

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tilehurst, Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109866

Headteacher: Ms Maxine Slade

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
OFSTED No: 3961

Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 November 2000

Inspection number: 224215

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Barton Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Dennis Greenway

Date of previous inspection: 11 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Raven (Ofsted No: 3961)	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it?
		Religious education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
		English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
		Science	What should the school do to improve further?
Barry Wood (Ofsted No: 1311)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
Bill Lowe (Ofsted No: 21245)	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Information and communication technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
Peggy Waterston (Ofsted No: 30677)	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Foundation stage	
		Equal opportunities	
		Art	
		Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Springfield Primary School caters for 243 boys and girls aged from 3 - 11 years. In addition, 52 children attend the nursery part-time. The school is bigger than most primary schools nationally. Most pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage, although 16 pupils come from minority ethnic groups, mainly African Caribbean. Eighty three pupils in the main school have special educational needs, covering a wide range of learning and other disabilities, including specific learning disability, moderate learning disability, emotional and behaviour difficulties and hearing impairment. There are two children with special educational needs in the nursery. At 34 per cent the proportion of pupils having special educational needs is well above the national average and the proportion having Statements of Special Educational Needs is also slightly above average. Eight pupils are learning English as an additional language, three of these being at an early stage of English language acquisition. Pupils enter the school with attainment which is typical of children aged three in all the areas of learning for children under five.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11, they reach standards which are in line with the national average in English and science. In mathematics standards exceed those found nationally. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum standards are typical of those found nationally at this age. In religious education standards meet the expectation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, taking the school as a whole, and the youngest children in the nursery and the reception class are taught very well. The teaching of pupils aged from five to seven is good and has improved very well since the last inspection. The school promotes good attitudes and behaviour and relationships are very good. The headteacher provides good leadership and the school is well managed. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection, in raising standards and in improving the quality of teaching, over the past four years. It offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of the priorities for school improvement.
- The teaching of the youngest children is very good and for those aged from five to seven years it is good.
- Standards achieved in numeracy are above average by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11.
- The school promotes good attitudes and behaviour and relationships are very good.
- The youngest children are helped to make a very good start on their school life when they enter the nursery.
- The school takes good care of its pupils and health and safety procedures are good.

What could be improved

- The use of whole-school assessment systems to track pupils' attainment and progress, to help teachers plan their teaching and to set targets for pupils to improve their work .
- The planning of the curriculum for the school as a whole, detailing the amount of time to be given to all subjects and units within subjects.
- The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils' awareness of the diversity and richness of a range of different cultures.
- Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and be independent.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Since then improvement has been satisfactory. The standards achieved by 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science have risen. Pupils have better skills in information and communication technology. The grouping of pupils aged from five to seven has

been reorganised so that there is a smaller age range within classes and this helps teachers to match work more accurately to pupils' needs and improves learning. Teaching has improved throughout the school and particularly for pupils aged from five to seven. There is much less unsatisfactory teaching overall, and none for the children in the nursery and those aged from five to seven. Attention has been given to the improvement of assessment but not enough progress has been made. There is still work to do on developing and using whole-school assessment systems to track pupils' progress, to plan future teaching and to set targets for pupils to improve their work. There are now schemes of work for all subjects, drawing on national guidance. Communication with parents is better but parents are still not fully satisfied with the information they receive about how their children are getting on in school. There is now a daily act of collective worship, which meets statutory requirements. Class registers are now completed in accordance with requirements at the start of morning and afternoon school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	A	B
Mathematics	E	C	B	C
Science	D	B	C	D

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

In the Year 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, pupils achieved standards in English which were well above average compared to all schools nationally and above average compared to similar schools. Similar schools are taken to be those which have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are fewer high-achieving pupils among the current 11-year-olds and inspection evidence shows that standards in English are currently average. In mathematics pupils reached standards which were above average in the Year 2000 tests and average compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that the standards reached by the oldest pupils are above average. In science, standards remain average, as they were in the most recent national tests. In geography, information and communication technology, music and physical education, standards are similar to those found nationally at the age of 11 and in religious education standards meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There is too little evidence to judge standards in art and design and technology. In history standards are higher than those usually found by the age of 11. Standards have risen over the past four years at a rate faster than the national trend, taking English, mathematics and science together. The main strength in standards is in mathematics, where good standards are promoted through the use of the National Numeracy Strategy. The main weakness is in pupils' use of information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects, although their skills have improved well since the last inspection. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' achievements in national tests and assessments, in consultation with the local education authority and the governing body.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and they show interest and involve themselves well in all activities.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, including the playground and the dining hall. There is no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism. There have been no exclusions from school in the past few years.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are very good. There are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and be independent.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. A few pupils come late to school in the morning and this affects their learning.

Behaviour is seen as good by parents and others, such as the leaders of the local playgroup, which many children attend before they start school. Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. They are eager to come to school and most attend regularly. Attendance is adversely affected by too many families taking holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English, taking the school as a whole, is satisfactory. The teaching of communication, language and literacy for the children aged under five is very good. For pupils aged five to seven, the teaching of English is good. For the older pupils, teaching is satisfactory. **The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall.** It is good for the children aged under five and good for pupils aged five to seven. It is satisfactory for pupils aged from 7 - 11. Taking the school as a whole, 98 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better. Sixty four per cent of teaching is good or better, with 25 per cent of teaching being very good or excellent. The proportion of good or better teaching is slightly higher than the national figure. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy, such as reading, is satisfactory. The basic skills of numeracy, such as calculation, are well taught, with teachers being guided well by the National Numeracy Strategy. The school is successful in supporting the learning of all its pupils, including those having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils learn at a good pace and teachers make good use of all the time available for lessons. Pupils have too few opportunities to be independent in their learning, although there are some good examples of this in science lessons for pupils aged between seven and eleven.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum includes all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The time allocation to subjects other than English and mathematics is not planned well enough to ensure that the curriculum is properly balanced.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There are suitable Individual Education Plans for pupils with special educational needs and pupils are given appropriate help with their learning by teachers and learning support assistants, both in lessons and in small groups withdrawn from class. Pupils from a local special school are very well supported in literacy and numeracy lessons and helped to make very good progress, both in basic skills and in their

	social development.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The few pupils learning English as an additional language are given appropriate support by teachers and support staff and helped to make satisfactory progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal (including spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development	Satisfactory. The school provides well for pupils' moral development, for example through the agreed class rules displayed in every classroom and signed by all pupils. Spiritual and social development are promoted appropriately. The provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory as too little is done to make pupils aware of the richness and diversity of a range of different cultures represented in the wider community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There are good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. There are very good procedures for monitoring and eliminating bullying, sexism and racism. Pupils' personal development is monitored satisfactorily and teachers know their pupils well. The school is still developing whole-school systems to assess pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects and assessment is at present unsatisfactory. A good model for assessing attainment and progress is provided in science for pupils aged from 7 - 11.

The school has a satisfactory working relationship with parents. The use of the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy provides a suitable framework for teachers to plan their lessons and gives them good guidance on what to teach, how and when. In particular, the use of the National Numeracy Strategy has contributed to rising standards in mathematics by the age of 11. The curriculum for the children under five is well planned and appropriately based on the 'stepping stones' towards the Early Learning Goals for children aged five. There is no whole-school curriculum plan, or 'map', showing what is to be taught, when, and for how much time.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has clear vision for school improvement, rooted in a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Other staff with management responsibilities fulfil their duties satisfactorily.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed about the school and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their role in school improvement planning has developed a lot over the past few years and it is satisfactory.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has undertaken a lot of very helpful evaluation of pupils' performance in national tests and assessments. She also helpfully monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and this has contributed to the improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school plans well and uses its money wisely to support the central purposes of the school in teaching and learning. Funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately.

Teachers are experienced and able to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils well. There are plenty of support staff and they have had some helpful training. They meet the needs of pupils well and provide good support for teachers. The accommodation provided by the school is satisfactory overall, although some areas are crowded, such as the administration offices, and there is no suitable medical room for pupils who are unwell or hurt. There are good resources of good quality for most

subjects, although the school needs more religious artefacts for the teaching and learning of religious education and to promote pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of a range of different cultures.

The headteacher's role in monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching is a strength of her leadership and management of the school. The time given to subject co-ordinators to be released from classes and concentrate on their subjects is very helpful in developing their management role. The school takes good care to secure good value for money when it obtains goods and services and the local education authority is helpful in this respect, acting as agent for the school in its dealings with suppliers and contractors.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best • Their children are making good progress • Their children like school • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside lessons • The information provided about how their children are getting on • The amount of homework set • The closeness with which the school works with parents

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views about the school, although progress in learning is satisfactory rather than good for the pupils aged from 7 -11. The range of activities outside lessons is appropriate. The information provided for parents is satisfactory, as is the amount of homework given. The school's partnerships with parents are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the nursery and the reception class with attainment which is comparable to that found in children of this age throughout the local education authority's area. In this year's national tests and assessments for 11-year-olds, standards in English were well above average compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar schools, that is to say those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were above average. Standards in mathematics were above average compared to all schools nationally and average compared to similar schools. In science standards were average compared to all schools and below average compared to similar schools. Standards rose in English and mathematics this year to exceed those achieved in 1999, but in science standards fell below the 1999 level. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum exceeded the national average in both English and mathematics and in science it equalled the national average. Taking all three subjects together, improvement in standards over the past four years has exceeded the national trend. Standards in all three subjects have improved substantially since 1996.
2. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are currently average by the age of 11. The present cohort of 11-year-olds contains fewer higher-attaining pupils than last year and this is reflected in the lower targets set by the school for this group of pupils and accounts for the difference between the last set of test results and the standards at present. The majority of pupils have writing skills which are average for their age. They write instructions, for example telling others how to play a game such as noughts and crosses. They use technical language, such as "chronological", "explanation" and "imperative verb", to talk about their work. They show awareness of their 'audience' as they read out their instructions for the rest of the class to work out what the game is and most pupils use speaking and listening skills which are typical of pupils of this age. Standards in reading are average. Most pupils read confidently, recognise when they make errors and correct themselves. They use the context of the text to help work out unfamiliar words. Overall, their reading is accurate. They talk about the plot of the story they are reading and discuss the characters but only the best readers are able to predict what will happen later in the book. Pupils make use of the school and public libraries. They have satisfactory library skills and use subject classifications effectively to find non-fiction books of interest to them. Most pupils read regularly at home. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Handwriting skills are satisfactory. Most pupils use fountain pens and present their work carefully, although a few pupils produce letters of uneven size.
3. Standards in mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. This inspection finding is consistent with the results of this year's national tests. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well to guide teachers and help them plan their work and this has a positive impact on standards. By the age of 11, most pupils successfully define prime numbers, square numbers, square roots, factors and products. Most draw a pie chart to represent data, for example children's choices of different flavoured ice creams. They interpret a graph showing temperature change over the course of a day and draw a graph to convert inches to centimetres. They interpret data recorded on a tally chart and derive information from it.
4. Standards in science are currently average by the time pupils are aged 11. This inspection finding is consistent with the results of the most recent national tests. Most pupils know that air, water, food and warmth are necessary for organisms such as mould to grow. They understand the need for a fair test when investigating, for example, the growth of mould on bread in different conditions, and appreciate that the time gaps between their observations need to be the same for all conditions of growth investigated. They know about Louis Pasteur and his work on the disinfection of wounds and instruments and the effect this had on surgery.

5. Standards in information and communication technology at the age of 11 have improved since the last inspection. Pupils of this age have skills which are typical of those found nationally, although there is too little use of these skills to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
6. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the age of 11, as at the time of the last inspection. Standards in geography, music and physical education are similar to those usually found nationally by the age of 11. Standards in history are better than those found nationally. There is too little evidence to make a judgement about standards in art and design and technology.
7. In this year's national tests and assessments for seven-year-olds, standards were well below average in reading and average in writing, compared to all schools nationally. In mathematics standards were well below average. Compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals, standards in reading were among the lowest five per cent in the country. In writing and mathematics they were well below average. Teacher Assessments in science this year showed that a very high proportion of pupils reached the levels expected for their age, but a low proportion of pupils reached the higher levels of the National Curriculum. The pupils taking the national tests this year were the last of those whose learning had suffered because they were in classes with three different age groups. Assessments made on their entry to the school show them to be a lower-attaining group than usual. This held down standards in reading, writing and mathematics and meant that few pupils reached the higher levels of the National Curriculum in science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading and writing are better than they were in the Year 2000 tests, although they are still below average. This is because the age range of pupils in classes has been reduced and teaching has improved and is now good and so standards are rising. Standards at present are not high enough in reading and writing.
8. Most of the pupils aged seven read regularly to someone at home and at school. They use the pictures in a book to help them work out unfamiliar words. They also make use of their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read. Pupils know and recognise an appropriate number of the words they encounter in their reading books. Less able readers lack knowledge of letter sounds to help them in their reading. The most able have a good store of words they recognise and they are able to use the context in which a word appears to help them decipher it. These pupils read fluently and with good expression.
9. Most of the seven-year-olds hold their pencils correctly. They form their letters correctly and joins are accurately done. Pupils learn and write high frequency words, comparing as they do so long and short vowel sounds and the effect that the letter 'e' has in modifying the vowel sound. The spellings they learn are taken from the list of high frequency words for reception class children and so their attainment in spelling is below what is usual for their age. This mis-match between the spellings set and the needs of the pupils is unsatisfactory.
10. Inspection evidence shows that in mathematics, standards by the age of seven are now average. They have risen this year because of the more appropriate age grouping in classes which these children have experienced and the much better teaching. The school's good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has also helped raise standards. Most pupils are able to count to 100 in tens. They know the number bonds to ten and 20, for example, $8+2$ and $17+3$, and that an even or odd number can be identified by looking at the last digit.
11. In science inspection evidence shows that standards are average by the age of seven. The good teaching pupils now receive means that more pupils than last year are reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Pupils know, for example, what a reflection is and describe how a reflection can be seen in a mirror and also in other shiny surfaces. They know that the type of surface a mirror has affects the type of reflection seen, for example that concave and convex mirrors give a different reflection from a normal mirror.
12. The youngest children are at least on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the age of five in all the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development and physical development. A few will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the age of

five and be ready to make an early start on the National Curriculum. They are confident and well-behaved. They come in confidently at the start of sessions and sit sensibly in a circle for registration. They share resources and take turns sensibly as they play, for example in the sand and the role-play house. Several children count the number of children present, with a little adult help counting to 20 or 21. About a quarter add, for example 21+1. Most recognise their own names and those of some of their friends on name cards and on their coat peg.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The previous inspection report stated that the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good but there were not enough opportunities for them to be challenged or accept responsibilities. It also indicated that poor behaviour had been perceived as a problem but that this had been addressed. The school has continued to address this issue and, through the new headteacher's vision, has very high behaviour expectations of all its pupils. The parents strongly approve of the school's determination to make this area a distinctive strength.
14. The nursery and reception children concentrate well and are sensible when participating in the many varied activities that are provided. They quickly gain confidence and independence, participate easily in the daily routines and co-operate with the staff, who encourage very good relationships. The children are attentive and respond well to the learning and "have a go" without displaying any anxieties. Although they will sometimes shout out in their excitement and enjoyment of the lesson, there is no evidence of poor behaviour, sulking, tantrums or lack of involvement. Reception pupils are not overawed when in learning situations with older pupils and they are gaining a very good foundation for their later school lives.
15. Older pupils arrive calmly in school and are obviously happy to attend, even though some have made significant bus journeys across the town. Most pupils wear the school uniform with pride, look smart and clean and represent their parents well. Their good attitudes allow them to settle well to lessons. As they progress through the school, most pupils become increasingly keen and responsive to their teachers, so that by the age of 11 they are able to discuss such topics as 'what is truth' with a high degree of involvement. Pupils are enthusiastic and interested, listen well to their teachers and become well engaged and concentrate on tasks. They like to show off their work, as in care and share assemblies, and generally they respond well to good teaching. Only when teaching strategies are inappropriate do some pupils start to chatter and become unproductive, for example in some lessons in Years 3 and 4.
16. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is generally good. Behaviour up until age seven is very good. Thereafter, teachers, particularly when teaching the age range seven to nine, have sometimes to work hard to achieve a good teaching and learning atmosphere. Generally pupils have a good understanding of the school's expectations for self-discipline and there is a general acceptance of the school's good behaviour norms. Staff have a clear control and most pupils do not overreact, even when being corrected. Behaviour around the school is very good and this extends to school visits where the school has received accolades for pupils' behaviour. Bullying was not observed, and incident and accident books indicate that interpersonal conflicts are a rare event. Occasionally, the school has needed to correct some pupils' bad language. The school has used exclusions very sparingly in the last two years due to the headteacher's views on its ineffectiveness.
17. The quality of relationships is very good and ensures a happy and friendly school. Staff represent very good role models and pupils value the trust, empathy and care that they are given, so that an effective teaching and learning environment is being promoted. In the classroom, pupils learn how to co-operate well with each other and they listen to each other and applaud each other's efforts. When working together in groups, all pupils share resources well and are helpful to one another. These good relationships were very evident, when Years 5 and 6 developed their own dance routines in a physical education class. At lunchtime pupils socialise well whilst having lunch and boys and girls mix well together. Although older pupils have limited dealings with younger pupils, due to split playgrounds, they are sensitive to the needs of younger children. They are exceptionally welcoming to visitors, and the school has been specially selected for these qualities, as six pupils from Brookfields Special School have been integrated into the school through a special needs inclusion project.

18. Although the school is developing its formal personal, health and social education, the personal development of its pupils is inconsistent and is unsatisfactory overall. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to show real independence or initiative in either their learning or their daily life in the school. The opportunities to take on responsibilities in either the classroom or the whole-school are minimal. When opportunities are given to pupils, they rise to the occasion, as in the production of a Year 3 and 4 play for assembly, or at the 'care and share' assemblies. Pupils are learning to create a caring society and they display a well-developed sense of moral awareness, which will equip them well for their next stage of education and eventually as good citizens. The school undertakes a residential visit for Years 5 and 6, which develops well pupils' spirit of adventure. Pupils maintain the environment of the site well, as there is no litter or graffiti, and cloakrooms and toilets are generally tidy in sometimes limited areas.
19. The previous report indicated that authorised and unauthorised absences were very good, but the completion of registers needed to comply with statutory requirements. During the last four years the school has had a consistently satisfactory level of attendance. The majority of the eight classes have attendance levels above the national average in the present school year. Unauthorised absence is now high, due in part to extended family holidays taken during term-time. They are also a significant reason for authorised absence. There are no indications of any truancy. A minority of pupils are late in the morning, which can disturb the first lesson of the day. Punctuality throughout the remainder of the school day is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is satisfactory overall. There is much less unsatisfactory teaching than at the time of the last inspection. At that time 20 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory or worse overall and 25 per cent of teaching for pupils aged five to seven was unsatisfactory – as many as one lesson in every five. Now there is no unsatisfactory teaching for the children under five or pupils aged five to seven and only three per cent for pupils aged from 7 - 11. Overall, 98 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better. Sixty four per cent is good or better and 25 per cent is very good or better. Nationally about 60 per cent of teaching is good or better in primary schools. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is due to a poor match between pupils' capabilities and the work set. Explanations are unclear and so pupils are unsure what to do. As a result, they waste time waiting to have things clarified and so little learning takes place.
21. The children under five are very well taught in the nursery and the reception class. Eighty eight per cent of lessons are good or very good. Eleven per cent are satisfactory and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The very good teaching these children receive means that they make good progress in their learning, so that they are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the age of five and a few will exceed them. Pupils aged from five to seven are also well taught. Here 79 per cent of lessons are good or very good and a small proportion is excellent. Twenty two per cent of teaching is satisfactory and none is unsatisfactory. This helps them make good progress in their learning and means that standards reached by the seven-year-olds in reading and writing and mathematics are better now than they were in the most recent national tests and assessments. For pupils aged from 7 - 11 teaching is satisfactory. Fifty-five per cent of lessons are good or better. Forty-two per cent of lessons are satisfactory and three per cent are unsatisfactory.
22. The teachers who teach the youngest children in the nursery and in reception have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Learning Goals for children to reach by the age of five and the 'stepping stones' towards those goals. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach to pupils aged from five to seven and for the 7-11 year olds teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. Secure subject knowledge, such as that seen in information and communication technology lessons in Years 1 and 2, means that teachers can explain things clearly and demonstrate well, so that pupils can understand and so learn well. Good subject knowledge is also seen, for example, in Year 5 and 6 physical education lessons, where the teacher's clear understanding of the short-term effects of exercise on the body helps promote good learning.

23. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well to the children under five and those aged from five to seven. They are taught satisfactorily to the older pupils, including those having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. In the nursery, teachers and support staff take advantage of every possible opportunity to promote the learning of reading, writing and number skills. There are regular opportunities for the children to learn about the names and sounds of letters, for example as they bring in from home things which begin with 't' and 's' and sort them according to their initial sound. Writing materials are always available for the children to use and practise their early writing skills. The children have many opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers, for example as they count the number of children present at registration and add on one as another child arrives. The pupils aged from five to seven read regularly to their teachers and to other adults and are encouraged to take books and read to their parents or carers at home. This promotes their reading ability well and is raising standards. They also learn to spell common words, although pupils in Year 2 learn words which are more appropriate to reception class children and this does not present them with enough challenge. Skills in mathematical computation are taught satisfactorily to pupils in Years 5 and 6, for instance as they learn to use their two-times and twenty-times tables and find ways of doubling numbers to 100 in their head.
24. The teaching of the children aged under five is well planned, with clear and appropriate purposes for lessons spelled out and good detail about what the children will do and learn, in all the six areas of learning for children under five. This careful planning enables teachers to match activities closely to pupils' needs, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, and so good learning is promoted. The planning of lessons for pupils aged from five to seven and those aged from 7-11 is satisfactory. However, planning is not as effective as it might be in meeting pupils' needs. This is because too little use is made of assessment information about what pupils know, understand and can do to help teachers meet pupils' learning needs. An exception to this is seen in science, where there is good assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of each unit of work using National Curriculum criteria which can be used to help teachers plan what to do next.
25. Teachers have very high expectations of what the children under five can do and achieve and this is effective in promoting good learning. So, for example, pupils have name labels on their coat pegs rather than pictures. They are expected to learn to recognise their own name and those of some of their friends so that they know where to put their coat and this expectation is soon met, promoting good early reading skills. Teachers' expectations are generally high for pupils aged from five to seven years, although too little is sometimes expected of Year 2 pupils' learning spellings. Expectations are satisfactory for pupils aged from 7-11. High expectations encourage pupils to make a good effort and this is reflected in good learning and rising standards. Expectations of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are appropriate and these pupils are helped to make sound progress in their learning.
26. Teachers use an appropriate range of suitable teaching methods to promote pupils' learning. A range of methods is used very well in teaching the youngest children. For example, the children are taught for some of the time as a whole-class, which is an effective way of imparting information, and they also work individually and in groups, sometimes unaided and at other times with the teacher or teaching assistant. There is a good balance between whole-class and small group or individual work. The range of methods employed is appropriate to the learning of basic skills such as reading, writing and counting and also helps promote the children's personal, emotional and social development. Whole-class and group or individual work is also employed well for pupils aged 5 - 11. An example of very effective teaching methods was seen in a science lesson with Year 4 and 5 pupils. The teacher posed as 'Betty' the Victorian maid (complete with mob cap!), who wanted to learn why food sometimes goes bad. Through skilful questioning, pupils developed their understanding of microbes and conditions in which mould grows on food. They were then well supported by the teacher and a learning support assistant in devising their own investigation into mould growth. These imaginative teaching methods, used in the course of one lesson, helped pupils to make good progress in their learning about aspects of living processes.

27. Good use is made of the time available for lessons, of very skilled support staff and of good resources in teaching the children under five. Lessons start on time and are delayed only minimally, even after a difficult, wet start to the afternoon. Trained nursery staff give very good support to teachers and promote children's learning well, both in whole-class sessions, such as 'circle time' at the start of the day, and through working with small groups, such as that cooking biscuits. Support staff are deployed well to help the pupils aged from 5 - 11 learn. They make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Resources for information and communication technology have improved well since the last inspection and they are used well to raise standards, although there is still too little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
28. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good. It is longer-term assessment that is unsatisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and regularly. There are many good examples of good marking which gives pupils clear advice on what to do to make their work better. This good advice is helpful to pupils and promotes their learning well.
29. Homework is used satisfactorily to supplement the work done in school. Work started in lessons is set to be finished or extended at home. All pupils take home reading books and they are encouraged to read to a parent or carer, which is helpful in developing their reading skills and also their interest in reading.
30. Teachers ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Some pupils are supported individually, or in groups, within the classroom so that they may take a full part in lessons. Learning support assistants are well briefed and help pupils to complete appropriate tasks. Teaching strategies take into account the needs of all pupils. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons for specific help with literacy and numeracy the aim is to help them acquire the necessary skills to enable them to take a full part in whole-class lessons.

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

31. There has been some improvement in curriculum planning since the last inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory because there were no schemes of work for any subject. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented and planning for other subjects is being developed using Curriculum 2000 and nationally published schemes. The school has a long term plan of topics but this is not sufficiently detailed to ensure that all pupils make smooth progress in their learning in all subjects as they move through the school.
32. The school provides a broad range of relevant opportunities for its pupils but the curriculum lacks balance. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good because it ensures that all the areas of learning are planned for in a progressive way, taking into account the attainment of the children. The school has identified English appropriately as a cause for concern and, in order to raise standards, has allocated a large proportion of time to this subject. Insufficient time is spent on information and communication technology with the result that there are too few opportunities for computers to be used in other subject areas. The school is developing schemes of work in the foundation subjects over its two year cycle, seeing how the planned units work and modifying them for the future. Teachers plan the work for their classes in some detail but the overall curriculum lacks coherence. This is because there is no overall curriculum plan or 'map' showing the amount of time to be given to all subjects and units of work within subjects.
33. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and are having a positive impact on standards. Evidence indicates that standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection from satisfactory to good.
34. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities to appeal to pupils' varied interests. There is a computer club, the members of which use a digital camera to take photographs of school activities and art displays, putting the results into a computer program. Pupils are able to play badminton in the hall at the end of the school day. Netball and football

clubs are run during lighter evenings and better weather. The school is fortunate to have help from parents with these activities.

35. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and are valued as individuals. Much of the provision for pupils' personal and social education arises incidentally; planned links with the local community enhance the provision. Discussion about various aspects of personal and social education take place in circle time and there is a policy to guide the teaching of sex education and substance abuse.
36. Links with the local community are strong and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils delivered Harvest Festival hampers to local elderly residents. They collected toys and tins for the less well off of Reading, following an appeal by a local newspaper. These activities foster pupils' awareness of the needs of others. There are links with the local police, which help to make pupils aware of various aspects of safety, including raising their awareness of the harm that can be done by drug abuse. Pupils contributed to a West Berkshire watercolour painting for inclusion in a display in the Millennium Dome and entered a competition to design a card for the local Member of Parliament. Involvement in the local business partnership enabled Year 6 pupils to take part in science activities, including interactive learning related to materials, forces and motion.
37. There are also effective links with partner institutions. Relationships with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer are strong and constructive; they include meetings between teachers from the two schools and the sharing of expertise and resources. Children's transfer from the local playgroup to the school nursery is eased by liaison between the two establishments. The school has close links with the nearby special school, which have resulted in the inclusion of pupils from the special school in some lessons at Springfield. There is co-operation with other local primary schools involving, for example, taking part in the annual Technology Challenge.
38. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted through daily assemblies and religious education lessons. A weekly 'caring and sharing' assembly celebrates pupils' achievements and there are opportunities for reflection, for example upon 'What makes a good neighbour?' following a reading of the story of the Good Samaritan.
39. The school places considerable emphasis on high moral standards and promoting good behaviour. Guidance for pupils is provided from the moment they enter the nursery class and continues as they move through the school. Stories and discussion are used effectively to develop pupils' ideas about the difference between right and wrong. During the week of the inspection pupils were polite, friendly and helpful.
40. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to work collaboratively and they relate well to each other. Teachers encourage a calm working atmosphere and ensure orderly movement around the school. The Year 6 residential visit to Lakeside provides good opportunities for the development of social skills outside the school environment. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative. For example, they do not even operate the overhead projector in assembly or hold the doors open for pupils to enter and leave the hall, as is the case in most primary schools.
41. At the time of the last inspection, provision for pupils' cultural development was found to be weak. There has been insufficient improvement in this aspect. Pupils study their own culture appropriately during history lessons, for example, and by work on the local area during geography. Occasionally, aspects of art, such as pattern making, provide insights into other cultures but overall, very few opportunities are provided to develop pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own. Provision remains unsatisfactory.
42. The school aims to provide a curriculum which is accessible to all pupils. This aim is met. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, have full access to the curriculum. In the main, pupils benefit according to their needs but further development of the use of assessment to inform planning is required.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The previous report stated that the school offered good quality care to its pupils, with well established procedures, but the monitoring of pupils' academic progress and personal development were inadequate. Although the monitoring weakness still remains, the school now offers good quality support, guidance and welfare and this contributes positively to pupils' progress and development. However, the school's aims do not communicate sufficiently clearly to parents that this is a key aspect of the school.
44. The headteacher and staff have a good knowledge of all their pupils, so that they can support them well in the school environment and this support is sometimes extended to parents in the community. Through the personal example of the headteacher, all staff are committed to their pastoral role and display a diligence and enthusiasm for the well-being of their pupils. All staff are well supported by good office administrative procedures when caring for their pupils. A distinctive feature of the school is the happiness of all its members and pupils feel well supported within this family atmosphere. Pupils are treated in a suitably sensitive and caring manner and parents are increasingly approving of the staff's efforts. The staff efficiently take registers at the beginning of each session and the time is well used for reinforcement of good manners. Registers are completed in an appropriate manner and have good presentation. They are reviewed but not systematically analysed. The school has a new Education Welfare Officer, and receives good support from the service.
45. The monitoring of individual pupils' non-academic progress, including personal development, is satisfactory, despite the school not having formal whole-school written procedures or systems. Individual teachers keep their own records of pupils' personal development, including conversations with parents, and these are passed between teachers as pupils progress between classes. These procedures allow the school to identify pupils with special educational needs and involve outside professional agencies appropriately. The school has a satisfactory special educational needs provision, promoted by adequate Individual Educational Plans with attainable targets, which are reviewed termly with parents. The good involvement of pupils from a local special school in some lessons during the last year has stimulated the school's special educational needs provision and led to further training opportunities for the co-ordinator.
46. The school undertakes considerable discussion and training before its support, guidance and welfare policies are implemented and this leads to consistent implementation and a good understanding by all staff. A good quality staff handbook further assists staff. The school is very welcoming to outside agencies and receives good support. The local behavioural support team is presently helping in the school and completing a project on personal development. A support teacher for the hearing impaired has greatly assisted in the integration of a deaf pupil into the school. The school nurse and Education Welfare Service render good support. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory and the school has a good focus through the special needs co-ordinator and the child protection co-ordinator. They have been well trained externally, but other members of staff have not received formal internal training. There is good support from the outside agencies and the school recognises the need for vigilance. There is a very good liaison and relationship between the school and parents during induction of children into the nursery and the reception class and parents receive considerable help at transfer to the local secondary school. The school has very good relationships with the playgroup and secondary school and this greatly helps to reduce parental and pupil anxieties at a stressful time.
47. From the children's first days in school the school focuses sharply on behaviour as a cornerstone of its support, guidance and welfare work. It has now produced a culture of good behaviour and it has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, which are implemented fairly. Pupils are well involved in the production of class rules and are pleased to sign these along with the home-school agreement, so that they have a good awareness of the expectations of the school. The good quality personal and social education is extending the moral provision through 'circle time', so that the school is trying to build pupils' self-esteem and self-discipline. The many good adult role models and the all-pervasive good behaviour culture, in which most pupils know the boundaries, have a very positive effect on pupils. The school has appropriate awards and sanctions in place and has used exclusions very sparingly. The school is very effective in

detecting any poor behaviour in the school and the vigilant headteacher and staff have eliminated all but the occasional example of inter-personal conflict.

48. Satisfactory attendance procedures and systems have resulted in satisfactory attendance. Parents are made aware of their statutory obligations through the prospectus but the school would benefit from a greater focus on in-term holidays and unauthorised absence, which are high.
49. The school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff, as evidenced by the low level of minor accidents. The school has a good complement of first aiders but first aid facilities are inadequate due to the lack of a medical room. Health and safety procedures are good under the guidance of a governor and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Pupils are well acquainted with health and safety principles prior to activities and through the personal health and social education provision. The lesson on road safety seen in the Year 1 and 2 class was particularly effective.
50. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and using that assessment as a means of improving curriculum planning are unsatisfactory. There is no whole-school system that ensures that assessment information is used effectively to inform curriculum planning. The school does, however, make use of the local authority's analysis of its national test results to review its provision. Although records of individual pupil achievement are maintained, they lack detail and are completed too infrequently. Attainment in non-core subjects, for example, history and geography, is recorded annually on individual record cards. This system, however, fails to address the need to test for pupils' knowledge and understanding of what has been covered in the short term. Nor does it allow for immediate remedial action to be taken by teachers where necessary. The school is very aware of the need to develop a system that enables them to track pupils' progress over time from entry to school up to Year 6. This would help teachers to immediately identify those pupils who were not progressing at the desired rate and allow that information to be used to set individual attainment targets. The school has appropriately included plans for developing its assessment practice in its latest development plan.
51. Short term, lesson to lesson, assessment is used well by teachers to inform their planning. During the inspection there were a number of examples of lessons being changed to accommodate the need to repeat some areas of work or to provide further practice. Teachers have a good personal knowledge of the strengths and weakness of the pupils in their classes. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school lives and support given where necessary. Subject co-ordinators are forming portfolios of assessed work that can be used for the levelling of attainment. This is already a feature of work done in information and communication technology and science but not in mathematics and English. However, this work is in its early stages and needs to be developed in all subjects of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The previous report indicated that the improvement of communications with parents was a key issue. It said that the school welcomed parents, involved them in some policy areas and had an active parent-teacher association. There was a requirement for a clear policy on homework and better quality newsletters.
53. Parents' views of the school are broadly satisfactory and an increasingly large majority of parents are pleased with the work of the school. There are major improvements in parents' satisfaction levels regarding behaviour, homework, standards of work and the values and attitudes of the school since the last inspection but approximately one in ten parents is dissatisfied with some aspect of the school. There is significant dissatisfaction concerning:
 - provision of an interesting range of activities outside lessons;
 - working closely with parents;
 - parents being kept well informed about how their child is getting on.
54. A detailed inspection indicates that these three areas are generally satisfactory. Historically, the school was not well perceived in the adjacent community and it is only recently that improving standards and educational provision have started to be recognised. Some parents' views are

based on what the school was like in the past and do not take into account the fact that the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. However, the school, staff and governors would now benefit from a review of their identity and public relations, to correct some of the mixed messages that are in the community.

55. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is variable but generally satisfactory. The aims of the school do not mention parents specifically and they and the school would benefit from their being present at some of the school's routine activities, such as the 'share and care' assembly. The school has an open door policy and the headteacher leads her staff by example, for instance by meeting parents daily at the school gate. This is very effective in the early years and lower school, where a good number of parents come regularly to the school but less effective in the upper school when many pupils are not escorted to school. The school consults well with parents, through a focus group, to evaluate policies.
56. The impact of parents in the school is developing satisfactorily. A few parents play a high quality role within the school, and within classrooms, as either volunteers or learning support assistants. All parent governor places are now filled and governors are committed and confident for the future. An enthusiastic committee of approximately 20 parents runs the parent-teacher association and there is a good involvement of teachers. The parents are very hardworking and are very financially beneficial to the school in funding resources and events for parents and pupils.
57. The quality of information for parents is variable but satisfactory overall. The prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are of inferior quality and do not sufficiently indicate that the school values its parents. The annual governors' report to parents lacks many aspects of statutory information. Policies and procedures are not displayed within the school for parents. Other written communications including the half-termly newsletters are of sufficient quality, regularity and timeliness and are respectful to the role of parents. Annual reports are only satisfactory. They give full and perceptive feedback on pupils' abilities in all subjects of the National Curriculum but do not set targets for improvement. Neither pupils nor parents are asked to contribute their views. The school wants to communicate well with parents and this comes to the fore at induction into the nursery and the reception class, when parents receive informative packs, and at transfer to the secondary school. All formal open evenings are well attended except the annual governors' meeting for parents.
58. The growth of the educational partnership is a satisfactory feature of the school for a majority of parents. However, the incidence of in-term holidays does indicate that a minority of parents do not perceive this as a high priority area. There is a very good acceptance of the home-school agreement by parents and pupils. Parents have been very interested when the school has offered them after-school sessions on the national tests and assessments taken by all 7 and 11 year olds and on aspects of the National Curriculum, including reading and mathematics. Parents are given an overview of topic work at the start of each term. A very high level of parents approve of the present homework arrangements, although there is no homework diary. Teachers mark homework well and give good feedback. There is a close collaboration with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and together with staff they produce meaningful Individual Educational Plans, with targets which produce good progress. When pupils have special difficulties, the school gives good support and parents are well involved.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership and management of the school are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. She has been in post for just over two years and in that time there has been good improvement in teaching, standards and pupils' behaviour. She is satisfactorily supported by the deputy headteacher, who is the only other member of the senior management team.
60. The school has a set of aims which are too vague and not explicit enough. These do include a commitment to good relationships, equality of opportunity and success and these commitments are reflected in the work of the school. As a result, relationships are very good; there is equality

of opportunity for all pupils regardless of gender, background, ethnicity or special needs and pupils are having more success and so standards are rising. The aim for pupils to be active in their learning is not fully met, as there are not enough opportunities for independent learning, although there are some good examples of this in science throughout the school.

61. The headteacher plays an important role in the development of the quality of teaching, through monitoring teachers' work and giving good quality feedback on what works well and what they need to do to improve. Good records of monitoring outcomes are kept, both by individual teachers and by the headteacher. The deputy headteacher also plays an appropriate role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Subject co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy monitor teachers' work and there are appropriate plans for the co-ordinators of other subjects to take on a similar role, once they have had the necessary training. All subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning, checking for consistency with longer-term planning. The management role of subject co-ordinators has improved significantly since the last inspection, when they were too little involved in the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects. They have appropriately delegated responsibility for their subjects, including the production of an action plan setting out targets for improvement and the management of a subject budget. The amount of monitoring and evaluation of teaching which goes on is more than that found in many similar schools and it is having a positive impact and improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. This is seen in the greatly reduced proportion of unsatisfactory teaching since the last inspection.
62. The School Development Plan has improved significantly since the last inspection and the current plan is good. It identifies a manageable number of appropriate priorities for school improvement over the next three years and progress on previous targets is appropriately reviewed. Currently, the School Development Plan focuses helpfully on the implementation of the revised National Curriculum; the implementation of national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy; the development of teaching and learning in information and communication technology; the governors' strategic view of the school; assessment and record keeping in the core subjects; and improvements in the school environment. The School Development Plan shows clearly that the school has already identified for action some of the improvements suggested by the present inspection, such as those relating to assessment and information and communication technology. The plan sets out an appropriate time scale for reaching targets and responsibilities for monitoring progress are identified. Members of the governing body are appropriately involved in monitoring and evaluating progress towards development plan targets. The good monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and the good School Development Plan clearly reflect the headteacher's and the governing body's clear commitment to school improvement. The fruits of this commitment are seen in the improvements in teaching and rising standards of the 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science over the past few years. The school has good potential to go on improving, due to the good leadership and management provided by the headteacher and the increasing involvement of the governing body in planning for school improvement.
63. The governing body shares with the headteacher a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are well informed about the work of the school. Many pay regular visits and several observe what goes on in classes. There are visits to the school by members of the governing body at least once each half term. There is an appropriate committee structure within the governing body and committees meet regularly to help keep governors well informed. For example, teachers report on aspects of their work to the curriculum committee. There are governors with specific interests in aspects of the school's work, such as literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, special educational needs, the Foundation Stage (for children under five) and health and safety. The governing body discusses and approves the School Development Plan, which is the work of the headteacher in consultation with staff. However, their role in identifying targets for school improvement is insufficient, mainly leaving this to the headteacher and generally approving her plan as presented following some discussion by the curriculum committee.
64. Although most members of the finance committee are new in post, the financial administration of the school is good. Annual budgets are prudently planned after consideration of a number of possible scenarios, prepared by the school finance officer. There is a very good involvement of curriculum co-ordinators in bidding for resources and the school is now allocating money appropriately to educational priorities through this consultative approach. Financial regulations

and controls, as documented in the financial procedures manual, are generally well implemented, although the school could more obviously monitor the spending of co-ordinators against their budgets. The recent auditors' report states clearly that the school's finance systems and procedures are satisfactorily organised and maintained. The experienced and effective finance officer ensures the smooth running of the administration and allows the headteacher to concentrate her energies on educational leadership. Although there is a good understanding of the use of computers in the office environment, there is not yet a maximum exploitation of the various software packages, due in part to time constraints in training.

65. The school's income and expenditure per pupil tend to be high in comparison with other schools. Further comparison shows that the key reason for this is the high teaching staff costs, as a result of the large number of experienced teachers on the staff. Support staff costs are also high, to support the above average level of pupils with special educational needs. Staff development costs are low, due to the local education authority funding some training centrally. The headteacher has moved quickly and effectively to reduce the school's cash balances to recommended levels. The school maintains competition in requesting tenders for services and goods and has made a satisfactory implementation of best value principles.
66. The headteacher has made determined and resourceful efforts to attract grants for the school and these have been well used to support various accommodation initiatives. The funding for pupils with special educational needs is at a good level to support an above average level of need and the school provides a good amount of financial resources to support its welfare and educational programmes.
67. The school's governors and headteacher have made a good start to developing performance management throughout the school and are on target against national deadlines. They have customised the performance management policy, trained staff and booked an external advisor. Governors are confident of being able to set meaningful objectives for the headteacher.
68. There are sufficient and suitably qualified staff to meet the demands of the school and National Curriculum. The majority of teachers have more than ten years' experience of teaching at the school. By virtue of the teachers' breadth of experience, the school has good cover in co-ordinating all subjects and aspects of the curriculum. Classes are of mixed age groups and above thirty generally. The good quality teaching and the high quality input of learning support assistants allows this to operate effectively. There are a sufficient number of non-teaching staff to support the daily routines of the school. Teachers are refreshed by a good input of training, which has been very relevant to the new educational initiatives. The local education authority has been particularly strong in providing training and also supporting co-ordinator meetings externally. Learning support assistants have been well trained in literacy and classroom management and lunchtime staff have been acquainted with behaviour management techniques. The school welcomes new teachers into the school and has effectively supported them with experienced mentors.
69. The quality of the school's accommodation is generally satisfactory. Good features such as the overall ambience of classrooms, hall, corridors and playing fields are offset by the unsatisfactory siting of the school library, lack of space in some classrooms where there are large pupil numbers, overspill of noise between classrooms, poor administrative facilities and the lack of a computer suite and medical room. The accommodation is well used and kept clean and tidy by the dedicated site controller, who takes pride in the school's appearance.
70. The school is well resourced for learning, although expenditure levels on resources are only average in comparison with other schools. The deficiencies identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Only in religious education are resources unsatisfactory, through a lack of artefacts. Resources for English, mathematics and science are of good quality and are well used. Resources in the other subjects are generally satisfactory, whilst those in physical education and music are good. Some good quality displays of pupils' work in classrooms enrich pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to improve the quality of education offered and the standards achieved, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- Press ahead with plans to implement a whole-school assessment system for all subjects and use the information gathered to set targets for improvements in pupils' attainment (paragraphs 43, 50, 51, 113, 136);
- Develop a whole-school curriculum plan, detailing the amount of time to be devoted to all subjects and units of work within subjects (paragraphs 31 and 32);
- Develop pupils' use of information and communication technology to support their learning in all subjects (paragraphs 27, 32, 106, 135);
- Enrich pupils' experience and understanding of a range of different cultural traditions, through the introduction of more appropriate books, displays, visits and visitors reflecting the diversity and richness of many cultures (paragraph 41).

Other issues which the school should consider:

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to be independent and take responsibility (paragraph 40);
- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements concerning the information included (paragraph 57).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	23	39	34	2		

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 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	243
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	77

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	21	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	14	13
	Girls	17	19	18
	Total	25	33	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (76)	94 (74)	89 (97)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	18	18	21
	Total	29	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (76)	89 (88)	100 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	33	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	22
	Girls	29	25	31
	Total	51	46	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (68)	79 (68)	91 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	23
	Girls	28	27	29
	Total	50	48	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (68)	83 (66)	90 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	225
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y7

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

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	495642
Total expenditure	485024
Expenditure per pupil	1738
Balance brought forward from previous year	19703
Balance carried forward to next year	30321

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	243
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	41	2	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	34	60	1	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	52	5	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	60	7	5	1
The teaching is good.	43	50	1	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	44	17	9	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	34	6	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	44	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	28	45	18	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	46	43	4	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	52	5	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	33	11	17	23

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

72. Children enter the nursery when they are three and transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were twenty-six children attending the nursery in the morning and a similar number in the afternoon. The statutory baseline assessments are carried out in the reception class during the first seven weeks of the term in which children enter; these provide a valuable source of information upon which to base lessons. Standards of attainment on entry are similar to those found nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that, when children transfer to Year 1, they will have achieved the Early Learning Goals expected of children in the Foundation Stage and, in a few cases, they will have exceeded them.
73. The accommodation and resources for children in the nursery are good and they have access to a secure, well equipped outside area. The staff make good use of the available space and provide a stimulating environment by creating interesting and attractive displays of children's work. Children are introduced to the routines and expectations of the school in a warm and sensitive manner. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes it is very good. Teaching is at its best when there is a definite focus for the activity in which the children are engaged, so that they make clear gains in their learning. The teacher and support staff work well together and provide experiences and activities which are appropriate for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. Some of the activities provided relate to the day's mathematical or literacy focus, extending children's knowledge and understanding well.
74. The quality of teaching in the reception/ Year 1 class is good overall and sometimes it is very good. Learning support assistants are well informed about the day's lessons so that they are able to assist appropriately with the development of children's knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons are planned well to take account of the range of experience and achievement of the children in the class. Accommodation is adequate and resources are good. An attractive and stimulating environment has been created.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. All children in the Foundation Stage are likely to achieve the standard expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. Most children enter the nursery with confidence, and with speaking and listening skills which are typical of children of their age. They are willing to contribute their ideas in class situations and co-operate well with each other, in pairs and sometimes in groups. They know how to take turns. Attention and concentration are well maintained and the children are able to sit quietly when required. They are forming good relationships with adults and with each other. In the outside play area they share the wheeled toys willingly and take turns to climb through hoops. Reception children were seen co-operating well around the art table, helping each other with putting on art aprons and sharing the colours when painting pictures. A sense of responsibility is developed well in the nursery, for example when children take turns to take a toy dog home for the night and bring it back the next day. Parental involvement is well fostered by the expectation that, when the toy returns, it will be accompanied by a 'diary' of the day's activities, written by a parent.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Children make good progress towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals in this area of the curriculum; most children will reach the goals by the age of five and a few will exceed them.
77. Children in the nursery learn to recognise their names, written on card, as they register for the session. Expressive reading by the teacher, for example, the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, promotes good listening skills and enjoyment. Children are able to answer questions about the text, including explaining how the characters in the story felt about what happened. Reading

is well developed through individual reading at home and at school. Children take books home regularly, develop a sight vocabulary, learn initial letter sounds and play word games with someone at home. Ongoing assessment is used well to teach reading according to children's experience and ability.

78. In the reception class, children shared a simple non-fiction text about making a cheese sandwich. Teacher's good questioning helped children recognise the importance of the order in which instructions are written, and also developed speaking and listening skills effectively. Phonic knowledge is developed well using a puppet to demonstrate letter sounds. Children read regularly to their teacher and to adult helpers; contact with home is maintained through the exchange of information in home/school reading records.
79. Children in the nursery listen attentively to stories, join in action songs and rhymes and speak with increasing confidence. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are well used in the reception class. The provision for the development of communication, language and literacy is good throughout the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

80. This area of learning is also well taught and by the end of the reception year children are expected to reach the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. In the nursery, registration is used as an opportunity for children to develop their counting skills. Children develop their recognition of numbers from 0 to 10 through good use of numbers on a 'washing line'. Most children in the nursery are able to identify the numbers and return them to the line in the correct order. They count in unison when watching a video which develops their awareness of the number 7 well, using humour and graphics to reinforce their understanding. Children's understanding is extended through appropriate practical tasks related to the programme.
81. In the Reception class, good teaching enables pupils to progress well. They demonstrate an increasing facility with number by such activities as counting to 50 in tens, and backwards from 20. They are beginning to add sets of numbers together to find a total.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Children are provided with a variety of experiences, in both the nursery and the reception class, which help to develop and extend their knowledge about the world. They are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area.
83. Every day, children in both classes discuss and complete a weather chart. In the nursery class, the diary entries related to the toy dog, which is taken home by different children, are used well to provide insights into the events in their own lives. Understanding of the world is developed through well chosen stories and through the range of different activities which is provided daily; children play in the house of the three bears, use construction kits, make pictures using shapes and a hammer and nails, manipulate the mouse during a sorting game on the computer and design and make junk models.
84. During a science lesson in the reception class, children explored which colours show up best on different backgrounds. They concentrated well, finding the activities interesting and, during the lesson, coming to a greater understanding of which colours show up well and are appropriate for sign writing.

Physical development

85. Provision for children's physical development is good and they are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area.
86. The use of the outside play area showed how well children in the nursery could use space, with an awareness of safety factors and of the needs of others. They could climb over, under and through equipment and ride and share wheeled vehicles. In action songs, they demonstrated an ability to touch their knees and toes and to turn right round.

87. In a very good physical education lesson in the reception class children responded well to the teacher's clear instructions. They moved in a variety of ways using their hands and feet and indicating a degree of imagination in the methods they chose. Space was well used and the children were able to improve their movements, having watched other children's demonstrations and after listening to their teacher's suggestions. They used benches and mats to make a three movement sequence including a balance, demonstrating good control of their bodies for their age.
88. Children in both classes use a range of small tools such as scissors, glue spreaders, pencils and paint brushes competently, with increasing control.

Creative development

89. Provision for this area of development is satisfactory and the Early Learning Goals are expected to be achieved by the majority of children. Children in both classes have opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form in both two and three dimensions. They sing simple songs from memory and sometimes match movements to music.
90. Children in the nursery class had used paints and collages to illustrate stories such as the Rainbow Fish and Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They made patterns from shapes and used felt-tipped pens to make pictures.
91. In the reception class children used shiny materials to make collages related to their topic on light, and painted pictures which they folded to make a reflection. They also constructed moving pictures to illustrate a story they had enjoyed, using split pins to make joints move.

ENGLISH

92. In the Year 2000 national tests and assessments for seven-year-olds, standards in reading were well below the national average. Standards in writing were average. Standards in reading were among the lowest five per cent nationally in comparison with similar schools, while those in writing were well below average. In the national tests for 11-year-olds standards were well above average compared to all schools nationally and above average compared to similar schools. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Trends over time indicate that, in the tests for 7-year-olds, standards in reading are consistently below national averages, while in writing standards show an improvement between 1998 and 2000. Standards in English for 11-year-olds show a fairly steady rising trend with results in 2000 being particularly high.
93. Evidence from the inspection confirms that standards in reading are below average by the age of seven. The good teaching seen during the inspection is helping to raise the standards reached by seven-year-olds but the full effect of the improved teaching is not yet evident. Standards in writing remain average, as they were in the Year 2000 tests and assessments. Standards in English by the age of 11 are average. The difference between the Year 2000 test results and the standards found presently are due to there being a less able cohort of pupils aged 11 this year. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for its curriculum for English and this is having a positive impact on standards, particularly in reading.
94. In all parts of the school pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to the comments of their peers. Teachers use good questioning skills which enable pupils to develop their answers. Pupils are keen to contribute their ideas in class discussions and do so from the moment they begin school in the nursery. They work effectively in pairs and in groups, showing courtesy and consideration for others. Older pupils understand, and use, a wide range of vocabulary. They discuss their work and express themselves clearly. Speaking and listening skills are well developed with the result that standards are similar to, and sometimes above, those which are considered typical for the age groups.
95. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on reading development in both key stages and, as a result, many pupils become competent readers. Throughout the school, pupils show enthusiasm for reading. For the youngest pupils shared reading sessions in the Literacy Hour are having a

positive impact on standards and they are developing a good awareness of the sounds of letters and letter combinations, which helps them work out unfamiliar words for themselves. Pupils read to someone at school on a regular basis, as well as having opportunities to share books in a group. Texts are well chosen for the ability of pupils, who show a keen interest. In a lively whole-class session using an instructional text (making a sandwich), role play was well used to show pupils the importance of the order in which instructions are given, as well as that instructions must be clear. Pupils do not always gain as much as they might from group reading sessions because other activities in the class cause a distraction. Home/school reading records show that younger pupils' reading is well supported by parents. Older pupils are able to discuss what they have read, express preferences about authors and compare one book with another. The school is fortunate to have a number of volunteers willing to run the school library and to listen to reading; they make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

96. An examination of pupils' written work in Years 5 and 6 shows writing for a widening range of purposes, such as describing a character in a book, a recount of an event and a poem about wet playtime. It also indicates coverage of points of grammar, spelling rules and vocabulary extension. During the inspection, pupils were drafting and refining a piece of instructional writing about playing a simple game. This task had been effectively introduced and developed by the teacher so that pupils made clear improvements to their instructions during the course of the week. However, pupils have too few opportunities to focus on particular aspects of writing for a sustained period in order to consolidate their learning and develop their skills further.
97. Standards of handwriting and presentation are broadly in line with what is typical for pupils of 11 years old. Most pupils use fountain pens to good effect but letter formation is often uneven. Handwriting is being taught systematically in Years 1 and 2 but this does not appear to be having an impact on standards of handwriting outside the specific lesson. The names and sounds of letters and letter combinations are taught well to the youngest pupils with an appropriate emphasis on commonly encountered words. The small amount of written work available during the inspection indicates that satisfactory progress is being made in these areas.
98. The quality of teaching for the pupils aged from five to seven is good and sometimes it is very good. This promotes good learning and as a result standards in English are rising. For the pupils aged from 7-11 teaching is satisfactory overall with some good lessons. In the best lessons, teachers maintain a lively pace, use good questioning skills, have high expectations and ensure that all pupils are actively engaged in the lesson. In all classes teachers share the objectives of the lesson with pupils but they do not always refer back to them at the end of the lesson to assess whether the objectives have been met. The teachers of the younger pupils, aged from five to seven, are adept at setting group tasks which match attainment in such a way that pupils are able to succeed whilst meeting a degree of challenge. The older pupils are set the same task but with additional guidance, or adult help, for less able pupils so that they can take a full part in the lesson. In most of the lessons seen good pupil management and appropriate tasks ensured that pupils concentrated well and made appropriate gains in their learning. All the lessons seen during the inspection were well prepared but longer-term planning is less satisfactory.
99. More could be done to create an environment which promotes literacy. There are few charts showing alphabetical order, word lists or labels, and very little written work was on display during the inspection. The library is located in a broad corridor in the centre of the school. It is well managed and maintained by a volunteer parent. Pupils have the opportunity to change books on a regular basis, providing them with access to non-fiction texts that are organised using the Dewey system so that retrieval skills are appropriately developed.
100. The co-ordinator for English has only recently taken on this role and has not yet had an opportunity to influence the teaching of the subject. Stocks of books for shared, group and individual reading are adequate and well organised so that they are easily accessible. All classes have equipment, such as bookstands, to assist with whole-class teaching.

MATHEMATICS

101. Standards achieved in the Year 2000 national tests and assessments for 11-year-olds were above the national average. When compared to the results of similar schools, attainment was average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the tests was well above the national average and well above that achieved by similar schools. However, pupils of seven years of age did not do so well. The Year 2000 test results for seven-year-old pupils were well below the national average. When compared to similar schools, the results achieved by the seven-year-olds were also well below average. However, the inspection shows that standards reached by pupils aged seven at present are average. The school has worked hard to improve its provision in the subject for the younger pupils and this has led to higher standards. For example, the National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented and staff trained in its application. There have been a number of staff changes and the overall quality of teaching has improved. Inspection findings are that pupils of seven years of age are achieving at a level that is in line with the national average. Pupils of 11 years of age are achieving at a level that is above the national average.
102. Pupils aged seven recognise odd and even numbers and say, for example, that 75 is odd and 74 even and that the classification is decided by the last digit. In their mental arithmetic work pupils perform mental addition, subtraction and multiplication sums, for example, $10+10+4$. They are able to mix different operations in the same sum, for example, $2 \times 10 + 4$, identify tens and units and arrange numbers to 100 in order. In work on fractions they can recognise halves and quarters and know that all parts must be of equal size. Some of the more able pupils can recognise number patterns and use that knowledge to predict answers. In their work on shape and measuring, pupils can identify common two-dimensional shapes, for example, triangles, squares and circles. They can also recognise and name three-dimensional shapes such as cone, sphere and pyramid. Pupils can use their skills to carry out simple mathematical investigations and use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary and symbols well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as a second language, are making good overall progress in their learning.
103. By the age of 11 years old pupils can recognise the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals; for example, they can say that $1/5 = 20\%$ and that $85\% = 0.85$. Using their knowledge of place value, pupils can multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and 100. Pupils have an understanding of the concepts of squared numbers and factors and are able to use that knowledge to solve mental arithmetic problems. Pupils are able to find the perimeters of simple shapes. When talking about shapes, pupils are able to name them; for example, they can say that an equilateral triangle is a regular polygon. In their data handling work, pupils are able to collect data in the form of frequency tables and use this information to produce graphs of various kinds. Pupils working on conversion graphs are able to draw conclusions from the data shown.
104. The good progress made by both the younger and older pupils is directly linked to the high quality teaching that they experience. **Teaching overall is good**, sometimes very good, and never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is good, the work given to pupils is well focused on the objectives of the lesson. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson made very good progress in their ability to count in tens because the method used fully involved them. In a Year 1 class the teacher created an atmosphere of excitement when a computer was used to develop a lesson on positional language, for example, right, left and forward. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are fully involved in the activities. Relationships are good and the teachers maintain a high level of good behaviour. Teachers use the language of the subject well and encourage its use by asking pupils to explain their thinking when giving answers to questions. Questioning is used well to probe for knowledge and teachers use their end of lesson summaries to ensure understanding. Common features of the good teaching are high expectations, good subject knowledge and the effective use of short term – lesson to lesson – assessment to inform lesson planning, so that problems are dealt with quickly, so ensuring that pupils make good progress in their learning.
105. Teachers are making good use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are suitably planned and generally begin with good introductions. The ability of pupils to perform mental calculations is enhanced by well-conducted practice sessions at the beginning of lessons. The work given to the pupils in lessons is generally progressive and follows a logical sequence. The provision of regular homework is used effectively to reinforce learning. The standard of marking is not consistent

throughout the school but where it is done well teachers ensure that they give useful feedback to pupils and ensure that all corrections are done.

106. Pupils develop their skills in other subjects during numeracy sessions. They are encouraged to express themselves clearly when explaining their thinking. Information and communication technology is used well by teachers as a teaching aid but its use by pupils is very limited because of insufficient equipment in classrooms. In history Year 5 and 6 pupils use their ability to extract information from graphs to get information about the birthplaces of people from the 1891 census returns.
107. The management of the subject has a number of strengths, one of which is the good level of subject knowledge and general expertise of the co-ordinator, who is a leading maths teacher. The subject co-ordinator helps colleagues by providing training and advice. For example, she has held a number of demonstration numeracy lessons for them. The quality of teaching is monitored by the headteacher, who gives detailed feedback to those concerned. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented by the school and this is pushing up the general level of attainment. Although it is clear that staff have a good knowledge of the capabilities of their pupils, there is no formal setting of targets for either groups or individuals, except those with special educational needs. The school has made good improvement in its provision for the subject since the report of June 1996, particularly in the standard of teaching for the younger pupils and lessening of the reliance in classrooms on commercially produced schemes of work.

SCIENCE

108. In the most recent national tests for 11 year olds standards in science were average compared to all schools nationally and below average compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards by the age of 11 are average.
109. The Year 2000 Teacher Assessments of seven-year-olds' attainment in science showed that an above average proportion of pupils reached the level expected of seven-year-olds nationally, but that fewer than usual reached the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Inspection evidence shows that currently the overall standards reached by seven-year-olds are average. The different cohort of pupils aged seven this year accounts for the difference between the above average standards in the most recent Teacher Assessments and those found now.
110. The standards achieved by 11-year-olds have improved very well since 1996, generally in line with the national trend. No national trends in science are available for the seven-year-olds' results.
111. By the time they leave the school at the age of 11, pupils have had good experience of a wide range of topics in science and good experience of investigating things for themselves. Pupils' opportunities to investigate science have improved well since the last inspection, when there was a weakness in this aspect. Pupils know what a habitat is and what constitutes an environment. They know about different types of human teeth, such as the molar, the canine and the incisor, and they understand their different purposes in tearing, chewing and cutting food. They know about the importance of keeping teeth healthy and some of the ways in which we can do this. Pupils understand some of the conditions for growth and healthy living, such as a balanced diet and exercise, and about the importance of not taking health risks, such as smoking. In work on the human body pupils learn about the circulation of the blood. They know that blood is carried in arteries, veins and capillaries. They know about the function of the heart and the response of the body to exercise. Some good opportunities are taken in physical education lessons to demonstrate the short-term effects of exercise. Pupils know about the structure and function of the human skeleton and that it plays a vital role in supporting the body and protecting vital organs such as the heart, the lungs and the brain. They know about the anatomy and functions of the digestive system, including the mouth, the stomach and the large intestine. Pupils learn about electrical conductors and insulators and have good opportunities to test different materials, such as wood, brass, aluminium and rubber, for conductivity. There are also good opportunities for investigation as pupils test the effects on bread of being kept over a period of time in different conditions, such as wet, frozen and in a vacuum. There are some good links with other subjects. For example, information and communication technology is applied as pupils use the digital

camera and computer to record the results of their investigation of mould growing on bread. Good links are made with history as pupils learn about the differences between keeping food fresh in Victorian times and today. Most pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding which are typical of pupils of their age in all the elements of science they study, including scientific investigation.

112. Seven-year-olds also have good opportunities to investigate science, for example as they find out what you can see in a box with and without light and as they investigate making shadows. They try out different mirrors and see how their reflection differs between normal, concave and convex mirrors. They know about the structure of the human ear in simple terms, identifying, for example, the eardrum. They experiment with sound and see that sound travels as vibrations, for instance as they hit a drum and see the beads on its surface dance about in response to the vibration caused.
113. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall. There is some good teaching for both the five to seven-year-olds and the 7-11 year olds. The best teaching features good, clear planning with a precise identification of what pupils will do and what they are to learn. This was seen, for example, in a lesson in which Year 4 and 5 pupils planned their own investigation of the conditions in which mould would grow. This clarity about what pupils are to learn is helpful in planning appropriate activities to meet pupils' needs and interests and so promotes good learning. Some very good use is made of imaginative teaching methods, seen, for example, when the teacher took on the character of 'Betty' the Victorian maid, who wanted to learn about why food goes bad and the effects of microbes. This technique stimulated pupils' interest very well and so promoted good learning. Good teaching is characterised by good class control and good relationships. This ensures that pupils behave sensibly and concentrate and so they make good progress in their learning, seen, for example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2 on how different coloured backgrounds aid the visibility of letters or graphics on a sign. Teachers make some good use of questioning to make pupils think and to check for understanding. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. This means that they can explain things clearly and so promote pupils' learning. This was seen, for example, in a lesson on light in Years 1 and 2, where the teacher and learning support assistant both had a good understanding of the distorting effects of concave and convex mirrors and so were able to give clear explanations and demonstrations of their effects on the pupils' reflection. In some lessons which are less successful there is too much chatter and the teacher fails to get the attention of all the pupils before speaking to the class. This adversely affects the learning of all the pupils, since they are not able to listen and concentrate well. The attainment and progress of the 7-11 year olds is assessed well at the end of each unit of work, appropriately using both teacher assessment and published 'check-up' tests, and the information gained is useful to teachers in planning their next steps in teaching. Assessment of the progress made by the younger pupils is not yet so well developed and there is work to be done to make this satisfactory.
114. Science is well managed by a knowledgeable, enthusiastic and able co-ordinator. She is given time on a regular basis to co-ordinate the subject and checks planning to ensure the smooth progression in pupils' learning as they go through the school. An issue for future development is the monitoring of the quality of teaching through classroom observation.

ART AND DESIGN

115. There was insufficient evidence for a secure judgement to be made about overall standards in the subject because the art work on display, and seen in lessons, related principally to painting and pattern making. In the lessons seen pupils were continuing with activities which had been introduced earlier. The teaching observed was satisfactory. Evidence has been taken from a scrutiny of displays in classrooms and in the corridors, from looking at pupils' sketchbooks and from observations during two lessons.
116. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 created reflections by painting a scene on one half of a piece of paper and folding it over to create the illusion of a reflection, linking their art work to their topic on 'light'. Some of the results were very effective and all pupils achieved a degree of success, because teachers have established clear routines and expectations which result in good co-operation between pupils and in sustained attention to tasks. Classroom displays show pupils have used paint in a variety of ways, including making leaf prints and firework patterns. Standards for this aspect of art are typical of what is expected of seven-year-olds.
117. Year 3 and 4 pupils were seen creating patterns using 'presto' printing blocks, sometimes colour mixing to create attractive muted shades. Some pupils cut shapes from sugar paper, in various shades, in order to make patterns, while another group used a template and bright felt tip colours to create a rotating pattern. Displays show that pupils have had experience of creating patterns in a variety of styles and ways. These include intricate pencil patterns inspired by Rangoli and Mendhi designs, computer generated repeating patterns and patterns created using tones of one colour. Standards achieved are typical of those expected for the age group.
118. The sketchbooks of pupils in Years 5 and 6 show recent pattern making based on William Morris designs. Knowledge about artists' work is also developed well through producing paintings and pastel drawings in the style of, for example, Monet and Renoir. Visits have been made to the Jelly Legged Chicken Art Gallery in Reading and to the National Gallery.
119. The co-ordinator took on the role earlier this year and is keen to increase her own knowledge of the subject so that she is able to provide guidance for other staff. The use of nationally published schemes of work is being developed over a two year period in order to check the effectiveness of these schemes in enabling the school to comply with the requirements of the revised National Curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. There was insufficient evidence for a secure judgement to be made about either standards in the subject, or the quality of teaching. There were few examples of pupils' work to look at and only one lesson was seen.
121. The previous inspection found that standards were typical of pupils of this age in schools nationally. The limited evidence available suggests this remains the case. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 classes were making moving pictures to illustrate what happened in a story they had enjoyed. They were seen working with the assistance of learning support assistants during lessons which included a carousel of activities. The pupils had designed their moving pictures before transferring their ideas to the making tasks, integrating the two aspects well for their age and experience. They made holes safely in order to insert split pins to make moving joints, or used sticky paper to incorporate sliding movements; indicating that they could assemble, join and combine components in a simple task.
122. By the age of 11 pupils design and make clocks. There is an annual design and technology challenge setting a similar task. This is something to which they look forward. The finished products show imagination and indicate that pupils are able to use tools and equipment with some accuracy in order to assemble the component parts. Time constraints have resulted in the concentration in lessons being upon making rather than designing, with the result that pupils have little opportunity to produce and modify their design ideas.

123. In a well taught lesson in Year 5, pupils were making clocks using their own design ideas. The teacher ensured that pupils knew how to use tools and equipment safely. Good questioning helped pupils to develop their ideas about their designs and to consider how they were going to assemble the clocks. They used a computer to print numbers of an appropriate size for the faces of their clocks; a good example of the integration of computer use in other subject areas.
124. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Design and make tasks are usually related to the topics that are being covered by the different age groups. The co-ordinator assists with all levels of planning throughout the school, ensuring an appropriate progression in the development of skills. Resources for the subject are good, easily accessible and well maintained.

GEOGRAPHY

125. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in the subject; because this half term the school is doing history. All judgements are therefore based on a scrutiny of work and discussion with the subject co-ordinator and pupils. Standards in the subject are typical of those usually found nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. The school has maintained the standards noted in the report of June 1996.
126. At the age of seven pupils discuss the sources of information they have used for the subject, for example, they are able to name globes and books. They are aware of the effect that people have on the environment and know the difference between the more common human and physical features of the landscape. They produce maps of the British Isles showing the main countries and including a key to show what each colour represents. Pupils have drawn diagrams showing the position of furniture in their classroom. By the age of 11 pupils have the ability to use aerial photographs to identify physical features of the area where they live. They are aware of the different types of buildings in the local area and have identified such features as leisure facilities and places of employment. Pupils know the main features of the British Isles, such as countries, rivers, hills and mountains. They understand the effects that weather can have on the landscape and have a knowledge of the processes involved in water erosion. They name the different parts of a river, for example, source, tributary and waterfall. Using their information and communication technology skills, pupils have carried out a survey of the shops in Reading and entered the information on to a database, using it to produce a pie graph. They identify and use symbols and simple references when doing map work.
127. The scrutiny of work carried out during the inspection indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. However, it was not possible to make any judgement about the quality of teaching.
128. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has shown an awareness of its development needs in the form of an action plan. Although the attainment of pupils is assessed once a year, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to assess their work more often and ensure that records of individual achievement are kept by teaching staff. There is no formal monitoring of the subject by the co-ordinator. In the last report it was noted that the need for a scheme of work was an immediate requirement. The school has responded to this issue and there is now an appropriate scheme of work, which ensures the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they move through the school. Every year pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given the opportunity to attend the Lakeside Centre for field study work and this has a positive impact on the standards reached by 11-year-olds.

HISTORY

129. The previous inspection found that standards in history were typical of those found nationally when pupils were aged 11. The present inspection finds that standards have risen and they are now above what is usually found nationally by the time pupils leave the school. The seven-year-olds are able to discuss historical figures such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. In the

case of Florence Nightingale they have an understanding of the impact she had on nursing and they are able to relate some of her experiences in the Crimea. For example, they said that she "... made hospitals cleaner and gave the soldiers nice food". They understand that historical information can be obtained from a number of different sources: computers in the form of the Internet, CD-ROMs, books, videos and television. Pupils understand that the things we use in our homes have developed over time; for example, they are aware of the development of lighting from rush lights to electricity.

130. The oldest pupils are aware of the importance of primary source material and have used it to study life in Tudor England. They are able to draw simple conclusions from source material; for example, when studying an inventory of possessions taken on someone's death they were able to say "John was religious because he had a box with a cross on it". In work on life in the time of Queen Victoria, pupils have further developed their ability to empathise with the lives of people living in the past. They have produced some thoughtful pieces of extended writing about aspects such as life in a ragged school and child labour in Leeds. This work is further developing their ability to use and interpret primary and secondary sources such as census returns, contemporary pictures and books. Their ability to study history has been enhanced by linking the subject to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils use their numeracy skills to gather evidence from old records and tables of data. This information is recorded in the form of tally charts and then used to produce graphs of various kinds. Their literacy skills have been used to produce some good pieces of extended writing.
131. Because of timetabling difficulties it was not possible during the inspection to observe any teaching of the pupils aged five to seven and the work available for scrutiny was limited. It was not, therefore, possible to form any valid view of the quality of history teaching in that stage. What is clear, however, from discussions with the pupils is that they enjoy the subject and are making satisfactory progress. Lesson observations and work scrutiny clearly indicate that teaching for pupils aged 7-11 is good overall and never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is good, the activities given to the pupils are sharply focused on the objectives of the lessons. Teachers take care to involve the pupils in their lessons and are able to create a sense of excitement. They maintain good relationships with their pupils and demonstrate good class control. The marking of pupils' work is detailed and there is a good range of activities made available to the pupils. This good teaching, as outlined above, when combined with the interest and effort put into their work by the pupils, ensures that they make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress in their learning to other pupils.
132. Since the last inspection management of the subject has been reviewed and effective improvements made in the school's provision for it. There is now an appropriate scheme of work. The subject co-ordinator is well aware of the need to develop the assessment and recording of the achievement of pupils. The development plan for the subject recognises that there is still room for improvement in the school's provision: For example, the need to constantly review resources. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a number of historical events. For example, they take part in a Victorian based event, which includes dancing and experiencing a school of the period. They visit various museums such as the Ashmolean, Reading Museum and the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

133. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are typical of those found nationally by the time pupils are aged seven and 11. Since the last inspection the school has made considerable improvements in the quality and quantity of the hardware available and has provided training and other confidence building activities for the teaching staff. The improvement in attainment for pupils aged 11 since the last inspection is due to the work that the school has done to enhance its provision for the subject generally.
134. Pupils aged seven use the mouse to manipulate images on a computer screen. For example, they are able to draw figures, such as a fish, and colour them in using an appropriate art program. In discussion pupils are able to talk about computers in terms of their use as sources of

information, mentioning the Internet and e-mail. They are also very aware of their use in storing and reproducing information. Pupils at age 11 interrogate databases and draw conclusions from the information received. They use a digital camera to provide pictures for the newly developed school web site. When presenting their written work, pupils select and drag pictures to illustrate it. They can organise their work for different purposes, for example, writing letters in the correct form in work that formed a good link to their literacy. Pupils present their poetry using various layouts and demonstrate a good grasp of the use of different fonts and computer generated colours and patterns. They combine information and illustrations from different sources such as the Internet or CD-ROMs on to one page. For example, they have designed a quiz sheet linked to their science work on the human body using information from different sources and showing a good grasp of page layout. In their history work pupils have downloaded a Tudor map and combined it with their own writing using different size fonts. Pupils are able to enter a sequence of instructions to control events.

135. Teaching in the subject is good overall, sometimes very good and never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is good, lessons are well prepared and develop not only ICT skills but in a number of cases provide good links to other subjects, developing pupils' skills in them. This is seen, for example, in work done during a lesson on the interpretation of databases and an emphasis on the importance of entering information in the correct form. The reasoning skills of pupils were developed during this lesson and they were able to say where errors in the data being entered had occurred. Teachers generally demonstrate good class control and relationships with their pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge, sometimes very good, and are able to enthuse their pupils. Despite the fact that pupils are making good progress in their theoretical knowledge, their opportunities to assimilate the information given to them during lessons is limited by a lack of opportunity to practise the new skills that have been taught. Therefore, inspection evidence clearly indicates that progress in learning for pupils aged both seven and eleven is no more than satisfactory, despite the quality of skill development and teaching highlighted above. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.
136. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has a clear vision of the way in which she wants to see it develop. One of the strengths of the subject is the very good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator and her ability to build on the confidence of the staff. The school has introduced a new scheme of work, which ensures the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they move through the school. It has not, however, ensured that the work of pupils is assessed on a regular basis and their attainment recorded by their teachers. The co-ordinator has run courses dealing with computer skills such as word processing, data handling and the use of the Internet and e-mail for teachers. This training has gone a long way to address the points made in the last report about the lack of teacher confidence in dealing with the subject. The co-ordinator has not formally monitored teaching but holds discussions with colleagues and advises where possible. The school management is very aware of the limitations of its provision for the subject, for example, everyday use of computers in classrooms and hands on experience during lessons.

MUSIC

137. The school has maintained the satisfactory level of attainment noted in the report of June 1996. Standards reached by the seven and eleven year olds are similar to those found nationally at that age. Pupils aged seven listen quietly to music and show appreciation of what they hear. They discuss music in terms of loud and soft and put forward innovative ideas when asked to portray different levels of sound. For example, in one lesson, they suggested that soft sounds could be portrayed with thin lines and loud sounds with thick.
138. Pupils of 11 talk about music and say what effect it has on them. In a Year 6 class pupils were able to say that the piece of music being played reminded them of, for example, "Church bells on a cold windy day" or "...an Italian restaurant". Pupils are able to respond to music by writing poetry intended to echo its mood. In performing their poems they show an appreciation of the need to fit their words to the speed of the music. Pupils in Year 4 are developing their ability to use the language of music. For example, they understand words such as 'dynamics',

'crescendo' and 'diminuendo'. In a Year 4 and 5 class singing lesson, pupils showed an ability to sing in tune and perform their own part whilst performing by ear and from simple notation.

139. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and it is good overall for the younger pupils. Where teaching is good, pupils are taught to appreciate different types of music. Teachers give a good lead in singing lessons and develop a real sense of enjoyment. Lessons are well organised and teachers use good questioning techniques to develop the speaking and listening skills of pupils. Throughout the school a feature of lessons in the subject is the high level of class control and the good relationships pupils have with their teachers and each other. They are, therefore, not afraid to try out new ideas and skills and do so without embarrassment. Teachers use the language of the subject correctly and use praise well to develop the confidence of the pupils. The productive atmosphere created by teachers in their lessons enables pupils to progress in their understanding of singing and holding a tune. Thanks to well organised lessons pupils progress in their ability to appreciate the dynamics of music, such as loud and soft. Teachers take care to link the subject with other areas of the curriculum whenever possible. For example, in a very good lesson on setting poetry to music the teacher encouraged the pupils to perform their poems in front of the class. In another music lesson a line graph was used to illustrate the concepts being taught.
140. The school seeks to ensure that the pupils are given as wide a range of musical experience as possible. The recorder is taught at three different levels of attainment and pupils are encouraged to sing. For example, the good level of provision by the school includes a choir, regular singing assemblies, carol concerts and other performances. Pupils are encouraged to take up instruments such as the cornet, trombone, and baritone horn. Weekly lessons have been arranged for pupils who wish to take advantage of the school's good level of provision in this area.
141. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision of what needs to be done to further develop the subject. There is a detailed scheme of work, which is being adapted to provide a rolling programme of experiences for the pupils and provide for the smooth progression of pupils' learning. There is an appropriate development plan for the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning and gives good technical advice and support to colleagues. There is an awareness within the school of the need to develop systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress on a regular basis and using this information to enhance planning for the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. Standards in physical education are typical of those found nationally by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. The full physical education curriculum is planned for, including swimming for the older pupils. There are good opportunities offered for outdoor and adventurous activities through the annual visit of the older pupils to the Lake District. There is a good sports day in the summer, in which all pupils take part and are encouraged to experience enjoyment and success. Some appropriate competition is introduced for pupils aged from 7-11.
143. The oldest pupils learn attack and defence skills appropriate to playing traditional team games such as netball. They 'mark' their partners skilfully and with enthusiasm and show appropriate skill in using a variety of appropriate passes, such as the chest pass, the shoulder pass and the bounce pass. Some good links are made with science, as the oldest pupils exercise and learn about the short-term effects of exercise on the body, such as the increase in heart rate and respiration. In dance lessons pupils express themselves imaginatively, for example as they dance through the 'hall of mirrors' in response to appropriately atmospheric music. They make appropriately exaggerated body shapes as they 'look' in the 'mirror'. Pupils move in many different ways with good co-ordination and body control. They listen to, respond and interpret music through suitable movement. They piece together movements with those they have done in previous lessons and devise a sequence of contrasting movements, for example, smooth and jerky movements. They practise and refine their movement sequences and perform them for others. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres by the age of 11, which is typical attainment at this age.

144. The standards reached by seven-year-olds are typical of those usually found at this age. The seven-year-olds find different ways of travelling using a number of balances and build their balancing movements into a sequence which they practise and perform. They move with good body control and skill and are innovative in devising their balance sequences. In dance they move imaginatively and with good control, for example hopping like a kangaroo and plodding like an elephant. They respond well to music and show a good awareness of space and of other people. They use the space well and keep clear of others as they work. They run lightly on tip-toe in response to appropriate music and make big, heavy, splashing strides in response as the music changes to represent a coming storm and Noah's Flood.
145. The teaching of physical education is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and good guidance is provided by the schemes of work in use, mainly based on recent national guidelines. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and energetic and keeps herself up to date well by undertaking appropriate training, such as the recent training on teaching sport. She has some regular release time from class to manage the subject and an area for development now is to use some of this time to monitor, and evaluate and develop the quality of teaching.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, all of these for pupils aged between seven and eleven. There were no lessons observed for the younger pupils during that week. The evidence of these lessons, together with the examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning, shows that standards are in line with the expectations of the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus for religious education by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. In the three lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory.
147. By the age of 11 pupils know about the Bible and that it is a sacred book to Christians. They know that the Bible was written by many different people 2000 – 3000 years ago and that the oldest books are in the Old Testament. Pupils know that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and that the New Testament was written by the first people to believe in Jesus Christ and that it was written in Greek. They also know that the Bible is the most translated book ever. Pupils are familiar with some of the stories of the Old and New Testaments, such as the story of Abraham and his wife Sarah, the creation story according to Genesis and the parable of the good Samaritan.
148. The younger pupils, aged between five and seven, learn much of their religious education through class discussion and not much is written down. This is appropriate at this age, but it means there was little work for inspectors to examine. By the age of seven, pupils know that Hinduism is a world religion different from Christianity. They know the story of Rama and Sita and the Hindu festival Diwali. Pupils' learning about Diwali is well linked to other subjects, for example science and history as they learn about light and look at sources of light in the past and the present day. They compare, for example, oil lamps used in the past with modern electric lights and torches. Pupils make divas – oil lamps used in the celebration of Diwali – and scented candles, work which links well with design and technology. They also learn about the Jewish festival of light, Hanukkah and there is planned work on the Christian practice of making Christingles at Christmas.
149. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. As a result pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The best teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge and understanding on the part of the teacher, which means that pupils are well informed and make good progress in their learning, seen, for example, when Year 5 and 6 pupils were discussing truth and how true the Bible is. Good use is made of time and appropriate time limits are set to encourage pupils to work faster. This has a positive impact on their learning, as they try hard and concentrate well on the questions set, for example, "How easy is it to tell the truth?"
150. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The subject co-ordinator has some release time from classes and it planned that she will monitor the quality of teaching and learning, which would be

an appropriate development. Too little use is made of visits out of school, for example to the Church, Mosque, Temple or Synagogue to enrich pupils' learning. There are too few visitors representing various religions invited into school to talk to pupils about their faith and religious practices. There are some religious artefacts, such as divas and palm crosses, but the quantity and range are not great.