

INSPECTION REPORT

Rushy Meadow Primary School

Carshalton

LEA area: London Borough of Sutton

Unique reference number: 102989

Head teacher: Miss J. Davidson

Reporting inspector: Mrs S. M. Barnes
16249

Dates of inspection: 6th - 9th November 2000

Inspection number: 224360

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rushy Meadow Primary School, Rushy Meadow Lane, Fellowes Road, Carshalton. SM5 2SG
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. John Porter
Date of previous inspection:	8 th – 12 th June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
S.Barnes 16249	Registered inspector	design and technology, music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? Equal opportunities.
E.Parrish 9577	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
J.Harding 21378	Team inspector	science, religious education	Special educational needs
R.Braithwaite 4099	Team inspector	geography, history	
J.Strickland 4351	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
B.Acheson 31334	Team inspector	Education of children under five, art, physical education	
B.Jones 28882	Team inspector	The hearing impaired unit	
D.Speakman 20086	Team inspector	mathematics, information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar, Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rushy Meadow Primary School is situated in Carshalton, in the London Borough of Sutton. It was built in 1992 and has a special unit, known in the local education authority and the school as the Opportunity Base, for pupils with hearing impairment. The school has 374 full time and 52 part time pupils and is much larger than most primary schools. Children start in the nursery on a part time basis (morning or afternoon) and normally spend one year in the nursery class. At the time of inspection 27 children were in each session in the nursery and nine of the 18 children in reception were under five. Children enter the reception class in September or at Easter, depending on their birthday, in accordance with education authority policy. Pupils attending the Opportunity Base come from a wider area than that surrounding the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free-school meals, (17 per cent), is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools at 1.8 per cent. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs. The number of pupils with statements of their need, four per cent, is well above the national average. There are great differences in the socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils and whilst a small proportion come from advantaged homes, the circumstances of a significant proportion are less well advantaged. Baseline assessment verifies the attainment of children on entry as being below average overall. This indicates a change in intake since the time of the previous inspection, in 1998, which judged attainment on entry to be average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. At the time of the previous inspection the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since that time a new head teacher and senior management team have been appointed. There has been a very good level of improvement. The leadership and management of the school are good and the leadership of the head teacher is very good. Teaching throughout the school is good overall and the school now provides a good education for all of its pupils. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The strong, effective leadership of the head teacher is very good. The governing body has a very good understanding of the school and is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. The leadership and management of the school is good overall.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop initiative in their learning.
- The provision for pupils with hearing impairment in the unit, and their integration into main school is very good. There is very good provision for children in the nursery and the teaching of these young children is good.
- The provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good. The provision for their social development is very good. As a result, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.
- Standards have greatly improved in information and communication technology and are now above those normally found at both key stages.
- Communication with parents is good and they have positive views of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics are below average at both key stages.
- Attainment and standards are below average in English at Key Stage 1.
- Standards in religious education are below average at Key Stage 2.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. It should, however, be noted that all of the key issues above have already been identified for action by the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected in 1998, it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since that time there has been a very good level of improvement. Standards have improved in English, science, and design and technology throughout the school and are continuing to improve in mathematics. They have

improved in history at Key Stage 2. There has been a very significant improvement in information and communication technology at both key stages and standards are now above average. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good.

Behaviour has improved and teachers and support staff are confident in establishing good behaviour in classes and around the school. Co-ordinators' roles are developing appropriately and planning in core subjects is now good. There has been an improvement in the use of assessment to guide teaching. A sound approach has been developed which identifies strengths and weaknesses and means are currently being established to record progress in the foundation subjects. Although it was not identified by the previous report, the school recognised the need to improve standards for pupils with special educational needs and good progress has been made in this area. However the school accepts there is still work to be done in the writing of Individual Education Plans. Communication with parents has been improved and the welfare and support of pupils is now good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved and is now good overall.

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	E	B	C	C
mathematics	E	C	D	E
Science	E	C	D	D

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

Standards on entry have altered since the previous inspection, which judged them to be average overall. Children currently enter the nursery with standards below those expected nationally, and well below in language skills. However, as a result of the good teaching in the nursery and sound teaching in reception, pupils make good progress overall in their learning. They enter compulsory schooling with standards which are in line with national expectations in all areas except language and those areas of mathematics which are based on language, which are still below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English at Key Stage 1, but by the time they are seven standards are still below average. At Key Stage 2, progress is good and by the age of 11, pupils achieve standards which are very close to those recorded nationally in English, and which are average when compared to similar schools. In 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was at the national level, at under three quarters of the pupils. In that cohort there were significant numbers of pupils (approximately an eighth) with severe special educational needs, not all of whom had a statement of their need. The proportion attaining the higher Level 5 was similar to national figures. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving levels expected for their age. This represents a considerable improvement in standards since 1998, when only 54 per cent of pupils attained the level expected of Year 6 pupils at the end of the key stage.

In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above in the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000 indicate that standards were well below average when compared with all schools and also when compared with similar schools. Although standards were well below average, the attainment of higher attaining pupils was appropriate and the school served those pupils well. The previous inspection judged standards to be below average at the end of Key Stage 2. There has been considerable improvement since 1998, when only just over a third of the pupils attained the expected standard at the end of the key stage. In the tests in 2000 this proportion was increased to almost two thirds. This is, however, below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs affected overall progress and the results attained. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. However, standards at the end of the key stage are currently below expectations.

The National Curriculum tests results in science for the last three years show clear improvements. At Key Stage 1, in 1999 the teachers' assessments in science showed that the school achieved results above those found in schools with similar intakes and the proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels was also above. In the last academic year, 79 per cent of pupils achieved the expected grade. At Key Stage 2 results have improved from well below the national average in 1998 to below national average in 2000. In comparison with similar schools the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was below average, and the percentage of pupils attaining at a higher level was average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs of a marked nature in that cohort depressed these statistics. Standards attained in information and communication technology are above average at both key stages. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection, when standards in the subject were a key issue. Currently pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education at Key Stage 1. However progress at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Standards are lower than those judged by the previous inspection. The school has identified weakness in the way lessons have been planned and has started to remedy the situation. Pupils make good progress in design and technology at both key stages and attain standards which are above those normally expected of pupils at seven and eleven. Progress is satisfactory in all other areas of the curriculum and pupils are likely to attain standards in line with those expected at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs in the Opportunity Base make good progress. Those pupils who have special educational needs in mainstream school make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They are enthusiastic and fully involved in their learning activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in class and around the school. The number of exclusions has dropped dramatically to only one in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good and relationships between them are also good.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start and end on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school and has resulted in a significant improvement in standards in recent years. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be sound. During the current inspection the proportion of teaching that was at least good was over half and, of this, nearly twenty per cent was at least very good. Three per cent of teaching observed was excellent. There was a very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, (just over three per cent). However, there was no specific pattern to this. Particular strengths of teaching throughout the school are effective planning, good knowledge and understanding of the subject being taught and effective management of pupils. Teaching of children under five in the nursery is good and as a result, children make good progress in all aspects of learning in the foundation curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory in reception and children continue to make steady gains in their learning as a result. The teaching of English and mathematics and of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is good. Throughout the school the teaching of design and technology is consistently good. Teaching of all other subjects of the curriculum is at least satisfactory and often good. The teaching of pupils with hearing impairment in the Opportunity Base and mainstream is good and leads to them making

good progress in their learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is satisfactory overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. There is an appropriate curriculum in place. The range of extra curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound overall. This represents an improvement. The provision for pupils with hearing impairment is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and they make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good and that for spiritual development is satisfactory. The provision for their social development is very good and a strength of the school. The Opportunity Base makes a very positive contribution to pupils' development generally.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Procedures for child protection are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good.

Parents views of the school are positive. Links with parents are very good overall and the quality of information provided for parents is also very good. Parents are suitably involved in their children's learning and the work of the school. They make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school is good overall and that of the head teacher is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are effective in fulfilling their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures in place to monitor and evaluate its performance. Teaching is monitored effectively. There are good systems for appraisal and performance management. Priorities for development are appropriate and good action is taken to meet them.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good. The adequacy of resources and accommodation is satisfactory. Educational priorities are very well supported by careful financial planning. The principles of best value are effectively applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good and pupils make good progress.• Children like school.• The school has high expectations of pupils.• The school is well led and managed.• School is helping pupils become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents feel their children do not get the right amount of homework.• Some parents do not feel well informed.• They feel the school does not work closely enough with them.• The range of outside activities is not enough.

The inspection team agree with the positive views of the parents. Homework amounts are generally appropriate. Information to parents about their children's progress is good. There is a good range of activities outside lesson times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with overall standards below those expected nationally, and standards which are well below in language skills. This represents a decline in standards on entry since the previous inspection, which judged them to be average. However, as a result of the good teaching in the nursery and sound teaching in reception, children make good progress overall in their learning as noted by the previous report. They enter the school with standards which are in line with national expectations in all areas except language and those areas of mathematics which are based on language, which are still below average. Baseline assessment is used appropriately on entry to school, and these assessments show that children, on entry, are not aware, for example, that print carries meaning or of the direction of written text. Half of the children entering the nursery have little support for home reading, do not know alphabet rhymes, the names of letters and are unable to trace their own name.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are below average. The results of the national tests in 2000 show a drop from those of 1999. In reading, 64 percent of pupils attained Level 2 or above compared with a national average of 83 percent. In writing, 69 percent achieved Level 2 or above as against the national figure of 84 percent. Trends over time show fluctuation during the past four years, with attainment showing a marked improvement since 1997 and being close to the national average in 1998 and 1999, and a marked dip in both reading and writing in 2000. Throughout this period pupils' performance has been below average in comparison with similar schools at Key Stage 1. The performance of girls has been better than that of boys in both reading and writing and their attainment overall has been close to the national figure recorded for girls. Work seen during the inspection shows standards similar to those indicated by the test results. A significant factor affecting results in Key Stage 1 is the attainment of pupils on entry to the school. Many have poor language skills and although they do not reach expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1, most make considerable progress. Progress is good at Key Stage 2, and by the age of 11, pupils are achieving standards, which are average compared to national figures, based on average points scored. This is average compared to similar schools. In 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was below the national level, at under three quarters, but the low results of this cohort are largely explained by the large numbers of pupils in the year group with severe special educational needs, identified by the school, not all of whom had a statement of their need. However, the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 was similar to national figures. There is currently no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls at this stage. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving levels expected for their age. The school has effectively met its targets. This represents a considerable improvement in standards over the past two years since 1998, when only 54 per cent of pupils attained the level expected of Year 6 pupils at the end of the key stage.
3. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above in the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000 indicate that standards were well below average when compared with all schools and also when compared with similar schools. However, because a large proportion of these pupils gained the higher Level 3, the average point scores indicate that the overall attainment was average when compared to all schools and also to similar schools. Although standards were well below average, the attainment of higher attaining pupils was appropriate and the school served those pupils well. Since 1996 standards overall have varied from above to below average and the overall trend has been similar to the national picture. Current attainment is below average. The previous inspection judged standards to be below average at the end of Key Stage 2. There has been considerable improvement in recent years, and most particularly since 1998, when only just over a third of the pupils attained the expected standard at the end of the key stage. The school has met its targets and in the tests in 2000 the proportion of pupils attaining

Level 4 was increased to two thirds. However this is still below the national average and is well below average for similar schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2, but standards at the end of the key stage are currently below expectations, as pupils work from a low base on entry. The progress of those with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Last year, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was below average when compared to all schools nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. However there were a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs of a significant nature in that cohort, and this affected overall progress and the results they attained.

4. The National Curriculum test results in science for the last three years show clear improvements. At Key Stage 1, in 1999, the teachers' assessments in science were above those found in schools with similar intakes and the proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels was also above. In the last academic year, although 80 per cent of pupils achieved the expected grade, this is below average and below the average for similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3, was above average and also above the average for similar schools. At Key Stage 2 results have improved from well below the national average in 1998 to below the national average, based on average points scored, in 2000. In comparison with similar schools the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was below average, and the percentage of pupils attaining at a higher level was average. The number of pupils with special educational needs of a marked nature in that cohort has depressed these statistics.
5. Standards attained in information and communication technology are above average at both key stages. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection, when standards in the subject were a key issue. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education at Key Stage 1. However progress at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Standards are lower than those judged by the previous inspection. This unsatisfactory progress is due in the main to the curriculum planning which overloads pupils at this key stage with a great deal of information delivered in little lesson time. The school has already identified this weakness and has started to remedy the situation. Pupils make good progress in design and technology at both key stages and attain standards above those normally expected of pupils at seven and eleven. Progress is satisfactory in all other areas of the curriculum and pupils attain standards in line with those expected at the end of both key stages.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their learning. Those pupils who have a few problems with literacy and are given extra help, make good progress. Pupils with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) make satisfactory progress but this could be better with more special strategies for teaching. Those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make good progress in learning as their problems have been analysed well and staff are consistent in their attitude to them. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress with their learning commensurate with their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy coming to school. They respond positively to the opportunities which it offers for work, play and friendship. They move confidently about the building and treat it well. They are welcoming and polite to visitors. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when attitudes were sound.
8. Behaviour is good. This is a significant improvement, as behaviour was a key issue of the previous report. In lessons pupils understand and accept the disciplines of the classroom, listen attentively and settle down to tasks purposefully. They co-operate with teachers and other members of staff and relate well to one another. When lessons are particularly lively and interesting they respond with great enthusiasm and give of their best. When their interest is less engaged they remain compliant and try hard. Only very occasionally were pupils restless or distracted in the lessons observed. During a wet lunch hour in the inspection week, pupils spent

the time happily in classrooms, with books, games or in quiet conversation. Behaviour was very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when the behaviour of a minority of pupils disrupted some lessons.

9. Personal development of the pupils is good. It is given a very good start in the nursery and as they move through the school pupils are given more opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. All pupils help to keep classrooms tidy and take registers and messages. Two pupils from Year 2 were given the task of delivering trays of Remembrance Day poppies to the classrooms where they had been ordered, which they were very proud to do. Pupils in Year 6 share in dinner duties and some help younger pupils with their reading. Others act as library monitors. All classes in Key Stage 2 send two representatives to the School Council, which meets regularly and gives pupils an opportunity to discuss and contribute to the running of the school. The Council makes recommendations, which are considered seriously and often implemented.
10. The policy for personal, social and health education recognises the contribution that all subjects, clubs and assemblies, make to these aspects of pupils' development. There is a specific personal, social and health education with time-tabling each week for such activities as "circle time", in which pupils learn to listen to others and to contribute their own ideas in a friendly and encouraging group discussion.
11. A striking feature of the attitudes and values that the school promotes, is the good integration of pupils in the Opportunity Base into the life and work of the school as a whole, including reverse integration opportunities for pupils in the main school to work in the Base. They share in mainstream lessons as much as possible and take part in assemblies, clubs and all school events. They work and play alongside mainstream pupils, many of whom voluntarily learn signing. In school assemblies, the use of signing by a number of staff and pupils gives valuable support to the pupils whose hearing is impaired, and increases the sense of community and sharing. In this, as in other ways, teaching and non-teaching staff in the school provide very good role models.
12. Pupils with special educational needs want to learn and try hard in lessons. The attitude of other pupils in the school towards them is good; there is no stigma if anyone has a difficulty and all pupils accept that many require special help. The presence of the pupils in the Opportunity Base very much helps to promote this positive ethos, from which all pupils benefit.
13. The number of exclusions was unusually high when the school was last inspected, but has now dropped significantly to only one for one day in the last year. Pupils appreciate the rewards and commendations which acknowledge good behaviour and good work, but the system of interrupting lessons to award stars to individual pupils can be disruptive on occasion.
14. Pupils demonstrate a good level of respect for others. Assemblies seen during the inspection included some lively pupil participation when Key Stage 1 pupils showed some of their week's work to an audience of parents, using demonstrations and role play. In another school assembly, performances by two very able young violinists from the school were heard with rapt attention by their fellow pupils, sharing an experience that was both social and cultural.
15. Attendance is good and compares favourably with national averages. Registration is carried out quickly and effectively. Straightforward procedures are in place to record and report absences. Pupils arrive at school punctually in the mornings and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school and has resulted in a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be sound. At that time, although there was good teaching in half of the lessons, thirteen per cent of the

teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. During the current inspection there was only a very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, (just over three per cent). The proportion of teaching that was at least good was over half and of this nearly twenty per cent was at least very good and three per cent of teaching was observed which was excellent.

17. Teaching in the nursery is good and as a result, children make good progress in all aspects of learning in the foundation curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory in reception and this means children continue to make steady gains in their learning.
18. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is good throughout the school. This is due in part to the appropriate emphasis which the school has placed upon the literacy and numeracy strategies, and the good work the school has done in response to the issues raised by the previous inspection to improve teaching and learning of computer skills. Throughout the school the teaching of information technology and design and technology is currently consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge in these areas. Their planning is good and their expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment are high. As a result, pupils of all levels of prior attainment make good progress in their learning in these subjects throughout the school. Teaching of all other subjects of the curriculum is at least satisfactory and often good. Where teaching is particularly good, as in a mathematics lesson on the properties of two dimensional shapes and diagonals for pupils in Year 5, the planning is good and pupils are managed well. In the lesson observed, the teacher used appropriate and effective methods to involve the pupils fully. There was plenty of good dialogue at the start of the lesson, the teacher's questioning involved the whole class and the pupils responded well as a result. There was good use of praise and encouragement and pupils were given good opportunities to investigate shapes, which they did with enthusiasm. The task was appropriately challenging and this had the impact of causing pupils to concentrate carefully. The teacher had a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and the capabilities of her class and pupils of all levels of prior attainment made good progress in their learning as a result.
19. On the rare occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, there was no specific pattern. On occasion it was due to teaching which did not increase the pupils' knowledge of the subject of the lesson, or a range of work which was too ambitious, or a task set that went on for too long with insufficient support for pupils to make satisfactory progress.
20. Many mainstream teachers have taken courses in signing, as part of the school's commitment to inclusion. Class teachers use a range of effective strategies when teaching pupils with special educational needs, although more could still be done in this respect. However, pupils' Individual Education Plans are not a clear basis for teaching in some classes and are of little practical help to teachers when planning their lessons. They do not provide sufficiently clear criteria against which teachers can assess progress. Despite this weakness, the work given to pupils with special educational needs, in reality, is generally satisfactory.
21. The learning support assistants work effectively with pupils with special educational needs. They do a great deal of work with pupils who have been noted as causing concern in their development of literacy skills and give extra support, which is having a positive effect. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported.
22. There is not always sufficient attention paid to specific disability needs, such as those pupils who are dyslexic, and this affects these pupils' learning. The special educational needs co-ordinator knows this and has started to initiate appropriate action to train staff. Rewards and sanctions are usually effective and so pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make good progress in moderating their anti-social behaviour. Support staff from the local education authority give good support to staff in terms of advice and in actual teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

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

23. The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned appropriately within the areas of learning and leads children effectively towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of this key stage. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 includes all National Curriculum subjects and religious education, which is planned in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. All teachers plan to the Literacy Strategy for English, the National Numeracy Strategy for mathematics and to government recommendations for science and non-core subjects. The curriculum meets the requirements of the new Curriculum 2000. The balance of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and appropriate emphasis is given to language and literacy, as identified priority areas.
24. The school has an effective programme for pupils personal, social and health education. There is a comprehensive health education programme, which includes sex education and drugs awareness, as well as moral aspects of these areas of study and advice on how to stay healthy. The school has plans to review this provision and to develop it further within its citizenship programme. Planning towards this is progressing well.
25. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the full range of curricular experiences. Within classes most pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate work, but work could be better focussed in some cases. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs adds substantially to the development of pupils' moral and social awareness generally throughout the school. All pupils are accepted and pupils know that everyone can contribute.
26. The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of age, ability, disability, origin or gender, have equal access to the curriculum and the provision for this is good. For example it is particularly effective in the case of pupils with impaired hearing as they mostly integrate into classroom work and the general life of the school. Other pupils, support assistants and specially trained teachers sign for them and support their specific language needs so that they are fully involved in what is happening.
27. There is a good provision of extra-curricular activities. The range includes recorder groups, looking after gardening clubs, computer club, choir and singing clubs, signing club, skipping club, French, drama, dance, board games and a range of sporting activities, including football, competitive team games, cross country running and netball. All pupils have opportunities to join in the extra-curricular activities and some clubs such as recorders, singing, skipping are also open to pupils in Key Stage 1. Most teachers take part at some time during the year and about a half of the pupils take part, supporting activities enthusiastically.
28. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Building projects are taking place on land adjacent to the school and the school is involved with the building company. Pupils monitor the progress of building and it is anticipated that they will suggest names for the roads. They are planning a mural, depicting the building site, to be painted in school. There is a satisfactory range of visitors from the community. These include the police, fire safety officers, representatives of a range of faiths studied in religious education, and the Blue Peter Dogs came into school to spend a morning with the nursery children. The school has a useful link with the Royal Festival Hall and pupils are busy designing a web page for them. In return, pupils receive free tickets to some concerts for school children, and they have attended events such as a programme of Italian music. The school benefits from the cultural facilities of London and they visit art galleries, for example. Representatives from a nationally known tennis club train pupils in short tennis and those from the local football club, train pupils in football. There are developing links with a secondary school, such as specialist science teaching for pupils in Year 6 and the transfer of details of pupils' special educational needs is good. The school enters into competitive sports events with other local primary schools, such as a swimming gala and competitive team games. There are also useful links between the early years' teachers and local play-groups.

29. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good overall. This has improved since the previous inspection when it was reported that there were strengths and weaknesses. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Although there is no whole-school policy outlining opportunities for the promotion of pupils' spiritual development, opportunities are taken as they arise in subjects such as science, art, information and communication technology and music. Human babies and young animals are brought into school as part of the pupils' study of new life and growth. The appreciation of our senses is prominent in this school, where there are a significant number of pupils who have hearing related disability. Although there is always a lighted candle and an opportunity for reflection during acts of Collective Worship, other opportunities for pupils' spiritual development in these events and in lessons are sometimes missed.
30. The provision for the moral development of pupils is good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when provision was broadly satisfactory. The school teaches pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong and this is effective as pupils demonstrate a good level of moral awareness about the effect of their actions on others. There is a system of appropriate rewards and sanctions that is applied to good effect and supports the school's behaviour management policy well. The school has a strong code of conduct implicit in all actions by members of staff. Teachers and non-teaching staff provide positive and effective role models. They ensure that their dealings with issues are firm but fair. Teachers talk through any breach of the school's code of conduct with pupils and, when necessary, with parents. When appropriate, teachers use "circle time" to discuss important issues, or to settle any problems, at an early stage. Most pupils have a strong awareness of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They tidy away equipment and most pupils learn to look after it carefully. This enables them to begin to appreciate moral issues concerning other people's property. Pupils generally respect their teachers, other pupils, adults who work in the school, and work on display around the school.
31. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. This reflects a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The strength of this lies in the very good levels of inclusion of pupils from the hearing impaired unit into the main school. Pupils from the main school show high levels of care and concern for hearing-impaired pupils and ensure that they are fully involved in what is taking place. This promotes the effective development of social skills. There is evidence of good levels of co-operative and collaborative work. In many classes throughout the school pupils work well together, sharing ideas and thoughts. As pupils get older, opportunities to take on responsibility increase. Younger pupils help in class, return registers to the office and look after equipment. Older pupils take part in assemblies and help around school. There is a school council with elected members from each class in Key Stage 2. The council discusses matters of concern and of importance to the pupils and helps them to become mature and responsible. Pupils support a wide range of charities and are socially aware of the situation of others. Pupils prepare tea parties for important events such as the opening of the computer suite and to say thanks to the voluntary helpers in class. Pupils prepare menus, prepare and serve the food and welcome guests.
32. The school makes good provision for the cultural development of pupils. This is an improvement on judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils have opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history, religious education and art. The pupils have good opportunities to experience the life of other cultures. In religious education pupils study aspects of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and the Muslim faith that influence and shape the lives of the followers. They learn about the traditional stories on which faiths are built. They are exposed to other languages including, Arabic, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and German and this helps to build cultural awareness. They use dual language texts and listen to stories that are representative of cultures, such as the Caribbean culture. The school organised an international day during which pupils were entertained with Spanish, Italian, Irish and Indian dance and music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The safe and caring environment of the school has a beneficial effect on the standards pupils achieve. Pupils have confidence in the support the school provides and know that staff will always listen and try to help. Pupils' sense of their own security in a caring community helps them to concentrate and do their best. The standards in pupils' welfare, support and guidance noted in the last inspection report have been improved commendably.
34. All staff make a positive contribution to the caring ethos of the school. They know their pupils and their families well and they respond readily to their needs. There are very good admission arrangements into the nursery, where a programme of home visits ensures a very good start to schooling. There are good child protection procedures and staff handle issues in a sensitive manner. The health and safety policy is very well monitored by the governing body and there are no outstanding issues. There are good arrangements for first aid, and fire drills are held regularly. The school makes very good provision for pupils at lunchtime where supervisors show a kindly concern for pupils and have positive relationships with them. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and there is good liaison with outside support agencies. Learning support assistants are unfailingly patient and they encourage pupils with a warm smile, which enables many pupils to participate in lessons and also raises their self-esteem.
35. The school has worked hard to improve behaviour since the last inspection. Procedures to promote good behaviour are now good and the school functions as a calm and well-ordered community. Eighty six per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour was good. The school is developing effective use of the personal, social and health education programme, to give pupils the confidence to talk about anything that worries them. There was no evidence of bullying during the inspection and pupils were very clear that they must report to an adult anything that bothers them.
36. The governing body has taken an active interest in promoting the importance of good attendance and there are very effective measures to ensure that pupils come to school regularly and promptly. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own attendance by awarding certificates to those achieving 100 per cent attendance. It is made clear to parents that they must inform the school if their child is absent and the vast majority of parents co-operate well.
37. Teachers have a good picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in most aspects of their work and their personal development. Procedures to identify pupils early who need extra help are good and the school follows effectively the recommendations of the national Code of Practice. Teachers take particular care to acknowledge pupils' achievements in all areas of school life, particularly when they have made efforts and tried hard. However, in some classes there is a tendency to award stars and merit points too readily, and the reason for some awards is not always crystal clear. Occasionally this has a negative effect on pupils, who feel left out. Marking is generally effective and in some subjects, such as in religious education at Key Stage 1, there are examples of particularly good practice.
38. The monitoring of the pupils' academic and personal development is good. Members of the senior management team are responsible for the assessment of pupils' standards and progress. The procedures are comprehensive and informative for teachers' future planning. There are good procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress in lessons. Assessments are made against the learning intentions of each lesson and strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning are recorded. This information is used effectively to set targets for each pupil. Parents are informed of these targets during consultation days. Information from these targets is used to track individual pupils' performance, particularly in English and mathematics, when they are reviewed at

a later date. This helps teachers to track pupils' progress throughout the year. Pupils are aware of their own targets and are involved in their own target setting.

39. Curriculum co-ordinators and senior managers analyse the results of National Curriculum tests of attainment, scrutinise work and hold discussions with pupils. The information gathered is used effectively to support weaknesses through curriculum planning and in teaching organisation. For example weaknesses in mathematics were found to be language related and the school now places suitable emphasis on this aspect of learning. They have also changed the groupings of the subject at Key Stage 2 to encourage better learning and to raise standards.
40. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Assessment records are kept of pupils' social skills, their attitudes and behaviour. They are assessed on entry to the school and their personal development is monitored regularly.
41. A very good target setting policy has been introduced which gives pupils targets related to their academic work, their standards of behaviour and personal development. These targets are regularly monitored for success. Pupils become involved at a very early stage in assessing how well they have done and the standards they reach in their behaviour and personal development. Parents have welcomed this initiative and believe it has a positive effect on standards of achievement.
42. The school shows a genuine concern for pupils with special educational needs, and has fought hard for their rights. Pupils with medical difficulties are looked after well and their problems are not allowed to affect their learning. The assessment of the pupils who have special educational needs is sound and has improved enormously in the last two years. After the last inspection pupils in Key Stage 2 were assessed by the local education authority, as there were doubts about the accuracy of some records and no special educational needs register was available in school. Since September 1998 much has been done. There have been sensible, workable systems devised by the school and these are secure. However there are insufficient diagnostic tests used which would assist staff when planning special work for pupils with learning difficulties. Some Individual Education Plans are very general and as a result the day-to-day assessment by class teachers is not always as effective as it could be.
43. There are a significant number of pupils on Stage 3 of the special educational needs Code of Practice, waiting for assessment by outside professionals in order that their particular needs are addressed and that the school has extra resources to tackle the problems. A number of pupils have been awaiting this extra assessment for a long time. This is an ongoing difficulty for the school and is known to parents. The school management is negotiating with the local education authority ways to speedily address this concern. The records of assessment and attainment of pupils with special educational needs have improved greatly over the last two years. They are now good, except for some of the Individual Education Plans. The school has set up a complete check of pupils in Year 1 so that literacy difficulties are picked up early; this is good practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school shows a very strong commitment to building close and effective links with parents and these have a positive impact on pupils' learning and the quality of life within the school. The standards noted in the last inspection report have improved considerably and reflect the commendable efforts made by the school to improve. In questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents registered their support for the school and for the improvements that have been made.
45. The school has put significant thought into the way in which it communicates with parents and the quality of information provided is now very good. Letters and newsletters are written in a very accessible style and give parents a very good picture of the current curriculum and school

activities. The prospectus, and a helpful induction programme for the nursery, give clear information about school routines and encourage parents to share any concerns they may have with the class or head teacher. There are consultation evenings each term where parents can discuss their children's performance. In addition there are very helpful target setting sessions, which parents and children attend, where teachers discuss targets to help children to improve, as well as ways in which parents can assist their children's learning at home.

46. Annual reports are sent out in the summer term and most are of a high quality. Teachers always ensure that parents have both understood and agree with these reports at the subsequent consultation evening. Teachers will also give an indication of the academic levels children are working towards. All staff are very approachable and will always find time to discuss parental concerns at the end of the school day. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress and are encouraged to attend reviews of their children's Individual Education Plans.
47. The school actively encourages parents to become involved in school life and a few make a regular commitment to help in classrooms, in the library, and to accompany pupils on outside trips. The school values greatly any help that parents can give and demonstrates this by inviting volunteers to "Thank You" assemblies. Most parents have already signed the home and school partnership agreement and many co-operate readily, for example by ensuring homework has been completed and by reporting absences promptly. Many parents show their interest in the school actively by attending open evenings, supporting school activities, and responding to questionnaires. However, there is evidence that some parents are not fully involved in supporting their children's learning, for example, by listening to their children read at home. The school recognises that some parents may find this difficult and has plans to set up a parents' group to encourage and support them.
48. There is an active Parents' Association, which contributes generously to school funds, most recently to support the new computer suite. They also hold social events, which encourage good relationships between parents and staff. Pupils benefit from the funds raised on their behalf and by the quality of relationships created between home and the school. Parents appreciate the support given by the staff to their Association's events and see this as genuine evidence of the school's commitment to building a strong home and school partnership.
49. In the questionnaires, a significant number of parents raised concerns about the amount of information they received on their children's progress. There is no justification for these concerns as the information already provided for parents is very good and the school readily responds to any requests for anything additional. Parents also expressed anxiety about the range of extra-curricular activities, and, again, inspection evidence found provision to be good.
50. The school takes seriously its duty to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in the education of their children. Parents are appropriately involved in assessments and reviews and many speak highly of the school's support. Parents have expressed special thanks for the way the school helps them cope with their own children's difficulties at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership of the head teacher is very good. The leadership and management of the school by the key staff are good. The strong, determined leadership by the head teacher has resulted in a very good level of improvement in key areas throughout the school. She ensures very clear educational direction towards higher standards, which is known to all. She is ably supported in her work by the deputy head and other key staff. There is appropriate delegation and the contribution of staff with management responsibilities is good. There is a strong sense of purpose within the school. The aims are well chosen and known to all, initially following those areas identified by the

previous inspection, but also tackling other areas of weakness such as the organisation of provision for pupils with special educational needs within the mainstream of the school. The expectation of standards is high in all aspects of school life. The ethos of the school is good. There has been a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection, which noted a number of serious weaknesses in the management of the school at that time.

52. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plays a very effective role in shaping the direction of the school. Statutory requirements are now fully met, including those for information and communication technology. There are good strategies in place for appraisal of staff and performance management. The monitoring and development of teaching is good, as is the monitoring of the work of support staff. Staff have appropriate targets for development and training is effectively linked to the school development plan. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the school has a good capacity to succeed in attaining the targets set. There are effective procedures for the induction and training of staff new to the school.
53. The current focus of the management is based on the awareness of the need to raise standards. The role of the co-ordinators has been effectively developed. The management and deployment of staff, noted as a weakness at the time of the previous report, are now good. Planning is now good and policies have been sensibly adapted to meet the needs of the school.
54. The school management has a clear commitment to providing the best for pupils with special educational needs and governors are fully involved in what goes on. There is an appropriate policy and staff are aware of the issues for improvement. The special educational needs co-ordinator has worked effectively, over the last two years, to set in place secure procedures and structures to ensure good provision for pupils with special educational needs. She has worked very hard with clear success. She leads the provision well. The training of teachers and support staff is adequate, but more is now needed in order to make further improvements. This is known to the special educational needs co-ordinator who has started to address this issue.
55. The school's code of positive behaviour management reflects its determination to improve the standards of behaviour, which were criticised in the previous report. Clear and consistent expectations and procedures by all staff, which were reported to be lacking and are now well established, and behaviour has improved significantly. Individual rules for each class are agreed, within a framework of principles, which pupils understand and respect. There is an effective system of rewards and sanctions, and the very occasional incident of poor behaviour in the classroom or outside is dealt with effectively. Lunch-time supervisors have had training in behaviour management and they are firm and friendly in their relationships with pupils.
56. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. There are appropriate sized classroom and areas to teach pupils with special educational needs. There is room outside the classrooms for work in groups and small rooms for quiet work. However the design of the building does cause sound to travel and this can cause some difficulties, particularly to pupils with hearing impairment. The school manages these difficulties well.
57. Resources for teaching and learning for all pupils including those with special educational needs are satisfactory, but more specialist computer programs for these pupils would be beneficial. The specific money allocated to spend on pupils with special educational needs is used well. The extra cash given to finance additional literacy help is an effective way of helping those pupils who do not have too many difficulties. In comparison with many schools, the school receives little extra money for pupils with the greatest need, as not all have had the detailed outside assessment that would bring them a statement of special educational needs and may give entitlement to extra resources in terms of paid staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further the governors and school should:-

- 1) Raise standards in mathematics at both key stages and standards in English at Key Stage 1, by:-
 - a. continuing to implement the literacy and numeracy policies:
 - b. Ensuring choices for reading periods are monitored more closely so that pupils are extending their range of reading in a supervised situation.
(Paragraph Nos. 2. 3. 70. 72. 74. 79. 80. 81).
- 2) Raise standards in religious education at Key Stage 2 by:-
 - a) moderating the curriculum planning so that older pupils are given more time to consolidate their learning:
 - b) putting clearer assessment systems in place so that teachers have a better knowledge of what pupils have already learnt.
(Paragraph Nos. 5. 120. 122. 123. 125).

All of these issues have already been identified by the school as areas for improvement, as indeed have the following minor ones.

In addition to the key issues listed above, the following less important issues should be considered in the governors' action plan:-

Individual Education Plans for pupils with special educational needs in main school often lack clarity and specific targets. (Paragraph No. 42).

The layout of the school presents some difficulties with acoustics, particularly for pupils with hearing impairment. (Paragraph No. 56).

In science at Key Stage 2, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunity to devise their own work and make their own choices. (Paragraph No. 85).

The teaching and learning of pupils with hearing impairment in the unit

- a) The unit is known as the Opportunity Base and is for children with hearing impairment. At present fifteen pupils attend the Base, from nursery age to Year 6, with only one pupil in Key Stage 1 this term. Most children come from the immediate area, though others are admitted from neighbouring authorities by arrangement. The majority of pupils attending the Base have severe or profound hearing loss. There is a spread of ability and, additionally, three pupils have movement problems. Each pupil in the Base has a statement of special educational need and works from a carefully structured Individual Education Plan (IEP). Daily checks are made on all hearing aids to ensure maximum efficiency. Staff include three permanent teachers, one part time teacher and six support assistants.
- b) The last inspection report of 1998 stressed the school's notable success in the integration of hearing impaired pupils. A subsequent visit by Her Majesties' Inspectors in 1999 reiterated this view. There is a strong policy for inclusion and reverse integration and this aspect continues to be highlighted as a particular feature of the school. Pupils from the Base are given access to a broad and balanced curriculum, allowing participation in a natural and varied language environment. Additional support in signing by Opportunity Base staff is always given in the Base and whenever needed in the main school. Pupils with near age-appropriate language skills and good audiology skills are able to work independently in class. The diversity of the special educational needs of the pupils requires a range of flexible and varied provision. Comprehension is often at good levels of understanding, but with an inability to verbalise. The school uses a combination of methods effectively to facilitate

communication. Hearing impaired children are given access to a “Total Communication” setting, which includes any means of communication depending on the child, such as gesture, formal sign language, speech, lip-reading, finger spelling, reading, writing, listening, amplification, residual hearing, facial expression and body language. The chief impetus for learning lies with language and communication, in order to be able to access all subjects in the curriculum.

- c) All Opportunity Base staff have attended courses in British sign language and sign supported English and are adept in the use of this communication tool to promote learning. Skills have been shared with others in the school and the pupils’ signing club is well attended. The use of signing in assemblies and around the school by main school staff and pupils is impressive. A spirit of comradeship abounds, with a feeling of total acceptance of each other. In this, the outcome is highly successful. Parents and governors acknowledge this element of the school as a real strength. An increased growth of understanding has taken place across the school as a result of its inclusion policy.
- d) An integral part of the organisation of the Opportunity Base is the importance of a multi-professional approach, which includes links with various hospitals, the Learning Support Service and the Service for Hearing Impaired in particular, together with various outside agencies. A physiotherapist visits regularly to establish and monitor a programme of activity for children with movement difficulties and a speech therapist attends from the speech and language department of the National Health Trust two days a week to work with individual pupils. The Base has a comprehensive policy for audiology, which includes regular checks and agreed procedures regarding post-aural and radio hearing aids, involving close liaison between hospitals and local authority services. Pupils with cochlear implants are carefully monitored.
- e) Standards of attainment vary, but in general they are at least in line with national curriculum levels of expectation for the pupils’ age groups. Occasionally, the level of expectation is exceeded. A Year 2 pupil, for example, has reached Level 3 and a Year 5 pupil, Level 4, with a forecast to reach Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2, in English and mathematics in particular. Inspection recordings show levels of attainment to be at least satisfactory, sometimes good across the curriculum. Standards of personal development are very good.
- f) Extra-curricular experiences are offered to all pupils from the Opportunity Base. Some have joined clubs, such as dance, in school. Others go to out-of-school activities, such as a swimming club, with the facility of a ‘signing’ instructor. Pupils take part in concerts and performances. The inclusion policy of the school excludes no one from participating in any activity. The formation of a School Council has involved representatives from the Opportunity Base and participation in this has greatly increased confidence in individuals. Pupils are encouraged to develop speaking skills through role play and drama. The attention to language development promotes good learning. Pupils in the Opportunity Base make good, often very good progress across the curriculum.
- g) The quality of teaching in all areas of the Base is very good, with some excellent work seen during the inspection. Planning is exemplary. Methods are very well suited to pupils’ ability levels and needs. Pupils are very well managed. Expectations are high. Questioning skills are very good and involve the pupils in an appreciation of facts and events. Lessons are stimulating, inspiring pupils to want to learn. Teachers show very good knowledge and understanding of subject matter. They focus strongly on auditory skills and the acquisition of language in all lessons. The teachers are well supported by exceptionally good assistants, who work constantly to promote awareness and understanding in the pupils’ development. The speech and language therapist liaises effectively with all staff and also plays an important part in pupils’ communication and learning. The support and care the pupils receive is outstanding in all respects of education and personal development.

- h) Pupils respond well in lessons. They develop high levels of concentration and make very good efforts to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils generally show positive attitudes towards learning. Behaviour is very good. Relationships with staff, peers and all members of the school are very good. All pupils try really hard to convey meaning in communication. They make every effort to improve their learning skills. Pupils are secure within their groups and around the school. Their personal development is of a high quality. The special attention given to nursery children, in terms of integration on entry to main school, is greatly beneficial to their social development.
- i) The co-ordinator of the Base is new this term. She emphasises the expertise of the staff and the strong team-work which have helped her to settle quickly and happily into her present position. Staff support the work of the Base and fully co-operate in matters of inclusion. Policies are regularly reviewed and are in keeping with current trends in relation to the hearing impaired. All teachers are very well qualified Teachers of the Deaf. All Base staff have attended relevant courses and are keen to update and extend their own learning. The Base has a structured approach to assessment, recording and reporting. Pupils' progress is constantly monitored. Social and emotional development is measured once a term (twice for new intake). Listening skills are monitored thoroughly from pre-school, throughout the primary school. Regular testing in reading, writing, spelling and number work ensures on-going knowledge of pupils' achievements.
- j) Individual Education Plans for pupils in the Base are excellent. Tasks are appropriate and challenging and are updated termly. Pupils in the Base are sometimes involved in setting their own tasks. A structured homework policy caters for individual needs and a good home and school book promotes contact with parents. Links with parents include group meetings throughout the year with guest speakers. Parents are very supportive of the Base. The co-ordinator is responsible for leading curricular differentiations and ensuring appropriate access. No pupil in the Base is disapplied from the national curriculum at present. Leadership and management of the Base are very good.
- k) Resources for the Base are extremely good and are used appropriately. Accommodation is good, although this would be improved with the addition of another room for occasions when all of the three rooms are occupied, such as when the speech and language therapist visits. However the acoustics of main school classrooms cause problems. The space is sometimes too open and sounds from elsewhere travel easily and are especially distracting for children with hearing problems, though staff work hard to maintain focus for them. Local trips into the community and further afield are made throughout the year to support learning. Good contact has been made with a secondary school for the hearing impaired. There are plans to extend visits in the future.
- l) The school has maintained the work of the Opportunity Base at a high level. The one weakness mentioned in the last inspection report of 1998 was the under-use of computers in the Base. This has been addressed; computers are now used regularly to support learning. The work of the Base continues to be valued and the children with hearing impairments are held in high regard throughout the school. The value placed on the work of the Base and the individual needs of the pupils is genuine. Standards are high. Financial planning by the school incorporates fully the needs of all pupils into the total curriculum range and allows for continuity and progression throughout all age groups. Every child in the Base has the chance to fully develop in every sense of the word in the first-class environment provided. The excellent qualities of the staff in the Base and the generosity of the rest of the school in accepting children with hearing impairment so well have played their part in the good results seen. The Opportunity Base continues to be a real strength of the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	87
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	16	39	38	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	374
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3	14
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	108

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	26	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	25
	Girls	15	18	22
	Total	37	40	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (84)	69 (77)	79 (87)
	National	83 (81)	84 (83)	90 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	25	25
	Girls	20	22	22
	Total	43	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (80)	78 (90)	79 (93)
	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	39	48	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	25	28
	Girls	42	30	42
	Total	69	55	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (78)	63 (67)	82 (78)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (77)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	25	31
	Girls	41	30	40
	Total	70	65	71
Percentage of pupils	School	79 (79)	63 (79)	80 (84)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	3
Indian	4
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	338
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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	1	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	335

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	1002747
Total expenditure	952638
Expenditure per pupil	2108
Balance brought forward from previous year	49343
Balance carried forward to next year	99452

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	452
Number of questionnaires returned	106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	42	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	52	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	56	7	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	57	15	3	1
The teaching is good.	41	52	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	39	17	6	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	39	5	6	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	48	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	32	51	9	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	37	57	5	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	47	7	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	33	22	13	12

Please note figures may add up to slightly more or less than 100 due to rounding up or down of decimals

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

58. Children enter the nursery with standards well below those expected nationally, particularly in language skills. However as a result of the very good practice and the good teaching in the nursery and the sound teaching in reception, children make good progress. They enter the school with standards which are in line with national expectations in all areas, with the exception of language and those areas of mathematics which are based on language. Assessments carried out in the nursery highlight weaknesses in children's knowledge of writing. They are not aware for example, that print carries meaning or of the direction of written text. Half of the children entering the nursery have little support for home reading, do not know alphabet rhymes, the names of letters and are unable to trace their own name.
59. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part time basis (morning or afternoon) and normally spend one year in the nursery class. Children enter the reception class in September or at Easter, depending on their birthday, in accordance with education authority policy. At the time of inspection, 27 children were in each session in the nursery and 9 of the 18 children in reception were under five. Effective induction procedures in the form of home visits and visits to preschool settings, together with a taster session in school, provide a smooth transition. The nursery is appropriately staffed by a qualified teacher and a nursery nurse. The reception class does not receive full time additional classroom support until the second group starts school after Easter. This lack of full time support makes the management of some activities difficult.
60. Baseline assessment is used appropriately on entry to school. Effective assessments made on entry to the nursery enable teachers to plan for children's learning. Children's attainments are highlighted at the end of each term and each child has their own target. Long, medium and short-term plans are in place. Planning is appropriately set against the Early Learning Goals. Children with special educational needs are effectively supported in their learning and for those with hearing impairment the support is very good. Both the reception class and the nursery plan together and the nursery nurse is included in the planning. Every three to four weeks the team has a formal meeting to track progress and assessment.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

61. The personal, social and emotional development of children entering the nursery is in line with national expectations. Children are friendly to adults and play and co-operate with their peers. The good teaching in the nursery provides a calm secure atmosphere where children are encouraged to be independent, and to take responsibility for their own learning. Progress is good and they are soon able to use their initiative. For example, the milk monitors for the day put name tags on the milk cartons and set out the milk table with cups and a jug of water completely unaided and undirected, without fuss or accident. They then go round to each group to tell them that the milk table is ready.
62. In group activities children co-operate well and are learning to share. One child on the pasta table did not have any resources, one girl offered her spoon whilst another gave her some of her pasta unbidden. They are learning to take turns, when taking part in a number game they know "we go round the group and take turns". Children stay on task and do not flit from one activity to another. They show respect for others. When they sit down in a circle for fruit, one child takes the tray round and each pupil asks for the fruit of their choice by name and signs and says thank you. They are able to change for physical education with the minimum of effort. Children have good

relationships with and show respect for, children from the hearing impaired unit. They can all sign and include these children in their activities.

Communication, Language and Literacy.

63. Children's language skills start from a very low base when they enter the nursery and, despite all the good teaching in the nursery, they still enter the reception class with language skills that are below national expectations. Children are not all read to at home and some have difficulty in sustaining interest. Story props, made in the nursery, support children's learning about literacy and deepen their appreciation and understanding of books. The classroom is clearly labelled and has a good book corner and role play area, which became the giants' palace to enable the children to act out the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Children were shown different versions of the story and care has been taken to provide a writing table with examples of different text such as menus, tickets and writing in other scripts (Tamil). Scrutiny of the nursery portfolios shows that children have used information books to find out about mini beasts and learned the vocabulary for the life cycle of a butterfly.

64. In the nursery, children learn the letter of the week and bring in items from home. Listening skills are good and children listen on headphones to a story without supervision. The assessments made on admission to the nursery show that children enter the school with a very limited vocabulary and have speech and language difficulties, but over the year the children make good progress, so that by the time they enter the reception class over half of the children are confident in participating in a conversation on a one to one basis and a further fifth participate as a speaker in activities. They show an enjoyment of books and an understanding of how books work. Just over half of the children can copy their own name. In lessons observed in the reception class half of the children find difficulty in copying their name from their name card and letters are incorrectly formed. Scrutiny of work shows emergent writing with some recognisable letters. Children are beginning to trace over letters but have difficulty with pencil control. They can use the computer to write simple invitations.

Mathematical Development.

65. The majority of children enter the nursery with mathematical skills that are below national expectations. The assessment on entry shows that that only 5 per cent of children could match one to one and only 10 per cent could sort, count to ten or recite number rhymes to ten, and none of the children had mathematical vocabulary for comparison. Assessment for children entering the reception class shows that despite the good teaching in the nursery, the language-based skills of the children are still below the national expectations. Scrutiny of work and the assessments made throughout the nursery show that progress over the year is good and that by the end of the year almost all children can count up to five objects. Following work on Jack and the Beanstalk they all made patterns to show how many beans make five. They can copy a short sequence of beads, follow instruction related to movement and position and can select a named object from an array of objects, for example, a square from a set of shapes. A good example of progress made was observed in the nursery when one child had difficulty moving the counter using one to one correspondence but the quiet, appropriate intervention of the teacher supported his development so that, by the end of the game, he was able to match his counter to the spaces provided. Children are given clear learning objectives and the teacher's quiet manner instils confidence. Many children in the reception class are unable to match one to one or to thread beads in a sequence without supervision. Where too many activities requiring a high degree of supervision at the same time are planned, children are not able to stay on task and their learning is not effective.

Knowledge and Understanding of the Outside World.

66. Children enter the nursery with very little knowledge and understanding of the outside world, but as a result of good teaching in the nursery children enter the school in line with national expectations. In a lesson on floating and sinking, the teaching and learning observed was very good. The teacher went over a previous lesson and then made sure that the children had the relevant vocabulary and understood what each word meant. The teacher's careful questioning

allowed children to articulate their own hypotheses. Sensitive timing and understated direction gave children time to come to their own conclusions and articulate their reasoning. As a result of this, children made very good progress after postulating the theory that all small items would sink and that all big items would float, they tested out each in turn, big, small, heavy, light and objects made from different materials. The children are given good opportunities to learn about the world around them and work that they have done on the senses is of a good standard. For example they have all been helped to record a pictorial listening walk. The teacher has scribed the children's description of what a pumpkin feels like on the outside (hard and shiny) and on the inside (soft and slimy). The Blue Peter dogs visited the class and children learned about guide dogs for the blind. Children have planted beans and learned what the beans need to make them grow. There is a computer in the nursery and two in the reception class and these are used effectively to broaden children's learning opportunities. Children in the nursery are able to operate the mouse and click and drag, and children in the reception class can use simple word processing skills.

Physical Development.

67. Physical development in the under fives is in line with national expectations. Teaching in the nursery is good and good provision is made for the physical development of the children. There is an obstacle course, set out in the garden, which the children tackle with increasing balancing skills. They also learn the vocabulary for over, under and round. Good progress is made in the nursery. The teacher gives clear instructions, delivered quietly and activities have good pace. There is a very good learning atmosphere throughout. Children warm up, running in and out of spaces and then on the sound of a tambourine, jump into a hoop. Nearly all the children understand 'find a space'; can make themselves into a small shape, wide shape and walk and run quietly. Nearly all understand 'in and 'out' and beside. Physical education lessons are well used to support learning in other subjects, such as mathematics, well, the teacher asking "how many children in your hoop?" and language work "where are you standing? Are you beside your hoop? Are you next to your hoop?" Children are able to observe the effects of activity on their bodies; one little boy said, "I am breathing!"
68. Progress in the reception class is satisfactory, standards are in line with national expectations and teaching is satisfactory. Children learn to do jumps of increasing complexity, although few had the control and co-ordination to accomplish the scissors jump. The children are aware of space and can move into it freely and with confidence. Activities in the nursery show children to be gaining control in hand and eye co-ordination in order to use scissors and to paste. By the time they are in the reception class their manipulation skills have increased and they are able to cut and stick with accuracy.

Creative Development.

69. Creative development in the under fives is in line with national expectations. The good teaching in the nursery ensures that the children have experience of a wide range of activities to which they can respond by using their senses. Children make good progress and learn effectively when they encounter experiences and resources that stimulate their curiosity, and which enable them, with support, to explore their creative pursuits. In music, they are able to join in songs and tap out simple rhythms on various instruments. The children work with a high degree of concentration and are able to predict the sound that the instrument will make. The teacher's attitude has a positive impact on the children's ability to learn, their confidence and obvious enjoyment. When children are sticking coloured stripes of material, the sensitive intervention by the teacher allows children to increase their skills. Children choose colours for painting with splatter technique and they are encouraged to describe their actions and the effects of their actions. Scrutiny of the work shows that children have had experience of printing including hand prints, making Rangoli patterns with rice for Divali, and creating portraits by sticking pasta shapes on paper. They have done wax resist paintings and used the computer to create pictures effectively.

70. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1, but standards in English are below average by the end of the key stage. At Key Stage 2 progress is good. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving at the levels expected for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average.
71. Standards in listening are good. Pupils listen and concentrate in lessons and assemblies and show that they have understood what they have heard. Speaking skills are less well developed and are judged satisfactory rather than good. Pupils answer readily in lessons, and many are articulate and confident in conversation. However, there are insufficient opportunities for them in some lessons to develop their own ideas orally, to make sustained contributions or presentations, and to enjoy the challenge of debate or argument. The previous inspection reported a lack of opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking skills through drama and discussion. The school council and a weekly drama club make a significant contribution to the standards achieved by those pupils who take part, but opportunities for drama and discussion are sometimes missed in English lessons and across the curriculum. The co-ordinator has produced a good policy for drama and is keen to develop this area of the curriculum in the future.
72. In reading, standards are below the national expectation at Key Stage 1. There has been significant improvement at Key Stage 2 so that they are close to the national level. Shared reading in the literacy hour has improved early readers' familiarity with and pleasure in words on the page. Pupils in Year 1 relish the rhyme patterns in their shared reader and there was much enjoyment of a poem being read together by two groups in Year 2. Good support by learning assistants is helping pupils with special educational needs to make progress with their reading and although for some this progress is slow, there is interest and sustained effort. Some pupils can use context and phonic clues accurately, but a significant proportion are still not confident about sounding out or splitting up unfamiliar words. Pupils have good understanding of the layout of books and the information they carry and in Year 2 most can understand and use the terms author, illustrator, publisher and blurb.
73. At Key Stage 2, a very wide range of reading competence is evident, often linked to the support and opportunities provided at home. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and is in general using it well, but in Key Stage 2 not enough attention is given to the use of shared reading as a means of introducing pupils to texts of greater depth and complexity than they would read on their own. The range of vocabulary and reference is being extended by some good work on newspapers in Year 4 and on an extract from Macbeth in Year 6 but some opportunities for extension and exploration of language are occasionally missed.
74. The allocation of a short period at the start of every afternoon for quiet reading encourages the reading habit. However, it is clear that a number of pupils are reading books below, and sometimes far below, their reading competence. Choices for this reading period are not always being adequately supervised or monitored by their teachers to ensure that pupils are extending their range. Discussions of books and authors, selections and recommendations do not play enough part in the reading sessions in Key Stage 2. Although pupils have a time-tabled weekly session in the library, they have limited access to it at other times except when with an adult, and as a stimulus to wider reading, it is not yet sufficiently well used.
75. The school has made a determined effort to improve standards of writing in response to the findings of the last inspection report, with considerable success in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, regular practice in handwriting is developing good letter formation. Most pupils understand the use of full stops and capital letters but many average and below average pupils do not yet use them consistently in their own writing. Lists, captions and records of some of their activities are tackled confidently. Higher attaining pupils can organise their ideas effectively in simple sentences but vocabulary is often limited and only a minority of pupils in Year 2 are writing at the expected level.

At Key Stage 2, a wide range of writing tasks is set and the presentation of work, even by below average pupils, is usually good. Reading, including a good selection of poems, is used successfully as a starting point for written work, which includes dialogue and narrative, poetry and prose. Pupils understand that writing can address different purposes and audiences and they use it to report, persuade, explain or create imaginatively. Work done by pupils at the end of the key stage (last year's Year 6) includes some good extended writing, with the best writers adventurous in their ideas and vocabulary and showing growing awareness of genre and style.

76. The quality of teaching is good overall, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory during the week of the inspection. Half the lessons seen were good. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and teachers understand its structure and use it effectively. Lesson plans and resources are shared across each year group, but the quality of the lesson and the learning depends on the way the basic plan is interpreted and developed by each teacher. The best lessons generate a sense of discovery, aroused pupils' curiosity and stimulate their ideas. Extension and additional input were key features of these lessons. Teachers take suitable opportunities to develop language awareness and to help pupils extend their own skills. For example, in the shared reading of a comic poem with a lively dramatic element, a Key Stage 1 teacher demonstrated to pupils how they could vary the pace, volume and emphasis as they read aloud so that their combined efforts produced a vivid rendering of the poem. In contrast, the requirement, "Read with expression" in a Key Stage 2 lesson, did nothing to improve pupils' reading technique. In Key Stage 2, the cauldron scene from "Macbeth" was enjoyed by two classes who had watched the cartoon version of the play. In one lesson the passage for shared reading was read aloud very effectively by the teacher but there was no opportunity for pupils to speak the lines themselves. Pupils in the parallel class had shown that this was well within their capacity if the right strategies were used.
77. Teachers in all years manage their classes well and pupil teacher relationships are friendly and harmonious. Target setting and assessment are regularly used and pupils are given a good understanding of what and why they are learning and how they can improve their work. Tasks are carefully set to meet the needs of pupils of varying abilities, though sometimes these could be more closely related to the shared reading or writing at the start of the lesson. Good work is being done with pupils with special educational needs and those receiving additional support for literacy. They make good progress, as do the few pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is effective liaison with the learning support assistants who do much of the small group and individual work with these pupils.
78. Resources for English are satisfactory, though the extracts or books for shared reading are not always large enough for the whole group to share the text comfortably. Good use is made of information technology for word processing, language exercises, research and retrieval. The books for the reading scheme are well organised and there are some attractive, though small, classroom libraries. Outside resources, including the school library service, supplement the books the school provides. The school library is not yet sufficiently accessible to pupils. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has a good understanding of the areas for development and is managing the subject well, with good support from the senior management team.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards are below average at the end of both key stages. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. The previous inspection judged standards to be average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The school recognised this situation, made mathematics a priority for improvement and as a result of taking appropriate action, there are early signs of improving standards in lessons.

80. At Key Stage 1 younger pupils make a secure, but slow start to building skills in number work. They count reliably to 20, recognise these numbers and are able to write numbers as words and digits. In lessons, many pupils use objects to count with and few have the skills to use number without this help. More able pupils count in twos confidently and order numbers to 20 accurately. By Year 2, although pupils are more secure in their use of number, many are not yet able to recall quickly or accurately simple addition, subtraction and multiplication bonds, and standards for average and lower attaining pupils remain generally below average. Higher attaining pupils attain standards appropriate for their age. These pupils calculate mentally number bonds in addition up to twenty accurately. They recognise and use mental strategies to identify odd and even numbers, while average and lower attaining pupils still use blocks to physically divide a number into equal parts in order to identify odds and evens. Although most pupils use appropriate and accurate vocabulary for addition and subtraction, the lack of language skills account for many of the difficulties pupils experience in early learning in mathematics. The school has recognised this and is taking appropriate action in its teaching.
81. At Key Stage 2, progress is satisfactory but standards remain below those expected for pupils of this age. There are signs of improving standards currently throughout the key stage. In Year 3 pupils have grasped the ideas of multiplication, but only the higher attaining pupils can recall quickly and accurately the answers to multiplication number bonds up to six times six. Others know the answers to some simple pairs, but need support with larger numbers. Pupils also show some lack of understanding of the different ways of presenting multiplication. Although they are able to complete the multiplication square to thirty-six, some have difficulty in interpreting it to quickly access the answers to multiplication bonds. In Year 4, pupils understand simple number questions and identify accurately which operation to use to solve a question. They are beginning to grasp the idea of a fraction being a quantity divided into a number of parts. They develop a sound understanding that the higher the denominator, the smaller the quantity and accurately arrange simple fractions. However, some are still unsure and, based on the size of numbers, think that a half for example, is less than a tenth. In Years 5 and 6, pupils work in one of four sets, based on levels of attainment and in Year 4 in two sets. This is starting to raise standards for all. Standards achieved by lower attaining pupils are below average. Most pupils identify accurately solid shapes from descriptions such as the numbers of faces, edges or corners and they know the names of common solids such as cubes, cuboids and cylinders. Lower attaining pupils require picture cues and rely heavily on charts on display in the classroom. Also their ability to retain knowledge over time is poor and revision of knowledge is helpful to their learning. Standards reached by pupils in the higher set are improving and they are working at levels that are appropriate to their ability. They know about negative numbers and they apply their knowledge in this area to plot and locate points using co-ordinates. They are able to visualise shapes on the co-ordinate grid and investigate situations, such as what would happen to a point if one or both signs were to be changed. They are also beginning to use phrases such as “reflection in the axis” for the movement of some points, demonstrating a secure understanding of this aspect of shape and space.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and in lessons observed was always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Where teaching is good, teachers generally have good levels of subject knowledge, which enable pupils to gain a sound understanding of all the areas of learning covered. Planning is good and is structured to build upon previous learning, for example, when a teacher identified a weakness in language skills and so structured the lesson to be largely oral, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to listen and talk to others about their work. However, some teachers’ presentation of work on the whiteboard is occasionally confusing. Teachers share the learning objectives with their classes clearly so that pupils are clear about what it is they are to learn. Teachers, who maintain a brisk pace in both the mental session and during the pupils' main task, inspire an alert response and good levels of concentration throughout the lessons. Teachers work hard at managing their classes and the resulting behaviour in most lessons is good. However, in the small number of classes where a few pupils have behavioural difficulties, these are dealt with effectively and good behaviour is quickly established. In more successful lessons,

teachers use questions skilfully to elicit pupils' knowledge and to extend their thinking. There is generally a good balance between oral sessions and opportunities for pupils to work independently. In most lessons the plenary session is used well to assess the progress pupils have made in learning and in some instances to extend thinking further. Teachers plan their work well so that the tasks are appropriate and are well matched to individual pupil's needs. This develops pupils' confidence and understanding effectively.

83. The co-ordinator for mathematics is knowledgeable and keen for standards to improve. She is enthusiastic, supports her colleagues effectively and monitors all aspects of the subject well. Information technology is used effectively to consolidate and often extend pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

84. Standards are average at the end of both key stages. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. The previous report stated that pupils' standards of attainment were broadly in line with national averages and that pupils had a sound grasp of scientific enquiry. The ability of older pupils to devise experiments was judged to be less well developed. However, the results of the end of key stage tests following the last inspection were well below average. Since that time the National Curriculum tests for the last three years show clear improvements.
85. Pupils are working at levels that are in line with national expectations in most of the programmes of study, but there are still deficiencies in their scientific enquiry skills at Key Stage 2. This is because some teachers do too much for pupils and do not let them devise their own work and make enough of their own choices. The co-ordinator is aware of this and she has started to address this issue.
86. The broad curriculum given to pupils at Key Stage 1, based on a government approved scheme, is having a good effect in raising standards and improving pupils' learning. Pupils cover a good range of work at an appropriate level and more able pupils can think for themselves and apply previous knowledge to their current work. An example is the good work currently being undertaken on the learning of electrical circuits by pupils in Year 2. Most pupils produce good drawings and explain them properly. They can read scientific words, such as electricity, and use the correct scientific vocabulary. They know about positive and negative poles and what happens if a circuit is broken. Many pupils are working at a higher level than usual in this topic, and this reflects the challenge given by the staff. Pupils describe changes that happen in nature and how materials can be classified. They have a good knowledge and understanding of how science affects our lives.
87. This sound scientific work continues at Key Stage 2, but there is some variation between classes within the same year-group. Pupils in Year 3 have a sound grasp of the properties of materials and how these determine the use made of different materials, such as plastic. Pupils in Year 4 continue this theme and describe the best materials for insulation. By Year 5 pupils know about how a material's properties of conduction or insulation are used in electricity, and in Year 6 pupils know the difference between circuits in series and in parallel. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in learning in most of the programmes of study, but they are less secure in the knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry. They can predict what would happen under different circumstances with reasonable accuracy and give sensible reasons. They know about 'fair testing'. However, their skills in selecting materials for experimentation, recording their observations in a neat way and suggesting improvements to the methods of working, are less well developed. Higher attaining pupils are at a special disadvantage because of this. Pupils' ability to explain is better orally than in writing; this was also the case at the last inspection.
88. Pupils show enthusiasm for science. Their attitudes and behaviour are at least satisfactory and sometimes good. They settle down well to work and can work well in pairs and groups. This approach to work reflects the quality of teaching, which is satisfactory overall, which was also the

case at the last inspection. The teaching observed at this inspection, was often good. The analysis of pupils' work from last year showed an exciting range of topics but insufficient different work for pupils of different attainment in a number of classes. Pupils with special educational needs have sound support from support staff, and from other pupils, which enables them to access the curriculum and to learn at an appropriate level.

89. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and good relationships with their pupils. In some classes, such as in one Year 2 class, these good relationships enable the teacher to challenge the pupils' imagination and fire their enthusiasm without pupils becoming silly. Teachers' marking varies considerably. It could be more constructive at times and corrections insisted upon. Information and communications technology is often built into the planning of activities, but is insufficiently used in some classes, especially for recording experimental work. Homework is given when appropriate.
90. The curriculum provided is broad and reasonably balanced, although the time allocated for lessons is rather low. There is detailed planning for the term, but lesson plans could be more detailed, particularly in setting out how pupils are all given the right work for their needs. The assessment of pupils' attainment, of most aspects of science, has been well thought out and appropriate targets set for individuals and groups. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is addressing the difficulty of assessing pupils' skills in scientific enquiry; this still needs to be better, so that staff know the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. At present there is a considerable amount of filling in known gaps in pupils' understanding, especially in teaching pupils key scientific words and phrases. Staff are exploring different ways of teaching boys in order to raise further their levels of attainment. These initiatives are good.
91. The subject is led well by an experienced professional with enthusiasm for the subject and a secure grasp of the realities of what needs to be done. She analyses teachers' planning and looks at pupils' work, she has started to monitor lessons, and has compiled a useful portfolio of pupil's work.

ART

92. It was only possible to observe one art lesson during the week of inspection but evidence of work in classes and in the school portfolio, teacher's plans and discussions with pupils, indicate that standards in the subject are at least satisfactory in both key stages. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and, as a result, pupils of all levels of prior attainment make suitable progress in their learning as a result. Teachers plan and assess effectively using government guidelines and an art curriculum map that provides a framework for continuity in planning, and progression in learning.
93. In a lesson observed, the teacher first helped the pupils to evaluate the previous day's lesson. They were given suitable opportunity to discuss what they were doing, which was to look at part of a still life arrangement through a view finder and draw just the detail within. They debated how they could improve their work. The resources provided were of a good quality and pupils were able to choose resources themselves. The teacher's clarification of what was required and focus of attention to detail had a positive impact upon the pupils' capacity to sustain concentration and so make good progress in the lesson.
94. As a result of the teachers' careful planning and assessment pupils make at least satisfactory progress overall in both key stages, although there are some examples of pupils making good progress on occasion at Key Stage 1. Self-portraits completed by pupils in Year 1 demonstrate that they observe detail carefully, such as hair and nostrils, and represent them using pencil, charcoal and oil pastels with confidence and freedom of expression.

95. A beautifully presented portfolio of work provides examples of work at the different levels as a guide for teachers' assessment. An abstract painting in the portfolio shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 can work with expression of movement, freedom and real exploration of medium and colour. There is evidence that pupils take pride in their work and its presentation. Pupils evaluate their own work and this has a beneficial effect on their learning.
96. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art. In a lesson observed in Year 5, pupils concentrated on their task and showed a keen interest. There is evidence of satisfactory breadth and balance in both key stages. Pupils work from a variety of starting points, from observational work from life to work in two and three dimensions. Pupils use clay effectively to make slab relief houses and use a suitable range of materials to make models of buildings. They use material of different textures and colours to create collage work and photographs to create a montage. At both key stages pupils are given suitable opportunities to generate computer images creatively.
97. Pupils are taught to appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultures and their own through visits to the National Gallery and the Royal Academy. They have looked at the work of other artists such as Van Gogh, Kadinsky, Dali and Monet. An artist in residence has been working with the pupils on a project linked with the building development next to the school. A computer-generated design has been produced from which pupils can paint a mural on the hoarding that surrounds the building development. There are good opportunities for developing literacy skills, for example, writing about dreams, sleep and feelings in the Year 4 project on dreams. This project also links effectively with numeracy, using repeated patterns in aboriginal work and through pupils' personal, social and health education with the expression of their feelings. There is a good policy for display and this has had a positive impact on the standard of display throughout the school, which is striking, and has a positive impact on the ethos of the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment make good progress at both key stages. Attainment at the end of each key stage is above that which is normally found at seven and eleven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory.
99. Teaching of the subject is good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning at both key stages. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and have high expectations of work and behaviour. As a result pupils throughout the school have very positive attitudes to the subject. For example, in a lesson on car design for pupils in Year 6, the work was well planned, resources were well prepared and the pace was brisk. Consequently pupils were attentive, interested and fully involved in the activity. The teacher was pro-active in her involvement with each group and her questioning was pertinent and effective in making them think more deeply about the shape of different parts of the cars. As a result of this good teaching, pupils work well and make good progress in their understanding and technical vocabulary. Pupils at both key stages are given good opportunities to develop skills of design and evaluation and as a result they have good levels of awareness of purpose when making their plans. For example, older pupils draw their plans of vehicles accurately from a variety of angles and investigate the strength of different seams well when designing slippers. There are good links to other subjects, such as science. For example, pupils in Year 4 make careful plans of alarm systems using knowledge of circuits and batteries learned in science. Information and communication technology is used appropriately and the school borrows a digital camera from a neighbouring institution to record the results when using construction materials for example. Teachers make good use of homework assignments to enable pupils to link work with history, as when they made models of houses.

100. The co-ordination of the subject is good. There is a clear policy and a good scheme of work based on government guidelines. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the school did not have a policy. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has developed a portfolio of recent work by pupils, which helps teachers to assess the levels pupils attain.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Pupils make satisfactory progress and are in line to attain standards that are consistent with those expected for their ages at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and also make satisfactory progress. The findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. During the inspection, because of the timetable for geography, no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, but sufficient evidence to come to a firm judgement was obtained from a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, portfolios, photographic evidence, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and staff.
102. At Key Stage 1, pupils start to make simple maps and plans of their locality and learn about 'our address'. This is helped by 'Our Walk along Fellowes Road' and the use of photographs where pupils can identify local shops and houses. Pupils can answer questions about 'What do I see on my way to school?' By looking at their many different holiday destinations, they develop an awareness of localities beyond their own. They are also able to compare a seaside location with Carshalton. At Key Stage 2, pupils can identify features of, for example, a village called 'Hardwick' by using plans and maps. By using aerial photographs they are able to compare a plan with an oblique view of a feature. They develop their own symbols for features on maps and use these to prepare a key, which they can then compare with symbols used on ordinance survey maps. Some pupils in Year 4 use their computer effectively to develop their understanding of map symbols when using a 'Village Mystery' CD ROM. Pupils in Year 5 identify environmental problems in their locality well particularly with regard to the local roads and the River Wandle. They make suggestions such as, 'more use of bicycles' and 'use security cameras to identify river vandalism' in order to improve their environment. They also have good locational knowledge of the British Isles, the continents and the oceans of the world. Pupils in Year 6 compare life in a village in India with life in Bombay and show a good understanding of the importance of location and the activities and lives of the inhabitants. They also talk with understanding about 'weather systems', 'isobars', 'depressions' and other weather features, encouraged by a study of current severe storms in this country and abroad. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are generally more proficient in their learning of geographical facts than they are in developing their geographical skills, where a minority show vagueness and a lack of understanding.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Planning is generally good and teachers make considerable efforts to provide appropriate and varied resources. Teaching is most effective when the teachers ensure that pupils' understand the geographical theory and purpose of what they are learning, and do not see lessons simply as vehicles for provision of facts. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, but on occasion assume pupils have higher understanding than the actuality. Pupils enjoy geography and usually respond positively. They are enthusiastic about their field visits to Brighton, Hampton Court and especially Painshill Park, an annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6. Their learning also demonstrates clear cross-curricular links, especially of countries such as Greece and Egypt. Complicated timetabling means that the occasional lesson is overlong, and can result in a loss of pupils' concentration. Isolated incidents were observed where pupils became distracted and fidgety and their behaviour became unsatisfactory, but teachers overall have good strategies for dealing with this. Planning is sound overall. Resources are satisfactory and effectively used and there are now satisfactory assessment procedures in place. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

104. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in their learning of history and their attainment is in line with that expected for pupils at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to make satisfactory progress. These findings indicate an improvement in the subject at the end of Key Stage 2 since the last inspection when the attainment of a majority of pupils was below national expectations.
105. Younger pupils show an understanding of differences between the past and present by looking at the toys of their parents and grand parents and comparing them with their own. This learning is enhanced by their 'hands on' experience with the toys, their visit to a museum of childhood, and help from the replies of their parents to questionnaires about their toys, which fascinate the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 recount in avid detail the story of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot – 'He was 9 when his dad died, he went to boarding school, joined the Spanish army and learned about gunpowder, and was a Catholic'. They also begin to understand the passing of time by making simple time lines of their own lives and analyse photographs of events in their parents' lives. At Key Stage 2, pupils show understanding and knowledge of reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain. They are able to identify 'rich soil for good crops', 'hunting dogs', 'slaves', 'fur' and 'tin', in addition to identifying areas which particularly interested Romans by using clues such as 'cester' and 'chester' in town names. In Years 4 and 5, pupils develop their knowledge of the Tudors through comparing the lives of the rich and poor of the time, making exceptionally detailed models of Tudor houses, displayed throughout the school, and recount and write about the lives of Tudor explorers such as Sir Frances Drake. They use information sources such as CD-ROM's in addition to enjoying practical experiences like a Roman day, when pupils and staff alike dress in Roman costume. In Year 6, pupils explain events and their consequences in recent history since 1930, particularly with reference to World War II. They write imaginary letters from child evacuees to their parents, and also describe the lives of 'women at war'. They can explain the changes in Britain since 1945 as a result of immigration, especially the effects on religion and worship.
106. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and sometimes good at both key stages. Teachers are enthusiastic and encourage learning by their use of a wide range of artefacts. They give practical opportunities to pupils to experience life in the past such as the visits to Hampton Court and the Honeywell Heritage Centre. Pupils talk enthusiastically and with some detail about what they have learned from these visits. Pupils show a sustained interest in history often recalling in conversations aspects of life in Ancient Greece and Egypt. Teachers' confidence in the subject helps to encourage a good pupil response to history. Their learning is enhanced through links with other subjects, as pupils develop writing skills, information and communication technology skills, geographical knowledge and independent learning when encouraged to find their own sources of information.
107. Resources are interesting and of good quality, and the newly appointed co-ordinators have a keen and knowledgeable approach to the subject. Good assessment procedures also benefit the learning of the pupils.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above that expected for pupils at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below national expectations, progress was unsatisfactory and a key issue was to deliver the National Curriculum requirements for information technology. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management and information and communication technology has been targeted for improvement recently. There has been a good level of investment in

developing and improving the resources for the subject since the last inspection, the curriculum has been improved and staff's subject knowledge and confidence is now much better.

109. By the time they are seven pupils display good word processing skills. They control the mouse and use the keyboard to type their script quickly, locating letters on the keyboard accurately. Pupils show competent mouse control in a range of programs, such as when using an art programme to draw colourful pictures. They know how to give a floor robot a series of instructions to move along a pre-determined pathway and predict what will happen. In doing this they are showing a sound knowledge of angle and know that "RT90" means a quarter-turn to the right. They are aware that it will respond to specific commands, and that these commands have to match what they want the robot to do. Younger pupils show a good understanding of programs to support number and language development. Pupils show skill that is appropriate for older pupils.
110. At Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their information and communication technology skills. They type both accurately and with appropriate speed when word-processing. They work straight on to the screen and these activities are not limited to simply copying written work. They are able to identify, highlight and correct any mistakes that they make. When using computers to produce written text, pupils log on, load their work from disc and save it at the end of the work session. They give appropriate commands to print their work. Older pupils use all of these capabilities as a matter of course. Pupils in Year 5 use a word processing program well to present their history work on explorers to a professional standard. They import graphics from art programs to good effect. Pupils in Year 6 create impressive power point presentations. In this they create logos for a television company and produce animated sequences for the opening of a television program. Whilst doing this, some pupils use their initiative and import logos from the Internet. Pupils present their work attractively using both art and word processing to good effect. They are able to use some higher order word-processing skills such as altering the size and style of print in their documents. The latest development is that pupils are now accessing information on the Internet. They log on, access specific information and some older pupils have used e-mail successfully. A strong aspect of pupils' attainment is their ability to use information and communication technology skills routinely and effectively in a range of higher order work. They use skills quickly and accurately.
111. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. There is a good amount of direct teaching of information technology skills and the teachers make very good use of the high quality resources available to them. Planning and organisation are both very good. Whilst half of the class are being taught in the suite, the other half of the class is developing other information technology skills, such as keyboard skills under the competent supervision of classroom support assistants. Most teachers follow this up in class and use information and communication technology to develop and support teaching in other subjects. The school recognises that this is an area for further development and plans are already laid to develop this. Teachers provide pupils with sufficient independence to develop the basic skills that they use in this subject to a good level.
112. Information and communication technology has been a major development focus since the previous inspection. The co-ordination of the subject is very good and this has enabled a very high level of improvement. Substantial development has taken place over recent years, and the co-ordinator has very good ideas for development and improving provision even further. He quickly set about developing the subject through specific grants available to the school and spent the money wisely. The quality and range of resources are now very good and enable teachers to give high quality provision and pupils to achieve good standards. The co-ordinator surveyed staff on their competencies and as a result, further training in specific areas is planned to enable all staff to be able to use resources to even better effect.

MUSIC

113. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment make satisfactory progress throughout the school. They attain standards in line with those expected of pupils of seven and eleven at the end of either key stage. This is a similar picture to that reported by the previous inspection and the satisfactory standards noted at that time have been maintained.
114. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers' knowledge is always at least satisfactory, and for Year 4 it is good. The co-ordinator shares his expertise in this year with the teacher in the parallel class. Lessons at both key stages are planned effectively to cover the full range of activities, including appreciation of music by other composers and pupils' own simple compositions. For example, pupils in Year 5 recognise and explore ways in which tuned and untuned percussion instruments can be used in various combinations to make patterns of rhythms. They listen with appreciation to the compositions of other groups. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' response. As a result pupils' response in lessons is satisfactory overall and they make steady progress in their learning. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when the silliness of a minority of older boys occasionally caused a disturbance in lessons. Pupils with hearing impairment are well supported by signing staff and so have equality of access to the curriculum.
115. The curriculum is suitably broad and is based upon government guidance, adapted to fit the school's needs and supported by the use of a commercial scheme. In addition there are suitable opportunities for pupils to learn to play the recorder and the violin or to sing in the school choir. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support work in the subject. Music in a range of styles and from many cultures is played as an introduction to assemblies or for clearing away in the nursery and reception class, and so makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to take the subject on. He is currently building a portfolio of taped work to help teachers' assessment of work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment make satisfactory progress overall in their learning at both key stages and attain standards in line with those expected. This reflects the picture reported at the time of the previous inspection.
117. Teaching at Key stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It is always at least satisfactory and sometimes good, with some very good teaching observed during the week of inspection. Where the teaching is very good, high expectations of behaviour have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. For example, a Year 1 class changed for their lesson quietly and efficiently and then sat on the carpeted area unbidden and participated in a silent "Simple Simon" game without the teacher, who was helping those pupils who need further assistance to change, needing to remind them. This was not the only good example of pupils taking responsibility for their own learning. In lessons pupils get equipment out quickly, quietly and safely. At Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory. Progress was significantly improved in lessons where expectations of standards of behaviour and control and precision in movement were high.
118. At Key Stage 1, pupils are able to run in and out between each other without collision. They work purposefully and creatively when extending a balancing activity using mats and benches. Pupils are able to articulate how they achieve balance and reproduce simple balancing action showing good basic control and co-ordination. At Key Stage 2, pupils connect ideas and skills in a dance drama about going on a camping holiday. They contrast different types of movement; vigorous digging followed by sustained poses as they pretend to sunbathe on the beach. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and achieve high standards in lessons where expectation are high

and instructions are clear. Where the lesson lacks challenge, pupils' actions lack fluency and precision. Plenty of evidence of controlled movement and a high degree of accuracy was observed in the demonstration of a finished dance in Year 4. Pupils responded to the music in an imaginative way. They were able to alter rhythm, direction, speed and level, sometimes working on the floor, sometimes standing tall and holding a sustained position. It was not possible to observe a swimming lesson during the week of the inspection, but scrutiny of the swimming registers from 1997 to 2000, shows that most pupils learn to swim. The register for the current year, which has only just started, shows that 29 per cent of pupils who go swimming achieve water skills Level 3 and 61 per cent achieve water skills Level 1.

119. Progression, continuity and consistency are achieved by using a commercial scheme of work and reference to the national curriculum and local education authority framework. The curriculum co-ordinator who has only been in post since September monitors teachers' plans and has spent her release time to date in organising resources. A portfolio of photographs is in an emergent stage and when complete will provide teachers with an exemplar for standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. The previous inspection report stated that pupils' attainments matched the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. This is still the case at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2, a significant number of pupils are currently confused between the beliefs and practices of the different religions that they have studied and so their attainment is lower than it should be. This situation has arisen because, although covering topics required by the locally agreed syllabus, too little time has been devoted to the subject to ensure pupils' secure understanding of the many religious faiths that are taught to them. The school is, however, aware of this issue and has started to address it.
121. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do appropriate work. They are introduced to the Jewish faith and to Hinduism, but most of the lessons are about Christianity. Pupils in Key Stage 1 clearly enjoy the lessons. They enjoy talking about what they have learned. They can explain the display about Diwali in the reception class. They write with sensitivity, for instance about what Zaccariah might have said to Elizabeth. Their written work is well presented and pupils show understanding of religious ways of thinking, and the importance of families. It is of note that pupils' written work in religious education shows clear improvement this term. This is because pupils want to do well and their work is constructively marked by teachers.
122. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an appropriately wide curriculum. They study Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism as well as the Christian religion. In discussion, many pupils were confused about the different faiths. A very good range of work has been given to pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of world religions and to foster their spiritual and cultural development. However, the time given to study the subject is insufficient for pupils to reap the benefit of such a wide programme. Work in books this year is brief and not always well presented; the subject is not used sufficiently well to promote literacy skills. The attainment demonstrated in lessons and in discussion with pupils is often lower than that expected. Most pupils demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the basic facts of the Christian faith, although a few are still unsure, for instance, about why Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem. Pupils know a satisfactory number of Bible stories and relate them to their own lives. Most can explain the importance of sacred writings in the Bible, but are confused about the names and content of religious books of other faiths. However, most pupils can retell the story of Rama and Sita and discuss why Hindus celebrate Diwali. They know about this because staff knowledge of this religion is good and there has been a suitable focus on this in school recently.
123. By Year 6, many pupils were unable, in discussion, to demonstrate a suitable knowledge and understanding of religious buildings and symbols. They confuse the celebrations and practices of,

for instance, Islam and Hinduism. They do not have a secure vocabulary to discuss festivals and religious concepts. Pupils show a real interest in religious education. They find it difficult to discuss the topic they are currently studying but are enthusiastic about the elegant displays of work in some classes. They realise the importance of the subject and how religion affects people's lives.

124. Staff are happy to teach religious education and no pupil is withdrawn from lessons. The teaching is generally satisfactory, with areas of strength and weakness depending on the presentation of the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Some very good teaching was observed in Year 2 where the teacher's expressive story telling and skilful management of pupils ensured that the lesson had a properly spiritual focus and proceeded with a good pace. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in a Year 4 lesson, where class management was unsatisfactory, and the content was not effectively presented and so many pupils did not make as much progress as they might.
125. It is not so much the teaching, but the changing curriculum that is the cause of the low achievement at Key Stage 2. The school is adapting the current schemes of work to reflect the new government guidelines, while still using the locally agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator is aware that the planning has lacked coherence recently, and has started to work to improve the long-term plans. She has not yet monitored all teaching, and the assessment of individual pupils' knowledge and understanding is inconsistent and work is not always matched to the needs of individual pupils.
126. The co-ordinator, with the help of the senior managers, has improved the curriculum by inviting a wider range of outside speakers to visit the school. Some visits to places of worship are made and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to provide better resources to help pupils learn about churches, mosques and synagogues, for instance. Lessons are sometimes too short, and teachers do not always have sufficient time to develop complex themes and to ensure that pupils have time to think and to discuss the spiritual and moral implications of the ideas that have been presented. Opportunities are sometimes missed to promote pupils' spiritual development.