

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116146

Headteacher: Mrs A Truman

Reporting inspector: Mr C R Phillips
15941

Dates of inspection: 18 – 22 September 2000

Inspection number: 224516

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Snuggs
Date of previous inspection:	9 March 1998

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Mrs M Henderson 19827	Team inspector		Hearing impaired unit
Mrs R Onions 18354	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a larger than average community school for boys and girls aged seven to eleven. It draws pupils from a mixture of private and rented housing, and its numbers on roll remain steady. It currently has 367 full-time pupils. Overall, levels of attainment on entry are broadly in line with the average found nationally, with a broad range of abilities. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals (8 per cent) is below the national average. Ninety-two pupils are currently identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average, and six pupils have statements of special educational need. Four of the pupils with statements are in the school's specialist hearing impaired unit. There are eight pupils for whom English is an additional language, although only one of these pupils is currently in need of extra language support.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is clearly an improving school, and it has no serious weaknesses. Standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science are improving, and in the most recent tests were at least in line with the previous national average in each of these subjects. This indicated significant improvement in mathematics, bringing it in line with the other subjects. Standards of attainment by the time pupils are eleven are currently in line with the level expected nationally in English and science, and approaching that level in mathematics. More attention is now needed to standards in the other subjects. The school is putting in place systems to ensure that individual pupils achieve their full potential, and levels of achievement are improving throughout the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and the pupils generally display good attitudes to their work. They are encouraged to be responsible in class and around the school, but more opportunities could be provided for them to work independently. The quality of relationships across the school is good. The headteacher, governors and staff work together well to improve the school and are striving for high standards. In common with other schools in similar situations, its costs are high, but it clearly provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It is raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- It has very good procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- It has strong links with parents.
- It is very well led by the headteacher, and the role of subject managers is developing well.
- The governing body fulfils its duties very well, and the school's finances are very carefully managed.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and those in the hearing impaired unit.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment
- The balance and organisation of the curriculum
- The setting of work that matches the full ability range of pupils
- The provision of opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning
- The development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum
- The effectiveness of the senior management team

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in March 1998, it was found to have serious weaknesses. The standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided, and the management and efficiency of the school all required substantial improvement. The key issues identified at that time are being addressed well by the school. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, the role of the subject managers is developing well, the governing body is now fully involved in the life of the school, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good. Standards of attainment are continuing to improve. The planning and organisation of the curriculum have also improved, although further attention is needed to some aspects of this. The school has, therefore, improved well since the previous inspection, and is now held in high regard by its parents. It is well managed, and the improvement has taken place principally because of the clear lead provided by the headteacher, who, with the support of the governing body, has introduced policies and practices that are well focused on providing the necessary quality of education for all pupils.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	C	C
mathematics	E	D	E	E
science	B	D	C	C

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

Since comparisons with national figures and with those for similar schools in 2000 were not available at the time of the inspection, the above table reflects the position in 1999. However, results in the latest National Curriculum tests show standards this year that are at least in line with the national average for the previous year in English and mathematics, and above that level in science. This indicates that standards have been maintained in English, have continued to improve in science, and have improved significantly in mathematics. Based on its knowledge of the pupils, the school has set appropriate targets in each of these subjects, and in each case has exceeded them. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment are currently broadly in line with national expectations for English and science, and approaching that level in mathematics. Attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected, but in information and communication technology it is at present below expectation. Standards in other subjects are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age, but in art and music overall achievement is below the level expected, as it is in aspects of geography and history.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are keen to attend, and usually show good attitudes in all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Their behaviour around the school and generally in class is good, although they become restless when activities are too long.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development and the quality of relationships throughout the school are good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory, although a few pupils are not sufficiently punctual at the start of the day.

The pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility, as in their duties as monitors in Year 6, but are not always encouraged sufficiently in the development of independent study habits and initiative.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Not applicable	Not applicable	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.

Of the lessons observed during the inspection, 54 per cent were good or very good, and 95 per cent were at least satisfactory. Five per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. When other factors, such as the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of work previously completed by pupils, are taken into account, the quality of teaching in all subjects, including English and mathematics is judged to be satisfactory overall. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. Sound provision is usually made for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, hearing impairment, and for whom English is an additional language, and for the higher attainers, but in some lessons there is insufficient provision for their differing needs. The teachers' subject knowledge and classroom management are sound and often good. Most have clear expectations about pupils' behaviour and involvement, and at this early stage in the school year are establishing good working routines. The pupils usually respond well to the experiences offered and are keen to do well, although some become bored when the level at which teaching and learning is pitched is inappropriate, or lessons or activities within them are too long. Many concentrate well, and show good understanding of what they are doing.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has concentrated on the development of English and mathematics, and, along with science, they have developed well. It is now beginning to address the need for the development and provision of the other subjects, but more work is needed. Provision for extracurricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including the pupils in the hearing impaired unit, is good, and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for these pupils is generally by way of the school's normal programme of learning, and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development. Provision for their moral and social development is good, and for their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils.

There is an effective partnership between the school and its parents, who believe the school is doing a good job in encouraging their children to do well and to develop well personally and socially. A substantial majority believes that they are informed appropriately about the progress their children are making, and that an appropriate amount of homework is given. The school offers a good range of learning experiences for all pupils by means of extracurricular activities and by good use of visits and visitors. All pupils are known well and are well cared for.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership, and the role of the subject managers is developing well. Following recent changes, the senior management team has yet to establish itself, and key members of it are insufficiently involved in the development of the curriculum and of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors undertake their responsibilities very well, are thoroughly committed to the continuing development of the school, and have a very good awareness of its needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, governors and staff constantly review the school's performance to good effect.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are used efficiently for the benefit of the pupils in the school.

The school is well staffed with teachers and is well supported by its learning support assistants and by all other adults working in it. The accommodation is still limited because of the size of its hall and its classrooms, and the condition of the building in which the hearing impaired unit is housed is poor. Access by vehicles to the neighbouring school continues to present a potential hazard to the pupils of the school when they are moving to and from the playground. Learning resources are satisfactory, and in some areas are good. The school has a clear educational direction, and, under the leadership of the headteacher, is becoming effective. The governors and headteacher review all development priorities regularly and evaluate all spending decisions to ensure that principles of best value in the deployment of resources are followed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good, pupils are expected to work hard, and they are helped to become mature and responsible. • They feel able to approach the school with questions, have close links with the school, and most feel they know how their child is getting on. • The teaching and management are good. • Most feel that their children receive appropriate work to do at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number feel that the school does not make enough provision for activities outside lessons. • A significant number feel that pupils do not receive the right amount of homework. • Some feel that they are not sufficiently informed about the progress their child is making.

The inspection team found that the parents' concerns are not justified. The school has an appropriate policy for homework, and provision is usually good. Much information is available about pupils' progress, and the quality of the annual written reports to parents is impressive. There is currently a good range of out-of-class activities. The inspectors support the very positive view of the school provided by the substantial majority of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When pupils enter the school at the age of seven, their standards of attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average overall, as indicated by the results of National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1.
2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, overall results in English and science were average, and in mathematics were well below average when compared with both national figures and those for schools of broadly similar intake. The number of pupils attaining the above average Level 5 was below the national average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Since the national figures for the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were not available at the time of the inspection, it is not possible to make the same comparisons. The school's results this year, however, indicate continuing improvement in each of the subjects when comparisons are made with last year's national figures. Overall standards in English, for instance, are still about average, but the number of pupils attaining Level 5 has increased, so that their performance is also in line with the national average. In science, the number of pupils attaining the higher level is still broadly in line with the previous figures, but overall attainment is now above the average achieved nationally last year. The most significant improvement, however, has been in mathematics, where performance this year has reached the previous national averages both overall and for the number of pupils achieving Level 5. These results confirm the upward trend overall in the school's results in recent years. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys.
3. At the time of the previous inspection, standards by the time pupils left the school were judged to be average in mathematics and science, and below average in English. There were, however, found to be significant shortcomings in the pupils' experience in each of these subjects and in other aspects of the curriculum. Since that inspection, the school has rightly targeted the improvement of these core subjects, whilst also responding to national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, and there are clear indications that this is proving effective. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English and science are in line with national expectations, and that in mathematics they are approaching that level. There are indications of significant improvement in the pupils' experience of most of the other subjects, but time constraints and attention to national priorities have meant that the developments now taking place in these subjects are not yet showing in the standards pupils are achieving. Standards in design and technology, physical education and religious education are currently in line with those expected, but in information and communication technology, music, art, and some aspects of geography and history they are below that level.
4. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the oldest pupils is currently broadly in line with national expectations in most aspects of English. Pupils throughout the school show satisfactory listening skills, but many find it difficult to respond orally. At present, the writing skills of the oldest pupils are in line with expectation, but their reading is less confident. The pupils' standards of general literacy are average. In mathematics, standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are almost in line with expectation. There has been improvement in all areas of mathematics, although a number of older pupils still have difficulty with some aspects of mental mathematics. Standards of numeracy overall are average. In science, levels of

attainment are in line with expectation. The pupils show satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the various elements of the science curriculum, and are developing useful investigative skills.

5. Standards of attainment in information technology are below the level expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils show, for example, developing ability to generate and amend text and are becoming more confident in handling data, but have had insufficient experience in the subject previously to have attained the required standard. In religious education, attainment is at least in line with the level expected by the locally agreed syllabus, with pupils developing good knowledge of the aspects of religion they study, as well as acquiring the ability to respond thoughtfully to the ideas they encounter. In most of their other subjects, the pupils' achievements are continuing to improve through the school, in spite of the restricted time available for them during the last two years because of provision for national initiatives and school priorities in literacy and numeracy. In design and technology and physical education, standards are broadly in line with those expected. In geography and history, pupils show good knowledge and understanding of the topics they study, but the development of their geographical and historical skills has not kept pace. In art and design, the limitations of time have meant that pupils have insufficient experience of various aspects of the curriculum. In music, standards are clearly below those expected, and have declined since the last inspection.
6. The pupils generally make satisfactory progress. By the age of eleven, pupils on the special needs register achieve good standards in relation to their prior achievements, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Throughout the school, carefully prepared individual education plans with precise learning targets are now being used well by teachers to set appropriate challenges. There are clear procedures for monitoring their progress as they move between stages of the special needs register. Pupils in the hearing impaired unit and those for whom English is an additional language also make good progress and are integrated well into all aspects of school life. The potentially higher-attaining pupils are generally making better progress than at the time of the last inspection, but more needs to be done to ensure that they are being challenged to attain at an appropriately high level in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and are eager to learn. The majority shows good attitudes towards their work, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Most concentrate well and are responsive in lessons. However, some pupils lose interest when lessons are insufficiently challenging, or become restless when the introduction to a lesson or the lesson itself is too long. The majority of pupils work well individually or in pairs. In an art lesson, for example, pairs of pupils made great efforts to observe each other's hair closely and draw it accurately. The pupils, including Year 6 monitors, take an active part in the daily running of the school and over half take part in out-of-school activities and clubs, such as the sports or poetry clubs and residential trips.
8. The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory overall. The pupils behave well around the school and in the playground, which is also an improvement on the previous inspection. They generally respond well to the occasional admonishments given by class teachers or playground staff. However, the behaviour of a few can deteriorate when too long is spent on a learning activity or the level of challenge is inappropriate, leading to a loss of concentration for the whole class and a wasting of time.

9. Pupils of different ages mix freely in the classroom and playground, and learn and play with each other in an atmosphere of friendliness and tolerance. There have been no exclusions during the last year. No bullying or other forms of inappropriate behaviour between pupils were seen during the inspection. Pupils are pleasant to talk to and polite to each other and to all adults in the school. Staff and pupils respect each other. Pupils take care of their own property and respect that belonging to other people and the school. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy learning and respond well to the praise and encouragement they receive from teachers and support staff, with whom they have good relationships. They, and pupils who attend the hearing impaired unit, are fully integrated into school life and other pupils treat them kindly, as they would any other member of the class.
10. The school is good at enabling pupils to understand the impact of their actions on others and builds opportunities into the curriculum, such as circle time, for the pupils to reflect on issues that relate to personal development.
11. Pupils with special educational needs continue to display very good attitudes as identified in the previous report. They work purposefully individually, in pairs and in groups. Pupils are well provided for in mainstream classes and are well integrated with other pupils in all aspects of the school's work and life.
12. There is a real sense of a school community where everyone is valued. The good relationships between adults and children and between pupils of all ages are a strength of the school. Older pupils act as mentors to help younger ones settle in, and all pupils take pride in gaining house points. Personal initiative, a wider sense of responsibility and team working are developed through events such as the raising of funds for charity and taking part in residential trips.
13. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, as it is broadly in line with the national average. There is no unauthorised absence and the majority of pupils start the day punctually. There is, however, a small group of pupils whose frequent late arrival means that the start of the day is disrupted for the teacher and themselves. A small group of pupils take holidays during term-times for longer than the permitted time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, six per cent were very good, 48 per cent were good, and 95 per cent were at least satisfactory. Five per cent of lessons observed were unsatisfactory. There has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
15. The teachers throughout the school are generally secure in their knowledge and understanding of the various subjects of the curriculum, and as a staff team they share considerable enthusiasm and experience and adequate subject expertise, except in music. All teachers work hard in preparing their lessons. Their methods of planning generally include much detail and their plans are usually clear about the specific learning intended. The teachers generally provide good explanations of the tasks required of the pupils, but their planning does not always take full account of the range of capabilities in each class, except in mathematics. There is an appropriate pace to most lessons; in the best lessons, a brisk pace is maintained, and the pupils have a real sense of achievement. The teachers use a good range of questioning skills and also reinforce learning when they review work with the pupils. The teachers know and usually manage their pupils well.

16. Throughout the school, a satisfactory range of approaches to classroom organisation is employed, and class, group and individual working are used appropriately to suit different tasks, although most lessons are clearly teacher directed. All pupils respond well to opportunities to organise the necessary resources for their work, but too few opportunities are provided for pupils to show initiative and become more independent in their learning. The pupils respond well to the limited opportunities provided for them to engage in individual and group research tasks, but, at a very early stage in the term, the teachers are still establishing basic work routines with some pupils and the range of such opportunities is more limited. Throughout the school, the teachers communicate well with the learning support assistants and voluntary helpers, who make a valuable contribution to learning. Resources are used adequately to support the pupils' learning, although the available resources are not always used fully for mental mathematics sessions and for design and technology.
17. In the most effective lessons, such as numeracy lessons in Years 3 and 5, and literacy sessions in Year 3 and in the hearing impaired unit, the teachers' subject knowledge is very good. The teachers engage the pupils' interest fully, providing high expectations for work and behaviour, and challenge for pupils of all attainment levels. They teach imaginatively and encourage the pupils to evaluate their own work, and, by careful intervention, use constant assessment and reinforcement of learning. In these and other lessons, the teachers' organisation is good and they know when to intervene and challenge the pupils by asking the right questions to develop their understanding and knowledge. All of the teachers are working hard to ensure that pupils develop good working habits. As a result, the pupils are generally keen to learn. By the time they leave the school, most have a clear understanding of what they are learning. However, they lack confidence in tackling more open-ended tasks, such as science investigations, when they have not yet developed the necessary learning skills and self-motivation.
18. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced satisfactorily, although more work now needs to be done to ensure that the necessary skills are developed and supported across the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology is a developing feature but is at present underused in most subjects. Throughout the school, the teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum, and also encourage and generally teach well the development of basic skills. Although they undertake some informal assessment of the pupils' work, this is present only in the best lessons and is not regular in all classes. Pupils' work is marked regularly, and marking usually indicates how improvement can be made. Individual targets are identified for pupils in English and mathematics, and the teachers are beginning to work towards these in a positive way.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate activities in class to match their needs in literacy and numeracy and across the range of subjects. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of special educational needs has improved significantly since the last inspection. The individual education plans drawn up by them in close consultation with the special needs co-ordinator and the learning support assistants are of a consistently good standard and identify achievable and realistic targets. The learning plans are modified on a very regular basis to take account of pupils' progress towards specific targets. Teachers are quick to praise pupils with special educational needs and offer positive comments to help the pupils develop a sense of self-esteem.
20. The school has identified a significant number of gifted pupils, but accepts that it needs to do more to make specific provision for extra challenge and enrichment. Teachers' planning does

not always make sufficient provision at present for the full range of abilities, including the needs of gifted and higher-attaining pupils.

21. Homework is set regularly, and parents are generally satisfied with the provision, although opinions among parents differ about whether sufficient homework is provided. All pupils take home reading books on a regular basis and many have spellings and tables to learn. Pupils are regularly given further work to do and usually receive appropriate feedback about the work they have completed, and overall provision is at least satisfactory.

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

22. The school provides a curriculum that meets statutory requirements, covering all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, as well as providing good quality personal, social and health education. The latter includes appropriate sex education and drugs education.
23. Over recent years, the school has responded to national and its own identified priorities and has placed heavy emphasis on the raising of pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. In this it has been largely successful. In order to do this, the school has allocated a much greater proportion of each day to English and mathematics than is usually seen. A consequence of this action has been to reduce time spent on other curriculum areas. This has naturally restricted attainment in many subjects including history, geography, art and music. The school has not yet devised ways in which English and mathematics can continue to be supported, while providing a more balanced curriculum, by exploiting the links between subjects. The potential, for example, for planning the development of writing skills in subjects such as history and science has not been fully recognised and, although pupils are expected to write in these subjects, full advantage is not taken of such opportunities.
24. Considerable productive work has been done on planning the curriculum and teachers take care to identify clearly what pupils will learn. Schemes of work identify target skills for each year group and termly planning identifies the skills to be learned in that term. This planning is becoming established in English and mathematics, and expected learning for different groups of pupils is identified. In most other subjects, however, the learning objectives that are identified in the planning are for the majority of pupils and there is a failure to identify clearly what groups of pupils with different prior attainment will learn. This affects adversely the progress of the more able pupils in particular. Curriculum planning in information and communication technology does, however, identify these different expectations and could provide a model for planning in other subjects.
25. The present timetabling arrangements do not always provide pupils with a balanced programme of work in each day. For instance, some lessons in science are too long and pupils' interest and concentration are lost. There are other instances where, for example, the hour for literacy is extended by additional work on spelling or writing or where mathematics lessons are similarly extended. In these instances, pupils become tired of similar types of activities. They become less interested or restless and the quality of their learning is affected.
26. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all aspects of the National Curriculum, and no pupil is disapplied from it. Pupils receive regular and effective support during their daily literacy and numeracy lessons. Additional support is available in other subjects where specific needs are identified in the individual education plans.

27. The school makes good use of visitors, such as puppeteers, the local police and historians, to enrich pupils' experience. Good use is also made of visits to extend the history, geography and science curricula, to, for example, Old Portsmouth and to Farnham Museum. The oldest pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential trip, and one is planned for Year 4. There is also a good range of extracurricular clubs, including poetry, computer and sports clubs. Over half of the pupils are currently involved in these clubs. Teaching is available for a range of musical instruments and a good number of pupils are given the opportunity to extend their musical education in this way. Relationships with partner schools are positive, and appropriate efforts are made to ensure that the transitions from the infant school and to the secondary schools are accomplished smoothly.
28. The school provides well for the pupils' personal development. It provides good opportunities for social and moral development. Pupils are actively encouraged to care for themselves and others. Through the good examples provided by adults, the school behaviour code and the high expectations of behaviour, the pupils are taught right from wrong, respect for others, and to work and play together well. Good opportunities exist for pupils to take responsibility, as, for example, when Year 6 pupils are paired with new Year 3 pupils to support them while they settle in to their new school. All pupils are expected to clear away in classrooms and older pupils take responsibility for aspects of managing the library and for helping at lunchtimes. Insufficient thought has been given to how pupils will develop independence in their learning. Although there are some good initiatives, such as the targets that are set individually in English and mathematics, pupils are given too little opportunity to work independently of the teacher in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs have opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in activities such as circle time, and the learning support assistants, in particular, have received recent training to develop pupils' self-esteem.
29. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for spiritual development. Through assemblies and work in religious and personal and social education, pupils are taught about, and to respect, the traditions and values of others. The religious education curriculum provides the opportunity to study the faiths and beliefs of a variety of religions. Year 4 pupils, for instance, made rhaki bracelets and were taught that in the Hindu faith these are symbolic of care for others. This work is, however, not fully co-ordinated and opportunities to develop spirituality through other subjects, for example to wonder at nature or reflect on human achievement in subjects such as science and mathematics, is seldom planned and opportunities are missed.
30. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils study their own culture and that of other places and times in subjects such as English, music, art and history. In music, for example, pupils are given opportunity to listen to music from Tudor times and for other countries, such as Africa and Asia. In art, pupils have studied the work of artists such as Seurat and William Morris. Pupils also develop their knowledge of British culture through visits to places of interest, including visits to local museums to study aspects of Tudor or Victorian life. The current lack of balance in the curriculum does not, however, allow pupils to spend sufficient time on these types of activities to promote good cultural understanding.
31. Overall, many improvements have been made in the curriculum provided for pupils since the time of the last inspection, including: ensuring that statutory requirements are met, the development of schemes of work in many subjects, the improvement of the curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics, information and communication technology, science and religious education and in planning work for lessons. Even though there remains considerable

work to be done in providing more balance to the curriculum, given the relatively short time since the last inspection, this represents at least satisfactory improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school provides good educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. Staff know individual pupils well and are aware of their needs. They show good concern for pupils' welfare and provide good support and guidance when needed. The welfare of pupils is a high priority and the school is a secure environment within which pupils feel safe. Parents believe that the school's values and caring attitudes have a positive effect on their children. The procedures for child protection, welfare and health and safety are good.
33. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is good. Over recent years, the school has made considerable progress in using the assessment of pupils' attainment to evaluate and improve the education it provides. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Regular assessments are made and used to modify the curriculum. Common weaknesses are identified and these are used to set targets for future work. As a result of an end-of-year assessment in mathematics, for instance, greater emphasis is currently being placed in Year 3 on teaching pupils about place value (for example, hundreds, tens and units). The school has also begun to make use of the data it has collected, to look at the progress of different classes and different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls. The school fulfils the requirements for assessing pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage and teachers meet to look at pupils' work to ensure that there is a common understanding and expectation across classes.
34. Careful records are maintained for individual pupils and these are used to set them targets for the improvement of their work. These targets are shared with both pupils and parents and help pupils to understand what action they should take to improve. This is assisting in the raising of standards.
35. The assessment and monitoring of the work of pupils with special educational needs is undertaken regularly by class teachers, the staff of the hearing impaired unit and the special needs co-ordinator, whose action plan identifies clear procedures for doing so. Samples of work are collected and discussed to see how well the work set matches pupils' needs. The targets identified in the individual education plans are precise and achievable, and are monitored regularly and changed when necessary in discussions with the pupils.
36. As a consequence of the school's priorities, assessment in other subjects is not as well developed. Work has been done to identify when and how pupils' attainment will be assessed. These systems have recently been revised and have not yet had full impact on the planning of subsequent work, in particular the planning of work for groups of pupils with differing ability or prior attainment.
37. The school has good procedures for pupils' personal support and guidance. Its personal, social and health education programme is well thought out and makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' personal and social awareness. Older pupils help new pupils settle in, and all show warmth and consideration towards the hearing-impaired pupils, who are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Those pupils with other special educational needs, including those with English as an additional language, are well looked after. Pupils show that they also like taking on special responsibilities, such as being lunchtime monitors.

38. Although there are no targets for the improvement of pupils' attendance, registers are checked regularly. Parents are aware of their duty to ensure their children's prompt and regular attendance and the great majority complies. The procedures for rewarding good behaviour work very well, reinforcing positive attitudes. Pupils are keen to earn certificates that are awarded for a wide range of achievements and presented in front of the whole school. Pupils and parents are confident that any worries, or instances of bullying, brought to the staff's attention will be dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school has very good links with parents, who give the school very good support and contribute significantly to their children's learning. Parents like the school and the education it offers. A significant minority was concerned that there were insufficient extracurricular activities, but inspectors did not find this to be the case. While acknowledging that homework had been a cause of concern to a minority of parents, inspectors did not find that their anxieties were now justified.
40. Parents of pupils entering Year 3 are welcomed to the school. Year 6 pupils have satisfactory opportunities to familiarise themselves with their secondary school through lengthy, useful visits in the summer term.
41. Parents receive clear guidance at the start of the year on homework and the curriculum, and also receive regular newsletters. Parents are encouraged to read with their children and to ensure completion of the homework set. The majority willingly does so. Parents are invited to open evenings three times each year to discuss their children's progress and are free to talk to teachers at other times. Parents are told at open evenings about the results of any tests taken. The end-of-year written reports are very well written and contain valuable information about the progress made. Parents of pupils with statements of special education need are kept fully informed about progress and, as is required, are asked to attend review meetings and contribute to individual education plans.
42. The home-school agreement has now been signed by the majority of parents. The parent-teacher association has raised considerable funds for the school which has enabled it to build changing rooms for the swimming pool and to buy computers. Volunteer help in the school is much appreciated but teachers have not given parents training to enable them to support pupils' learning more effectively in, for example, reading.
43. The governing body's annual report for parents and the school prospectus are generally clear, full and useful documents, although the governors' annual report to parents does not contain specific information about the success of the provision for special educational needs or a financial statement about special needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The school has a clear sense of educational direction, and is well managed. The headteacher provides very clear leadership, and is well supported by the governing body and by the subject managers and other co-ordinators. Following the recent departure of some key staff, and with current difficulties in recruiting experienced teachers to the area, the newly constituted senior management team has still to become established and effective. Two senior members of staff, the deputy headteacher and the head of the hearing impaired unit, although members of

the team and engaged in other aspects of the school's management, are insufficiently involved in providing a pro-active lead in the development of the curriculum or of teaching and learning.

45. Several of the key issues in the previous inspection report related to aspects of management. They have been addressed well. There were concerns, for instance, about the role of the subject co-ordinators. The subject managers, as they are now titled, have a clear place in the school's management and they discharge their responsibilities well. They and the headteacher undertake detailed and careful monitoring of teachers' planning, pupils' work and the school's performance. The managers for literacy and numeracy have also, with the headteacher, undertaken considerable monitoring of teaching, and the involvement of other subject managers in the observation of classroom activity in their subjects is being introduced. All of the subject and other managers have clear ideas about the continuing development of their subject or other area of responsibility. They support their colleagues well and play an active part in the school's decision-making and planning processes.
46. A key issue in the previous inspection related to the role of the governing body in the management of the school. This has clearly been addressed well. All governors now have a good knowledge of the school and are strongly committed to its support and development. They are well informed about the relevant aspects of school life, and discharge their duties effectively through an appropriate structure of committees. Responsibility for monitoring and supporting the provision for pupils with special educational needs and of literacy and numeracy has been allocated appropriately to individual governors, each of whom provides a useful link with developments in these areas. All governors also have useful links with particular subject areas. Several governors, and particularly the chair of governors, have regular contact with the daily life of the school. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and other aspects of school life are met.
47. The quality of financial planning is very good. The school manages its budget efficiently, and spending is related clearly to the raising of educational standards. Careful records of expenditure are maintained, and items raised in the most recent audit report have been addressed appropriately. The governors and headteacher monitor the school's financial position closely, are well supported by the school administrative staff, and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions. Clear priorities have been identified for the allocation of the substantial balance carried forward in the school's accounts, in order to bring it in line with the level recommended by the local education authority. All specific grants given to the school, including those for the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the support and training of teachers, are identified appropriately.
48. The school development plan is a practical and very well organised document, which is clearly focused on the raising of standards, whilst also including matters related to areas such as staffing and premises. It provides considerable detail about the priorities agreed, is carefully costed, and its progress is regularly reviewed. It is proving very effective in helping the school to meet its targets. At present, however, it relates only to the present school year, and does not include outline plans for subsequent years. Responsibility for the approval of the plan and its subsequent evaluation lies clearly with the governing body, and governors are well informed about its progress. There is an appropriate system of consultation during the preparation of the plan, with, for example, the full involvement of subject managers in the identification of priorities for their areas.
49. The issue from the previous inspection about provision for pupils with special educational needs has also been dealt with well. The school's provision is well led by the special

educational needs co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher. The co-ordinator liaises effectively with staff, parents and a wide range of outside agencies. She has developed appropriate targets for improvement in training and resources, in order to develop further the already effective provision. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice. Class teachers are more competent and confident in helping pupils with special educational needs to improve their learning. A policy document, designed to help class teachers to meet the needs of pupils, and other documents, including suggestions on how to devise individual education plans, are well-designed and useful to staff.

50. Governors are better informed about this provision, and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs provides a good link. The separate budget for special educational needs, based on the local education authority's assessment, is generous. There was a slight overspend last year but this was a result of a considered intention on the part of the governing body to ensure appropriate staffing levels for special educational needs in the school. Staffing for special educational needs is very good, the accommodation is adequate and the level of resources is good.
51. The teaching and non-teaching staff support each other well. Relationships between the staff and the pupils are good. Systems and practices are effective in ensuring that the school's day-to-day life is well ordered and provides a good context for learning.
52. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education effectively, and to meet the needs of all pupils. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience, but currently lack specific input from a music specialist. Good support is provided to new members of staff. The qualifications and experience of the support staff are appropriately matched to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers and classroom support staff work well together to provide good support to pupils throughout the school, and particularly for pupils with special educational needs. This partnership has a positive impact on learning, is contributing to the continuing improvement in standards at the school and ensures that pupils make appropriate progress in their learning. The administration of the school runs smoothly and unobtrusively, and all the adults involved in the life of the school work well together as a supportive team for the pupils.
53. The school has good arrangements for meeting the professional development needs of staff. The training undertaken is clearly focused to support the priorities of the school development plan and improve the quality of teaching and provision. For example, the school has made effective use of training opportunities to prepare staff for the current national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, which are helping to raise standards in these areas. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are very good. In common with many schools, the schemes for the appraisal of teachers and for performance management are awaiting further national developments, but all staff have regular professional development interviews and all have appropriate job descriptions.
54. The school makes efficient use of the resources available to it. The school's accommodation is adequate for the present numbers of pupils. Although the classrooms in the main building are small, limited use is made of the space available in corridors. The quality of displayed pupils' work enhances the learning environment throughout the school, and the buildings are carefully maintained and in good decorative order. The pupils take pride in and look after them, and take care of the resources available. Recent improvements have provided extended computer facilities and additional rooms for the teaching of small groups. The building in which the hearing-impaired unit is housed is still regarded as structurally unsound, and the

access of vehicles to the neighbouring infant school, although carefully supervised, still presents a serious potential hazard to pupils of the junior school moving to and from the playground area.

55. The school's resources for learning are satisfactory overall, and for some areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology and special educational needs, are good. The library is adequately stocked, with a satisfactory range of books to support the curriculum, but limited use is made of this facility to extend pupils' research and independent study skills. Some use is made of loan services. All pupils have regular access to computers. Good use is made of visits and visitors, and of the school's immediate environment, to extend the pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to improve the school further, the headteacher and governors should:

- ⇒ continue to raise standards of attainment in all subjects, and particularly in information and communication technology, art and music throughout the school, by:-
- ensuring an appropriate allocation of time to all subjects (see paragraphs 5, 89, 114);
 - reviewing the way in which lessons are timetabled, to ensure that learning activities are not too long (paragraphs 25, 80, 87);
 - developing ways of planning to ensure that there is an appropriate match between the learning provided and the full range of attainment levels in each class, including higher-attaining pupils (paragraphs 6, 15, 20, 24, 85);
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to show initiative in their learning and develop independent ways of working (paragraphs 16, 104); and
 - encouraging the development and support of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across all subjects (paragraphs 23, 74, 97, 100, 111).
- ⇒ develop the role of the senior management team, to ensure that all members are fully involved in providing a clear lead in the development of the curriculum and of teaching and learning throughout the school (paragraphs 44, 62).

Other issues which should be considered by the school for possible inclusion in the action plan:

- ◇ The on-going use of assessment in lessons (see paragraph 18, 79).
- ◇ The inclusion in school development planning of outline plans for subsequent years (paragraph 48).
- ◇ Inclusion in the annual report to parents of details of the effectiveness of the school's provision for special educational needs (paragraph 43).
- ◇ Continuing to press for the replacement of the building housing the hearing-impaired unit and removal of the potential hazard caused by vehicular access to the site (paragraph 54).

HEARING IMPAIRED UNIT

57. The overall standard of achievement by pupils in the unit is good, in the light of their special educational needs. Some pupils make slower but steady progress and work very hard to overcome the severe language delay, which is a consequence of their deafness. Many pupils reach age-related national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 and a few are above the

expectations for their age group. This is indicative of the very good progress they make whilst in the unit. The unit serves both the nearby infant school and the junior school, and the majority of pupils enter the unit in Reception. At the beginning of their entry into the junior school, speech is frequently still unclear and their access to the curriculum still very dependent on additional support as listening skills are inadequate. During their time in the unit, most pupils develop clear speech which is understood by most adults and other pupils. A few develop very expressive voices. In a lesson on 'Carrie's War', for example, pupils read with considerable enthusiasm and skill. Pupils also make very good progress in listening to and understanding language. They make increasing use of their residual hearing and their hearing aids, as well as lip reading. Comprehension skills develop as they acquire more vocabulary and are able to understand an increasingly complex range of vocabulary and syntax. This includes colloquial expressions and figures of speech. In some cases, progress has been particularly rapid after a cochlear implant.

58. Pupils spend an average of three-quarters of their time in mainstream classes and the remaining time in the unit with a specialist teacher of the deaf. Support within mainstream classes is provided part of the time by a specialist, a learning support assistant or a support teacher. Teaching within the unit is good and often very good. The teachers take exceptional care to ensure pupils understand texts and to provide a language-rich environment. Where pupils are taught within mainstream classes, they are given good support to ensure that they have good listening conditions, understand instructions and take a positive role in the class, volunteering information and answering questions. Occasionally, insufficient planning by the additional teaching or support staff means that there is a lack of additional teaching materials to support understanding of concepts and vocabulary specific to the topic of the lesson. Pupils respond well to the style of teaching and support in both settings and, with help, become increasingly confident. They are generally enthusiastic to learn and, as they develop further, understand how they must respond to overcome their deafness to be active members of the class and the school.
59. Pupils with hearing impairment have full access to the whole curriculum. Inevitably, their daily withdrawal for specific language teaching in the unit means that they miss some lessons. Times for withdrawal are rotated sensitively to avoid missing the same lessons consistently. In addition, pupils understand increasingly the need to find out for themselves what they have missed and get good co-operation from teachers and their friendship groups. There are additional opportunities for extracurricular activities. For example, in 1999, as part of the 'Comenius' project, a group of hearing and hearing-impaired pupils were invited to Holland to take part in a musical drama.
60. The unit, as part of the whole school, makes very good provision for the assessment and care of pupils. In most cases, children have known staff within the unit since the age of four and, as they have learned how to communicate, have built up very trusting relationships with them. Both the school and the unit provide a secure, caring and effective learning environment for hearing-impaired pupils. There is very close liaison between all members of staff. Procedures for dealing with child protection issues are well established. Staff are skilled in helping pupils come to terms with their deafness and encouraging them to wear and look after their hearing aids. There is an excellent audiology policy. This ensures that each pupil will make maximum use of their residual hearing. Hearing aids are checked weekly to monitor the performance of each aid, as well as a daily inspection to ensure routine maintenance is being done. Assessment and monitoring procedures are excellent. The assessment of hearing is done regularly to ensure that specific needs are fully met. In addition, there is systematic monitoring of speech and language development. Targets in

individual education plans are related closely to assessment information, are clearly stated, and success criteria outlined.

61. There are excellent links with outside agencies. The specialist teachers work closely with pre-school admission panels and with the hearing impairment unit in a neighbouring secondary school. This close co-operation provides a very sound basis for continuity and progress from one school to another. The unit receives very good support from the Southampton Cochlear Implant Team, the county peripatetic team for hearing impairment, and other outside agencies.

62. The unit is well managed. The very clear philosophy of the unit on natural auralism and integration provides a very clear focus for teaching and learning activities. There has been satisfactory progress in meeting issues raised at the time of the last inspection. There is consistent and systematic monitoring of pupils with hearing impairment in mainstream classes to ensure that they progress at a suitable rate. Good in-service training is given to established and newly qualified staff to support their teaching in the integrated setting and raise teacher expectations in all subject areas. The amount of non-contact time for unit staff has been considerably reduced and staff are used to support wider groups of pupils. There is occasionally some useful reverse integration when hearing pupils work in the unit. Staff in the unit also have some whole-school responsibilities, but these are insufficiently developed, particularly in relation to curriculum development and support and wider aspects of monitoring. The budget is satisfactory and well managed. There are plans to improve accommodation, although the present unit is internally attractive and well maintained.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	48	42	5	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	367
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	92

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.92
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.03
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 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	46	45	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	25	39
	Girls	37	26	37
	Total	70	51	76
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (61)	56 (57)	84 (74)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	28	36
	Girls	33	31	34
	Total	59	59	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (53)	65 (60)	77 (73)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Since comparisons with national figures and with those for similar schools were not available at the time of the inspection, the above table reflects the position in 1999.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	1
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	4
White	352
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	30.4

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	187

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	702 046
Total expenditure	686 532
Expenditure per pupil	1 871
Balance brought forward from previous year	41 882
Balance carried forward to next year	57 396

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	365
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	37	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	49	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	55	3	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	56	16	5	1
The teaching is good.	48	46	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	50	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	45	47	4	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	58	38	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	48	3	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	36	26	9	5

Other issues raised by parents

All issues were related to the items above, except that parents were keen to record the level of support there had been from all parents during the recently concluded discussions about amalgamation proposals.

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

ENGLISH

63. Results in the National Curriculum tests for 2000 indicate that pupils attained standards that are at least in line with the national average for 1999. The findings of this inspection also indicate that standards of attainment in English are broadly in line with the national expectation.
64. In the last inspection report, attainment in speaking and listening was average and in reading and writing was below average. Since that time, there has been some improvement and during this inspection attainment in listening was judged to be good and in speaking to be below average for pupils other than the higher-attaining pupils. For the higher-attaining pupils, standards in reading and writing are at least in line with the national average. For average and lower-attaining pupils, attainment is below average in reading and average in writing. Pupils who are on the register of special educational needs show good levels of achievement, when compared with their prior attainment.
65. Throughout the school, pupils are developing their listening skills well in a variety of contexts, including the regular use of listening stations. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other. They enjoy listening to stories and concentrate well in whole class discussions. Pupils' replies show that they clearly understand what teachers and other pupils say. In speaking, however, pupils' responses are generally limited to single sentences and many of average ability possess a limited vocabulary. Insufficient opportunities are provided for all pupils, especially the higher-attaining pupils, to offer sustained oral responses, present a case or debate a point of view.
66. Standards of pupils' attainment in reading are satisfactory overall. Able pupils read fluently and are confident in anticipating the text or in reading with expression. Other pupils are less enthusiastic about reading and in many instances do not read regularly. Pupils who are competent in reading read a wide range of books and can express their preferences sensitively. The development of pupils' library skills is at an early stage but older pupils are taking responsibility for cataloguing and creating a database on the computer. Older pupils talk meaningfully about authorship and can describe accurately the main characteristics of fiction and non-fiction books.
67. Pupils who are experiencing difficulty in reading, especially in Years 4 to 6 do not have the phonic competence to help them deal with unfamiliar words and to establish the meaning of what they have read. The introduction of a phonic programme in Year 3 is raising all pupils' standards in reading effectively. Reading records do not have a diagnostic framework to help identify pupils' individual difficulties and progress.
68. The school has new policies on handwriting, spelling and extended writing and these initiatives are having a beneficial and positive effect on pupils' standards of attainment. Pupils' ability to spell correctly is improving and pupils regularly check their spellings using class dictionaries. Handwriting skills are improving, but are still variable across the school. In Year 3, pupils are beginning to understand differing sentence patterns and how to sequence sentences logically. Pupils enjoy writing descriptive accounts and imaginative

stories, albeit the texts are brief. They enjoy poems and the way alliteration and rhyming words are used in language, as in the animal poems developed in a Year 3 class.

69. Pupils have a developing appreciation of how writing is used for different purposes and write weather accounts, letters and information data. In science, for instance, they write careful accounts of their investigations. They have some opportunities for extended and creative writing in subjects such as history and religious education, but more planning is needed to ensure that such opportunities are part of a considered policy for developing and reinforcing pupils' writing throughout the whole curriculum.
70. As pupils progress through the school, they develop a deeper understanding of language conventions. They use punctuation accurately and are beginning to identify parts of speech in texts and how to apply them correctly in their own written work. Although pupils re-draft their work, their appreciation of how to improve the actual text is less well developed.
71. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of textual styles, as well as developing their own personal style of writing, are underdeveloped. Older pupils transpose passive texts into active forms and understand the concept of genre when classifying different types of books. The higher-attaining pupils can offer valid and relevant reasons for choosing favourite books and poems. They enjoy creating their own poems and are becoming aware of a range of linguistic patterns.
72. Pupils are responding well to the literacy sessions. They enjoy looking at big books together. The whole-class discussion approach helps pupils to think about the structure and conventions of language. During these sessions, pupils work well individually, in pairs and groups. They share ideas willingly and learn from one another. Some of the work given, however, is not always sufficiently matched to the differing levels of attainment in the class, and there are insufficient opportunities for higher-attaining and other pupils to develop independence in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs, including pupils for whom English is a second language, are making good progress and are achieving good standards against their levels of prior attainment.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers adopt an appropriate consistency in the choice of content and in their approaches across year groups. Lesson plans are of good quality and well structured, with progression inbuilt to take account of related aspects of language. The teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and to use their imaginative and creative abilities in writing stories, dialogue and letters. In the best lessons, such as literacy sessions in Year 3 and in the hearing impaired unit, a brisk pace and a lively style ensure that pupils respond at a high level and make good gains in their learning.
74. Separate schemes of work of good quality exist for literacy, listening and speaking, reading, spelling, handwriting and extended writing. There is no reference to the use of language across the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology in language activities is also underdeveloped. The subject manager has only recently taken responsibility for English. She has undertaken in-service training and is involved in monitoring the literacy programme throughout the school. A school governor is also appointed to take responsibility for literacy and works closely in liaison with the subject manager. Assessment, recording and reporting on class and homework tasks are worthwhile and teachers' comments in books and reports are detailed and help pupils to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

MATHEMATICS

75. Since the previous inspection, mathematics has taken on more importance within the school. The standards attained in National Curriculum tests have improved significantly over recent years and in the 2000 tests, results were in line with the previous year's national average. The well below average attainment referred to in the previous inspection report is much improved and, although the present Year 6 pupils may not quite achieve the results of last year's pupils, their attainment is likely to be very close to the national average. The quality of teaching and learning and the attitudes of the pupils are much improved. There is a general confidence in teaching mathematics throughout the school and the working habits of the pupils are significantly better. The present planning system and the structure of the numeracy lessons now provides very good support for teachers, and the learning outcomes are always made clear in the planning for these lessons. The assessment of learning, including the marking of work and the use of targets for which pupils aim, is much improved. There is an improved depth of experience in all elements of mathematics and the skills of problem solving are usually tackled effectively. Many effective procedures are in place to raise attainment. These include the close monitoring of teaching, learning and attainment, effective teaching in ability sets and booster classes and a mathematics club. The school is aware of the further developments that are now needed and well able to effect them.
76. Work completed by last year's oldest pupils indicates that the majority of pupils attained the level expected nationally and a few, about a sixth of the year group, at a level above that. By the time they left the school, most pupils could measure angles properly, although only a few could work out the internal angles of a regular polygon. From being unable, at the beginning of the year, to show their working out when attempting to solve problems, most eventually used their own strategies and organised their presentation well. There was a consistently wide range of Year 5 and 6 work completed in the previous year. It was generally accurate, showed good use of rulers and was well set out, with good presentation. In some classes in Years 3 and 4 there was less consistency, although clear progress. At a very early stage in the term, most of the present Year 6 pupils can solve two-digit multiplication questions by a variety of methods, but the mental strategies of a significant number of pupils are limited and they find combining two elements when solving a problem difficult. A significant number, however, can use inverse operations to solve problems and work mentally with ease.
77. Teaching is good overall. Because of insufficient progress in the past, there are still significant gaps in knowledge, understanding and confidence in the learning of the older pupils, although recent progress has been better. Learning, however, is satisfactory overall, with some evidence of good progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the higher attainers, who usually receive well matched work. Good support is provided by learning support assistants, who work well with teachers and keep careful assessments of daily progress against detailed plans made by teachers.
78. In Year 3 learning is often good. In Year 4, in some lessons seen, there was some unsatisfactory learning where insufficient content or unclear explanations or strategies did not provide enough support for all pupils. In Years 5 and 6, learning is often good, but, when the lessons are too lengthy or the pace slow in lengthy test situations, learning deteriorates. In most lessons, the teachers show good subject knowledge and teach and reinforce skills well. They provide opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking and are able to assess

their needs more clearly. In the many lessons where this is accomplished with the necessary pace, perceptive questioning and good reinforcement of the process, the pupils gain confidence and are clear about their learning; for instance, in Year 4 and Year 5 classes where pupils were solving problems. The teachers generally motivate pupils, explain work clearly, and are careful to stress the vocabulary needed; bright, clear mathematical displays in classrooms support learning. Some teachers are beginning to encourage the pupils to see mathematical patterns and to appreciate the wonder of number and occasionally to reflect on their work, but, as yet, not all teachers provide enough time for this to be done adequately. In the best lessons, such as in Year 3 and Year 5, learning began appropriately from what the pupils knew. The tasks were broken down into small steps that matched the needs of pupils, expectations were high but realistic, and teaching was challenging and imaginative.

79. There is much effective assessment of pupils' work, although more assessment in lessons and immediate feedback of this to the pupils is necessary. The use of individual and group targets, and teachers' marking, help and encourage pupils to improve their work. Much of the marking is of high quality; it is not yet, however, consistently applied across the school and is sometimes not legible enough for it to be of maximum use to pupils. The school plans to involve pupils further in the evaluation of their own learning.
80. The response that most pupils make is good overall, but variable from very good to a few occasions when it is unsatisfactory. Most pupils show positive attitudes to their work, and are keen and eager to learn, so their behaviour is good. Their concentration is being sustained increasingly, as shown in lessons in each year group. The older pupils find their work more enjoyable and easier than in the past and presentation of work is improving because of the attention paid to its organisation by teachers. The pupils often show a pride in their work, and it is well presented and accurate in most classes. Most pupils are beginning to enjoy the challenge that the subject can bring. Occasionally, as in a Year 4 class, the pupils do not sustain interest, and are fidgety when unoccupied, because they find the work too difficult without help. At an early stage of the term, the teacher has to work hard to motivate some of the lower-attaining Year 5 pupils who are only just beginning to enjoy their mathematics. They soon show a lack of confidence in their ability to solve problems even though the strategies have recently been reinforced well by good teaching. Occasionally, where lessons for the older pupils are long because of extra mathematics sessions, they find it difficult to concentrate. The Year 3 pupils show consistently good or better attitudes and their natural enthusiasm and enjoyment is continuing. Mathematics is fun for them, and is beginning to be so for pupils in other year groups.
81. The development of numeracy is satisfactory, but more opportunities could be made to encourage its development. Time lines are used in work on the Tudors and Victorians, for example, and history vocabulary such as 'recent' or 'a long time ago' is developed in Year 3. The river study survey planned at Cove Brook uses ways of collecting data well in geography in Year 5, with precision in units of measurement. Year 6 pupils measure carefully to construct grids for their food can design, and label sketches; measuring is also used well when designing and making boxes using isometric paper and in making celebration biscuits.
82. Mathematics has a high profile in the school. The present co-ordinator is aware of the future needs of the subject and is addressing them diligently. Much staff training has been completed successfully and the monitoring of work and of teaching and the subsequent feedback to teachers is succeeding in raising standards. The school intends to monitor the pupils' learning more closely and to ensure the necessary continuity between the ability

groups in Years 5 and 6 and this should ensure work is even more closely matched to pupils' ability. The numeracy strategy has been introduced satisfactorily and teachers use the three-part lesson effectively. However, the development of the pupils' mental agility would benefit from the use of short practice periods with a more lively and dynamic approach where pupils in all classes are actively involved in manipulating numbers and experiencing the fun this can bring. At present, available resources are not used sufficiently for this purpose. Extra time for mathematics has been made available, and much of it has benefited learning. However, the school needs to review the time allocated, in order to see how it might best be used, since some periods of time in the upper school are too long to be used effectively. The school has already identified the need for the links between mathematics and other subjects and its use in information and communication technology to be developed further.

SCIENCE

83. The results of the 1999 end of key stage assessments showed that standards in science were average. The results for 2000 showed an improvement in the number of pupils attaining the level expected at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows, that while the current Year 6 are a less capable year group, pupils' attainment in the rest of the school is satisfactory and pupils are in line to attain appropriate standards at the end of the key stage. An average number of pupils attain higher standards, but inspection evidence shows that more pupils are capable of attaining these higher levels. As a result of the good support provided for them, through carefully structured work and adult help, lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well for their ability. This is also true of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
84. As part of their work on materials, pupils in Year 6 conducted an investigation of what materials might make the best thermal insulators. They recorded their observations carefully, and most showed a reasonable understanding of how to conduct a scientific investigation and ensure that their testing is fair. They enjoy discussing their findings with others and drawing conclusions based on the evidence they have gathered, although some find it difficult to make predictions about the possible outcomes of what they are doing. Work completed previously indicates that by the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have a good understanding overall of the various elements of the science curriculum, but that progress in the investigative element of the subject is more recent.
85. Teaching and learning in science are satisfactory. A considerable amount of time and effort has been put into planning the work that each year group will undertake and in identifying how their skills and knowledge will be developed. This work has helped teachers to plan their lessons so that most pupils' learning is systematic and successful. The present planning, however, does not identify, at a sufficiently early stage, the expectations for what pupils of different abilities will learn. This has a particular effect on the more able group in the class, approximately one quarter of the pupils, who are often not sufficiently stretched or challenged. Recently teachers have begun to assess pupils' attainment on a regular basis. This work is in its infancy and more thought needs to be given to how the information can be used to assist the planning of lessons that will meet the needs of all pupils.
86. Lessons in science show a good balance between the direct teaching of knowledge and opportunities for pupils to investigate, observe at first hand and report on their findings. Pupils in Year 4, for example, observed how different substances behave when they are mixed with water. Through this they learned about the different possible outcomes. They also discussed how the investigation should be conducted and how the test could be made

fair. Their written reports allowed them to learn the required skills of scientific reporting, as well as consolidating literacy skills. Pupils are given similar opportunities in science lessons to apply and consolidate their mathematical skills, such as those of measurement and data handling. Although these opportunities occur, they are not yet a systematically planned part of the school's English and mathematics teaching. The application of these skills is, therefore, not developed as well as it might be. There are, at present only limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in science.

87. Pupils generally show good attitudes to their work in science. In most classes, pupils are well managed and have opportunities to work with concentration, but there are occasions when lessons are overlong or are timetabled to happen after lengthy English or mathematics lessons. Despite their liking for science, some pupils find these lessons difficult, concentration is lost and there is some restless behaviour. In these lessons, or parts of lessons, too little is accomplished.
88. Although there remain areas to develop, the hard work of the subject manager and the teachers during the period since the last inspection has resulted in good improvements in the curriculum, teaching and standards in science.

ART AND DESIGN

89. The pupils show satisfactory achievement in some elements of art, but below the level expected in others. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but because of the limited time now available for art in the curriculum, they have insufficient time to develop skills in areas such as the three-dimensional or textiles and they do not experience a wide enough range of natural and other materials.
90. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' intricate and careful designs in pale pinks, greens and mauve show a good awareness of colour, line and tone. Their developing appreciation of art and artists is shown by their detailed sketches of irises in the style of Monet and their prints made from a William Morris design in Year 5. Also in Year 5, the pupils use crayon and paint to show effectively their use of shape, pattern and colour, portraying a range of emotions. They understand how colours can give an appearance of warmth and others appear cool. The art club pupils made a large picture of a winter scene using paper silhouettes and shades of grey, providing a good sense of depth in their picture.
91. The subject is taught satisfactorily and learning in the areas of art experienced is also satisfactory overall. In several lessons the learning was good, as when, in Year 4, the pupils were taught the potential of different pencils to build up a range of shades and, in pairs, evaluated their work. The progression in learning was seen when, in Year 5, the pupils used this knowledge to sketch a candle, comb and brush carefully and accurately, matching the shades highlighted in photocopied pictures. Time could be better used in some lessons by earlier intervention to support learning or shortening introductions a little. The pupils make good progress in their use of pencils for shading and sketching because of the careful skills teaching throughout the school. Their colour-mixing skills are practised and used well. Some teachers encourage pupils to look at improvements they might make in their work, but this needs to be developed more consistently across all classes. Because of an inadequate allocation of time to the subject, however, this continuity in learning is not consistent in other areas of the pupils' work in art, such as three-dimensional work.

92. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are mostly satisfactory and sometimes better. The pupils usually work with precision and care and with growing attention to detail, as in a Year 6 lesson when transferring the design of a food can onto a previously constructed grid. Most pupils show a pride in their work and eagerness and enjoyment in the activities. The pupils observe carefully and show perseverance, as in Year 4 where they obtain impressive results when sketching the back view of a head, prior to painting portraits. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, enjoy their work and make satisfactory progress. But a few are inattentive at times, when, for instance, introductory explanations are too lengthy, or they show signs of silliness when an element of the organisation of a lesson could be better.
93. The newly appointed co-ordinator has a clear overview of needs and has already begun to develop the subject by raising the profile of art across the school. Good support is provided for colleagues who benefit from the strategies and ideas she provides. She is aware of the need to develop the progression of art skills, is monitoring planning usefully, and has begun to improve the use of sketchbooks as a means of assessing progress. Other useful assessments are in place. The elements of reflection and appreciation and the display of pupils' work throughout the school are being improved by support and example. Resources are adequate, but their storage is to be re-organised to make them more accessible.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. The last inspection report identified serious weaknesses in design and technology and pupils' attainment was below average. It was possible to observe only Year 3 classes during this inspection. The judgements are, therefore, based on three lessons seen, on a scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work from the previous term and discussions with teachers and pupils. The standards attained by pupils, by the time they are eleven, are broadly in line with the national expectation. The provision for this subject has improved since the time of the last inspection and pupils are making satisfactory progress.
95. In the lessons seen, pupils willingly offer their own ideas about design and designing, as when, in Year 3, they are considering how to make shadow puppets using levers and hinges to create moving parts. In other years, pupils produce designs and models of Roman chariots, picture frames and boxes, involving pupils in investigating how to make the box lids secure. Pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, are encouraged from the start to evaluate and to improve on their designs. In one class, pupils had to consider four alternative designs and to select one which best suited their purpose.
96. Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally satisfactory. Many are eager and confident and show a keen interest when undertaking model-making activities. Their designs are drawn with clarity and imagination and pupils enjoy sharing ideas with each other and working co-operatively. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have access to all aspects of design and technology and are making good progress and achieve good standards relative to their levels of ability.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are now working to a new scheme of work and produce short, medium and long-term plans that are of good quality, providing consistency of practice across each year group. The plans are, however, at an early stage of development and currently pupils' learning experiences lack progression from year to year. Nevertheless, teachers use imaginative and interesting teaching approaches and allow for changes in their lesson plan to take account of pupils' own design ideas. Teachers are

more competent and have more confidence in their knowledge and understanding of this subject and their expectations are satisfactory. There is a growing awareness on the part of teachers of the importance of cross-curricular links between design and technology and other curricular subjects.

98. The subject manager has undertaken some partial random monitoring of pupils' work across the school. She is enthusiastic and is committed to developing this subject and is convinced it will enrich pupils' learning experiences. Currently, the amount of time available for teaching the subject is limited and this is having a detrimental effect on attempts to raise the standards in pupils' work.

GEOGRAPHY

99. The pupils' achievements by the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with the level expected nationally in their knowledge and understanding of the topics they study. Evidence from lessons observed and from work already completed indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in these aspects of the subject. By the time they are 11, the pupils have a good understanding of their own locality and many have sound knowledge of other localities in this country, such as the village of Rotherwick, or in distant places. They develop an appreciation of the significance of key physical features, such as rivers. Skills such as mapwork are now developing through the school, but the oldest pupils are less confident in these, as, for instance, when translating information about land use gained from aerial photographs to an outline map of the locality.
100. During their first year in the school, the pupils gain a good awareness of the area in which they live through their study of Cove Brook, and are able later to identify some of the similarities and differences between it and other areas. All pupils become familiar with appropriate language to describe their surroundings, and begin to gain a good understanding of basic ideas about maps when they develop plan views of their classroom. They continue to develop their familiarity with maps as they progress through the school, whilst pursuing a series of geography study units, and develop an awareness of the physical and human features of differing regions. The topics covered throughout the school help to build up the pupils' knowledge of their own surroundings and of other areas, countries and cultures, as well as providing opportunities for them to practise their skills. Good use is made of the school's own locality, as in the river study of Cove Brook currently being planned by Year 5 pupils. As well as providing opportunities for the reinforcement of numeracy skills in fieldwork surveys or weather recording, the work pupils undertake in geography also supports the development of their language skills through, for example, different types of writing. Some use is also being made of information and communication technology resources, as in the river study, but more needs to be done to ensure the subject is making its full contribution to these cross-curricular skills. Good links are made with history in topics such as 'Egypt'.
101. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good. The teachers' subject knowledge throughout the school is good. They use questioning well and encourage pupils to use the appropriate vocabulary in their work. Lessons are usually well planned, and a particular strength is the way in which the year teams prepare similar learning activities for each of their classes, ensuring a common experience across the year group. There were occasional examples where the teacher's approach to part of the activity planned did not ensure the level of challenge which was evident in other classes undertaking the same tasks,

but generally the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' achievement and behaviour. Almost all pupils respond well to the opportunities provided, showing a lively interest in what they are doing. They work well together, enjoying the opportunity to discuss the issues that arise in the course of their work. The subject makes a good contribution to their social awareness.

102. The scheme of work developed since the school was last inspected is providing useful guidance to teachers. A systematic approach to the identification of pupils' progress in the development of geographical skills is being developed, and the identification of assessment opportunities is to follow. The co-ordinator has clear views about the way in which the subject should develop, and provides valuable support to colleagues. The subject is adequately resourced, developed, and some limited use is made of loan services. It is enhanced by its use of the locality, and good use is made of residential and other visits. The subject has continued to improve since the previous inspection, in spite of the restrictions on the amount of curriculum time for non-core subjects caused by the introduction of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.

HISTORY

103. The subject has clearly improved since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be below average. By the time pupils leave the school, their levels of achievement are currently broadly in line with the level expected nationally in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the periods they study. The observation of lessons in the two year groups currently following history topics at the time of the inspection, as well as the scrutiny of work previously completed by all year groups, indicates that as pupils go through the school they make good progress in the development of historical knowledge and understanding. The pupils enjoy history, with many indications in work on topics such as the Victorians and the Ancient Egyptians that they make good gains in knowledge of the periods being studied. Older pupils begin to develop an understanding of the key people and influences that have shaped history. As part of their studies, they enjoy the opportunity to explore many of their own ideas and values. Pupils throughout the school are now being introduced carefully to a range of historical sources and are encouraged to ask questions about the evidence they provide and about its reliability, but older pupils are not yet sufficiently skilled in this aspect of the subject.
104. As they progress through the school, the pupils are encouraged to think about how familiar things have changed over time, and pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are becoming used to dealing with a variety of historical sources. All of the historical topics the pupils study are carefully linked to a clear timeline for the period, helping to develop an appropriate sense of chronology. In view of the limited time available for the subject, the teachers have to work hard to encourage such awareness and to reinforce the development of historical skills within the time allocated. There are some good examples of pupils being encouraged to engage in independent study or research activities of the kind that will extend learning, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. In the course of their work on the Victorians, for instance, they responded well to the opportunity to gather information about living conditions from the books available, or through their access to CD-ROMs, but currently have limited opportunity for extended study of this kind, because of the time constraints.
105. Throughout the school, work in history is used well as a link to other areas of the curriculum, such as geography. For instance, pupils pursuing their study of Ancient Egypt learn much

about the continuing importance of the River Nile. The resulting work is often well displayed, helping to create an interesting learning environment and celebrating good work. The subject also makes a useful contribution to the development of literacy through, for instance, the careful presentation of written work and opportunities for empathetic and extended writing, but more consideration is needed of the way in which the subject can make its full contribution to the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

106. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory, and good examples are seen. The teachers' subject knowledge is good, and they convey well to pupils their own interest in the topics being studied. The pupils respond well, gaining considerable pleasure in the work they do and enjoying the things they learn about the past.
107. Overall planning for the subject is good, and it is well led by a well-informed and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who provides useful support to colleagues. The scheme of work is complemented by a newly developed programme of work to ensure the necessary progression in skills and by the identification of opportunities for the assessment of historical skills and knowledge. The subject is appropriately resourced in the provision of books and materials within the classrooms and library, and these resources are augmented at times by means of the loan service. Every opportunity is taken to bring the subject alive, and good use is made of visitors, including the provision of authentic costumes and artefacts related to key topics. Valuable visits are also made to places of historical interest further afield, such as the museum and Hampton Court to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Current standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below the nationally expected levels. Work seen during the inspection, however, indicates that standards are beginning to rise. Until recently, the school has suffered from a lack of modern computers. In addition, a number of teachers lacked both the expertise and the confidence to teach ICT successfully.
109. The past situation in the school has meant that, although pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, have had access to most elements of the National Curriculum in ICT, their learning has not been systematic enough to promote appropriate progress. Good use of specific grant money has provided the school with a good number of new computers, which are now networked in the dedicated suite for whole class teaching, and this has released other computers for use in the classrooms. At the time of the inspection, these new computers had been in place for three weeks and staff and pupils were engaged in a familiarisation exercise. All classes are now timetabled to use the computer suite and a sound scheme of work has been produced which should ensure sufficient coverage to raise attainment. In addition, staff have just begun the new opportunities funded training to extend and update their teaching skills in this subject.
110. Both the teaching and the resultant learning in the ICT lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory. Teachers had planned purposeful activities aimed at introducing the new machines and software, as when Year 5 pupils explored a prepared database about rivers. Classes were well organised and all pupils were given good opportunity to work at the computers. As a result, they were quickly learning how the new computers function. There are, however, some aspects of teaching that are currently not always successful and these inhibit learning. Whole class teaching at the beginning of lessons is not always sufficiently

clearly structured and pupils are not always seated in a position where they can see what the teacher is doing. Additionally, thought needs to be given to different ways in which a single adult can support a whole class of pupils, working in pairs. There is also a need to consider further the level of challenge of activities for the significant minority of pupils who have access at home to very similar programs to those used in lessons. Although pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are usually good, with pupils concentrating well and showing interest in the work set for them, when pupils are already familiar with programs they become bored and are less focused in their work.

111. Increasing attention is being given to the requirement for ICT to be a fundamental part of the teaching and learning in other subjects. During the inspection, pupils were using work in ICT lessons to complement their work on portraits in art, on rivers in geography and in preparing newspapers, but there is too little use of ICT at present to extend learning in other subjects, including literacy and mathematics. The scheme of work assists teachers to plan ICT lessons well, but planning in other subjects does not show consistently when and how ICT will be used in class. The subject manager has begun to check the planning for ICT lessons, but has not yet had opportunity to assist teachers develop skills by observing their teaching.
112. In the time since the last inspection, improvements have been made in the management of ICT, in the resources available and in the plan for the development of the subject. Although attainment has not yet improved, the school is now well placed to ensure that pupils can make good progress.

MUSIC

113. Attainment in music throughout the school is below that seen in other schools and has declined since the last inspection. This is, in part, because in the time since the last inspection the school's priorities and energies have been directed towards the national requirements for the development of literacy and numeracy. It is also a consequence of the loss of the specialist teacher, which has left a considerable gap in staff expertise in this subject.
114. During the time when statutory requirements were suspended in music, pupils have had very limited access to the large parts of the music curriculum; consequently the levels of pupils' knowledge and skills in most aspects of music are too low. A recently written scheme of work provides a structure for the teaching of music, but the time allocated to the subject each week remains too short to allow pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, to make appropriate progress.
115. During the week of the inspection, the teaching of music in the lessons seen was satisfactory overall and good in a number of lessons. Pupils throughout the school were engaged in learning to listen analytically to music. Teachers had taken care to use the new scheme purposefully to prepare their lessons well and to teach in a well-structured, thoughtful way. Despite the inhibitions of some of the pupils, the learning taking place in the lessons was usually satisfactory and sometimes rapid, with pupils moving from a low base to much higher attainment. A Year 5 class, for example, began by struggling to identify simple changes in a recorded piece of music by Bach, but, by the end of the lesson, were able to count how many repeats of the main theme occurred and were able to suggest that the first two repeats were to establish the theme in the mind of the listener. There are occasions, however, when the youngest pupils are presented with work that is insufficiently challenging or older pupils are asked to do activities that are beyond their current level of attainment. In these lessons,

pupils fail to learn as successfully. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very variable, but satisfactory overall. Where there is the correct level of challenge, they respond well, concentrate hard and enjoy their work. In some other situations, the pupils are demotivated at times and this further inhibits their ability to learn.

116. There remains much work to be done. There is an urgent need to assess the current attainment of the pupils so that they can be provided with more suitable work to enable them to develop the skills they have missed over recent years. The scheme of work needs revision to ensure that pupils are challenged at a high enough level, especially at the time when they enter school. As this scheme is introduced, staff will need help in extending their capability and developing their confidence in teaching music. The school has few opportunities for pupils to make music in clubs outside school hours, but there are good opportunities, taken up by a significant number of pupils, to learn to play brass, woodwind and stringed instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. The attainment of pupils by the age of eleven is about in line with the national expectation and represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing their physical skills in dance and games. Pupils' attainment in physical education in the last inspection report was below average. A policy was in place but there was no scheme of work to ensure balanced coverage of all areas of the subject. During the present inspection, lessons were observed in games and dance. No lessons in gymnastics were available for observation at the time.
118. Pupils appreciate how moods and feelings are expressed in bodily movements, especially in relation to the term's theme of conflict/invasion. They are effective in demonstrating 'freeze' dance postures, using four directions of movement, as individuals and in pairs. In another class, pupils undertook running, bouncing and stretching movements to indicate expressions of excitement and did so successfully in imaginative ways. Pupils are currently at an early stage in their understanding and appreciation of dance and have difficulty in sequencing movements to music accurately and to time.
119. In games lessons seen, older pupils are becoming more competent in developing basic hockey skills. They enjoy working in pairs and in mini-teams when practising passing and shooting in hockey. Overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress in both dance and games, in particular in the way they use space, develop poise and balance in their movements. They listen carefully to instructions but do not always undertake activities in a controlled, disciplined and rigorous manner. Pupils evaluate effectively their own and others' performance and offer alternative ways to improve enthusiastically. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all aspects of physical education, are fully integrated into the range of activities offered, and make appropriate progress. All pupils work safely when in the hall or playground. They have good attitudes and they work confidently in pairs and small groups.
120. Pupils display positive attitudes to physical exercise. They are dressed appropriately and respond correctly to instructions. Pupils are aware of health and safety issues, and, during one lesson held in the classroom because of the inclement weather, offered very good suggestions about the purpose and benefits to them of physical education.

121. The quality of teaching in physical education is at least satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well, issue clear instructions and encourage pupils to use their imagination and creative skills. They insist that pupils pay attention to their demands and instructions. In the best lessons, teachers insist that pupils make progress in their use of relevant skills during the lesson. In this case, lessons are well structured with relevant warm up activities followed by intense activity and spells of reflection. In other lessons, the pace was sometimes slow and there was a lack of involvement by the teacher.
122. The subject manager for physical education is new to the post and, though a non-specialist, has the support of other teachers. The policy and scheme of work are of good quality and represent an important step forward. They are having an impact on the quality of the teaching and learning and in raising standards. There has been little monitoring or evaluation of the work of pupils across the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. The pupils show satisfactory achievement in religious education in relation to the expectations set out in the local agreed syllabus. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in teaching and learning and in its monitoring, and in the attitudes of pupils to their work. By the time they leave school the pupils acquire an appreciation of many of the practices and beliefs of Christianity, as well as those of traditions such as Hinduism and Islam. The work they do is carefully planned by the teachers to encourage a developing awareness of what it means to take a religion seriously. The pupils are encouraged to relate what they are learning to their own feelings and experiences, as in Year 6 when studying creation stories and forming their own ideas about stewardship of the world's resources. They learn about Christianity through stories and practices and they build on this knowledge as they go through the school. They understand the meaning of symbols such as bread and the cross and develop a good awareness of themselves and the world around them, showing sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of others. In Year 3, for instance, when discussing the nature of God, they draw careful pictures showing his power in the world.
124. The subject is taught well overall and learning is usually at least satisfactory and often good. The teachers are becoming more confident and knowledgeable in what they teach. As a result, the pupils show good levels of knowledge, because material has been presented to them in an interesting way. The pupils' religious understanding is developed well by a range of imaginative activities such as the making of rhaki bracelets in Year 4. The pupils show a good understanding of why these are special to Hindus and how they are a symbol of care. Pupils in Year 5, similarly, had made their own versions of Muslim prayer mats. Explanations by teachers are usually clear and questioning perceptive, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the higher attainers, are challenged by the often stimulating approach to learning and make good progress. There are plans to ensure that tasks in all classes are always matched more closely to the differing needs of pupils. Occasionally, the concepts are too difficult for them to understand because the planned steps in learning are too large, as in one Year 3 class about the Bible as a guidebook for Christians. Most teachers mark pupils' work effectively and encourage the pupils to improve, and refer to learning in religious education when assessing progress, as in Year 5 when a pupil received positive feedback about the good questions he had asked about Palm Sunday.
125. The pupils' attitudes to their work are generally good, although occasionally they are restless, if they are unsure of the task, or find it difficult to engage in discussion. They respond well

to the interesting learning opportunities provided and present their work well. Because of the positive atmosphere created, most pupils are able to share important feelings with their teachers and other pupils and show respect for other views and cultures. They show empathy for and are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of religious stories and events, as in Year 6 when pupils responded movingly in their writing about Jesus in the wilderness, and in Year 3 when pupils worked together to compose an advertisement for an imam.

126. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of the needs of the subject and is developing good practice throughout the school. There is close monitoring of the work completed by pupils, and of planning for it. This has led to an improvement in standards and in teaching and learning and the teachers' confidence. A recently prepared programme of visits and visitors will support and enhance teaching in the current year. A new scheme of work, being prepared, is to build on good work completed and written into long-term plans, and to take in recent changes. Regular assessments of pupils' understanding and learning for each term take place and some teachers also assess many of the activities completed during the term. Resources are adequate, with a good selection of artefacts, but an improved range of reference books would be beneficial.