beginning to write simple words and phrases. Children turn the pages of a book in the correct way and can retell the story from the pictures. Most can read words or phrases in a simple text. They are well on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers, in both the nursery and reception classes, encourage partnership with parents and carers in supporting children’s reading development at home. This has a positive impact on their interest in books and in their desire to read.

## Mathematics

80. By the time they enter the reception class, children can name the primary colours of red, yellow and blue and most can recognise and name some 2D shapes such as square, circle and triangle. The higher attainers can recite numbers to 20 and beyond and can count and match numbers accurately to five, matching finger to objects. However, gains in learning are unsatisfactory in the nursery. This is because few interesting or challenging activities are provided for children which will develop mathematical language or skills in sorting, matching, ordering and counting. During the inspection, the children’s only experiences of mathematics were if they chose to play with or were directed towards number jigsaw puzzles. If they were in a group with the teacher during registration, they practised reciting numbers up to 32, the number present. However, although a small number of higher attaining children were able to do this, few could count accurately beyond 10 and most struggled up to this number. Questions were not directed at individual children, which meant that the same ones, usually the most able, answered all the time.
81. The quality of teaching in mathematics is unsatisfactory in the nursery. Insufficient use is made of resources to organise independent activities in a way that ensures steady gains in children’s learning. More direct involvement of adults in varied role-play situations, such as shops and



cafes, would also make a greater contribution to children's growing awareness of mathematics in every day life.

82. Children's achievement in the reception classes is good. This results directly from the good and sometimes, very good teaching in mathematics, so that, by the time they enter Year 1, children attain the early learning goals. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce children's knowledge and understanding of numbers and to develop their mathematical language. Well-planned and organised lessons move children's learning forward at a brisk pace. Good use is made of resources and games in order to make learning fun. In the reception classes, children can order 5 circles from smallest to biggest and four strips of paper from shortest to longest. They can identify positional words such as "under", "on top" and "next to". They are familiar with vocabulary such as "more than" and can add on one to a set of two or three and the more able children can add on two more and say what the number will be then. They know the names and can identify a number of 3D shapes such as sphere, cube and cylinder, learning to recognise them in familiar contexts, such as large blocks in "The Den". They use computer programmes to support and broaden their vocabulary, learning the names of cylinder, cuboid and prism.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

83. When they enter the nursery, many children have difficulty in expressing their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the nursery, good use is made of visitors, for example, to bring in small farm animals, to increase children's knowledge of the wider world. They gain knowledge about cultures and beliefs through topics such as "festivals". They learn about celebrations such as birthdays, Diwali and Christmas. Children develop an awareness of their senses such as touch and smell. They are encouraged to use them to explore the world around them, for example, moulding and smelling a dough mixture and by playing with sand and water. However, more could be done, in the nursery, to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world by providing a wider range of more challenging and investigative activities to promote early scientific and technological skills. In the reception classes, through a topic about "Shops", teachers provide lessons, which, while promoting early geographic and design skills, also develop their knowledge and understanding of the world of shopping. For example, following a visit to some shops, children design their own shopping bags. Very good questioning encourages them to think about the shape and size of their bags, about the type of shop it will be for and how the writing on the outside advertises what is sold and the name of the shop. In both nursery and reception, children are developing competence in using computers. By the age of five, children can use a mouse to control objects on the screen and utilise a variety of programmes to support their work in literacy, mathematics and art. Children use a range of construction materials to make models. They can operate a cassette player to listen to a story. By the time they enter Year 1, children's attainment is broadly as expected for this age.

### **Physical development**

84. By the end of the reception year, most children meet the early learning goals in this area. Their movements are well co-ordinated and they are developing good control of their bodies. Children can control the speed of their movements and change actions to the sound of three different musical instruments. They can handle a 'parachute' with confidence and are beginning to work collaboratively, as a class, to control its movements. Children are confident when moving about the classrooms, hall and outdoor areas and are aware of objects and others around them. They handle crayons, pencils, scissors, glue and paintbrushes with increasing control and care, developing effective hand-eye co-ordination.
85. The quality of teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes. Children are effectively taught to manipulate tools, such as pencils, brushes and small apparatus, such as beanbags, so that they develop their manipulative skills well and make good progress in this aspect of their physical development. A variety of small apparatus is provided and teachers effectively demonstrate their use. In the nursery, regular, planned every day use of the secure outside area allows children to gain skill in steering and riding wheeled toys and to develop their skills in

balancing and climbing effectively. Teachers in the reception classes build on all these skills, except in the use of wheeled toys, to maintain steady gains in children's learning.

### **Creative development**

86. Currently, children are on course to meet the early learning goals for this area by the time they enter Year 1. Children use paint confidently and present their ideas through a variety of techniques, including modelling from junk materials. Children start from a fairly low level of skill when they enter the nursery and achieve well throughout the nursery and reception years. They are given opportunities to explore and use a variety of painting, modelling, collage and printing activities, which are often linked to topics, as well as opportunities for imaginative role-play in designated areas and with "small world" toys. Adult-led activities promote good learning of colours, develop children's visual perception and help children gain safe control of the finer movements of cutting and using glue. In the nursery, children learn to sing songs together and can carry out actions and follow instructions. Most can tap a simple rhythm on their knees. Children enjoy singing together and this is largely due to the enthusiasm of the nursery staff who, despite the fact that the music is recorded, sing and mime with pleasure. This has an infectious impact on the children. Even those who cannot follow the words join in happily with the actions. No judgement can be made about music in the reception classes, as none was seen during the inspection.
87. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, overall, with some very good teaching seen in both reception classes. There have been satisfactory improvements in provision since the previous inspection when much of the work in the nursery was unsatisfactory. Teaching in the nursery is now sound overall, although there are still significant weaknesses, which contribute to some unsatisfactory learning. The curriculum has been reviewed. Planning takes account of the nationally recommended Early learning Goals and the steps towards each of these have been planned for each half term. On-going assessment of children's achievements is good.

### **ENGLISH**

88. Standards in English are broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards in reading are average, but below the standards achieved by similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in reading is below the national average. Pupils' attainment in writing is below the national average and below the standards being achieved by similar schools.
89. There was an improvement in 2000 in standards in reading and pupils' attainment was average. However, standards in writing are still below average. By the time they leave the school at the age of eight, pupils' attainment in reading is average, but their attainment in writing is below average. Over the past four years standards in both reading and writing have declined, although they showed a significant improvement in the 2000 results.
90. When pupils enter the school, many of them lack confidence in speaking, although they listen well. The school also has a high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language and many of these are at the early stages of learning English. Their reading skills are poorly developed and few pupils have sufficient pencil control to enable them to write. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, but, by the time they are seven and when they leave the school at the age of eight, pupils are not confident in speaking, although they listen well and their reading standards are average. In lessons and assemblies, pupils listen very well but many of them are passive in discussions and do not readily volunteer to answer questions. When they do, some rely on one-word answers and find it difficult to express their ideas. Pupils' progress in speaking is unsatisfactory and they do not reach the levels expected for their age. However, pupils' make satisfactory progress in listening and demonstrate average skills for their age.
91. Given the limitations of pupils' skills on entry to the school, they do well to attain satisfactory standards in reading. The higher attaining pupils are enthusiastic readers. They enjoy talking

about the kind of books they like and comment on the features of the stories they are reading. Average and lower attaining pupils are less confident and fluent in their reading. They have only a limited range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and often wait to be told. Some use their knowledge of sounds to work out new words. Some five-year-olds, who are not yet fluent readers, enjoy using the pictures to tell the story of "Noah's Ark Adventure". They are beginning to use punctuation such as exclamation marks to help with their expression in reading aloud. Pupils try hard to read the shared text in their literacy lessons. Younger pupils enjoyed the rhyming text of "The bear who wouldn't share". They were able to identify the rhymes and repeated phrases in the story, which helped them to join in. Some pupils with English as an additional language enjoyed listening to the story of "Little Red Hen" on tape and followed the story in the book as they listened. Pupils in Year 3 were beginning to read play scripts with good expression. During the inspection week, the school library was being reorganised and so was not in use. However, the older pupils were able to talk about how they find information books. They know that the fiction section is arranged in alphabetical order and that non-fiction books are arranged by subject. They can use indexes and lists of contents to find information. Pupils take their books home regularly to read at home and this supports their learning well.

92. Pupils' attainment in writing is below average throughout the school. The systematic use of a handwriting scheme is having a positive effect and most pupils try hard with their handwriting and presentation. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are able to write neatly using joined script. Pupils know that writing is used for different purposes and is set out in different ways. In Year 3, pupils were beginning to write their own play scripts, based on events in the classroom. They understand that they should not use speech marks or reported speech when writing plays. The range of independent writing is very limited. Pupils are able to sequence events and use these in their story planning but this is not yet well developed. Much of the work seen consisted of work sheets. These enable pupils to practise their skills, but there is no evidence that these skills are then transferred to pupils' independent writing. Over time, pupils make unsatisfactory progress with their writing and there is very little evidence that pupils use their writing skills in other subjects.
93. Teaching in English is satisfactory, overall, although there are variations in teachers' skills. In one-third of lessons the teaching was good. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson. Most teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. They take care to discuss unfamiliar or complex vocabulary so as to help pupils understand what they are reading. They explain tasks very clearly and model language well for pupils. In some lessons, teachers made deliberate mistakes in their writing on the board in order to help pupils identify errors. This helped them to check pupils' understanding. In the best lessons, teachers made good use of open-ended questions to challenge pupils and to make them think. Teachers are beginning to set individual targets for pupils in their writing. These are written in their target books and referred to during lessons. Although the tasks for pupils of different attainment are similar, pupils are given different levels of support, which helps their achievement. Overall, pupils have sound attitudes to their English lessons and they behave well.
94. In some lessons the learning is not sufficiently challenging for the higher attaining pupils. They are merely expected to complete more work at the same level. In many lessons, teachers do not plan specific work for pupils who have special educational needs or who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. In a lesson on poetry, these pupils were not secure in their understanding of rhyme and this meant that they were not able to complete the task set, writing a list of words to rhyme with different colour names. Some teachers have insufficient knowledge about the teaching of spelling and miss opportunities to develop pupils' skills. They do not identify common spelling patterns, recognise words within words, or learn spelling rules. This means that pupils have few strategies to help them learn to spell and this is reflected in many misspellings in their work. In other classes, teachers give pupils helpful guidance about their spelling and this helps them to improve. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across year groups. In some cases, work is merely ticked without comment. There is little evidence of marking which helps pupils to evaluate and improve their work.
95. The school has introduced a system of assessment books. These contain examples of pupils'

work which are assessed against national curriculum levels. In many of the examples of writing seen the levels given were over generous and did not give an accurate picture of pupils' attainment. In the 2000 national tests, pupils did not attain the writing results predicted by the teachers' assessments. Inspection evidence confirms that teachers need to develop their understanding of the standards pupils must attain in order to achieve particular National Curriculum levels.

96. The co-ordinator for English is new to the school. She has made a good start in analysing the issues the school has to address and has formed an appropriate action plan to address these. She has begun to monitor teachers' planning and will be observing teaching in the next term. She also monitors samples of pupils' work and has arranged professional development for colleagues in supporting bilingual learners in the literacy hour. She has identified the need to improve resources in some areas of the English curriculum and is currently reorganising the library. This involves a good number of parent helpers who are working well under her direction.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Pupils in Year 2 attain the standards expected in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, shape, space and measures). The 2000 test results indicate a similar picture and also show that the standards achieved are comparable with those in similar schools. Standards are improving and, since 1999, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of 7-year-olds reaching the standards expected in the national tests. Standards are not yet as high as they should be, but improvements are working their way through the school. Pupils in Year 3 attain the standards expected in numeracy and in all areas of mathematics, except data handling, where little evidence of attainment was seen.
98. There are marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. A lower proportion of girls than boys attain the standards expected in the national tests. Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well and make satisfactory progress.
99. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and use this to solve simple two-step problems. They comment on the patterns emerging from simple number sequences and teachers encourage pupils to explain their ideas both in oral work and when they record their work in their books. Pupils know some of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and they are starting to tell the time, using hours and half-hours. Eight-year-old pupils can halve and double numbers to 100 and they are knowledgeable about odd and even numbers. They solve simple money problems, involving pounds and pence, and are starting to learn about fractions of similar value. Pupils comment on the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and are starting to tell the time, using the 12-hour and 24-hour clock. No evidence was seen of attainment of work in data handling, but an appropriate level of work is planned for later in the term. The pupils are given frequent opportunities to solve number puzzles and to develop their awareness of patterns in number. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. The school strikes a good balance between setting problems that involve number and those that involve real-life situations.
100. The quality of teaching and learning is mainly good, but some aspects of satisfactory lessons could have been better. In the lessons seen in Year 1 the teaching was good but, in Year 2, in one class, teaching was good, but, in the other, it was satisfactory. In Year 3, teaching was very good in one class and satisfactory in the other. Oral work at the start of each lesson is good in all classes, but, where teaching is satisfactory, group work does not match the needs of more able pupils. The analysis of pupils' work in Year 2 showed that the standards achieved in one class were higher than those achieved in the other. Higher standards were being achieved in the class where teaching was observed to be good. In Year 3, one class has had several teachers this term, but, overall, the standards of work being achieved in both classes are similar.
101. The teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is well established and planning is good. In most classes, teachers use questions well at the end of sessions to assess what pupils understand. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this develops the pupils' ability to

use the correct mathematical terms to explain their ideas both orally and in their writing. The oral and mental sessions are well paced and delivered with enthusiasm, pupils learn quickly and show an increasingly good ability to carry out calculations in their heads. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and, in this part of the lesson, the majority of teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. In the majority of classes, tasks are well matched, but where teaching is satisfactory the tasks were too easy for higher attaining pupils. In one Year 2 class, the task given to one group led pupils to become more concerned with cutting and sticking than the mathematical content of the lesson.

102. In all areas of the school, the pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is unsatisfactory. This is because teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities, although these are provided for younger pupils in the school. Pupils have few opportunities to use their mathematics to help learning in other subjects.
103. Teachers use informal observations and formal assessments to assess pupils' attainment. In a number of classes, information from marking pupils' work was used efficiently to re-organise teaching groups. However, this was not a feature of group work where teaching was satisfactory. Assessment is used appropriately to monitor pupils' progress and to set targets for pupils in all classes.
104. There have been good improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards are rising and the mathematics curriculum is well planned. The co-ordination of the subject is very effective and all aspects of provision for this subject are monitored and evaluated rigorously. The unsatisfactory match of tasks to higher attaining pupils continues to be an issue in two classes.

## SCIENCE

105. The results of national teacher assessments in 2000 show that the school's results are well below the national average and well below the standards achieved by similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Standards observed during the inspection were higher than those achieved in the national assessments. Seven and eight year old pupils were seen to be attaining standards that met the national expectation. This is an improvement in attainment in science since the last inspection, when they were seen to be below average in Key Stage 1.
106. In Key Stage 1, pupils attain the standards expected for their ages in science. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of living things. In Year 1, for example, they learn how humans find out about the world around them through their senses. They know that living things grow and reproduce and through investigation, learn that people grow at different rates. They can recognise and name external body parts such as head, neck, arm, elbow, knee and foot. In the current Year 2, pupils describe their observations and are beginning to understand the process of finding out through testing. They record their findings in a variety of ways, such as drawings and simple tables. However, they do not use computers often enough to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of some physical phenomena such as electricity and sound. They have an understanding of simple circuits and know what is required to make a bulb light. They are aware of the dangers of electricity and can identify products that are powered by batteries or mains electricity. They begin to classify materials into groups, for example, those that float or sink and those that are attracted or not to magnets. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how materials can be changed, for example, by heating or cooling and the more able understand that some changes are reversible such as ice melting and freezing. However, pupils know less about habitat and the ways in which animals are suited to particular environments.
107. Standards in Year 3 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Good questioning by teachers enables pupils to develop an understanding of a "fair" test, when investigating the hardness of different rocks. By the end of Year 3, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the earth and beyond. For example, they know that light comes from the sun, that the earth turns

round once every 24 hours and that it is day or night according to the earth's position. The more able pupils are beginning to recognise how shadows are formed and how they are longer or shorter according to the sun's position in the sky.

108. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the achievement and gains in learning of all pupils are satisfactory. Pupils' achievement parallels closely the quality of teaching. All pupils enjoy scientific investigation and express amazement and excitement as they investigate phenomena, such as electricity. This is especially beneficial for those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, who are often effectively supported by classroom assistants in the class.
109. While the quality of teaching and learning throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, overall, it could be better. This is because there is still some unsatisfactory teaching in one Year 2 class in Key Stage 1. However, there is some good teaching in the other Year 2 class to offset this and, overall, there has been an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is sound and they are careful to use and emphasise the correct scientific terminology. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' development of vocabulary and on their overall learning in science. In the best lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with equipment and to find out scientific facts through investigation. This occurred in a Year 2 lesson about electricity, where the teacher challenged pupils with questions that led them first to predict what would happen if they fixed two light bulbs into a circuit with one or two batteries and then provided them with the equipment to discover for themselves. This investigative work develops pupils' skills of enquiry and kindles their interest and enjoyment. A common weakness in lessons where teaching was satisfactory was that teachers over-direct or show pupils what to do. In these instances, teachers' expectations are too low and they do not allow pupils sufficient opportunity to experiment and investigate for themselves. This has a detrimental effect on the development of enquiry skills and pupils do not make as much progress as they should in this aspect of science. Discussions about investigations and recording of experiments provide satisfactory support for the school's work in literacy.
110. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly. Records are kept of these assessments and are used satisfactorily to influence what pupils do next. The school has begun to analyse information from national teacher assessments, but has not yet had time to make sufficient use of this to modify the curriculum or to set targets for improvement. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, marked by joint planning that occurs within year groups. It includes regular monitoring of the effectiveness with which plans are implemented.
111. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum has been reviewed. The quality of teaching has improved and standards are rising.

## **ART**

112. The attainment of seven and eight year olds is below that expected for their age. This is especially the case for drawing and three-dimensional work. When compared to the average standards achieved in reception this shows that there is some under-achievement throughout Years 1, 2 and 3. Similar standards were observed during the previous inspection.
113. When pupils draw illustrations in their books, the proportions are weak and there are few features in the drawings. The school is in the process of implementing a new scheme of work and pupils were observed developing drawing skills systematically, but, as yet, this has not had an impact on the overall standards achieved in drawing in the school. Pupils' skills in painting develop satisfactorily and older pupils mix shades of the same colour and use them effectively in their work. The analysis of work showed that only a limited amount of work had been carried out where pupils develop skills in three-dimensional work and textiles and this has an adverse effect on the progress they make.
114. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. In one lesson, the teaching was good and in the other it was satisfactory. In both lessons, teachers developed pupils' drawing skills well by

getting them to observe details such as eyes and brows on a face or by getting pupils to notice how various shading effects can be achieved by using different types of line. The school's new planning for the subject contains a good level of detail that helps staff plan progressively to teach skills in all aspects of this subject. Some additional support in the form of in-service training may well be needed to ensure that teachers can confidently teach all aspects of this subject. Currently, provision for art and design reflects the influence of western artists, but little reference is made to the work of non-western crafts people and this limits the contribution this subject makes to the pupils' cultural development. Good links are made with information and communication technology and information and communications technology skills are used to good effect in developing artwork.

115. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. Year 1 pupils tried hard to produce a range of different effects in their shading whereas, Year 2 pupils started to lose interest in sketching eyes and brows when they were given a little too long to complete the task.
116. The shared areas that each year group has are well organised for artwork and resources are satisfactory, but limited time is available for teaching art and design. The new co-ordinator has a clear view about how the subject needs to be developed and has produced a well-constructed scheme of work. Whilst there has been little monitoring of teaching and learning in this subject in the past, the implementation of the new scheme of work is being monitored carefully by the co-ordinator. Overall, the management of the subject has improved since the previous inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. Standards in design and technology are broadly in line with those expected nationally, although there were only limited opportunities to observe the teaching of design and technology. This is because most of the lessons were due to be taught after the end of the inspection. Other evidence was obtained by looking at examples of pupils' work, teachers' lesson plans and from discussions with staff.
118. By the age of seven, pupils are able to generate ideas and use pictures and models to communicate their designs. In Year 1, pupils plan and design playground equipment. They make models of swings and seesaws using card and art-straws. As they move through the school, pupils increase their knowledge of joining and finishing techniques. By the age of seven, they assemble, join and decorate materials in a variety of ways using paper, card, cotton reels, wooden discs, scissors, glue, masking tape and split pins, for example, to make wheeled vehicles in Year 2. Pupils in Year 3 learn about stability in structures by investigating and evaluating familiar objects such as photo frames and bookstands. They use the information gained to design and make their own photo-frames. Pupils are helped to think about the materials that they will need to make their models and to evaluate and revise their plans, designs and models.
119. There were insufficient lessons seen in design and technology to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching. In the one lesson seen in Year 3, the teaching was sound. The pupils were well motivated by the teacher and showed interest in designing photo frames, answering questions such as, "How is it going to be joined?" and "How will it stand up?" From other evidence of work on display, it is clear that pupils make steady gains in learning over time and that those pupils who have special educational needs and whose first language is not English, make progress at the same rate as others of the same age.
120. The curriculum for design and technology is well planned, with a clear focus for learning each half term. Assessment procedures are not yet fully developed in order to guide teachers' planning for pupils' next steps of learning. The subject co-ordinator provides informal support and guidance for colleagues. However, although monitoring of teachers' planning is regular, there has been no opportunity to check on teaching and learning in the classroom.
121. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The curriculum and planning have been revised and standards have risen.

## GEOGRAPHY

122. At Key Stage 1 and Year 3, attainment is below expected standards and pupils' progress is currently unsatisfactory. The school has recently introduced a well structured scheme of work, but there has been insufficient time between introducing new schemes of work and the start of the inspection for standards to be improved to the nationally expected levels.
123. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about their locality and other familiar places through first hand experiences, maps, atlases and photographs. Year 1 pupils recognise some of the physical and human features in the area. They identify buildings and understand that some nearby are where people work. They use photographs of the area and recognise places and signs and where these are situated on a large-scale plan of the area. Through going on a walk they understand the need for safety, recognising signs and safe places to cross roads. In Year 2, they use maps and aerial photographs to investigate how land is used and satisfactorily recognise places and features. They look at the difference between their own area and the country and make simple comparisons. However, when talking about their lessons, pupils are hampered by a lack and understanding of geographical vocabulary.
124. In Year 3, pupils talk and write about where they would like to go on holiday, using a simple writing frame. They describe how they would get there and use pictures from magazines to illustrate their work. Using an atlas and world map, they mark their journey and send a postcard with simple description of where they are. They begin to understand that weather patterns are different across the world and think about weather patterns in Mitcham. They acquire a growing knowledge and understanding of their own locality and develop their ability to compare different places for similarities and differences such as the seaside.
125. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve similarly to the other pupils.
126. The previous inspection report recognised that attainment was below national expectations and a key issue was to raise standards. There has been insufficient improvement since then, as attainment is still below expectations. The school has quite properly concentrated on introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to raise attainment in these areas which has consequently resulted in less attention to geography. However, there have been positive developments in the past two terms with the introduction of a scheme of work, using guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and revised National Curriculum.
127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and is sometimes good. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, which is communicated effectively to pupils. They use correct geographical terms, which extends pupils' understanding. Planning is usually satisfactory with clear learning objectives but these are not always shared with pupils so that they know what they are learning. Teachers' expectations are generally satisfactory, although higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, because all pupils undertake the same activities. Lessons usually proceed at an appropriate pace and teachers use questioning effectively to assess what pupils know, can do and understand. Resources, such as photographs, maps and atlases are used successfully to support pupils' learning. However, there is insufficient recording in Year 2 and Year 3 so that pupils can refer back to and learn from previous activities
128. Most pupils' attitudes towards the subject are at least satisfactory and sometimes they are good because teachers motivate their pupils well. Most pupils listen attentively and are interested in their work. They usually settle quickly to activities and show good concentration, which means that behaviour is usually good. In discussions, they listen to what others have to say, take turns and show respect for the comments of others.
129. The school has very recently introduced a clear scheme of work based on guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority which provides clear guidance for teachers. However, it has not yet been in place long enough to raise standards. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and background of the pupils. Also, the lack of a geography



focus in some terms means that the subject is taught intermittently and this affects skill development. Tasks do not always make sufficient demands on the more able pupils. Assessment and marking do not effectively set targets to enable pupils to improve their work. Good use is made of pupils' literacy skills in written activities, but the use of their numeracy skills is less well developed. The use of information technology to support pupils' learning in this subject is unsatisfactory, although this is partly because the availability of subject-specific software is limited. Sound use is made of the local area to support pupils' learning, with visits to local places of interest. Some good displays in classrooms and about the school enhance the learning environment and raise the subject profile.

130. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of planning, but there is no effective monitoring of teaching and learning to raise standards and share good practice or pupils' work. This is an area for development. There are no assessment procedures in place to monitor pupils' attainment and progress and plan suitable activities for different ability groups and this is unsatisfactory. Learning resources are satisfactory and there is a sound range, which is readily accessible.

## HISTORY

131. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only two lessons in Year 2 as no history is planned in Year 3 until the summer term. Analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicates that attainment is currently below national expectation and that pupils make insufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make unsatisfactory progress.
132. At the time of the last inspection, it was found that standards were similar to those expected nationally. However, this is no longer the case. History has received less attention during the past two years, as the school has quite rightly concentrated on introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. However, since the last inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of teachers' planning with the introduction of a new scheme of work this term.
133. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the past effectively through looking at photographs and artefacts. They talk about the differences between past and present times and put the photographs and artefacts into a time sequence. They recognise that some things are similar and some have changed. From this they develop a sense and awareness of chronology. However, there is insufficient recording of their findings to enable them to learn from past lessons. The quality of the limited work in pupils' books is well below expectations. Pupils have difficulty in talking about their work in history as they lack vocabulary and find it difficult to explain historical words.
134. Review of teachers' planning and the observation of two lessons indicate that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, in one lesson the teaching was good, but, in the other, it was unsatisfactory. Where the teaching is good, planning is clear and there is a good range of artefacts, which are relevant to the experience of pupils. This helps pupils develop their understanding of the past. Pace is brisk and the teacher uses questioning effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, but this is not always communicated effectively to pupils. Planning is usually satisfactory with clear learning objectives, but these are not always shared with pupils, so that they are not clear about what they are learning. Resources, such as photographs, maps and atlases are used successfully to support pupils learning, but are not always relevant to the background and knowledge of the pupils.
135. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are satisfactory, overall. Most pupils show interest and enthusiasm in the subject matter and concentrate well when teaching is focused and pace is brisk. However, when teaching is less good they quickly lose interest and consequently their behaviour deteriorates.
136. The school has very recently introduced a scheme of work for history, but it has not yet been in place long enough to raise standards. It is based on guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which provides clear guidance for teachers. However, the school needs to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and background of the pupils and that the subject is taught on a regular basis. History alternates with geography in the yearly planning cycle, which means that the subject is taught only intermittently. For example, in Year 3, history is taught only in the summer term. This arrangement adversely affects pupils' progress. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject. There is satisfactory monitoring of curriculum medium term planning, but there is currently no monitoring of pupils' work to raise standards. There is no systematic assessment of pupils' progress and this is an area of development. Learning resources are satisfactory and effective use is made of educational visits and visitors into school to enrich pupils' learning experiences. History contributes to literacy through written work, although this is very limited and the quality is below expectations. Numeracy is supported through the use of time lines which develops their chronological understanding. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in history. Good history displays in classrooms and about the school enhance the learning environment and increase pupils' awareness of history.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards in information and communications technology are unsatisfactory. Information and communications technology has been identified by the school as an area for development and is a high priority on the schools development plan. There were very few opportunities to observe pupils using information and communications technology during the inspection and judgements about standards and progress are based upon the use of computers and other equipment, scrutiny of pupils work and talking to staff and pupils.
138. By the age of seven, pupils' knowledge and understanding and use of information and communications technology is below expectations because pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their skills and some staff lack knowledge and understanding. During the inspection it was apparent that those pupils who have regular access to computer technology at home show more competence and confidence. Currently, teachers give insufficient opportunities for pupils to independently load programs, save information and have hands on experience. Many pupils have a limited knowledge of the keyboard and use of keys and exchanging and sharing information. They are just beginning to write simple sentences and use the shift, delete and spacebar. They use an art program to draw simple lined shapes in different colours and draw faces. However, few know how to change font, colour and size of letters independently. Their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using information technology, inside and outside school, is below expectations and they lack the necessary vocabulary.
139. By the age of eight, pupils' knowledge and understanding vary, with those having computers at home being more knowledgeable. A significant number of pupils are aware of the internet and use of e-mail facilities. Many pupils understand that information and communications technology can be used in different ways to send messages and exchange information such as sending faxes to other schools. However, many lack basic keyboard knowledge and skills because of limited planned access in previous years. They have a limited understanding of the entering and storing of information such as in databases. Most know that information can be gathered from a variety of sources such as people, books, videos and CD-ROMs. They know that television communicates information and they understand and interpret weather map symbols.
140. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection. However, there have recently been some positive developments. New computers and upgraded software have been recently introduced. The school has purchased two laptop computers for staff to improve their skills and knowledge. There are weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, but most of them have not yet received sufficient training. The school, as a priority for raising standards, has identified further training needs and this is to be arranged, using government money during the coming year as identified in the information and communications technology development plan. The school has recently updated the scheme of work, using guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this provides support for other areas of the curriculum.
141. At both Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and communicate this effectively to pupils. Planning is satisfactory, although not always currently relevant. For example, classrooms are not yet equipped for using the Internet and the teaching of this aspect in Year 3 is currently not effective. Many pupils who do not have computers at home lack basic skills and knowledge. Due to lack of computers, teachers find it difficult to deliver the planned curriculum. There are currently insufficient, directed opportunities for pupils to use computers. This means that pupils do not have sufficient and regular access to develop basic keyboard knowledge and understanding and improve standards. Pupils often undertake the same task and no account is taken of their prior attainment. In a small number of classes, teachers do not record when pupils use information and communications technology and what they can do. Consequently, activities are not always matched to the pupils' needs in these classes and this does not make effective use of information and communications technology or ensure that pupils make sufficient progress. Although there is some use to support reading and mathematics, teachers do not yet plan effectively for information and communications technology across the curriculum and too few opportunities are provided.

142. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy using the computer and they are keen to learn. On the few occasions when they were observed using computers, they worked well individually, in pairs or in small groups. They show respect for the equipment, take turns and support each other well. Most show good concentration and perseverance, have positive attitudes and are well motivated.
143. The co-ordinator has only very recently taken over responsibility for the subject and has had little opportunity to provide support and improve standards. Although there is some monitoring of planning, there is currently no monitoring of pupils' work or quality of teaching to raise standards. The information and communications technology development plan shows what needs to be done to improve attainment and quality of teaching and plans in place. New networked computers have recently been purchased and staff are not all confident in their use. Staff training in specific areas, using government funding, is due to begin shortly and this will improve the knowledge and understanding of teachers' and learning support assistants. The newly introduced scheme of work is thorough and well structured. It provides good guidance, but there has been insufficient time between introducing new schemes of work and the start of the inspection for standards to be improved to the nationally expected levels. The school also needs to think carefully as to how it can be managed with the current level of new and older resources. With only one modern computer for each class, the number of suitable computers is insufficient to implement the scheme of work in all areas and ensure regular access to raise pupils' standards. The school has recognised the need for assessment procedures and an evaluation of pupils' skills so that teaching is more effective and activities more closely matched to their needs. There is a sound range of suitable software including CD ROMs, especially for the older computers, but these have yet to be fully utilised to support all areas of the curriculum. All classes have a listening centre and headphones, which encourages pupils to work independently. Other resources to support information and communications technology, such as programmable toys, CD players, television and video recorders are sufficient and used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of information and communications technology.

## **MUSIC**

144. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make a judgement either about pupils' attainment and progress or of the quality of teaching in music. School planning documents show that insufficient time is allocated to music to cover all the requirements of the programmes of study. Timetables show that each class has a thirty-minute lesson each week and an additional five minutes each day is expected to be spent on singing. This arrangement does not give teachers the time to develop pupils' musical skills. In the five-minute sessions, time is spent on singing familiar songs and rhymes with no emphasis on teaching or on evaluating and improving the pupils' performance.
145. The school has adopted a scheme of work and is currently adapting this to take account of the new curriculum requirements and the needs of pupils. The school development plan has identified the need to provide opportunities for staff to develop their competence in teaching music and this is planned for the spring term. In assemblies and in singing practices, pupils sing with pleasant tone and are reasonably in tune. Teachers do not give enough attention to posture and breathing which would immediately improve pupils' skills. Songs are practised with no evaluation or development of pupils' musical skills. Pupils in Year 3 understand the difference between pulse and rhythm and work well together in groups to play different rhythmic patterns whilst maintaining a steady pulse. They enjoy their work and work well together in groups. They enjoy performing their simple patterns to the rest of the class.
146. Music is a subject that needs developing in the school. In the previous inspection, standards were judged to be broadly in line with national expectations, although very little music was observed. Currently, the time allocated to music is insufficient to allow for the systematic development of pupils' musical skills. At present, there are no extra-curricular activities in music. Music makes little contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school's collection of instruments and listening resources is not sufficiently representative of a range of cultural traditions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

147. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 attain the standards expected for their ages. Standards are similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection, although pupils in both key stages now make satisfactory progress. There is no difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
148. Pupils in Year 2 link stretching, curling and balancing movements into simple sequences demonstrating increasing control over their bodies. The 'warm up' section of all lessons is brisk and challenging and teachers demonstrate the exercises well. The pupils enjoy this section of the lesson and respond with enthusiasm and show a good awareness of the space around them. Where teaching is good, teachers use demonstration well and explain to pupils how they could improve their movements. A common weakness in lessons where teaching was satisfactory was that pupils identified how to improve their movements, but they were not able to do it in practice. Teachers' interventions were insufficiently targeted to help pupils see how to improve their work and this limited the progress made. Teachers promote pupils' independence well by ensuring that they learn to take equipment out safely and to put it away at the end of a lesson.
149. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their work in physical education and they behave well. In Year 3, pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work. They show a good awareness of safety issues and also discuss the effect that exercise will have on their bodies. Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy the warm up sessions and the good pace in this section of the lesson, together with very clear expectations, set the tone for the lessons. Pupils work well in pairs or on their own, developing sequences with high and low movements. Where teaching is good, the feedback given to pupils enables them to improve their work and to describe the performances of other people constructively. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, only limited opportunities are given to repeat and refine their work and their progress is consequently more limited.
150. The new co-ordinator has drawn up an action plan for the development of this subject. Currently, teachers are planning their work from the existing scheme of work and the co-ordinator gives them feedback on their plans and discusses the techniques that need to be used to teach different skills. This is helping to develop teachers' subject knowledge and giving them confidence to teach the subject. As a result, all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and half of it good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The gymnastic club that is run for Year 3 pupils enhances provision in this subject, as does the school's termly participation in competitive sport activities organised by the local education authority.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

151. At the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education were judged to be satisfactory. In all the lessons observed, pupils' attainment was at least in line with standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus and in some lessons it was good.
152. At the age of 7 and when pupils leave the school at the age of 8, pupils' knowledge and understanding is at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils know several stories from the bible, for example the story of Noah and stories of the birth of Jesus. They are developing a good understanding of the lessons to be learned from the stories and how these affect the lives of believers today. They talk about the rainbow as a sign of God's promise to Noah that he would not send another flood and understand the importance of keeping a promise. Work in pupils' books shows that they are being taught to think about what the stories mean to believers and how they affect people's lives. They have written about the qualities that make a good friend and from this consider the qualities of the friends of Jesus. Pupils are enthusiastic about religious education and keen to contribute to discussion.
153. In all the lessons observed the teaching was at least satisfactory. In forty per cent of lessons the teaching was good and in a few instances it was very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are concerned to develop the skills and attitudes expected by the locally agreed syllabus as well as pupils' knowledge of content. Teachers use a good range of strategies for

teaching religious education. They make good use of discussion and role-play, which effectively supports pupils' understanding. This makes a good contribution to pupils' language skills. In some lessons, teachers use the technique of circle work. This contributes well to pupils' moral and social development. For example, pupils understand from this work that they should co-operate and be kind to one another.

154. Teachers keep good records of their work in religious education, recording discussions and pupils' involvement in role-play. They evaluate pupils' contributions to lessons and use these to plan further work.
155. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Teachers' planning is monitored and the school has a coherent curriculum plan derived from the locally agreed syllabus. The syllabus clearly states that in first schools the curriculum for religious education should concentrate on Christianity and Judaism with Islam being taught in Year 3. The school scheme of work reflects this. However, the school has a significant proportion of Hindu and Sikh pupils. Whilst the syllabus states that the curriculum may draw upon examples and stories of other faith traditions, the units of work do not provide sufficiently for this and the needs of all faith groups represented in the school are not appropriately met.