

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. CATHERINE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC
SCHOOL**

Barnet

LEA area: London Borough of Barnet

Unique reference number: 101333

Headteacher: Mr B McLoone

Reporting inspector: Mr P Dennison
17736

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st September 2000

Inspection number: 224686

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Vale Drive
Barnet
Hertfordshire

Postcode: EN5 2ED

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Allen

Date of previous inspection: 8th July 1996

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|---------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Mr P Dennison, 17736 | Registered inspector | The foundation stage | What sort of school is it? |
| | | Equal opportunities | What should the school do to improve further? |
| | | Mathematics | School's results and achievements |
| | | Art and design | How well is the school led and managed? |
| | | | How well are pupils taught? |
| Mr A Mundy, 9388 | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
| | | | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Mr A Wilson, 20846 | Team inspector | English as an additional language | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| | | English | |
| | | History | |
| Mr R Willey, 28320 | Team inspector | Science | |
| | | Design and technology | |
| | | Geography | |
| Rev. Dr. P Johnson, 28032 | Team inspector | Special educational needs | |
| | | Information and communication technology | |
| | | Music | |
| | | Physical education | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Catherine's is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school in the London Borough of Barnet. At the time of the inspection there were 243 full-time pupils on roll, taught in 9 classes. In addition, there were 48 children attending the nursery and 19 children attending the reception class part-time. There is a wide range of attainment on entry, although overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group. There are 106 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. This is above the national average. Five pupils have a statement of Special Educational Need. There are 31 pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is above the national average, although none are at an early stage of acquiring English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals (9%) is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Standards in English, mathematics and science are improving and are now above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, standards in information technology are below the national expectation. Much of the teaching is good and has a positive effect on progress. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The provision for moral and social development is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to work and their behaviour is good.
- It is a caring school with positive relationships.
- The provision for SEN is good.
- The provision for children in the nursery is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology are below the national expectation and pupils do not make sufficient progress.
- The school development plan does not clearly identify the longer term needs and priorities of the school. It lacks detail and does not incorporate clear success criteria against which the school will be able to evaluate its effectiveness.
- Whole school curriculum planning does not provide sufficient guidance to ensure progression in the development of skills and concepts.
- The school does not make effective use of the assessment information to monitor pupils' progress and ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Progress since the previous inspection in July 1996 has been satisfactory. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has improved. The results achieved by pupils in the National Curriculum tests at the age of 11 have improved between 1996 and 2000. The caring ethos of the school has been maintained and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. Assessment procedures have been developed but there is still inconsistency in the use of assessment to support planning and match work to pupils' needs. Some schemes of work have been developed but whole school curriculum planning is not yet fully effective. The provision for information technology is still unsatisfactory. Additional equipment has been provided but pupils have insufficient opportunities to use information technology to support learning across the curriculum. These remain as areas for further development.

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 | A | B | C | E |
| mathematics | C | C | C | E |
| science | C | C | C | E |

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

Pupils' achievement in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests was in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The results for 2000 show a considerable improvement on the 1999 results and this is reflected in the evidence of the inspection. Attainment in all three subjects is above the national average. Taking the years 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of the pupils was close to the national average in English and mathematics and below the national average in science. Results have improved broadly in line with the national trend.

In comparison with similar schools using the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals, the school's performance was well below average. However, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average. Using the progress made between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as an indicator, the school's performance was well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national average in writing and science.

Pupils' attainment in information technology is below the national expectation at the end of both key stages.

The school has set realistic targets for improvement in English and mathematics and the 2000 results exceeded the target set for English and were close to the target for mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work hard, concentrate well and show good levels of interest. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good throughout the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Personal development is good overall. Relationships are good. Pupils co-operate well with each other and their teachers. |
| Attendance | Attendance is satisfactory. It is slightly above the national average. |

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to school. They enjoy a good relationship with their teachers and their classmates. They are keen to learn, respond well in lessons and behave well. The school council is a valuable forum, but few other opportunities for whole-school responsibility are available to pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. During the inspection, 54% of teaching observed was good or better and 13% was very good. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory and none was poor. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage was never less than satisfactory and in 50% of the lessons observed it was good. Teaching in the nursery was consistently good. In Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed, 39% of the teaching was good or better and 6% was very good. However, 11% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, 63% of teaching was good or better and 21% was very good. None was less than satisfactory.

Where teaching is most effective it builds on previous learning, work is introduced in a lively and stimulating way and tasks are provided to meet the differing needs of pupils. Where teaching is less successful, learning objectives are not clear and work is not well matched to pupils' capabilities and, at times, lacks sufficient challenge.

The teaching of English and mathematics is effective. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The school meets the needs of all pupils well. Those with special educational need are well supported.

Pupils respond well. They are keen to learn and work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2. There is an appropriate range of learning opportunities to support pupils' academic and personal development. However, the curriculum for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop the necessary skills to use computers as an integral part of their day-to-day learning. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. There are good procedures for assessing and identifying those pupils who have special educational needs. They are well supported by the special needs co-ordinator. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Moral and social development is good, cultural development is satisfactory. However, spiritual development is unsatisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Satisfactory procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well. Very good individual care and support is provided. |

The school encourages parents to support their children's learning and establishes a satisfactory partnership with them.

The curriculum for information and communication technology does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The overall quality of the leadership and management provided by the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. They have established a positive ethos for the school. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Governors are supportive. They are aware of the needs and priorities facing the school. However, their role in relation to strategic planning is hampered by the lack of a clear development plan that covers all aspects of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Some monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in English and mathematics has been developed. The school also has some strategies to monitor pupils' attainment but these do not yet provide a sufficiently rigorous analysis of pupils' progress. |
| The strategic use of resources | Resources are generally used well. Finance is managed prudently. Grants for specific purposes such as provision for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. However, longer term financial planning is unsatisfactory. |

There are sufficient, well qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory. Learning resources are adequate.

The headteacher, administrator and governing body consider cost, quality, service and efficiency in their decisions on the choice of goods and services, and obtain tenders for larger expenditure. The school applies the principles of best value soundly.

The school development plan is not an effective management tool. It does not prioritise between the various issues facing the school. Nor does it set out clearly who will be responsible for the initiatives or the time scale for completion. It addresses planned curriculum developments, but does not incorporate the review and planned development of all aspects of the school.

The school is not fully meeting the statutory requirements relating to information for parents in the Governors' Annual Report and the school prospectus.

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 • Children make good progress • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible • Children are expected to work hard and to achieve their best. • They feel comfortable approaching the staff with any concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework provided for their children |

The inspection team fully endorses these positive views. However the team does not support the views of a number of parents who are not happy with the homework provided. From the time pupils start in the nursery class, the school encourages parents to support their children's learning at home. The amount of homework given to pupils is increased as pupils progress through the school. This takes a variety of forms including reading activities, mathematics and following up classwork in curriculum areas such as history, geography and science. Homework is generally used effectively to support learning across the curriculum. The team considers the provision of homework to be satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. There is a broad range of attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes, although, overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group. This is confirmed by the baseline assessments carried out when children enter the reception class. Overall, attainment is above the average for the local education authority. By the time they complete the Foundation Stage the great majority achieve the early learning goals established for the age group. Many move beyond this to the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 1. The good levels of achievement reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.
2. Pupils' performance in the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments in reading and mathematics was above the national average. Their performance in writing and science was in line with the national average. The results in 2000 showed an improvement on the results for 1999, although national results are not yet available for comparison. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the performance in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with the national average. Attainment in all three subjects was described as sound at the time of the previous inspection, although the test results in mathematics were below the national average. Standards in reading and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection, whilst standards in writing and science have been maintained. On the evidence of the inspection, attainment by the end of the key stage is above the national average in mathematics and reading and in line with the national average in writing and science.
3. Pupils' literacy skills are sound at Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, most pupils are becoming competent speakers and listeners. A small minority are less confident when asked questions and, although they listen carefully, still restrict answers to single words at this stage. Most pupils are competent in the early skills of reading and are developing a range of strategies for attempting unknown words. Their writing shows an increasing fluency and control, with simple punctuation being used accurately. By the end of the key stage, pupils read a range of texts with fluency and understanding. They use capital letters and full stops appropriately in their writing, with simple words spelt correctly. They develop their ideas logically in a sequence of sentences. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to convey meaning through their writing but do not yet use punctuation consistently.
4. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and have good numeracy skills. They develop their understanding of the number system and their mathematical vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to carry out written calculations accurately and most have a good knowledge and understanding of number facts, shapes and measures.

5. On the evidence of the inspection, pupils make sound progress throughout Key Stage 1 in science. By the end of the key stage, pupils possess a sound scientific vocabulary and knowledge. They develop their knowledge and understanding of life processes, materials and physical processes. They are able to observe changes, make sensible predictions and describe their findings with an increasingly accurate scientific vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can carry out simple investigations. Pupils are beginning to understand the need for fair testing. Higher attaining pupils are able to write clear explanations, often with carefully drawn and labelled diagrams.
6. Pupils' performance in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools using the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals, the school's performance was well below average in all three subjects. However, this comparison does not take into account the number of pupils with special educational needs which is well above the national average. Using the progress made between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as an indicator, the school's performance was well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science.
7. Taking the years 1996 to 1999 together, pupils' performance in English and mathematics has been close to the national average. The results in science have been below the national average. Overall results of the National Curriculum tests between 1996 and 1999 have improved in line with the national trend. The results in 2000 show an improvement on the results for 1999, although no national results are available for comparison. The percentage of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 4 or above in English rose from 71% to 85%, in mathematics it rose from 62% to 80% and in science it rose from 74% to 94%. The percentage of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 5 rose from 24% to 53% in English. The percentage achieving Level 5 in mathematics fell from 26% to 18%, although one pupil achieved Level 6. Whilst in science the percentage achieving Level 5 rose from 24% to 59%. This improvement has been brought about through good teaching and the implementation of the national strategies for numeracy and literacy which have provided a framework for planning and led to a clear focus in lessons. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment was described as sound in all three subjects. Evidence from this inspection confirms the performance in the 2000 tests. There has been a clear improvement in standards which are now above the national average in all three subjects.
8. Pupils make good progress in all three subjects at Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, standards of literacy and numeracy are good. By age eleven, pupils listen carefully to one another and their teachers. They give articulate, complete answers to questions, demonstrating good comprehension skills. The majority of pupils are confident when asked to address the rest of the class and speak clearly to the best of their ability. The majority of pupils are competent readers. They read aloud clearly and with understanding and discuss the characters and plot of stories confidently. Higher attaining pupils are very fluent and expressive. They read widely and explain their views clearly. Most pupils are confident in the use of a dictionary or thesaurus. Wider research skills are less well developed since there is no access to a library for this purpose. Their writing is organised, clear and well adapted for a number of purposes. Most pupils make good use of punctuation and are secure with spelling. They plan work carefully and make good use of parts of speech such as adjectives and adverbs. Lower attaining pupils are less consistent with spelling, punctuation and the use of descriptive or imaginative language.

9. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities have a good knowledge of place value and can use the four basic operations competently. The higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of percentages and probability, can use fractions and decimals accurately and are competent in long multiplication and division. The lower attaining pupils can apply the four rules of number effectively and use a wide range of units of measure competently. Pupils have a sound knowledge of shapes and their properties and a good appreciation of the number system and measures. They use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. Pupils make good progress in developing their mental strategies and are able to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and to support their work in other subjects such as science.
10. In science, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils carry out investigations over a period of time. They understand the need for setting up fair tests and record the results in charts and graphs. They are able to distinguish between natural and man-made materials and can differentiate between conductors and insulators. They know the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases. They can determine which changes are reversible and which aren't. They possess a sound understanding of the parts, structure and functions of the human body.
11. Attainment in information technology is below that expected at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, there is little evidence that pupils are developing skills in storing and retrieving information or that they can save or print their own work. Overall, the progress of pupils of all attainments in the development of information technology skills is unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not been provided with sufficient opportunities to enable them to attain the expected standards. The range of work planned does not cover all aspects of the programmes of study, particularly controlling and modelling. Their use of the computer as a research tool is under developed nor do they have sufficient opportunities to use information technology to collect and display data.
12. Attainment in art, history, physical education and music are in line with that expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Standards in geography are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There was insufficient evidence available during the inspection to evaluate attainment in design and technology.
13. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are carefully assessed and tasks are planned to match their prior attainment. They make sound progress in relation to their prior learning across the whole school, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress.
14. The previous inspection report highlighted some concerns regarding underachievement by the higher attaining pupils. The school has addressed this issue by enabling subject co-ordinators to monitor and support such pupils during some of their lessons in English, mathematics and science. The National Curriculum test results indicate that higher attainers are now doing much better and increasing numbers are achieving higher levels in the tests. Nevertheless, in some lessons work is not well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.

15. The school has begun to analyse test results but does not yet make effective use of that information to track pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement. Realistic targets for the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests have been agreed and the results in 2000 exceeded the target set for English and were close to the target for mathematics. Overall, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory. In the nursery and in the upper part of Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Parents who returned the parents' questionnaire confirmed that their children like school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. The good attitudes noted in the previous inspection report have been maintained.
17. Children in the nursery learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between their parents, carers and teachers. They enjoy meeting other children, and are confident and secure in classroom and school routines. The children relate well to adults, listen to them attentively, and are very well behaved. When working alone or in groups they are encouraged to be independent, and to complete activities.
18. Pupils come to school enthusiastically. They enjoy lessons and, when given opportunities, can work independently without needing close supervision. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, and are keen to answer questions and participate in discussions. Excellent attitudes were observed in a Year 5/6 art and design lesson, where the teacher led a mature and humorous whole-class discussion. Later, pupils were absorbed in the development of pencil drawings based on simple pin-figure structures.
19. Pupils work well in groups, readily exchanging ideas, sharing materials and often making very good use of time. During the inspection no unsatisfactory attitudes were observed although, on the few occasions when teaching was unsatisfactory, attitudes deteriorated.
20. There are no differences in attitude between pupils of different levels of attainment. In discussion with visitors, they are all polite, confident and proud of their achievements. Attitudes in extra-curricular activities are very good. After-school clubs are well supported.
21. Behaviour in classes and in the open areas of the school is good, and the standard noted during the previous inspection has been maintained. Pupils are thoughtful and mutually respectful. Behaviour is often very good in classrooms when pupils are grouped on small carpeted areas to receive instructions at the beginnings of literacy and numeracy lessons. During the inspection, behaviour was particularly impressive when two days of sporadic rain restricted activities at morning break and lunchtime. Parents and pupils confirm that incidents of bullying or aggression between pupils are rare and are dealt with effectively when they do occur. No child has been excluded from school within the past four years.

22. Pupils' personal development is good overall. All pupils willingly carry out everyday duties in classrooms and, when given opportunities, throughout the school. The school council is a valuable forum, but few other opportunities for whole-school responsibility are available to pupils.
23. Within the curriculum, opportunities for personal development are more limited because most activities are prepared and directed by teachers. The school library is currently closed, depriving pupils of opportunities for individual research. Some pupils visit the public reference library.
24. Relationships in the nursery and throughout the school are good. Pupils respond politely and confidently to each other and to adults. They are not afraid to be seen to make mistakes, and they are mutually supportive. Each member of the school community has equal status and receives sensitive and effective support at work and play.
25. Attendance is satisfactory in all year groups and, overall, is slightly above the national average for primary schools. Regular attendance has a positive effect upon pupils' attainment and progress. Most pupils arrive punctually at school and settle quickly to work. Registration periods are efficient, and lessons begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

26. The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. During the inspection, 54% of teaching observed was good or better and 13% was very good. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory and none was poor. This is similar to the previous inspection report when teaching was also described as good.
27. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage was never less than satisfactory and in 50% of the lessons observed it was good. Teaching in the nursery was consistently good. The main strengths are the very good relationships between adults and children; good planning and the teachers' knowledge of the curriculum and of how young children learn. The activities are carefully planned to enable children to learn through first hand experiences which provide interest and motivation. The staff have appropriately high expectations of the children, both in achievement and social skills, and the children are respected and valued. Support staff work closely with the teachers and make a very positive contribution to children's learning.
28. In Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed, 39% of the teaching was good or better and 6% was very good. However, 11% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good overall. In the lessons observed, 63% of teaching was good or better and 21% was very good. None was less than satisfactory.
29. Teachers use a variety of teaching techniques and organisation strategies which enable the pupils to learn in the most appropriate way. The teachers generally have appropriately high expectations of behaviour and attainment. They expect pupils to maintain concentration and lessons proceed at a good pace. They make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and they give clear explanations. Group work is organised skilfully to enable some groups to work independently thus enabling the teacher to give intensive support to others. Where teaching is most effective it builds on previous learning, work is introduced in a lively and stimulating way and tasks are provided to meet the differing needs of pupils. Teachers make good use of

questioning techniques and effective use of review sessions to reinforce and evaluate learning and understanding, for example when recapping on the work done in numeracy lessons. Where teaching is less successful, learning objectives are not clear and work is not well matched to pupils' capabilities and, at times, lacks sufficient challenge. There are examples of effective planning and evaluation in some classes but this is not consistent throughout the school. The assessment of pupils' attainment is not always used effectively to plan future work.

30. Teachers know their pupils well. They provide good verbal feedback during lessons and help pupils to improve their work. The use of written marking is less consistent. Comments do not always effectively ensure that pupils are aware of areas, which need to be improved or to set clear targets for improvement. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment is not always used well to plan future work. Consequently work is not well matched to pupils' capabilities.
31. Teaching in English and mathematics is generally effective. Teachers throughout the school generally have a good knowledge and understanding of teaching literacy and numeracy and plan carefully within the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.
32. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Any problems are identified quickly, and individual education plans are established which enable pupils to achieve as much as possible. The special needs teacher, nursery nurses and classroom assistant work well to provide less able pupils with educational support focused predominantly on developing literacy and numeracy skills. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and much is good. A high percentage of this work is done on a withdrawal basis. The special needs staff aim to link with the literacy and numeracy work which is taught in the classrooms.
33. From the time pupils start in the nursery class, the school encourages parents to support their children's learning at home. The amount of homework given to pupils is increased as pupils progress through the school. This takes a variety of forms including reading activities, mathematics and following up classwork in curriculum areas such as history, geography and science. Homework is generally used effectively to support learning across the curriculum.

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

34. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2. There is an appropriate range of learning opportunities to support pupils' academic and personal development. The curriculum in mathematics is good and promotes numeracy well throughout the school. Opportunities to develop numeracy skills in other subjects are also carefully planned, for example in history where pupils use a time line to sequence the development of the Ancient Greek Olympics. Literacy is effectively promoted through the literacy hour and drama makes a good contribution to the development of literacy skills. The curriculum for physical education is good and the teaching of swimming is a strength of the subject. However, the curriculum for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop the necessary skills to use computers as an integral part of their day-to-day learning. There are also weaknesses in the curriculum for design and technology. There is little evidence of a systematic approach

to the development skills. Since the last inspection, more time has been allocated to the teaching of science and this has had a positive impact on achievement. Schemes of work have not yet been fully developed for all subjects. There is no scheme in place for music or history and others are in need of review. Consequently, long, medium and short-term planning is of variable quality and is not always effective. Planning does not take sufficient account of the skills to be taught on a yearly, termly and weekly basis in order to ensure continuing achievement. There is no clearly established rolling programme for classes with mixed age groups and lesson activities are not always accurately matched to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. The school has identified the need to address this issue. It has recently formed working parties to review schemes of work following recent changes in the National Curriculum for foundation subjects.

35. There is good provision for personal, social, and health education where issues such as healthy eating and drugs awareness are explored thoroughly. All pupils have opportunities to examine other moral and social issues including sex education. Educational visits, including a residential trip for older pupils to the Isle of Wight, play an important part in developing social skills and independence.
36. The quality of learning opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. The effectiveness of teaching strategies for their literacy and numeracy development is also good. These pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum through well-constructed individual education plans which are well matched to their needs.
37. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. It includes a range of sports opportunities such as football, netball and basketball. There is a well attended after school activities club which specifically provides for pupils in Years 3 and 4. This ensures that all pupils in Key Stage 2 have regular access to extra-curricular sport and reflects the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities for all. Teachers also give their time generously to provide regular after-school clubs for gardening and drama.
38. The community makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning and there are strong links with the local parish church. Pupils visit nearby places of interest such as the Spires in Barnet where school choirs have performed regularly. Visitors to the school, such as the school nurse and the fire brigade, make positive contributions to pupils' learning. The school is an effective provider of training opportunities for students on work experience and nursery nurse or teacher training.
39. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The provision for social and moral development is good and remains a strength of the school as reported at the time of the previous inspection.
40. The school provides a safe and happy environment where pupils feel valued. Pupils, working in pairs, discuss and help each other to complete tasks successfully. Pupils are very supportive of each other and establish good relationships with adults and other pupils. A new system of rewards, involving certificates and appending leaves to the good news tree, has been introduced this term. The system is designed to reward contributions to all aspects of school life and is not exclusively academic. There are some specifically timetabled lessons in support of moral and social education. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were engaged in a series of lessons about bullying. The work is on-going and future issues will include strategies to avoid and combat bullying. Issues are often addressed effectively where and when necessary. Following a science lesson with

Year 6 pupils where pupils were investigating the conditions conducive to healthy growth, a moral discussion ensued about the value of pursuing the experiment further as it may have an irretrievably damaging affect upon the plants involved. Work on the plight of immigrants in the 1950's in history produced empathetic written responses from pupils and fostered their understanding of social issues. Pupils learn about moral responsibility in the wider world and are involved in fund-raising for charitable activities such as Comic Relief and a shoebox appeal for Kosovo. Pupils are expected to be supportive of each other as well as polite. Teachers trust their pupils. Access to learning resources, for example, is often open. A school council has been set up with representatives from each class. However, pupils have relatively few opportunities to exercise responsibilities and to show initiative. Extra-curricular activities such as football, netball, basketball and gardening engender co-operation and teamwork and develop social skills. The residential visit for pupils in Year 6 supports moral and social development particularly well.

41. Cultural development is satisfactory. The cultural work in relation to drama is a very good feature. Pupils learn of plays, playwrights, history of the theatre, make models and develop their literacy skills. However, this cross-curricular approach is not well developed across the school and this hinders the opportunities for pupils' cultural development. Multi-faith aspects in religious education are not well developed and pupils are not afforded a wide breadth of knowledge about other faiths, beliefs and traditions. Some cultural development is supported through subjects such as art and music. Pupils learn about famous artists, such as Monet, Picasso and Dali. They hear some music from other cultures and listen to pupils playing instruments and singing but learn little of famous composers. Music used in assembly is often not identified. There are limited cultural contributions from visiting groups and individuals.
42. The provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory in that opportunity for active participation by pupils is limited. Assemblies are variable in quality and effectiveness. Locations for assembly do not promote an atmosphere conducive to reflection and spiritual development. Chairs set on tables surround pupils in the dining hall. Pupils in the school hall are orientated in such a way that people in transit through the hall are a regular distraction. Singing is often unaccompanied. Pupils do not take an active part, or lead, in assemblies or in whole school prayers. Older pupils do not have the opportunity to take responsibility, show initiative or lead activity in any way. Opportunities for reflection are infrequent. Many classes begin the school day with prayer but this is not the pattern across the whole school. However, there are examples of good practice where teachers demonstrate sensitivity in handling classroom situations. In the reception class a new pupil was feeling unhappy. The discussion that ensued about making friends was appropriate, relevant to pupil experience and culminated in an appropriate prayer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. Satisfactory procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The school follows local authority guidelines for child protection. The deputy headteacher is the responsible officer, and has received training. All staff, including midday assistants, understand child protection issues. They have received some training in everyday procedures.
44. The school has adopted the local authority's health and safety policy, including procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out of school visits. During the inspection, a significant number of health and safety concerns were reported to the headteacher. Some were rectified immediately but the school's procedures for maintaining high standards are unsatisfactory. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the playgrounds at break times and lunchtimes. One member of staff is a qualified first-aider, and all staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils.
45. The programme for personal, social and health education is good. Adequate curriculum time is scheduled for topics including health education, sex education, drugs awareness, personal feelings and "stranger danger".
46. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well, and are skilled in assessing their needs. Very good individual care and support is offered by class teachers and by the head teacher and deputy, who are accessible and reassuring. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good, although largely informal, based on teachers' observations, knowledge and understanding of individuals. The school functions well as a happy and orderly community.
47. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance are very good in the nursery. Elsewhere in the school, pupils are assessed through class teachers' records and through test results, but this information is not used effectively to monitor the progress of individuals or groups.
48. Introductory booklets from the nursery and reception classes are part of the warm welcome offered to parents and their children. Pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines, and individual help is provided where necessary. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for transfer to secondary education.
49. The behaviour policy promotes good behaviour in classes, in the open areas of the school, and in the playgrounds. However, rules are not displayed in classrooms, and pupils have no immediate points of reference on the rare occasions when behaviour deteriorates. The anti-bullying policy is implemented consistently and thoroughly. All incidents are recorded by the headteacher.
50. A variety of merit certificates has very recently been introduced for good work, behaviour and effort. A whole-school tree of achievement, displayed in the assembly hall, awaits its first leaves. In the interim, pupils' achievements are commended at special assemblies.

51. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory but do not include regular checks on attendance trends in year groups or the whole school. No consistent procedure is established for contacting parents when a child is absent without explanation. Class registers are completed neatly, and conform with legal requirements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents' views of the school are very favourable. At a pre-inspection meeting and in questionnaire responses, parents commended all aspects of the school's work.
53. The school has satisfactory links with parents, who are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms good two-way communication and good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. A number of parents and friends provide regular, valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. Parents' skills and interests are noted, and frequently are used to enrich the curriculum.
54. An active parent-teacher association organises a variety of social and fund raising events each year and makes useful contributions to the school's budget. Good co-operation is established between the parents' group and the governing body.
55. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Fortnightly newsletters are very informative about school successes, events and important dates. At the start of each term, advance warning of curriculum topics enables parents to prepare to help their children at home. At evening meetings, parents have discussed the mathematics and science curricula. The school prospectus and most recent governors' annual report to parents do not include all the information legally required. The content of the governors' annual report is particularly unsatisfactory.
56. At three consultation evenings each year, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Annual written reports to parents show what children know and can do, and set individual targets for improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
57. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the reception classes or join other year groups. Parents of pupils in Year 6 are well informed about secondary transfer. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed of progress, and they understand the school's procedures for support and discipline. They appreciate the school's sensitivity to individual feelings.
58. Most parents want to be involved with their children's learning, and to help them at home. Parents confidently ask teachers for advice on general or particular issues related to their children's work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The overall quality of the school's leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. Collectively the, headteacher, staff and governors contribute effectively to the quality of education provided and to the standards achieved by the pupils. They have established a caring and supportive ethos for the school. The school ensures that all pupils have access to the curriculum. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour, good relationships and equality of opportunity for all.
60. The governors are kept well informed about developments in school and many of them are regular visitors. They provide effective support for the school and are developing their management role. Individual governors have responsibility for areas such as special educational needs, literacy and numeracy. They have established committees to oversee and meet the requirements of their statutory responsibilities. However, the school is not fully meeting the statutory requirements relating to information for parents in the Governors' Annual Report and the school prospectus. Nor does the school meet the requirements to fulfil all elements of the National Curriculum information technology programme.
61. The school development plan has been produced in consultation with staff and governors. This is based on a clear analysis of the school's needs. However, it does not clearly prioritise between the various issues facing the school. Nor does it set out clearly who will be responsible for the initiatives or the time scale for completion. It addresses planned curriculum developments, but does not incorporate the review of all aspects of the school. Thus, whilst the school development plan informs the work of the school, it is an ineffective tool for managing change and development.
62. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed effectively. The school fulfils the requirements of The Code of Practice in having a Special Needs Register, consulting parents, and holding annual reviews. The school has effective strategies in place to promote skills of literacy and numeracy. The implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has provided a useful and effective framework for curriculum planning. However, in many other subjects, the schemes of work require revision in order to provide a clear framework to support teachers' planning. The school has some strategies in place to monitor pupils' progress through the use of standardised tests and teacher assessment, but these do not yet provide a sufficiently rigorous analysis of pupils' attainment and progress.
63. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Improved assessment procedures have been developed but there is still inconsistency in the use of assessment to support planning and match work to pupils' needs. Some schemes of work have been developed but whole school curriculum planning is not yet fully effective. The provision for information technology is still unsatisfactory. Additional equipment has been provided but pupils have insufficient opportunities to use information technology to support learning across the curriculum.
64. The governors are committed to raising standards and to improving the quality of accommodation and resources in the school for the benefit of the community. They have a vision for the future and an appreciation of the priorities facing the school. However, the lack of a suitable school development plan for all aspects of the school makes clear, strategic financial planning very difficult and the current procedures are unsatisfactory. Spending priorities for curriculum areas or capital projects are not clearly linked to the school's actual or projected income over a number of years. There

are no time limits set for the completion or review of new developments or for evaluating the effectiveness of spending. Grants for specific purposes such as additional literacy support and provision for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. The day to day administration of financial affairs by the school secretary is good. She seeks best value when ordering equipment and services and provides the headteacher and governors with up to date budget information. The collection of money and management of accounts is carried out unobtrusively and makes a positive contribution to the running of the school. The use of modern technology for administrative and educational purposes is insufficiently developed.

65. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance measurement is sound. There are effective staff development and appraisal procedures already in place. The school is preparing for the implementation of the performance management policy. Teachers attend many in-service training courses on appropriate and relevant subjects. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been a recent priority and this has involved whole school training. There are very effective systems in place to support the induction of new staff. Newly appointed teachers are regularly observed by their mentor and given feedback. The teachers are given opportunities for non-contact time to observe other teachers and to prepare lessons.
66. All teachers are suitably qualified. They have an appropriate range of expertise and experience between them to meet the needs of the pupils and provide coverage of the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. They are suitably deployed in terms of their classroom responsibilities. Classroom support staff, the school secretary, kitchen staff and mid-day supervisors all make an effective contribution to the work of the school.
67. The range and quality of learning resources are sufficient to teach the planned curriculum. However, the effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is poor. Computers in classrooms are not used effectively to support learning across the curriculum.
68. The accommodation is satisfactory. There are sufficient classrooms for the number of pupils. There is a hall which is used for assemblies, music and physical education. The school also has the benefit of a separate dining room. The school has a room designated as a library, although at the time of the inspection this was in the process of re-organisation and therefore not available for use. There is an outdoor swimming pool, playground and playing field. The previous inspection report noted that repairs were needed to the nursery building and that some classrooms were in poor decorative order. These issues have been satisfactorily addressed. The site and parts of the building are not kept to the highest standard of tidiness giving a false impression that the school is not cared for.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. To improve the school further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment in information technology by:
 - raising teachers' expertise and confidence;
 - implementing a clear scheme of work to identify a progression in skills and to meet the latest national guidance;
 - planning better opportunities for pupils to use information and communications technology to support their other learning in the classroom;
 - improving the effectiveness of the arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and standards of attainment. *(Paragraphs 11, 137 – 143)*
- (2) Develop a coherent whole school plan for the curriculum and detailed schemes of work for all subjects which clearly identify progression in the development of skills, support teachers' planning and help to ensure continuity throughout the school. *(Paragraphs 34, 63, 120, 125, 130, 136, 140 and 149)*
- (3) Review the school development plan to ensure that it clearly addresses the priorities facing the school, relates to a longer time scale, sets appropriate targets, links clearly with financial planning and includes success criteria against which progress can be evaluated. *(Paragraphs 61 and 64)*
- (4) Make effective use of assessment information to monitor pupils' progress in all subjects and ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. *(Paragraphs 47, 97, 104, 114, 129 and 143)*

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that the information for parents in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report meets statutory requirements. *(Paragraph 55)*
- Ensure that the health and safety issues raised during the inspection are addressed. *(Paragraph 44)*
- Complete the reorganisation of the school library to ensure that pupils have adequate access to reference sources. *(Paragraphs 68 and 97)*
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to be involved in activities which will promote their spiritual development. *(Paragraph 42)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 68 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 26 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0% | 13% | 41% | 43% | 3% | 0% | 0% |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 24 | 253 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | - | 24 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | - | 5 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | - | 108 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 31 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 12 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 17 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.2 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.5 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1999 | 15 | 27 | 42 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| | Total | 36 | 36 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 86 | 86 | 86 |
| | National | 82 | 83 | 87 |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 21 | 23 | 24 |
| | Total | 36 | 38 | 39 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 86 | 90 | 93 |
| | National | 82 | 86 | 87 |

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1999 | 14 | 20 | 34 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | Girls | 15 | 11 | 14 |
| | Total | 24 | 21 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 71 | 62 | 74 |
| | National | 70 | 69 | 78 |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 | 11 | 11 |
| | Girls | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| | Total | 27 | 27 | 28 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 79 | 79 | 82 |
| | National | 68 | 69 | 75 |

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 1 |
| Black – African heritage | 7 |
| Black – other | |
| Indian | |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 216 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 18 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 13.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19 |
| Average class size | 23 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 89 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 24 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 64 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 6.9 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

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

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 671,341 |
| Total expenditure | 622,371 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,014 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | -19,464 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 29,506 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 338 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 64 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 69 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 55 | 34 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 61 | 34 | 3 | 0 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 28 | 33 | 13 | 6 | 20 |
| The teaching is good. | 55 | 33 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 42 | 48 | 8 | 0 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 70 | 23 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 44 | 42 | 3 | 2 | 9 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 48 | 39 | 11 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 52 | 34 | 9 | 0 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 66 | 28 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 58 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 13 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. Children are admitted to the nursery at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Pupils transfer into the reception class in the September or January of the year in which they reach five years of age. Admission to both the nursery and reception classes is staggered and pre-admission arrangements incorporate visits for children and parents. There are good links established between home and school and children settle quickly into the routines of the school. This helps them to feel secure and confident. At the time of the inspection there were 48 children in the nursery and 19 children in the reception class. All were attending part-time. The children in the reception class attend full-time after an induction period of two weeks. Children are assessed in the first half term of full time school. A wide range of attainment is represented in the school's intake although pupils' attainment on entry is above that expected nationally for children of this age. Boys and girls of all backgrounds settle well and make sound progress. By the time they finish the Reception Year, the great majority successfully achieve the standards as set out in the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage and many move beyond this to the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 1.
71. The educational provision for children in the nursery is good. Children are provided with a broad range of well planned activities which help them to acquire appropriate skills and understanding. The nursery is well managed to ensure best use of the resources and staff to progress learning. The children's attainment and progress is monitored through observation on a daily basis. These assessments are well used to plan appropriate work which is well matched to children's needs and abilities. Children benefit from a well thought out curriculum that covers the six areas of learning appropriate to the age group. There is close liaison between the nursery and reception class teachers and pupils are very well prepared for the transition into the reception class. Few pupils enter school directly into the reception class.
72. Staff work effectively together as a team. All staff have a good knowledge of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and of how young children learn. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and appropriate expectations for attainment. Teaching in the Nursery is good. In the Reception class it is satisfactory. The expertise and experience of the support staff in the nursery and reception classes is recognised and used well. They make a very significant contribution to children's learning. The good teaching is characterised by thoughtful and sensitive relationships with pupils and a teaching style that is direct and well organised.
73. The children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They respond well to the opportunities they are given and enjoy learning. The children settle quickly into the nursery and are happy, secure and developing confidence. They form positive relationships with staff and other children. They learn to share equipment and take turns. This good progress is maintained in the reception class. The children understand and accept the routines such as how many can work in each area, and of more formal session procedures when they work with the teachers or nursery nurses. Their behaviour is good and they are gaining in confidence and self esteem. In both nursery and the reception class, children are keen to be involved and behave well. Children approach their work and play with enthusiasm and show good powers of

concentration and perseverance. They are secure and at ease with adults and with one another.

74. Teaching of personal, social and emotional education is good. All staff provide very good role models and have appropriately high expectations of children's behaviour. They encourage them to concentrate and persevere with activities and the children respond well. In the nursery, good use is made of snack time to develop social skills. Class procedures and rules are reinforced throughout so that the children know exactly what is expected of them.
75. By the time they reach the end of the reception class most children are likely to achieve what is expected for their age in communication, language and literacy. All children, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language make good progress. In both the nursery and reception class there are opportunities for children to listen to stories and to participate in book sharing sessions. The majority of children make good progress in listening skills. They listen to instructions and questions although some younger children's response is restricted. Reception children continue to develop speaking and listening skills through group discussions and role play activities. They extend their vocabulary, speak clearly and demonstrate an ability to recount experiences. The children know that pictures carry meaning and are aware that words do also. They handle books appropriately and listen to stories and some choose to read or to spend time in the writing area. Some nursery children recognise their name and initial sounds. Reception children know most letter sounds and are beginning to read and write familiar words.
76. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. Children in the nursery are encouraged to talk about what they are doing in all activities and staff talk to them and ask questions to promote their language skills. Staff urge the children to listen carefully and praise their contributions in discussions and this motivates the children's involvement. Stories are read well which helps the children to concentrate and enjoy them. Opportunities are provided for role play where staff intervene appropriately to extend the play and develop children's vocabulary and understanding. Staff in the reception classes provide a range of appropriate activities to develop language skills. Children learn to wait for their turn to speak and listen to other pupils. The children respond well to stories and rhymes. Pupils in the nursery have constant access to mark making materials and books and are encouraged as emergent writers. Their early reading and writing skills are developed in the reception class through a structured approach to the teaching of phonic skills and letter formation.
77. Children in the nursery make good progress in their mathematical development. Children are learning to use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary and some show confidence in using it. Staff make sure that whenever possible they encourage the children to use the everyday events and equipment to re-enforce their confidence in using numbers. Number songs and rhymes are sung frequently. All the children have a stimulating and relevant experience of counting, numbers and patterns carefully matched to their age and experience. The work planned takes into account the pupils' level of attainment and their need to develop the language of number. The teacher's expectations are high. In the reception class, pupils make satisfactory progress in counting and are learning to write numbers. In the reception class, they further develop these skills. Through established routines and planned activities, children learn to match, sort, order, sequence and count. Children learn to recognise and write numbers to ten. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are able to use language to describe the position of objects and their size and quantity. They can identify simple shapes and create patterns. They sort objects into sets using a range of criteria

including size, shape and colour. Most count and match and by the time they leave reception, many are copying and writing numbers. By the time they are five years old, for the majority of children, the level of attainment is above what is expected for their age.

78. The teaching of mathematics is good. There is a good range of appropriate activities in both the nursery and reception class. Careful consideration is given to what the children can learn in self-chosen activities as well as in directed tasks. Good use is made of the resources and of time available. Children have many opportunities to learn and reinforce their number skills and understanding and to develop the language of number. A good example of assessment was observed in the nursery when children were asked to estimate and then count the number of cubes they picked up in one hand. Their ability to count and to recognise and write numerals was carefully recorded to support the planning of future work.
79. The children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and most are likely to attain standards in line with expectations for this area of learning. A wide range of activities are provided and children are encouraged to talk about events in their lives and the environment. Stories are used to encourage pupils to develop concepts of time and place. They recall their experiences through a range of role play situations. Floor play equipment such as airports, railways and roadways is used to enable pupils to develop their language use and to make connections with their own surroundings. They have opportunities for a wide range of early scientific experiences using materials such as sand and water and they develop an appropriate vocabulary. As part of the topic 'Myself,' children become aware of their own bodies and are able to identify and name body parts. Children are able to use the skills of cutting, joining and building using a range of materials. For example, one child was observed taking great care with the wrapping of a 'parcel'. This was a difficult task involving the use of scissors and tape. The child showed great perseverance and eventually achieved success. They have access to construction sets which they use with skill to build models. Children learn to use the computer and can control simple programs using the mouse and the keyboard.
80. Teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Activities are well resourced and planned and build on previous learning. These activities extend the children's experiences outside school. The children are encouraged to work independently with appropriate intervention by adults. The children are developing good work habits as well as increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
81. Progress in physical development is good and by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve the national expectation. In both the nursery and reception classroom the children move confidently, making sure they move around each other and furniture carefully. Children develop fine control of small apparatus and pencils and use scissors and tools with increasing control and safety. Their hand-eye coordination and their manipulative skills are developed as they thread beads, cut out shapes, build models, paint and build with construction kits. Children in the nursery have very good access to outdoor play to use the large apparatus and wheeled toys. The outdoor play is well planned with skills teaching and opportunity for choice and free play. The staff provide good opportunities for balancing skills and create obstacle courses which involve balancing, crawling and some limited climbing. Opportunities for climbing are however restricted by the lack of suitably challenging equipment. Pupils in the reception class have no access to large outdoor play equipment. They do however, have timetabled sessions in the school hall when they dance, perform simple

gymnastics and play games.

82. The teaching of physical development is good. Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop physical skills and show the children how to use equipment safely, for example how to hold the scissors correctly when cutting. They make children aware of the need for safety when balancing and jumping from the apparatus. Staff set appropriate challenges and provide lots of encouragement to develop children's confidence and skills.
83. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve the nationally expected level of attainment in creative development. The nursery has a good range of resources for creative development and pupils make good progress. The staff ensure that there is a good balance between the teaching of skills and free exploration. A good example was the clay pots which children produced. They were encouraged to explore the material and discuss their thoughts. They showed good levels of concentration and were proud of their efforts. Pupils show great enthusiasm for art and are able to represent what they see and feel in a range of media. They explore colour and texture through painting and printing. They model with scrap materials and make collage. Children are involved and collaborate effectively in role play which is actively supported and extended by staff involvement. They have opportunities to explore music, using percussion instruments. They know a number of songs and rhymes and sing with enthusiasm.
84. The quality of teaching is good with many opportunities provided where children can develop their creative thinking and skills. The staff encourage the children to talk about their work and express feelings. The planning of appropriate activities, along with the use of a good range of resources, results in children being able to achieve the intended learning outcomes in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

85. In Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in English are in line with the national average, overall. They are above the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing and in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above the national average. They are above the national average in reading and writing and in speaking and listening. These findings represent good improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection in 1996.
86. The 1999 national tests for seven year olds indicated that pupils' performance was above the national average in reading. The percentage reaching level 2 or above was close to the national average and the percentage reaching level 3 or above was above average. Their performance in writing was close to the national average. The percentage reaching level 2 was close to the national average whilst the percentage reaching level 3 was above average. In comparison with similar schools, their performance in reading was below average and in writing it was well below average. Standards in reading and writing have risen steadily in line with national trends over a four year period, despite a decline in 1998. Inspection findings broadly reflect this picture of continuing improvement.

87. In 1999, national tests for eleven year olds indicated that pupils achieved close to the national average based on average points scores. Test scores have risen broadly in line with the national trend over the past four years. Results for the current year indicate that standards are now rising more quickly and this is reflected in the inspection findings.
88. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national average. Most pupils are becoming competent speakers and listeners. They use these skills in discussion about themselves, how they get to school and the type of house they live in. They also confidently discuss the stories they are reading in the 'big book' during the literacy hour. A Year 2 pupil, for example, explained, "If the tiger has eaten all of the family's food, then they will have to go out to a restaurant." A small minority are less confident when asked questions and, although they listen carefully, still restrict answers to single words at this stage.
89. Standards in reading are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. A high proportion of pupils of all abilities read accurately from appropriate texts at level 2. Some of these are fluent and read expressively. They recognise a range of complex words and have well developed skills for reading new words which they come across. They understand their stories and answer questions about the book they are reading. Their home reading comprises mostly fiction whilst a small minority read non-fiction for pleasure. Most know that story books have an author, an illustrator and a contents page. Some higher attaining pupils are familiar with the index in non-fiction and know it is arranged alphabetically. Otherwise, wider reading skills are not yet well developed because they do not use a library regularly.
90. Standards in writing are in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' handwriting is adequately developed by age seven. The range of handwriting indicates that most pupils are ready to begin joining letters, having successfully achieved accuracy of letter formation. Higher attaining pupils write clear sentences with correct spelling and accurate use of capital letters and full stops. They write for a range of purposes, for instance to describe a visit to Whipsnade Zoo, and are developing an awareness of their audience. Events are placed in the correct order and ideas are logically developed. Lower ability pupils are beginning to convey meaning through their writing but do not yet use punctuation consistently.
91. Standards in speaking and listening are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. By age eleven, pupils listen carefully to one another and their teachers. They analyse text carefully and give articulate, complete answers to questions, demonstrating good comprehension skills. They use appropriate and accurate language in their replies. A Year 6 pupil discussing autobiographical writing, for example, reasoned, "People wouldn't have bought Mary Seacole's autobiography if they didn't like her." The majority of pupils are confident when asked to address the rest of the class and speak clearly to the best of their ability. A minority, although confident, are hesitant and confine answers or suggestions to short phrases.
92. Standards in reading are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The majority of pupils are competent readers. They read aloud clearly and with understanding and discuss the characters and plot of stories confidently. Higher attaining pupils are very fluent and expressive. They read widely and explain their views clearly. They speak knowledgeably about their favourite books, identify a wide range of children's authors and make good use of non-fiction. They have well developed reference skills and skim text to gain information quickly. Most pupils are confident in the use of a dictionary or thesaurus. Wider research skills are less well developed

since there is no access to a library for this purpose.

93. Standards in writing are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The quality and style of pupils' handwriting are very good. The vast majority produce clear, uniform and attractive joined script in all of their work in English and other subjects. Additionally, writing is organised, clear and well adapted for a number of purposes. They modify language for use in formal and informal letter writing or to communicate, for example, in the style of a journalist describing a plane crash in the Andes. A small number of higher attaining pupils use metaphorical imagery which reflects standards well above the national average. A Year 6 pupil, for example, writes, "*The moon is a dented vase thrown by an angry child.*" Most pupils make good use of punctuation and are secure with spelling. They plan work carefully and make good use of parts of speech such as adjectives and adverbs. Lower attaining pupils are less consistent with spelling, punctuation and the use of descriptive or imaginative language.
94. The overall quality of teaching is sound, with some strengths in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, teaching is sound overall. It is sound in two thirds of lessons and on one occasion it was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, teaching is also sound, overall and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. It is satisfactory in sixty per cent of lessons and good or better in the remainder, with the greater proportion of good teaching taking place in Year 6.
95. The strategies for teaching literacy throughout the school are effective and this is having a positive effect on the standards being achieved. Teachers throughout the school plan lessons in accordance with the National Literacy Strategy. This ensures well balanced activities in the majority of lessons which include question and answer sessions, written activities and a review of what has been learned. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make at least sound progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. The features of the most successful teaching are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance and very good relationships between teachers and their class. This results in an academic atmosphere in which pupils have high self-esteem and a mature attitude to their own learning. In a Year 6 lesson seen, for example, the teacher expected all pupils to provide complete and articulate answers to questions and this had a positive effect on the development of their speaking and listening skills. She also set challenging targets for individuals and groups to achieve both in the lesson and in their homework. Pupils clearly enjoyed this challenge and responded very well. Teaching is occasionally less successful where the management of pupils' behaviour is inconsistent or where the work planned for groups of pupils is not well matched to their needs. This results in restlessness which slows the pace of teaching and the rate of achievement. The school's marking policy is inconsistently applied throughout the school. Overall, it is more effectively used in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Where it is used well, it is constructive, provides pupils with incentive to improve and is a useful tool for teachers in planning the next day's work for individuals and groups. Homework is used effectively by teachers throughout the school and makes a positive contribution to the school's improving achievement in English.
96. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject. They enjoy the literacy hour and younger pupils particularly enjoy reading the '*big book*' together. Pupils throughout the school work conscientiously during the writing sessions and are keen to make contributions in discussions. A small minority become restless or uncooperative on occasions, when work is either too difficult or insufficiently challenging. However, even on occasions where pupils are not clearly directed, the vast majority persevere with their work and relationships between pupils and teachers are good.

97. The school has taken a number of steps to improve standards since the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been widely implemented and standards of attainment have improved. Effective use has been made of additional literacy support and booster classes to achieve this. There is now a wider range of tests in use for assessing pupils' progress on a regular basis. There are, however, some further areas for development. More effective use could be made of assessment data to track the progress of individuals and to set accurate targets for improvement. The literacy co-ordinator has had a limited role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning or the standards of pupils' attainment. Areas for development such as the library have been identified but not yet addressed effectively. Insufficient use is made of computers to either facilitate data analysis or to improve pupils' editing and word processing skills. The school library is not currently in use. This is having a negative impact on the development of pupils' library and research skills and severely limits opportunities for independent learning. Drama makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievement and is a strength of the subject. Pupils are given the opportunity to visit the Globe Theatre and to take part in workshops given by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

MATHEMATICS

98. Standards in mathematics are above the national average at the end of both key stages. Inspection findings show there has been improvement in standards at both key stages since the previous inspection. The school's 1999 results of national tests at Key Stage 1 showed standards were above the national average. The school's 1999 Key Stage 2 results in national tests were in line with the national average. Although the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level for their age was below the national average, the proportion achieving the higher level was above the national average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection which indicated that the higher attaining pupils were not always provided with sufficient challenge. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of both key stages show a steady improvement between 1996 and 1999. The school's results from the tests in 2000 show further improvements in the levels achieved.
99. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time in the school, as a result of the full and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, the good teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils use their mathematical skills well to support their learning in other subjects, for example in science and geography. The previous inspection reported that attainment was in line with the national expectation at the end of both key stages, with pupils making sound progress. Attainment has been improved and pupils in both key stages make good progress. They show gains in knowledge and understanding and are able to use appropriate mathematical skills in a variety of contexts. Pupils develop an understanding of the number system and develop sound understanding and knowledge of how to apply their learning to practical situations. However, insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

100. Standards of numeracy throughout the school are good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are introduced to mathematical vocabulary and their understanding of numbers are developed through well-planned activities which develop links across the curriculum. Suitable reinforcement is provided through activities to develop their knowledge and understanding of patterns, numbers and shapes. By the end of the key stage, they carry out simple calculations accurately and have a good knowledge and understanding of number facts. They demonstrate a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, an understanding and appreciation of number pattern and measures, and are developing skills of data handling. Pupils begin to develop their skills in mental recall of number bonds and to explain how they have arrived at the answers to questions. As they gain in understanding of how to order, add and subtract numbers, they apply their knowledge successfully to money and measures. Average and higher attaining pupils have some understanding of multiplication and division, halving and doubling numbers and of fractions.
101. Pupils build successfully on their knowledge and skills at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities have a good knowledge of place value, can use the four basic operations competently, have a sound grasp of spatial concepts and can use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. Pupils have a sound understanding of decimals and fractions and can round decimals to two or three decimal places. They can measure accurately areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes. They can draw acute and obtuse angles accurately and recognise and name properties of three-dimensional shapes. The higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of percentages and probability, can use fractions and decimals accurately and are competent in long multiplication and division. The lower attaining pupils can apply the four rules of number effectively and use a wide range of units of measure competently.
102. The majority of pupils display positive attitudes to work. They usually behave well and respond positively to challenge. When required, they collaborate well with other pupils, sharing ideas and equipment sensibly. They concentrate well and work hard to complete their tasks. They have good relationships with their teachers, listen with attention and respond eagerly to questions. These positive attitudes to learning have a beneficial effect on their attainment and progress. However, on occasions when the pace of the lesson slows or the work lacks sufficient challenge, they lose interest and behaviour deteriorates.
103. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages and is never less than satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and structured, with clear aims. Classroom management skills are generally good and this enables teachers to use a range of teaching styles including whole class, group and individual tuition. Good use is made of the framework provided by the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons usually begin with a lively and effective session of oral and mental work, which effectively develops pupils' mental recall skills and promotes their use of different strategies to answer questions. Effective use is made of whole class teaching where teachers frequently involve pupils in explaining their ideas and demonstrating to the rest of the class. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, good questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to explain a wide range of strategies they had used to solve addition problems. Group or individual tasks are then completed and lessons usually have a lively pace to which pupils respond well. Some teachers make effective use of a plenary session at the end of the lesson to review and reinforce pupils' learning, however this is not yet used consistently in all classes. In the most effective lessons, teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour. They effectively build on pupils' knowledge and understanding from previous lessons. For example, in a lesson on division with pupils

from Years 5 and 6, the teacher reinforced earlier learning to ensure that pupils developed a clear understanding of the concepts involved. Pupils were then involved in activities to support this learning and which gave them the opportunity to use the skills introduced. The pupils responded well because of their interest and consequently developed their skills, knowledge and understanding. Homework is used very effectively to support work in mathematics through the learning of multiplication tables and number bonds and through work which reinforces classroom activities.

104. Teachers make good use of questioning to assess and develop pupils' understanding and provide support as necessary. Pupils receive good feedback on their work through verbal comments although written marking is not always used to the best effect. There are regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. However, teachers do not always make the most effective use of these assessments to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
105. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is good and has been influential in raising standards in recent years. The National Numeracy Strategy is used as an effective framework for planning and is having a beneficial effect on standards especially in mental work and the development of mathematical language. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. An adequate range of resources is available to support teaching and learning in the subject. The co-ordinator provides support and advice as necessary. Clear and appropriately challenging targets have been agreed for the National Curriculum tests.

SCIENCE

106. Attainment of pupils shows overall improvement since the last inspection. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. Teacher assessments for 2000 were close to those for 1999. The weakness in experimental and investigative science identified at the previous inspection has been addressed. This is evident from teacher assessments at the end of the key stages where results in experimental and investigative science were above the national average in 1999. However, the improvement is less evident in pupils' work. The scrutiny of work from the last school year identified much pupil work in life and life processes, materials and their properties and physical processes but much less in experimental and investigative science. Where pupils had recorded their own results, described what they had done and attempted to explain the outcomes, the work was of a high standard.
107. Attainment in Key Stage 2 was reported to be broadly in line with the national average at the last inspection. Test results in 1999 were below national average, but results for 2000 show a significant improvement. In 1999, 74 per cent of pupils attained National Curriculum Level 4 and above and this was below the national average. However, 24 per cent pupils attained Level 5 and this was close to the national average. In 2000, 94 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 and above, of whom 59 per cent attained Level 5. The evidence of inspection supports this recent improvement and attainment is now good. The range of work seen was well balanced across the four attainment targets for science. Much of the science work in Key Stage 2 is focused on experimental and investigative science. This is a strength. Comparison with national averages based on average national curriculum points in tests shows that pupil performance was close to the national average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Trends over time are broadly in line with the national trend over the past four years to 1999.
108. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils possess a sound scientific vocabulary and

knowledge. Pupils understand that force can be used to push, pull and turn; that living creatures are subject to a life cycle and are part of a food chain. They know that electricity flows through wires and can be a source of danger; they can differentiate between living, dead and “never-lived” objects; they know about a variety of light sources and can differentiate between natural and artificial sources. They know the five senses and the parts of the body associated with them; they know about conditions necessary to sustain life and growth and about reversible and irreversible change. Pupils are beginning to understand the need for fair testing. Presentation and layout is generally satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils are able to write clear explanations, often with carefully drawn and labelled diagrams. There is evidence of satisfactory progress.

109. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to distinguish between natural and man-made materials. They can differentiate between conductors and insulators. They sustain investigations over a period of time as in an investigation of the growth of bacteria on cheese. They discriminate between solids, liquids and gases; determine which changes are reversible and which aren't; and which substances are soluble and which are insoluble. They understand the difference between pulse and heart rate and the beneficial affects of exercise and possess a sound understanding of the parts, structure and functions of the human body. There is evidence of good progress across all the attainment targets and particularly in the development of experimental and investigative work.
110. Pupils with special education needs are afforded full access to the science curriculum and make sound progress. Pupils develop a good scientific vocabulary. In a Year 6 class, pupils talked of “dehydration”, “condensation”, “control plant” and “mould” in on-going work on conditions for sustaining life. In a Year 3 class pupils talked of “attract” and “repel” and correctly distinguished between them. Presentation and layout of work is usually clear, neat and makes effective use of well-annotated diagrams, graphs and drawings.
111. In both key stages pupil progress is achieved through all pupils having similar experiences but more demanding explanations are sometimes required from higher attaining pupils, particularly throughout Key Stage 2. This is an area that is currently being developed through release of the subject co-ordinator to work with groups of higher attaining pupils throughout the school. Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Literacy skills are well used in researching and recording whilst numeracy skills are frequently used in data handling which often takes the form of graphs and tables. However, information technology is not used effectively to support learning in science.

112. Pupils' attitude to science is good at both key stages and respond positively to the challenges set by their teachers. They confidently put forward ideas, make predictions and draw conclusions. They listen well to each other and value each other's opinion. They demonstrate a mature and responsible attitude towards caring and supporting each other and towards the creatures and plants that are in their charge. The improving level of investigative opportunities, particularly at Key Stage 2, makes the subject exciting and challenging.
113. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. At Key Stage 1 both lessons observed were good. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher made good use of resources in investigative group work on "tasting" and "smelling" in order to develop sensory awareness. The teacher helped to develop pupil awareness of hypothesis, testing, recording and concluding. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were establishing criteria through which they could group and classify materials. There was a good focus on vocabulary and the lesson moved on at a good pace. Pupil activities were relevant and well linked to the learning objectives that the teacher had indicated in planning. Teachers subject knowledge was good and learning was effective. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good. Six lessons were observed. All teaching is satisfactory or better and one-third of lessons are very good. Teachers look for the opportunity to link attainment targets to an investigative element and to other subjects. Pupils in Year 3 were involved in group tasks on magnetism. Tasks helped recall previous knowledge and extended it through wider application or through a challenge. Higher attaining pupils were challenged to design a magnetic fishing game. This linked well with design and technology requirements to design and construct. Lower attaining pupils were investigating the magnetic qualities of various metal objects in order to increase their understanding of "attract" and "repel". Questioning techniques are good and much use of open-ended questions promoted pupil thinking and is reflected in the sensitive and thoughtful responses that pupils give. In a Year 6 lesson on conditions for sustaining plant life, the teacher's questioning gave pupils the opportunity to predict. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and demonstrate good teacher knowledge and understanding. Homework is regularly set and consists often of finding information or finding environmental examples of classroom work.
114. Teachers' planning was satisfactory overall. Science is taught within a topic framework in Key Stage 1 and as a discrete subject at Key Stage 2. The subject long-term plans are constantly reviewed and modified in response to perceived deficiencies in curricular coverage in relation to outcomes from national tests. This has promoted improvement in pupil attainment across both key stages. Currently, overall curricular provision is being thoroughly reviewed in relation to Curriculum 2000. Short-term planning is variable and often brief. Learning objectives are usually clear and sufficiently well defined to ensure that outcomes are successful. However, tasks are rarely differentiated in short-term plans and this is a weakness as pupil success or sense of challenge is impaired. The school makes very effective use of national and commercial test data. However, this is not well supported by on-going assessment and recording of pupil achievement at the end of units of work. There is a lack of consistency in assessment and recording and some teachers have little evidence to identify pupil attainment and progress other than test scores. This is currently under review and steps are being taken to put a uniform system in place.

115. The subject is very well supported by a hard-working and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has been in post for two years. The co-ordinator is effectively encouraging links across the attainment targets in science as well as links with other subjects. As part of Project 2000 the co-ordinator has classroom release in order to support groups of higher attaining pupils within classrooms across the whole school. This enables the co-ordinator to have an overview of standards of pupil attainment, quality of teaching and the effectiveness of curricular provision across the entire school as well as creating the opportunity to impart advice and guidance to colleagues. Resources are adequate for curriculum coverage. The school pond is a resource much used throughout the whole school. The school has worked very hard to address subject weaknesses identified in the previous report and many areas have been significantly improved.

ART AND DESIGN

116. During the inspection, no lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and only two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Evidence from these and from examples of pupils' earlier work indicates that achievements in art are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages.
117. A range of media including drawing materials, paint, printing, modelling and collage work is provided during the year. Pupils also have opportunities to study the work of other artists and apply this to their own work. Pupils develop an understanding of colour mixing, and the selection of appropriate materials. They express themselves through drawing and painting and modelling and use simple techniques with developing control. Pupils in Key Stage 2 produce careful observational drawings using pencil and are introduced to shade and tone. However, three-dimensional work is relatively under developed. There is little evidence that information technology is used to support work in art.
118. The quality of teaching observed at Key Stage 2 was good. It has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Work is both challenging and enjoyable, and pupils are encouraged to think about the quality of their work and how they can improve it. Lessons are well planned and prepared with good introductions and clear instructions. Pupils have positive attitudes; they listen carefully and demonstrate enjoyment and independence in carrying out art activities and approach their work with confidence.
119. Teachers often integrate art activities into topic work. Planning reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and supports learning in other subjects. However, there is no clear indication in short term planning of the key skills to be developed.
120. The art co-ordinator provides support for colleagues but has had limited opportunities to monitor standards of work. There is a school policy for art, which provides some guidance for staff. The school does not yet have a scheme of work in place to support staff in providing a systematic programme of skill development throughout the school. The school has adequate consumable resources for art and is developing a collection of reference materials concerning artists and their work. Resources to support three-dimensional work are limited.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. There were no design and technology lessons during the week of inspection and teaching of the subject was observed only as elements of two other lessons. The evidence available from Key Stage 1 related to designing and testing parachutes and from Key Stage 2 designing and making masks and theatre dioramas. There is little evidence of designing techniques or evaluation. The co-ordinator identified other design and technology activities that had been undertaken during the previous year. In Key Stage 1 pupils had engaged in weighing and mixing materials in baking, designed and made wind chimes and pop-up Easter cards. In Key Stage 2 pupils had designed and constructed Tudor houses, tangrams, push-and-pull Easter cards and had designed and constructed model pyramids which had been tested for their weight-bearing properties, designed and constructed photo frames, decorated jars and clay statues.
122. However, there was insufficient evidence available to make judgements about the standards of attainment or the quality of teaching.
123. Long-term and medium-term planning is currently done within a topic framework in Key Stage 1 and as discrete subjects in Key Stage 2. Little evidence was found of a systematic approach to the subject whereby design and constructional techniques and skills were developed in a consolidating and progressive way.
124. Although no designated design and technology lessons were observed, subject elements were observed in two science lessons. In a Year 3 class groups of pupils were working on aspects of magnetism. One group was set the task of designing and constructing a magnetic fishing game. This was a suitably challenging task for a group of higher attaining pupils and they responded enthusiastically to it. They worked in pairs to come up with ideas and designs then compared them, communally deciding on the best. In a class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, within a science lesson on muscle function, were shown how to construct a model to demonstrate the functioning of the biceps. Although there was no pupil design element, the construction aspect was responded to enthusiastically by all pupils. This was preceded by sound consideration of safety when using portable vices and saws. Pupils had not used tools like these in school for some considerable time but did so sensibly and safely in co-operation with each other. There was a genuine sense of achievement upon completion.
125. There is no agreed school pattern for recording pupil achievement and progress. The subject co-ordinator has been in post since the beginning of term. Although design and technology has a policy document, it dates from 1996. It needs up-dating in line with requirements of National Curriculum 2000. There is no clear scheme of work in place through which teachers can develop pupil's design and technology techniques and skills in a systematic and progressive way. As there has been no co-ordinator for the subject since 1998, the new co-ordinator faces a challenging task and is responding enthusiastically. There is to be an audit of resources, policy document update and initial development of a scheme of work during the current year. The co-ordinator is very aware of the range of opportunities for subject development through other curriculum subjects, particularly science, and of the need to develop a subject portfolio as a means of recording evidence of achievement in the subject within school and as a resource bank for teachers. The co-ordinator, however, has no opportunity to have an overall strategic view of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound geographical knowledge of the local environment and have visited the school's locality, including shops and park, and have identified their favourite place in Barnet. Pupils are able to name their home town and can also name the city and country it in. They have worked out their route to and from school and constructed a town map. Pupils are aware of the variety and use of many buildings in the neighbourhood. They can identify different kinds of homes. Year 2 pupils know that the United Kingdom comprises islands surrounded by water and can identify the constituent countries on a map. They include features and used simple symbols on their maps.
127. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national expectations. Pupils compare and contrast Barnet with many different locations, including India, Greece and Egypt and with locations in other parts of the British Isles. They have compared climatic conditions, topography, settlements, land use and economic activities. Pupils have a good understanding of plans and Ordnance Survey maps. They have a sound knowledge of scale, grid references, contours, direction, keys and symbols. Pupils use maps and atlases well and can locate cities and features on maps of the British Isles, Europe and the world. They understand the pattern of day and night, winter and summer as well as the influence of sun and moon. A focus for geographical work in Year 6 is based upon the Isle of Wight. Pupils visit the island on a school journey during the year. This is a very good feature. A year 3 class were engaged in investigating global weather patterns. This was linked to pupils' holiday experience and some pupils were able to relate climatic conditions from worldwide locations. Pupils were able to locate many European countries and the United States of America on a globe. Their general knowledge of the world is good. In a Year 6 class considering river courses pupils were able to describe rivers they had visited in Canada and Switzerland. Homework is regularly set and pupils have often to research geographical information. Little use is made of computers in the subject and this is a weakness. Overall pupils' progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and often good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
128. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2. Of the four lessons observed, three were good and the other was satisfactory. Lessons are generally well prepared and resourced and teachers possessed good subject knowledge. This was evident in the quality of geographical vocabulary used during the lessons. In a Year 6 lesson on rivers, pupils knew of "source", "waterfall" and "mouth" and quickly assimilated terms such as "tributary" and "meander". Teachers maintain a brisk pace in lessons and resources are well organised. Questioning is often challenging and frequently requires pupils to recall previous knowledge. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils. Work is well presented but very similar. There is little evidence of work being matched to the different abilities within the class.
129. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is barely satisfactory. Two lessons were observed, one of which was satisfactory. The other lesson was unsatisfactory as the work was a duplication of work in the previous school year. This highlights the lack of a systematic form of record keeping in the subject. No assessment procedures are in place and there is no school portfolio for the subject. Subject assessment was an area of concern at the previous inspection. Planning is variable across both key stages and lessons do not always identify the learning objectives clearly. Marking overall is weak. Often pupils' work is merely ticked with some occasional encouraging comment. Comments geared to promote improvement, other than presentation, are rare.

130. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for one year and has reviewed the policy document in the light of curriculum 2000. There is no clear scheme of work in place, although material from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has been introduced during the past year but this remains to be evaluated at the conclusion of units of study. The subject co-ordinator has no monitoring role and has, therefore, no strategic overview of the subject.

HISTORY

131. Standards of attainment in both key stages are in line with national expectations. This reflects a decline in standards since the last inspection when standards were judged to be above national expectations
132. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound understanding of the changes that have taken place in people's lives over the recent past. They use a variety of sources of evidence to develop their research skills. For example, Year 2 pupils examine photographs and copies of newspaper extracts to compare life in Victorian times with the present day. They are also familiar with the names and achievements of famous people from the period such as Florence Nightingale and Sir Isaac Newton.
133. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities have developed a sound knowledge base about the past and a significant minority have well developed investigative skills. They are familiar with many aspects of the culture of ancient Greece and the effects on their own cultural heritage through the development of the Olympic Games. They show a clear understanding of the changes which have occurred in Britain since the nineteen thirties and their effect on people's lives. However, pupils in both key stages currently have no access to a library and too few opportunities to use computers for independent research. This limits their progress in the wider development of investigative skills.
134. The quality of teaching is sound, overall and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is good in one third of lessons. The best teaching is reflected in very good preparation and imaginative use of learning resources. In a Year 6 lesson seen, for example, the teacher used overhead projector transparencies and a variety of other sources of information on the Olympic Games to introduce the lesson. This captured the interest and attention of the class, developed their research skills and enabled them to achieve well. Teaching is occasionally less effective when pupils' recording of their work is confined to copying notes or drawing pictures. Teachers throughout the school provide good opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. They achieve this through sharply focused question and answer sessions and the planning of group discussions. Teaching in the subject also makes a good contribution to the development of extended writing. Pupils in Year 5, for example, wrote at length about a teenager's life in the nineteen fifties.
135. Pupils throughout the school enjoy opportunities to compare life long ago with their present day environment. They appreciate and remember visits to places of historical interest and respond enthusiastically in *'living history'* activities such as dressing up as hippies from the nineteen sixties.

136. The school has not introduced a scheme of work since the last inspection. This has led to a lack of continuity of provision from year to year. Whilst some individual lessons are taught well, there is no systematic teaching of the knowledge and skills required to meet the demands of the curriculum. These factors, coupled with a lack of resources for developing investigative skills, account for the decline in standards since the last inspection. The school has identified a need to address this issue and a working party has been formed to introduce a new scheme of work based on recent adjustments to the National Curriculum for history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

137. There was little work in information technology taking place during the inspection. The observations made along with a scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicate that attainment is currently below the national expectation at the end of both key stages. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection when standards were in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.
138. Pupils from Year 2 were able to recall maths and language programs they had used but could not remember the last time they had worked on the computer. The pupils were unable to give any examples of word processing, data handling, controlling or measuring using the computer. By the end of Key Stage 1, there is little evidence that they are developing skills in storing and retrieving information or that they can save or print their own work. Overall, the progress of pupils of all attainments in the development of information technology skills is unsatisfactory.
139. In Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 3 had completed a pro-forma poem installed on a computer about Autumn Sense Poetry using simple word processing skills. In Year 4, the higher attaining group composed Haiku poems on the computer. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given access to a CD Rom about bullying as part of a personal, social and health education lesson. The program was loaded for them and although they were able to control the program using the mouse, they did not display confidence or assurance in handling the technology. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 showed they had had some experience of data processing, producing bar charts, word processing, loading a program and saving data. However, the pupils have minimum school experience of using the computer for research, exchanging information, monitoring or modelling.
140. No direct teaching of relevant skills for information and communications technology was observed. There is evidence of some work and a rota in nearly all the classes of pupils' access to the computers but these examples are limited. As a consequence regular access to a planned scheme of work is not given and the planning for pupils' development throughout the curriculum is minimal and unsatisfactory. At the time of the inspection the requirements of the National Curriculum were not being met.
141. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not been provided with sufficient opportunities to enable them to attain the expected standards. The range of work planned does not cover all aspects of the programmes of study, particularly controlling and modelling. Few pupils use word processing to draft and redraft work. Their use of the computer as a research tool is under developed nor do they have sufficient opportunities to use information technology to collect and display data.

142. Since the last inspection the school has purchased new computers and is currently exploring the development of a computer suite. A digital camera has been acquired through the collection of commercial vouchers. The equipment throughout the school is adequate with the minimum of one computer in each class and two computers in most classes. The school is not yet connected to the Internet. Additional resources and some staff training will become available later this year as part of the National Grid for Learning initiative. However, many staff have limited confidence and require support and guidance. There is currently no scheme of work to provide clear guidance for teachers when they are planning the curriculum. Leadership and management in this subject is ineffective. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a short while but has not yet provided the clear support and guidance needed by colleagues.
143. There is little evidence of direct teaching of ICT skills. There are few examples of planning for information technology lessons and little mention of use of ICT on plans for other subjects. Too little time is devoted to the subject and computers are not always used well. There is no detailed progression of skills and at present methods for assessing and recording pupils' progress and attainment in ICT through the school are unsatisfactory. During the period of the inspection there was little evidence of information technology supporting pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum. There is insufficient access to the computer for the majority of pupils.

MUSIC

144. Overall, attainment in music is in line with the national expectations at the end of both key stages. Some pupils achieve above the expectations.
145. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully and copy rhythms accurately as a group and when responding individually. By the end of the key stage they are able to read simple notation and play rhythms by sight using a "walk/run" method for crotchet and quaver recognition. Their unaccompanied singing remains on pitch and in time showing good aural memory.
146. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills. By the end of the key stage they use the tonic-solfa to read music, sing unaccompanied in unison and in harmony and to compose simple tunes. When listening to two contemporary songs and asked to choose one song as a theme tune for a charity appeal for homeless people, Year 6 pupils were able to analyse the song lyrics for the message and meaning and to confidently express their views about the style of music used.
147. Teaching is good overall. The teachers show a good knowledge of the subject and have clear methods for the delivery of their plans. Their expectations are high and discipline in this largely practical subject is good. The pace of lessons is satisfactory but is sometimes too fast to allow time for the pupils to rehearse the elements being taught. The singing practice for Key Stage 2 was an enjoyable time with the teacher's obvious skills and enthusiasm rewarded by the pupils' attention and effort. Throughout the school the good relationships between teachers and enhance the opportunities for learning.
148. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. In both key stages, pupils listen attentively and respond well. They are able to organise groups quickly, distribute instruments efficiently and remain on task almost all the time. They show obvious enjoyment of their music lessons.

149. The music co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced. Overall the standards of provision are satisfactory. There is, however, no whole school scheme of work for music and little monitoring of the subject. Consequently, it is difficult to ensure that all elements of the National Curriculum programme of study are adequately covered.
150. Pupils also have access to lessons on the recorders, violins, brass instruments and flutes. Some of these lessons are provided by peripatetic teachers. The music curriculum is enhanced by opportunities for the pupils to perform at inter-school festivals, local fund raising events and at senior citizens' homes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

151. The school provides a well-balanced programme of physical activities throughout the year which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastic activities and respond to music through dance. All pupils, from the Nursery to Year 6, have experience of swimming and the great majority are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
152. During the inspection, lessons observed included gymnastics, games and swimming. Other evidence was gathered from discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages.
153. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop control, co-ordination and balance and have an awareness of space and the need to use it well as part of their PE activities. They develop skills in the use of small apparatus, including a variety of ways of sending, receiving and travelling with a ball. They participate in gymnastics and respond to music through dance. Pupils are able to move confidently in a space of their own and in shared spaces. Year 1 pupils explore their ability to move in a variety of ways by hopping, rolling, sliding and running. Year 2 pupils show good control of their bodies through balancing, jumping and landing on and from a variety of gymnastic apparatus.
154. In Key Stage 2 these skills are further developed and pupils perform with increasing competence. They also develop an understanding of, and play games and develop athletic techniques. Pupils demonstrate increased control during ball games and multi-skills activities. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils were able to pass a ball accurately around a small group by kicking. They also developed an awareness of defence and attack skills while playing small group football games. Year 6 pupils worked with a PE coach to develop athletic skills and general fitness. Pupils have a clear understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. The opportunities provided for teamwork and a sense of fair play support the development of pupils' social skills.
155. The teaching of physical education provided by class teachers is satisfactory in both key stages. All teachers offer plenty of praise and immediate feedback to the pupils. Teachers set appropriate challenges, provide clear instructions and explanations and encourage pupils to develop skills. Questioning is used effectively and use is made of pupils as exemplars of good practice. All lessons begin and end in an orderly manner and contain appropriate warm-up activities. Relationships and class management are good. In the best lessons teachers regularly provide new challenges and encourage pupils to achieve higher standards. The teaching provided by the sports coach and the swimming instructor is very good. Their lessons are well planned and structured. The objectives of the lessons are given to the pupils who are given ample opportunities to practice and are challenged by the activities provided.

156. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. They are enthusiastic participants and use the opportunities provided to develop their skills. They co-operate well in small groups or as part of a larger team. They are always correctly dressed for physical activity and behaviour is usually good. They listen and respond well to their teachers' instructions. The pupils co-operate fully with each other. They enjoy their lessons and change quickly into their kit which gives maximum time for the lessons. When changing for swimming for example, although space is limited the pupils' co-operation and enthusiasm ensures the changing area is used efficiently.
157. There is a policy and a scheme of work which provides guidance for teachers. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils to participate in football, netball, athletics and dance. The school also takes part in competition with other schools. There is an appropriate selection of apparatus and equipment to meet National Curriculum requirements. The resources for physical education are good. There is a small swimming pool, a large hall with a range of gymnastic equipment, a large, marked playground and a field. Good use is made of external coaches to support the development of skills in sports such as swimming. The school also makes good use of parents to support swimming and other games activities.