

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JAMES THE GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

PECKHAM

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100825

Headteacher: Mr E Dunphy

Reporting inspector: Wendy Simmons
OIN 23674

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th October 2000

Inspection number: 224835

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Voluntary Aided
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, St James the Great RC Primary
Name of chair of governors:	Father Tom Mc Elhone
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

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Ron Elam 9092	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents.
Rosalind Johns 22745	Team inspector	English English as an additional language History	How well are pupils taught?
Robert Lever 16492	Team inspector	Science Physical education Information and communication technology	Special educational needs. How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

St James the Great Roman Catholic Primary School is an over subscribed, average size school, which educates 192 boys and girls aged between three and 11 years. The school has a Nursery class and, currently, there are 35 children in the Nursery, nine of whom are full time. Pupils are admitted into the school in September and January. There are 19 pupils aged five or under in the Reception class. Overall, pupils come from a lower than average range of social backgrounds. Seventy-two per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language; this is significantly above the average. Most of these pupils are working very closely towards becoming fully competent in their use of English. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is 38 per cent, which is above average. The school has 56 pupils on the register for special educational needs and this is above the national average. There are three pupils who have a statement of special educational need, which is slightly below the average. Pupils enter school at three at standards that are significantly lower than average. There are eight classes, which are taught by ten teachers and one additional visiting deputy advisory teacher. The three storey Victorian school is situated on a busy main road in an area that has been identified for a great deal of rebuilding as part of a regeneration project.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school, which is giving satisfactory value for money. The leadership and management of the headteacher, senior staff and governors are good. Standards achieved in the Foundation Stage are average and reflect the very good teaching. Overall, standards are lower than average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school achieves above average standards compared with other similar schools. However, standards in writing and in information and communication technology are not high enough. Nevertheless, overall, pupils make good progress from their considerably lower than average level when starting school. They have good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with a strong element of good and very good teaching.

What the school does well

- The school achieves average standards in mathematics, science and reading at Key Stage 2 and achieves above average standards compared with similar schools.
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good, teaching in Year 4 is particularly strong, and the teaching and provision for children in the Foundation Stage are very good.
- The support by the Reading Recovery teacher is very good and has a positive impact on standards.
- The support for newly qualified teachers is very good, especially from the visiting advisory deputy teacher.
- The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is very good and there is good teamwork between the headteacher and senior management in improving the school further.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment and standards in writing which are not high enough.
- In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching and provision for the curriculum are not good enough.
- The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is insufficiently developed to enable pupils to achieve higher standards in their writing and speaking.
- Statutory requirements for health and safety are not complied with concerning risk assessment.
- The range of opportunities and resources within the curriculum.
- The long term retention of staff to ensure that curriculum subjects are managed more effectively.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Governors and staff show a shared commitment to improvement and a good capacity to succeed. The last full OFSTED inspection in March 1998 found serious weaknesses in the school. Since then, the school has made good progress and no longer has serious weaknesses. Progress since the last inspection is good, but it has slowed down recently due to numerous changes in staff. There has been satisfactory improvement in subjects except information and communication technology, writing and

music, where development is limited. Very good improvement has taken place in the Foundation Stage. There are still weaknesses in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Accommodation has improved very effectively. Good progress has been made in health and safety, but there are weaknesses in risk assessment. There has been good progress in developing assessment although the good developments in marking are not used consistently. Good progress is evident in improving information for parents and in teaching. Teaching at Key Stage 1 and in the Foundation Stage shows significant improvement, but some teaching remains unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. There are still limited resources for some subjects.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

This table shows that the school achieved lower than average standards in all core subjects in the 2000 test results. This was largely due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs. The findings of this inspection show below average attainment in English, mathematics and science at both key stages, but writing and information and communication technology remain lower than average across the school. By seven years, pupils achieve average standards in all other subjects. In Year 6, the improvements in the results for mathematics are due to good development in the subject as part of the school's improvement plan. In science and mathematics, the fact that the pupils in the current Year 6 have different abilities from those in the last year is also a reason why the findings are different. Overall, compared with similar schools, above average standards are achieved. Pupils are underachieving in information and communication technology and writing where standards are not high enough. The school has set realistic and challenging targets for improvement and trends over time show some good improvement, but a decline between 1999 and 2000 at Key Stage 2. Since 1999, there has been steady improvement at Key Stage 1 and this reflects the school's commitment to improvement. The findings of this inspection show some further improvement on the 2000 results at both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good around school but variable in lessons as a minority of pupils find it hard to listen. There has been improvement in lessons since the last inspection. Although newly qualified teachers are not as skilled at behaviour management as other teachers, they are very well supported. A few pupils act inappropriately in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Pupils and teachers get on well together. Personal development is hampered by limited opportunities to use the library and resources in information and communication technology. Resources in the Reception class are not sufficient to extend children's play, but children's personal development in the Foundation Stage is good overall.

Attendance	Attendance is good. Absences are carefully monitored as unauthorised absence is high.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are very strong in the Foundation Stage and good at Key Stage 1, where there was no unsatisfactory teaching. At Key Stage 2, they are satisfactory and range from very good to unsatisfactory. Fifty-five lessons were seen. Of these, two were unsatisfactory and one was poor. This was largely due to inappropriate behaviour by a few pupils. In one lesson, English work was not sufficiently challenging. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons seen and of this, 59 per cent was good or better. In total, 26 per cent of teaching was very good. Teaching is good in Year 4 and there was no unsatisfactory teaching in either Year 4 or Year 6. Where teaching is good, lessons have plenty of challenge for pupils of all abilities and pupils behave well and learn quickly. The senior management team and the visiting advisory deputy teacher are successfully improving standards of teaching and learning. There are particular strengths in the teaching of mathematics, and for children in the Foundation Stage and in physical education at Key Stage 1. Teaching of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. Numeracy teaching is good and results in good learning. Literacy is taught satisfactorily overall, but is weaker in writing than in reading. The Reading Recovery teacher gives very good support. There are insufficient opportunities for the focused teaching of writing skills. Writing is not always well presented, and there are inconsistencies in spelling and handwriting.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has improved since the last inspection, most notably in the use of schemes of work and in the Foundation Stage. However, there are several unsatisfactory elements as the information and communication technology curriculum does not meet National Curriculum requirements. The range of work in music, design and technology, physical education and art is insufficiently balanced. There are good community links but extracurricular activities are limited
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and very good in the Nursery. Teaching is good and is well-organised enabling pupils to have access to the whole curriculum. The support for autistic pupils is very good and the provision for Reading Recovery is very effective.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory but the lack of a specialist co-ordinator limits development. There are weaknesses in planning and target setting for these pupils in English teaching. In mathematics, science and all other subjects, they attain average standards and achieve well. The curriculum does not help pupils to develop language skills through drama. There are missed opportunities to share different languages and links with computer technology are weak.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	The school's provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and it makes a satisfactory provision for their spiritual development, although there are missed opportunities to develop

development	spirituality particularly in art and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Overall, the school provides a caring environment and there is effective support for pupils' welfare, but the governors are not doing written risk assessments. Assessment has improved due to good leadership from the deputy headteacher, but is not available in all subjects. Early years assessments are not used sufficiently well.

Links with parents are satisfactory and parents are appropriately involved in the work of the school although annual reports on children's progress do not tell parents how to help their children to improve their standards of attainment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a strong sense of teamwork. However, individual subject responsibility and leadership are variable. In some subjects, the lack of a permanently appointed co-ordinator weakens development. Effective action has been taken to keep the school ticking over during a period of change.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They work very hard. A particular strength is governors' role in shaping the direction of the school. However, they are not fulfilling their statutory responsibilities for health and safety and in providing the full National Curriculum for information and control technology.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring of the school's performance is good. Senior staff and governors are taking effective action to improve standards, although they are not totally clear about how to develop writing systematically. Evaluation of pupils' progress in their speaking skills is too limited.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. There is some inappropriate use of funds for special educational needs and English as an additional language. Support staff are not always used to best effect during the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The development plan is appropriate, but is not set beyond 2001 and it does not break down projects into small steps. The financial administrator is providing very good support.

The number of staff is appropriate but the recruitment of subject co-ordinators has been difficult. As a result, the headteacher has taken on an exceptionally heavy additional workload. There is very good support for new teachers. The accommodation is good and kept extremely clean. The school is not making good enough use of computer technology and resources are not sufficiently developed.

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 coming to school. • Their children make good progress. • Teachers have high expectations. • Their children are happy at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extracurricular activities. • The school to act quickly on complaints. • A more consistent approach to homework and the teaching of spelling. • Aspects of health and safety.

The inspection agrees with the positive views of parents, although expectations are not high enough in writing and information and communication technology. The findings match the areas which parents

would like to see improved overall, but the findings are that health and safety are satisfactory except in the governors' responsibility to do written risk assessments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The national end of Key Stage 2 tests for St James the Great Roman Catholic Primary School in 2000 show that, compared with all schools, standards were below average in English, mathematics and in science. However, the school's results were above average compared with similar schools. Since the last inspection in 1998, standards have declined in English but the findings of this inspection show improvement to an average level in mathematics, science and reading. Furthermore, there is good improvement in the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 results. In mathematics, standards between 1998 and the provisional data for 2000 show a decline. Overall, the decline in 2000 is largely due to the difference in the groups of pupils in that year and the high number of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, there are other factors, which are noted in the findings of this inspection below.

2. During the period 1996 to 1999, girls performed better than boys in English, mathematics and science. The school has a good system in place to monitor pupils' attainment by gender and from this, they have sought to widen boys' reading resources to help them to improve their interest and standards. No differences were seen between the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection. Higher achieving pupils are generally achieving well in mathematics and science, although they are insufficiently challenged in writing in English. There is no formalised system for recognising gifted and talented pupils other than by testing in English and mathematics and, as a result, pupils who have strengths in other subjects are not well catered for. Overall, by the age of 11, pupils achieve well considering their lower than average attainment on entry to the school at three years old.

3. The school has set realistic targets for the abilities of the current Year 6 pupils. It is aiming for 70 per cent of pupils to reach Level 4 and above in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 for English and mathematics. It is on course to reach these targets in mathematics but, without improvement in the teaching of writing and monitoring of pupils with English as an additional language, the school is not on course to achieve this target in English. However, the school's action plan clearly recognises the need to develop writing and information and communication technology. However, it is less focused on the co-ordination for pupils with English as an additional language and this is a weakness.

4. The findings of this inspection are that pupils in Year 6 attain standards in English that are below those found in most schools. Standards in reading are average and reflect the very good teaching by the reading recovery teacher and recent emphasis on this aspect of work as part of the school's improvement plan. Standards in writing are poor by Year 6. There are several reasons for this. All the current Year 6 speak English as an additional language and this is reflected in their lower attainment in English. Although most of them are nearly fluent in English, they do not have sufficient skill in identifying and using the grammatical structures of Standard English, especially in their written work. Moreover, the school is not giving sufficient attention to planning effectively for pupils' proficiency in spoken and written work by monitoring and tracking their improving levels of competency. Examples and profiles of pupils' linguistic development are not kept and, as a result, it is difficult for teachers to plan directly for these pupils. Some classroom assistants are employed specifically to support pupils with English as an additional language but their time is not always used for this purpose and they are not always clear about how to support pupils' linguistic development. Overall, some pupils are not achieving as well as they could although they are achieving well in mathematics and science where written skills are less dependent upon more complex speaking and writing skills.

5. Across the curriculum, there are too few opportunities to develop English through drama and in providing regular opportunities for teachers to demonstrate how to write for a

range of purposes by going back over pieces of writing to extend pupils' ideas. Furthermore, teachers are not marking work consistently well, nor giving pupils enough time to go back and do corrections or make improvements and write accurately. There are too few occasions when pupils write at length, without interruption. The teaching of spelling is not rigorous enough and overall, there is inconsistency in the teaching of English especially at Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and is having an impact on the improving standards in reading. The very good teaching in Year 4 is having a very positive impact on pupils' attainment in all aspects of English.

6. The findings of this inspection are that pupils in Year 6 are on course to attain average standards in mathematics. The findings are different from the 2000 results and reflect the different ability of the class, the school's initiative to develop this area of the curriculum and the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. There are strong indications that the school has recognised how to improve standards: firstly, by giving more support to pupils who are performing at just below the average level to bring them up to the Level 4 standard and secondly, by putting greater emphasis on using number skills in more realistic problem solving activities. The school is also making good use of pupils' performance scores in tests at the beginning of each year to help teachers to set individual targets for pupils. The good quality teaching by the co-ordinator and in Year 6 and the school's monitoring and leadership are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. However, homework is not supporting pupils' development consistently well.

7. In science, pupils in Year 6 attain average standards and achieve well. Standards in all other subjects are similar to those found in most schools except in information and communication technology, where standards are below average. This is because pupils are not sufficiently confident in a wide range of skills, are not using information and communication technology sufficiently to support their work in different subjects and do not use the school's resources often enough. Moreover, there is insufficient direct teaching of the subject. The range, quantity and access of resources are far too limited for the requirements of the National Curriculum.

8. These findings in Key Stage 2 represent similar standards to those found at the time of the previous OFSTED inspection in 1998 except in English which has declined from average to below average in writing and improvement in aspects of design and technology to a satisfactory level. Standards remain below average in information technology and average in all other subjects. Singing has declined to an average standard as there is no specialist teaching. The standards achieved by pupils at Key Stage 2 are not high enough in aspects of English and in information and communication technology. In other subjects, there are missed opportunities to widen pupils' spiritual appreciation.

9. In English, in Year 6, most pupils read fluently and achieve well, often due to the very good support from the reading recovery programme and the satisfactory use of the literacy strategy. Pupils with special educational needs are given further support with their reading from the 'Springboard' team who help pupils on a one-to-one basis. As a result of this, pupils are achieving very well for their abilities. However, the library is not used consistently well as a means of helping all pupils to widen their reading knowledge and information retrieval skills. Pupils mostly write clearly but not always in a joined and flowing style, although the school has recognised the need to improve cursive writing and presentation as part of its improvement plan. Pupils are very confident and keen to engage in conversation and often listen well, although a few pupils do not recognise when it is inappropriate to interrupt the teacher and, therefore, do not always listen carefully to the ideas and opinions of others.

10. In mathematics, in Year 6, pupils are confidently handling numbers to solve numerical problems using the four rules. Most are confident with their tables and can use them as a tool for division as well as multiplication. Most pupils are gaining a good understanding of patterns in numbers and can often solve more complex problems mentally. They have a growing understanding of work to two decimal places. The lively teaching ensures that higher

achieving pupils are extended well by helping them to develop their own strategies for problem solving, although there are missed opportunities to link number work to data handling and other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils confidently explain their methods of working verbally. They are beginning to use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and 100. Higher achieving pupils are able to follow this through to include decimals and work using place value to 1000. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a good effect on pupils' attainment at both key stages.

11. In science, in Year 6, pupils know about different methods of seed dispersal. Past work shows that they know about fair testing and can make simple experiments. They know about electrical circuits and have linked their work to design and technology. Work is not always marked to help pupils to think scientifically. On occasions, the teacher over directs work and this results in pupils not developing sufficient independence in their investigations.

12. Pupils in Year 6 can draw in the style of Picasso and, due to good teaching, have a good knowledge of the feelings and different styles of work of this artist, but the curriculum is not broad enough. In music, pupils sing tunefully but the lack of a specialist co-ordinator hampers their overall progress. Moreover, there are many missed opportunities for pupils to appreciate music in assemblies and through wider links with the community. However, the good teaching by a visiting dance team for 'Black History Month' helped to enhance pupils' love of rhythm and knowledge of tempo. There are insufficient links between music and the use of information and communication technology resources. There was no geography being taught at the time of the inspection, but discussion with pupils shows that their knowledge is insufficiently developed. In physical education, pupils play hockey and engage in dance activities effectively, but they are not all able to swim 25 metres when they leave school. Extracurricular activities and competitive sports activities are too limited.

13. In design and technology, Year 6 pupils have a growing understanding of the design process and evaluate their work making some modifications to their original ideas. However, links with information and communication technology are poor and pupils have limited opportunity to develop their understanding of work in three-dimensional construction, use mouldable materials and develop a wider understanding of food technology. Work is hampered by limited resources, which was also a weakness at the last inspection. In history, pupils have a developing sense of change and can talk about different historical characters and periods of ancient and recent history. In information and communication technology, standards are not good enough, as pupils are not developing skills quickly.

14. The school's 2000 end of Key stage 1 test data show that, compared with all schools, standards have improved from well below average to below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the period 1996 to 1998, standards improved considerably, but in 1999, there was a significant decline. This was partly due to differences in the ability group of pupils taking the tests but, in addition, the school recognised that work in reading was not meeting the needs of some pupils. Hence, the school has worked effectively to improve the teaching of reading and 2000 data show good improvement in the number of pupils achieving Level 2 and Level 3. In writing, standards followed a similar pattern as reading between 1996 and 1999, but the results for 2000 still show lower standards. The school has taken steps to improve work in writing but, without a permanent co-ordinator, this is not proving sufficiently effective as the findings of this inspection show. In mathematics, standards improved between 1996 and 1997, but declined in 1998 and 1999. However, the 2000 results show effective improvement, which is also borne out in the findings of this inspection. Compared with similar schools, standards are above average. When the four years 1996 to 1999 are taken together, there was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

15. The findings of this inspection are that, in Year 2, standards in English are below average. The pupils reach standards in writing that are well below those which are found in most schools. In reading, standards match those found in all schools and represent good improvement in the last year. In speaking and listening, standards are lower than average due

to the high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and have not yet become fluent in English. Moreover, the support and monitoring of these pupils are not well co-ordinated and this is a weakness. Issues relating to the teaching of these pupils are the same as at Key Stage 2. Assessments when pupils start school at three and at the end of the Foundation Stage have not been well used as a tool to help teachers to match work specifically to pupils' individual needs in the past, although this has improved recently. Pupils in Year 2 have had changes in teaching staff and these pupils have not benefited from consistency in their learning. In mathematics and science, standards this year are currently on course to meet the average levels for all schools. Although, at the time of the inspection, the Year 2 class was well taught by a temporary teacher and the long-term situation for the class is unknown. Recent developments in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 are already having a positive impact on standards and indicate that younger pupils are on course to achieve average standards in reading and mathematics.

16. These findings are different from the last OFSTED report and show a decline in writing and speaking and listening skills. Overall, there are more pupils in the school who are speaking English as an additional language and this is reflected in the lower attainment. There has been improvement in design and technology at Key Stage 2 to average from unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Information and communication technology are lower than they were at the last inspection due to lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop new skills across the curriculum. The quality of physical education teaching has improved from unsatisfactory to good and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment across the key stage. In all other subjects, pupils attain similar standards as at the last inspection, with some additional improvements in science. Pupils do not reach adequate standards in writing and information and communication technology and this is a weakness. In all other subjects, pupils achieve average standards and are achieving well for their abilities.

17. At the age of seven, overall, pupils achieve lower than average standards in English. They speak confidently and with enthusiasm and this shows very good progress from when they start at three years when a significant minority had limited or sometimes no use of language in a formal school environment. Nevertheless, attainment is hampered by the lack of monitoring of pupils' acquisition of language. As this is not formalised, it makes it difficult for teachers and assistants to identify how to help pupils in specific lessons. Furthermore, there is no speaking and listening policy. Pupils generally listen well, although a few do not concentrate well and attempt to interrupt the teacher inappropriately. Listening is made difficult in some classes by the inclusion of a few pupils with special educational needs who call out and shout due to the nature of their special educational needs. Here, the classroom assistants work expertly and quietly to refocus these pupils while endeavouring to minimise the effect on the rest of the class.

18. Pupils in Year 2 read with expression and attempt new words using letter sound and other reading clues to good effect. The impact of the literacy hour and the Reading Recovery support is having a positive effect on pupils' average attainment in reading.

19. Pupils attain lower than average standards in writing. They write independently and can spell some words using plausible letter combinations, but they are not writing with sufficient frequency. Additionally, the teaching of spelling is not systematically developed. Sometimes, teachers write for pupils to develop their understanding, but this is not sufficiently well established in whole-class teaching and when teachers mark pupils' work. Pupils write in simple sentences but opportunities to write at greater length for different purposes are limited and this has an impact on pupils' ability to move steadily towards the next level of competence in their work.

20. By the age of seven, pupils achieve average standards in mathematics. They are confident in simple calculations to ten and use mental and written strategies for addition and subtraction. They recognise odd and even numbers and can count in twos and fives. Higher

achieving pupils have a grasp of number facts to 20 and confidently count and sequence numbers to 100. Most pupils make assessments and estimations for measuring work and are beginning to understand the use of metres and centimetres.

21. In science, by the age of seven, pupils achieve average standards. They can identify different parts of a plant and describe their observations of living things. They can sort and identify different materials into groups and do simple scientific experiments recording their work in drawings, tables and simple sentences. They know how to make a simple electrical circuit work.

22. In the following subjects in Year 2, pupils achieve average standards. In art, pupils paint and draw imaginatively and in detail. In design and technology, there was no evidence available other than planning documentation for Year 2, but in Year 1, pupils link their work to making moving people. Overall, their attainment is hampered by lack of planned opportunities to develop their understanding. In music, pupils listen well and experiment with instruments to make simple compositions but there are many missed opportunities to develop musical understanding and appreciation in assemblies. In history, pupils have a growing sense of time and talk about change in their own lives and those around them. In physical education, pupils are developing co-ordination and ball skills well. In geography, they can talk about maps and their environment with growing accuracy. Pupils achieve lower than average standards in information and communication technology. They are not making enough progress in keyboard skills for writing and they have limited opportunities to use information and communication technology in other areas of the curriculum.

23. Children enter the school at the age of three years when they start in the Nursery class. The notes taken by the teacher and observations suggest that they are well below average in their language and communication skills in particular. Parents are not sufficiently involved in helping teachers to know more about what their children can do when starting in the Nursery as the school does not have a formal method of collecting this information. The current Nursery teacher is helping children to develop quickly and, as a result, by the time they join the Reception class, their attainment has improved to below average in aspects of speaking, writing and mathematics and average in all other areas of the curriculum. The Reception teacher knows how to develop the learning needs of young children and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, these children are achieving the requirements of the Early Learning Goals in all six areas. The quality of teaching at this stage is very good and this is having a significant impact on children's learning and attainment. The current Year 2 pupils did not have these teachers, and past test results at five years indicate that these pupils had below average skills. To date, the assessment information at five years of age has not been used to best advantage in setting targets for pupils and teachers to work towards.

24. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well overall as they receive very focused support from classroom assistants in group work sessions. The impact of the Reading Recovery work is very effective in raising attainment in reading. There are two autistic pupils in the school who are very well supported, ensuring that they have opportunities to be fully included in the life and work of their classes. The very high number of support staff reflects the school's policy to employ additional staff to help raise attainment and this is generally successful, although writing is weaker. However, there is some confusion about the various roles of support staff, which is detailed in the leadership and management section of this report.

25. The school has a very high number of pupils with English as an additional language. By the age of 11, they are achieving well and reach average levels in mathematics and science, but their attainment in English is below average. In Year 2, many pupils speak distinctly although their vocabulary is narrow. In Year 6, their oral and written skills are below those found in most schools. Some pupils do not have a rich vocabulary and have difficulties with the grammar and structure of Standard English. No significant differences in attainment between different ethnic groups were observed during the inspection. Overall, there are

weaknesses in the leadership and management relating to these pupils that has an effect on their attainment and, although they make good progress, they do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

26. Religious education and collective worship are to be inspected later in the year under Section 23 of the Education Act.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

27. Pupils' attitudes and attendance are strengths of the school and make a good contribution towards promoting their attainment and progress. Their behaviour overall and relationships with adults and with each other are good. This conclusion continues the findings at the time of the previous inspection. Parents state that their children enjoy school.

28. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards learning are good. This includes those of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with statements of special educational need are well integrated into the life of the school and other pupils show very good respect towards their needs. In general, pupils with English as an additional language are enthusiastic and confident learners. Misbehaviour in class is usually directly linked to the quality of teaching. Respect towards the feelings, values and beliefs of others is good. The concentration and keenness of the young children in the Reception class were apparent in a music lesson when using percussion to learn about loudness and quietness. Pupils have the confidence to try and work out answers in front of their classmates as seen during mental mathematics, especially in a Year 5 numeracy lesson developing speed in times tables. However, the use of the library and information and communication resources for personal investigation and research is underdeveloped. In most classes, pupils settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom. Year 6 pupils were completely engrossed in their work during an art lesson discussing abstract painting. Nevertheless, in some lessons, especially in the upper end of the school, pupils sometimes find it hard to listen when the teacher is talking and a few lose interest and do not pay full attention to the teacher. The teachers have to work hard to ensure that inappropriate behaviour does not adversely affect the quality of teaching and learning. Overall, the teachers achieve this appropriately and, in some instances, behaviour management is very good.

29. Pupils generally behave satisfactorily in the classroom, at play and lunch times. They are open, courteous and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way when supervised although sometimes run if there is no adult present. In particular, they take especial care when using the stairs and wait patiently for other classes when going to and from their rooms at the beginning and end of the day and for assemblies. They show respect for property, for example, putting equipment away when they have finished with it. Most pupils behave well but, in several of the lessons seen, progress was limited by inappropriate behaviour. Some pupils fidgeted or chatted to others and the teacher had to stop teaching in order to regain control. In several classes, for example, a Year 1 literacy hour and a Year 6 science lesson, the inappropriate talking of the pupils resulted in a high level of noise, which was often ignored by the teachers. No bullying occurred during the inspection and the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any aggressive behaviour that may take place. There were three fixed term exclusions in the last school year of pupils showing extremely poor behaviour.

30. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils get on well with each other when playing games at break and lunch times. In the classroom, they respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet and follow the rules of 'circle time'. Even the youngest children, just over three years old, in the Nursery show they are learning to take turns. They also follow the teacher's instructions such as to not put the guinea pigs' food in their mouths. Good co-operation was seen when Year 5 pupils worked together helping each other to tape cups together to make a

shaker during a design and technology lesson. The pupils' personal development is also good. Year 6 pupils showed their ability to understand the feelings of others from their writings as refugees during the Second World War. Pupils take on many tasks both within the classroom and outside and Year 6 pupils have various duties around the school. Lunchtime highlights the sense of community as pupils wait patiently for all at their table to collect their food before they pray and start eating. Pupils also benefit from meeting people in the community such as when the choir sings to older people at Christmas. They visit the library to choose books but the opportunities to develop their initiative are limited.

31. Attendance is good. Over the past year, it was nearly 96 per cent and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the inevitable childhood illnesses, with few parents taking their children on holiday in term time. Unauthorised absence at 1.9 per cent was higher than many schools and reflects the difficulty the school has in obtaining explanations from some parents. Pupils are generally keen to come to school and punctuality has improved since the last inspection. Nevertheless, there are usually a few pupils arriving late each morning. Registration takes place reasonably promptly at the start of the day, but in the afternoon, it sometimes did not take place until an hour or more after the start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

32. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory although there are important variations between different parts of the school. During the inspection, the quality of teaching and its impact on learning was judged in 55 lessons or parts of lessons. In 26 per cent it was very good, in 33 per cent it was good, in 35 per cent it was satisfactory, in four per cent it was unsatisfactory and two per cent it was poor. The quality of learning closely reflects the quality of teaching. These findings are an improvement on those of the school's last OFSTED inspection when 20 per cent of the teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory. In those subjects where secure comparisons between the two inspections are possible, teaching has improved in mathematics throughout the school and in physical education at Key Stage 1 and in design and technology at Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the monitoring of teaching and in the development of day-to-day assessment, including marking. However, marking is still inconsistent and was identified as a key issue at the time of the last inspection.

33. The major strengths of the teaching throughout the school are teachers' planning of their lessons, the way the Reading Recovery programme is implemented and the quality of teaching in mathematics, for children aged under five and for pupils with special educational needs. The most important weaknesses are inconsistency in the management of the pupils' behaviour, the way writing is taught, the teaching of information and communication technology and its use in other subjects, and lack of sufficient recognition of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language in planning lessons.

34. The quality of teaching and learning for children aged five or under is very good in all areas of their learning. This is also an improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection which judged the quality of the teaching of these children to be satisfactory. The teachers have a strong understanding of how these children learn. Planning is very good, because it allows children to engage in first-hand experiences, which are then developed into more formal learning. They have high expectations and make the most of opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding by asking challenging questions, which require them to develop their use of spoken language. Teaching methods and management of pupils are good. They use resources very well, although there are too few in the Reception class to extend imaginative play effectively. Teachers make very good notes about pupils' development, but the tests on entry to the Reception class are not used well enough to help guide teachers in their lesson planning. There is a wonderful working atmosphere in the Nursery that ensures that children select resources for themselves and engage in sustained and focused play. Teachers and assistants have very good relationships with the children.

35. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is good which represents a further improvement since the school's last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory at this key stage. At this key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in mathematics, numeracy and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects, including literacy. However, in geography, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement and in information and communication technology, the quality teaching and learning was judged to be unsatisfactory. In general, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen at this key stage. Twenty five per cent of the lessons seen were very good and 38 per cent were good.

36. A Year 1 numeracy lesson involving mental calculations and subtraction illustrated the strengths of teaching and learning throughout the school and the very effective way in which the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The teacher used her voice well to motivate the pupils and keep good control which resulted in their behaving well. Praise was used effectively to recognise the pupils' efforts, which resulted in their progress from an awareness of sequences of numbers from 1 to 20 to counting in twos. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils were shown, for example, as they were told, "Let's count together. Now find the number on the number line. Check and write it carefully." The pupils also developed their knowledge of subtraction very effectively and a good discussion ensured that they understood the concept well. As a result, they were interested, thought for themselves and solved problems such as $(6-3)(7-4)$. The teacher used her knowledge of the subject well to teach the subject systematically. Learning resources were well organised and the pupils were involved in varied suitable activities such as a take away game in which they had to sit or stand according to the work on the board. Time was used constructively and the pace of the pupils' learning was enhanced by well-organised group work. The teacher used mathematical vocabulary well and made effective use of questions to spot and correct difficulties experienced by individual pupils.

37. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory which is an improvement on the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. At this key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in mathematics and numeracy and satisfactory in all other subjects, including literacy, except geography where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement and information and communication technology where it was unsatisfactory. There are important variations in the quality of teaching and learning in different year groups in this key stage. In Years 4 and 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. However, in Year 3, 17 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and none was better than good due largely to difficulties in the management of the pupils' behaviour. In Year 5, 14 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and 14 per cent was poor. However, in one class in this year group, the quality of teaching and learning was consistently very good and both teachers in Years 3 and 5 are being well supported to develop their teaching skills.

38. A Year 5 handwriting lesson exemplified the shortcomings in the teaching, where they existed, throughout the school. It also illustrated that although the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy satisfactory writing is an area of weakness. There was no planning for this lesson and it lacked purpose. The pupils were not given clear instructions about what they were expected to do, how they were to behave and the quality of the work which they were to produce. The teacher's control of the pupils was insecure. They were quiet when the teacher insisted but the noise level soon increased as the teacher moved around the room talking to individual pupils and pinpointing their difficulties. This helped those receiving support to understand what to do to improve but did not establish a purposeful working atmosphere in the class. This was compounded as routines and procedures were not well established. There was some effective questioning of individual pupils but the lesson lacked pace and some lost concentration and became restless. The teacher's management of the pupils was too negative. A pupil was sent to the headteacher unnecessarily, threats were made and not carried out and the teacher ended the lesson by telling the pupils how

'disgusted' he was with them. Some pupils laughed at this. No real learning took place in this lesson because of poor class control and communication skills. The pupils were generally able to form regular letters in a satisfactory cursive hand when guided by lines but were unable to do this without a model to follow.

39. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers use appropriate methods, which enable pupils with special educational needs to learn effectively and the groupings by ability in lessons promote higher standards for all groups. Limited use is made of additional information and communication technology to support pupils with special educational needs. Teachers take full account of the targets set out in individual education plans. Individual education plans contain clear targets and they are sufficiently practical for class teachers to implement when support staff are not present. Overall, the support assistants give good, and sometimes very good, support and keep accurate records of pupils' progress. The Reading Recovery teacher is highly skilled and experienced, and pupils make very good progress.

40. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. Class teachers make satisfactory provision for pupils with English as an additional language but there is no specialist teacher. Planning does not always encompass the learning and language needs of these pupils. There is insufficient focus on oral and listening skills in teaching. Classroom assistants give satisfactory support in group work but there is no real distinction between the roles of special educational needs and English as an additional language support staff. There are no bilingual assistants to support younger pupils.

41. There are no pupils in the school who are achieving above the expected levels for their age in English or mathematics where they would be easily identified by the school's assessment procedures. However, because the school does not have an overall policy for gifted and talented pupils, they are not being identified in subjects such as art, physical education, music and drama.

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

42. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum except in information and communication technology, where the full programme of study is not covered and insufficient time is given to teaching the subject in specific lessons or across the curriculum. The curriculum reflects the religious aims of the school and the commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils. There is some imbalance in the design and technology curriculum and in composing and performing in music, in aspects of physical education and in the provision for three-dimensional work in art.

43. Issues raised in the previous inspection report regarding the development of schemes of work for all subjects have been addressed. The school has adopted the recently published national guidelines. There has been a significant improvement in the planning of the curriculum, although it is not consistently well balanced and this is a weakness. There are effective policies in place for all subjects. The whole school curriculum plan ensures that all subjects, with the exception of information and communication technology, are appropriately covered and that work builds on what has been taught and what will follow. There is no policy for English as an additional language but it is part of the action plan. There is no policy for personal, health and social education. There has been little progress in developing information and control technology since the last inspection. At present, the school is experiencing frequent changes of staff and the headteacher is temporarily coordinating many

subject areas. This present lack of curriculum co-ordinators means that some planned curricular development has been put on hold.

44. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage are good and a considerable strength of the school. The teachers clearly know about recent changes to the curriculum for these children and have worked very hard to ensure that their written planning and school documentation reflect this. A particular strength is their understanding of how younger children learn. Moreover, they are successfully raising the profile of this group of children in the eyes of all teaching staff.

45. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is very good in the Nursery. The curriculum is well organised and arrangements for using individual education plans are effective in ensuring that needs are met, whilst still enabling pupils to have access to the whole curriculum. The support for two autistic pupils is very good. The Reading Recovery provision is very effective and remains a strength of the school.

46. The school provides pupils with English as an additional language with an environment and curriculum that reflect positive attitudes towards their languages and cultures. They have full access to the National Curriculum and their language skills are not a barrier to learning although more advanced pupils do not have enough support to achieve the full range of academic language or apply it to their written work. All pupils in the school are equally valued and their individual needs are recognised but the school does not sufficiently celebrate its rich cultural diversity and wealth of languages through multicultural displays. Language also has a low profile in the school and there is insufficient awareness of how pupils' first language can support their development of English. The curriculum does not give pupils adequate opportunities to gain confidence through the creative arts. Information and communication technology does not sufficiently support the learning of pupils with English as an additional language.

47. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, although numeracy is much stronger than literacy, due to the weaker teaching of writing. The time allocated to these is appropriate and the implementation has raised the standards of attainment across the school, although the time allocated to aspects of writing is not always used to its best advantage.

48. There is an unsatisfactory range of extracurricular activities to enrich pupils' learning outside the school day. This was also the finding of the previous inspection. Pupils have very limited opportunities to participate in sport. There is a swimming club and pupils have the chance to play football against other schools when the secondary school arranges it. There is a recorder club and time for Mass practice. There are no extracurricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 1. Educational visits and school visitors are important and regular features of the curriculum and the school makes a good effort to provide a rich variety of experiences for pupils. Years 4 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit and all classes have planned opportunities to visit places of interest beyond the school.

49. The school has a commitment to equality in education. There is good planning on a day-to-day basis for the needs of all pupils, including the higher achievers and those who have special educational needs. There is little specific planning evident for those with English as an additional language. The school has improved the provision of reading materials, particularly for boys. The school tries to include Black History whenever appropriate.

50. Provision for pupils' personal education is good. 'Circle times' provide good opportunities for pupils to explore a range of feelings and issues. A good emphasis is given to teaching about health issues, the misuse of drugs, an awareness of medicines and sex education and these elements are treated sensitively. The work is taught within personal, social and health education and within the science curriculum.

51. There are good links with the local community through the parish and these contribute positively to pupils' experiences and their subsequent learning. The parish priest plays an

active role in the life of the school and says a weekly mass. The school has developed good links with the police. In some curriculum subjects, such as design and technology, links with the community to find out about design are missed, especially as this area has had a wealth of building development and changes in environmental features.

52. There are very constructive relationships with partner institutions. There are good links with the church playgroup and liaison with the local Catholic secondary schools is effective. There are valuable teacher and pupil exchanges. Opportunities for pupils to play matches with other schools are rare. Students from teacher training institutions are welcomed into the school for the practical elements of their courses.

53. The school's provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and it makes a satisfactory provision for their spiritual development. This is strength of the school and is an improvement on the findings at the time of the previous inspection. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are satisfactory. They are underpinned by the school's Catholic ethos and heritage. School assemblies help pupils to develop an understanding of their faith and the school's commitment to prayer is very apparent in the classroom and at lunchtime. The children in the nursery expressed their wonder when a box was opened and they saw a mother guinea pig and baby. Year 6 pupils gained insight into the values of others when they explored the life and work of Picasso during an art lesson, although wider spiritual moments are missed in art work throughout the school. Nevertheless, the school does not always plan opportunities within lessons to enable pupils to appreciate the exciting nature of the world around them or to reflect upon their own feelings. There are missed opportunities to develop more spiritual moments in music.

54. The school's approach to pupils' moral development is good. The school stands for clear values and respect and care for others. The expectations include high standards of behaviour and acceptable conduct, which pupils generally respond to positively, as they enjoy their work and show care for the school. These standards lead to the pupils having a good awareness of right and wrong. Pupils are generally self disciplined and this makes for an orderly school. The staff are good role models and the overall positive approach of the school to encouraging pupils' moral development is evident in the way that all adults deal with pupils. Nevertheless, there is some inconsistency between teachers about the extent to which they intervene in any low-level disruptive behaviour during lessons.

55. The provision for encouraging the social development of the pupils is good. The school values its members and encourages pupils to integrate well both at work and at play. In the classroom, there are many opportunities to work together in pairs or groups. Pupils are encouraged, and are willing, to undertake various tasks in the classroom such as getting resources and tidying up at the end of the session. Older pupils have duties around the school such as the delivery and collection of registers, preparing the hall for assembly and supervising other pupils at lunchtime. The recently introduced 'circle time' is helping to reinforce good social values.

56. The provision for cultural development is also good. Pupils are starting to appreciate their own cultural background from work in the classroom such as studying an African painter in art and using the Nigerian exchange rate in mathematics. Visitors include a Ghanaian music group and Caribbean dancers. Western culture is reinforced through the use of nursery rhymes, the study of the Romans and Celts and visits to local art galleries, museums and the theatre. Painting and music help the development of aesthetic awareness, although this is not consistently well developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. Staff show appropriate concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the

school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory.

58. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The Headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise and know to whom they should report in the school if necessary. This represents an improvement on the position at the last inspection. The provision for first aid is appropriate: several staff have been trained, records are kept of any treatment and letters are sent home to parents as appropriate. A health and safety policy is in place and the governors are actively involved in touring the school each term to identify any potential hazards. Outside contractors are used to check the fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment regularly. Nevertheless, the school has still not carried out the health and safety risk assessment, which was highlighted as a need at the last inspection. In addition, not all staff have received training to ensure they are fully aware of their personal responsibilities. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology.

59. The school has made good progress in developing arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English since the last inspection. In addition to the statutory assessments, the school is currently using national test materials to make annual assessments. It also makes ongoing, informal assessment and keeps appropriate records of pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects, which inform future planning and target setting well. This target setting, with pupils in Key Stage 2, is a useful development that is already beginning to improve standards through the provision of effective support and advice to pupils on their academic progress. In science, assessments at the end of each unit show what pupils have learned and give information for future planning of work. In other subjects, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory but the school is planning to reflect the good practice in English and mathematics across the board.

60. Assessment procedures for children under five are good and show a significant improvement since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory. Assessments undertaken when children are five are not used fully to set targets for their development or to plan suitable programmes of work. Staff make clear ongoing assessments and keep sharply focused notes, which effectively inform the planning of new work. However, there are no formal assessment procedures to identify what children know, understand and can do when they enter the Nursery. Parents' knowledge of their child is not well used.

61. There is effective assessment to identify pupils with special educational needs and this feeds appropriately into the individual education plans. These plans are sufficiently specific to allow accurate assessments to be made. Very effective assessments are made for pupils on the Reading Recovery programme and meticulous records of progress are kept. The school efficiently monitors its results in national tests to identify the achievements of different ethnic groups. However, not enough attention is paid to monitoring pupils' fluency in English and setting challenging targets in language proficiency as they move through the school. There are no pupil profiles to support and record their development of language. There is insufficient liaison between the acting co-ordinator for English as an additional language and class teachers to assess and support the language needs of pupils.

62. The assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to improve procedures. Assessment information is now analysed effectively and is used to identify areas for development for raising levels of pupils' attainments in the core subjects, particularly in mathematics and English. A new marking system has been introduced but it is not applied consistently in all classes across all subjects.

63. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development make a satisfactory contribution to raising their achievement. The monitoring of progress of

the pupils' personal development is less structured but the teachers and other classroom staff have an appropriate understanding of the pupils. Pupils' personal qualities are enhanced by the various tasks they have around the school. The school encourages pupils to celebrate their work during Friday assemblies and with half-termly awards. Their self-esteem is being raised by the introduction of 'circle time' and visiting dance teachers encouraged pupils to think about how they present themselves to the outside world. The school methodically assesses pupils with special educational needs to gain a good understanding of their difficulties.

64. The procedures for promoting discipline and behaviour are good. Class and school rules are on display in the classroom and teachers discuss with the pupils what is expected of them. The behaviour policy has a good balance of rewards and sanctions as well as strategies for the staff for managing disagreements. It was developed after discussion with the pupils who have also produced posters to display in the school. Parents are provided with a copy of the policy. Pupils were able to quote examples of what they should and should not do. The inspectors saw good instances in lessons of teachers ensuring that the pupils understood how to behave. Nevertheless, in some classes the teachers did not, for example, insist on the pupils putting their hands up and they were allowed to continue to call out. In other instances, the pupils were allowed to be noisy so that learning was affected. Although parents could not recall any instances of bullying or racism, the school takes appropriate action if any occurs and, during the inspection, there was no indication of bullying, racism or aggressive behaviour. The pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well through the school's special educational needs system.

65. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils are keen to come to school and the relationships between the school and parents result in little absence. In newsletters, the school reminds parents of the need for pupils' regular attendance and the importance of arriving on time. Punctuality is monitored consistently with appropriate records kept in the office of pupils who arrive more than ten minutes after the start of the day. The headteacher monitors the registers and late book each week and contacts parents as necessary.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66. The number of parents attending the parents' meeting and those who returned the questionnaire was very small. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are generally very pleased with all that the school does. They are satisfied with the level of support their children receive and consider that the school promotes positive attitudes. These reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. Some parents were concerned about the range of activities outside lessons and the inspection team decided that the provision of clubs and activities at lunchtime and at other times is too limited. Some doubts were expressed about the amount of homework and the inspectors concluded that there is inconsistency in homework and the support it gives to pupils' learning. A few parents also felt that the school did not work closely with them although the inspectors concluded that the school provides good opportunities for parents to meet teachers and that the school encourages parents to become involved. Sometimes, complaints are acted on too slowly.

67. The school has established satisfactory links with the parents and these contacts are effective. A home/school computer pilot scheme is being developed to give greater access to parents and pupils who do not have this technology at home. It is developing steadily overall, but was not high profile during the inspection. The quality of information to parents has improved to a good standard since the last inspection, when it formed a key issue, as statutory requirements were not met. The headteacher sends newsletters home two or three times a term which provide general administrative information as well as encouraging good attendance and outlining the behaviour policy. Every half term, class teachers send details of what they will be teaching their pupils. Every morning and afternoon, parents have a very

good opportunity to see the teachers. They are in the playground at the beginning of the day and all come into the hall and go outside at the end of the day when parents are collecting their children. The inspectors saw many conversations taking place and it is apparent that parents feel very welcome to come into the school. Parents are invited to formal meetings with teachers every term to discuss their children's progress. However, only two-thirds of parents come although the school is prepared to arrange alternative days. The annual report on pupils' progress is sent home in the summer term. For most classes, this report provides a reasonable summary for English, mathematics and science although targets for improvement are rarely mentioned. Nevertheless, it is poor for the other subjects as comments are very brief and concentrate on the work covered or attitudes rather than the skills and understanding acquired. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately invited to the setting and review of their children's individual education plans. The school works hard to ensure good links with parents of children for whom English is an additional language and interpreters are provided when necessary. However, the school does not always give enough information to parents of children with English as an additional language to enable them to support their learning at home.

68. Parents' involvement with the school makes a satisfactory contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. The meetings for new parents and others on numeracy explain how they can help at home. Reading books are sent home every day although some of the reading records have comments from the pupils rather than the parents. The Nursery is especially welcoming to parents and encourages them to stay to settle their children as well as to help in the classroom. In particular, a mother showed off her baby and a father has played the guitar. The Nursery teacher intends asking the parents to provide information about what their child can do to help assess how the school can best support the pupils. The school has no parent association although parents help to organise the summer fair. Few parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis but many more are willing to help on trips out.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The last full OFSTED inspection in March 1998 found that there were serious weaknesses in the school concerning teaching and learning, compliance with child protection and health and safety assessment, the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language and statutory requirements for information for parents. Since then, the school had been visited by an Additional Inspector, who found that the school had made good overall improvement. This inspection finds a similar situation to the 1999 visit. However, development has slowed down recently due to the numerous changes in staff. As a result, the headteacher has made it a priority to focus on successfully integrating new teachers to the school and in re-allocating subject leadership to new co-ordinators. Currently, the headteacher is taking the responsibility for English, special educational needs, geography, design and technology, music and the overall development of English as an additional language. The recruitment of permanent staff has been a considerable problem for the school, but due to the good teamwork by the senior management team, the school is handling this period of change effectively.

70. Overall, development since the last inspection is still judged as good. The school is successfully raising attainment in reading at both key stages; attainment in mathematics has many strengths and science is also average. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in the teaching and in pupils' attainment in writing. There has been satisfactory improvement in all other subjects except information and communication technology, where progress is insufficient and in music development is too limited. The Foundation Stage has improved very well. The accommodation in and outside has been developed very effectively. Good progress has been made in health and safety, but there are still weaknesses in the completion and knowledge of risk assessment. Child protection procedures are good. There has been good progress in developing assessment systems, which are used to guide teachers in their

planning of work in English and mathematics. Due to recent changes of staff, the good developments in marking have not been consistently integrated into the work or lessons seen during this inspection. Good progress is evident in developing the quality of information for parents, although there are some weaker elements to develop further.

71. The main area for improvement concerned the quality of teaching. So far, the school has worked effectively to develop very good support for newly qualified teachers by providing plenty of high quality model lessons by strong teachers and in monitoring and guiding their teaching. Classroom management and discipline are mostly effective and good behaviour management techniques are clearly evident in lessons. However, some teachers are more effective in maintaining high standards than others and newly qualified teachers are not as skilled at behaviour management as other teachers. Arrangements for staff development are satisfactory overall and are linked to teachers' needs and priorities in the school improvement plan. The headteacher is monitoring teaching appropriately and is endeavouring to improve teaching by making his observations more sharply focused. Additionally, he gives considerable support to teachers and teaches several subjects on a regular basis. This allows teachers to observe or work with other small groups of pupils.

72. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher and staff with management responsibility are good. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a shared commitment and capacity to succeed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher clearly care for the school and the pupils within it. Senior staff are very reflective and take part in a wide range of courses for their professional development. Moreover, they have worked very hard through some periods of great difficulty. Leadership shows a good understanding of how to develop the school in the future. The school's improvement plan is written on a two-year cycle, but there is no formalised written overview beyond that. Although the priorities for development are appropriate, they are not broken down into small achievable steps.

73. Across the curriculum, leadership is variable. It is satisfactory in science, art, history physical education and special educational needs. There is very good leadership in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, leadership is good. In all other subjects, the lack of a permanently appointed co-ordinator weakens their development and this is a weakness. Monitoring by co-ordinators is planned but is limited at present, although English and mathematics have been monitored.

74. The provision for special educational needs also lacks a co-ordinator but the former co-ordinator has left strong systems in place during the transition period. The general deployment of support assistants is good, but they do not use their time consistently well at the beginning of lessons. At the moment, support assistants are not appraised.

75. The leadership and monitoring for pupils with English as an additional language are unsatisfactory. There is no specialist co-ordinator for English as an additional language and is a weakness. The headteacher has temporarily undertaken the co-ordination but he already has heavy responsibilities. There is no policy for English as an additional language to support teaching and learning but an action plan is being developed containing appropriate targets. The school uses some of the additional funding provided for pupils with English as an additional language to make staff available to assist pupils with special educational needs. This is not appropriate and results in pupils with English as an additional language not receiving the level of support to which they are entitled.

76. The school budget is set to support the school's development plan to good effect, with additional finances clearly allocated to the development of information and communication technology. The budget is controlled and monitored very effectively by a very good financial administrator. However, the allocation of finances for English as an additional language is not clear enough. All other special budgets are used effectively. The recent audit report recommendations are being implemented well. The good financial management reflects the

findings of the last inspection, but the school is not formally monitoring the effectiveness of its spending.

77. The governing body has worked hard to develop its role since the last inspection, especially in expanding its monitoring role. Most governors are very regular visitors to the school and know about its daily workings. One of the school's particular strengths is their role in shaping the direction of the school as they have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, the governing body is not completely fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. There are weaknesses in ensuring that the current requirements for risk assessment are satisfactory and also, the full curriculum for information and communication technology is not being provided.

78. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are good and senior staff and governors are taking effective action to improve standards. The senior staff are working hard to develop this aspect of their work, but are not totally clear about how to develop writing skills systematically. However, they have sought good support from the Local Education Authority. The school has been successful in recognising and supporting the average pupils who may need just a little extra push to achieve their full potential in mathematics. However, the evaluations of pupils' development in acquiring English are not sufficiently incorporated into the otherwise good evaluation of the school's performance in tests.

79. The number of co-ordinators for subjects is unsatisfactory. Teachers have good qualifications and the number of support staff is very good. Overall, class teachers are appropriately qualified and competent in teaching all areas of the curriculum. The recruitment and retention of high quality staff has been of paramount importance to the development of the school and is well recognised in written development planning. Nevertheless, the school has still not fully resolved this issue. However, good planning and support of newly qualified teachers are having a positive effect on standards of teaching, curricular development and whole-school improvement. The office staff contribute well to the generally very efficient running of the school.

80. The accommodation is good and kept extremely clean by the site manager and his staff. He contributes very positively to the life of the school. The recent developments to the site are good and enhance pupils' learning environment. The only real weakness is the information and communication technology suite, which is not a stimulating environment for pupils to work in. Currently, the school is not making good enough use of new technology. The library is attractive but is not sufficiently well used for personal study.

81. Resources are unsatisfactory overall. There are limited resources for the demands of aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. There are not enough play resources for children in the Reception class and the quantity and range of tools and materials for design and technology are too limited. Many of these resources were also identified for improvement at the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. In order to build on the existing standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Raise standards in writing by developing further the school's improvement plan by:

(This is already identified in the school improvement plan)

- seeking to appoint a permanent English co-ordinator;
- making better use of assessment information when pupils start school at three years and when they finish the Foundation Stage, so that targets for pupils' development can be identified and progress tracked;
- developing the quality of teaching by:
 1. continuing with training for teachers and assistants;
 2. regularly demonstrating guided writing skills in whole class lessons, in group work and in a variety of different subjects;
 3. planning time when pupils can work with teachers and assistants to go back over their writing to extend their ideas, develop vocabulary, do corrections and make overall improvements in accuracy;
 4. giving sufficient attention to the use of correct grammatical structures;
 5. improving marking so that there is greater consistency of approach;
 6. making better use of information and communication technology resources for redrafting writing;
 7. providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length without interruption;
- developing a rigorous and progressive programme for improving spelling and handwriting.

Paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 14-19, 32, 33, 38, 47, 70, 90, 104-118.

Raise standards in information and communication technology by building further on the school's improvement plan by:

- ensuring that pupils use this technology in their daily work in a variety of subjects;
- increasing the amount of planned direct teaching of skills in information and communication technology;
- making better and more efficient use of the resources which the school already has;
- planning progressive work which accurately matches pupils' needs;
- widening opportunities and resources so that the National Curriculum is fully covered;
- monitoring the teaching of the subject.

Paragraphs 8, 13, 16, 22, 33, 35, 42, 43, 70, 80, 121, 127, 143, 147, 156-162.

Develop the provision for pupils with English as an additional language by:

- seeking to appoint a permanent co-ordinator who can lead development to raise pupils' attainment in speaking and writing;
- develop procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' competence in English as they move through the school;
- keeping simple profiles of pupils' linguistic development;
- helping teachers and support staff to plan directly for language development;
- giving support to classroom assistants so that they know how to help pupils at different stages in their acquisition of English;
- ensuring that the budget to support these pupils is used properly;
- making better use of drama to help pupils in their language development.

Paragraphs 4, 15-17, 25, 33, 40, 43, 46, 49, 75, 75, 78, 76-82, 104, 106, 111, 155.

Implement statutory procedures for health and safety by:

- completing, recording and reviewing risk assessments;
- raising the awareness of staff and governors concerning health and safety risk assessments.

Paragraphs 58 and 77.

Broaden the curriculum by:

- developing the range of work in design and technology;
- developing planned opportunities for spirituality within curriculum subjects;
- providing a better balance and provision for extra curricular opportunities;
- providing opportunities for pupils to work independently using library resources;
- broadening art, music and physical education activities, so that there is a better balance of subjects.
- improving resources to widen opportunities.

Paragraphs 9, 12, 13, 22, 28, 34, 48, 51, 53, 56, 66, 80, 81, 89, 103, 137, 140, 142, 146, 164,169.

Continuing to attempt to appoint suitable permanent teaching staff.

Paragraphs 43, 69, 79, 82, 105, 118, 150.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- **continuing to support newly qualified teachers in their behaviour management skills;**

Paragraphs 33, 37, 54,71.

- **making homework a regular and consistent feature of pupils' learning;**

Paragraphs 6, 66.

- **ensuring that classroom assistants are consistently and effectively used at the beginning of literacy and numeracy lessons;**

Paragraphs 118, 130.

- **building on assessment procedures;**

Paragraphs 23, 59, 62, 68, 70, 117.

- **building further on the school's improvement plan so that there is a longer term overview and short term projects are broken down into small, measurable and costed steps.**

Paragraphs 72, 130.

- **ensuring that reports to parents clearly identify what it is that their children have to do to make further progress in subjects;**

Paragraphs 67, 118.

- **developing procedures to identify gifted and talented pupils in all subjects.**

Paragraphs 41, 162, 168.

83. PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	26%	33%	35%	4%	2%	

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	192
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		81

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	56

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	152

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	15	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	27	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (80)	87 (93)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	27	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (80)	100 (100)	100 (87)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	16	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	13
	Girls	9	9	12
	Total	19	18	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (63)	60 (70)	83 (89)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	13
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	20	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (74)	80 (74)	83 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	32
Black – African heritage	110
Black – other	6
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	31
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y[R] – Y [6]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y[R] – Y [6]

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	222

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
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	601,369
Total expenditure	602,726
Expenditure per pupil	2,501
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,761
Balance carried forward to next year	29,404

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	235
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	21	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	27	6	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	38	6	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	35	13	6	2
The teaching is good.	60	23	2	2	13
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	27	0	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	27	0	8	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	31	8	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	33	8	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	25	13	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	31	13	10	10

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents expressed some concern about spelling.
- Parents were concerned about the safety of the children on school trips.
- Parents commented that there had been an improvement in the quality of information provided to them.
- The school does not always act on parental complaints.
- Parents were concerned about the absence of a special needs teacher.

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

84. There have been improvements to the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection, when the work was satisfactory. Moreover, the quality of teaching is now very good. The overall very good teaching has a very positive impact on children's learning and they make very good progress and achieve very well for their abilities in all areas of their curriculum. The teachers have a good understanding of the Early Learning Goals and are planning the curriculum effectively. The decision to place these teachers in the Foundation Stage is very good and shows how the school is planning for long-term improvement in standards. The current co-ordinator moved from Key Stage 2 to take over this role at the beginning of 2000 and the Reception teacher was recently appointed to school.

85. Many children begin Nursery with poorly developed skills, particularly in speaking and listening. This is confirmed by the initial observations and assessment made by the teachers. By the time they are ready to enter Year 1, most children achieve well and attain the Early Learning Goals. This is due to the very good teaching in these areas of learning. Teachers and adults in the Nursery and Reception classes are dedicated and committed to educating the children and forming helpful links with parents. The care with which teachers treat children leads to a harmonious atmosphere where the children become confident in their relationships with teachers, and with each other. The provision for these pupils is a considerable strength of the school. There are missed opportunities to set targets for children's development from the good range of assessments which the teachers do when pupils start school and parents are not contributing consistently to pre-school profiles of their children's abilities. In addition, the testing at the beginning of the Reception class is not used to best effect for target setting that can be tracked as pupils move through the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

86. Nearly all the children enter the Nursery class with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave Reception class, most of them achieve the Early Learning Goals. This shows very good progress and reflects the skilful teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. Teaching is very good, but, there are limited resources for play in the Reception class and this has an impact on children's wider personal development.

87. In the Nursery, children play and work together well. They show consideration towards, and are helpful to, each other, for example, a full time child helped a new child to print his name using the computer. They are enthusiastic about their learning such as when listening to the big storybook 'Over in the 'Meadow' in the Nursery class, or when doing number games in the Reception class. In the Reception class, a few children are still learning to work with each other co-operatively, for example, when clearing away bricks at the end of an activity, one child obstructed another's efforts to put them away. Most children, however, are co-operative and persevere till the clearing away is done properly. They are enthusiastic and energetic, and become very noisy but eventually respond to the teacher's quietening activities, particularly action songs.

88. The adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each other, and the children, with courtesy and respect. During their time in the Nursery and the Reception class, children learn to take their share of responsibility, for example, in the Reception class two boys cleaned up the floor in the water play area thoroughly before going on to the next activity.

89. Teachers also promote children's personal development effectively by ensuring that the equipment and resources are easily accessible to them and help them to become independent. They provide opportunities for children to become considerate to guests, such as when offering toast to visitors at break. Teachers provide very good opportunities for the children to learn from adults, other than teachers, for example, during the 'baby clinic' one of the mothers brought in her baby to be weighed and bathed. The range of resources for small world play are too limited in the Reception class to help pupils to move quickly from playing alone to playing with another child in an imaginative game. An example of this occurred when three children were making models with bricks. They concentrated well and all made a simple model but there were not enough wheels and too few bricks to make the 'car wash' as one boy wanted to do. Moreover, there was no play mat or small people to extend their imagination and language skills further. When one child started to work with another, it ended in an argument about who was going to finish their model due to the limited resources and, as a result, the children reverted to playing alongside each other and not together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

90. In both the Nursery and Reception classes the children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with each other and with adults. For example, in Reception, a child spoke confidently about a story she had written about a bear, which she described as 'a big hairy, brown bear'. All the adults use talk to very good effect and are very good, active listeners. They show children that they value their efforts at communicating. The quality of teaching of basic skills is good overall, and very good on occasions, so that children achieve well for their abilities. However, teachers do not demonstrate writing skills often enough.

91. A concern for developing language skills is evident in all aspects of the Nursery and Reception, and teachers are very careful to use technical language, which they ensure is understood. By the time children leave the Reception class, nearly all are achieving the Early Learning Goals.

92. Teachers in the Reception class use elements of the Literacy Framework very well. A good understanding of phonics is developed through effective games based on the letters in the children's names. By the end of Reception children's letters are formed well and they can spell simple words, such as 'and' and 'this'.

93. In both year groups, teachers encourage children to think of themselves as readers and writers whatever their stage of development. For example, the youngest children in the Nursery class make a zigzag book and 'write' their own name on the front. They choose what they want to write with, such as a felt tip pen, pencil or marker.

94. Children in the Nursery were fascinated by illustrations in 'Over in the Meadow' and knew that the print told them what the story was about. In Reception, children enjoy stories and learn rhymes such as 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'. The children are encouraged to take reading books home, and many do so.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

95. This area of learning is taught very well, and some children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals for mathematics by the end of the Reception year. All children are achieving very well for their abilities and make very good progress in their learning from the much lower than average standards which are evident when they start school in the Nursery. Nearly all children in the Reception class recognise and write numbers from one to at least ten, and count beyond this. With support from the adult, they count the number of children in the class. Children are beginning to link their counting with the written numbers.

96. Teachers support children very well and seize every opportunity to enable children to apply their developing skills, for instance, when taking the register. They are expert at making learning fun through using, for example, number fans in a game. Incidental learning

takes place through a range of practical activities. For example, children pour water and make comparisons about how full their bottle is compared with their friend's. Children easily identify circles, triangles, rectangles and squares from a description of their properties. By the end of the Reception year, they use objects to compare heavy with light. They learn simple addition, subtraction and are beginning to count in twos. They understand terms such as 'bigger than' or 'smaller than', and 'more' or 'fewer' and recognize some odd and even numbers. The children's enjoyment of stories and songs is also used to very good effect in the teaching of mathematical skills.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

97. Many children have a limited general knowledge and experience on starting school. They make rapid progress in all aspects of this area of learning, due to the high quality of teaching. There is good emphasis on the provision of first-hand experiences and teaching methods are imaginative. Most of the children are on course to meet the recommended Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception year.

98. In a highly successful lesson with guinea pigs they learnt about how to care for the animals and to handle them very carefully. One child thought the guinea pig food was breakfast cereal so the teacher helped them to think hard about the differences with careful, guiding questions. Another child showed her imagination and language skills by describing the pile of shredded paper bedding on the floor as 'it looks like a fire'. There was a real sense of wonder as children observed and touched the guinea pigs, which had a very positive impact on their spiritual development.

99. Children are secure and know the routines of the day and the layout of their classroom. They learn about routes round the school and show landmarks on a large map. They have some understanding of stages of growth from studying the giant African snail and its young. They are encouraged to notice the changes in colour in leaves in the autumn and are helped to make comparisons with different leaves. Children frequently make up games based on their own experiences in the play area such as having a meal and offering round drinks and pizza or ice-lollipops. Practical work involves the children in selecting materials and using them in different ways. Many children confidently, and independently, use the computer keyboard to copy letters of their name, and know how to use the delete key. Teachers are hindered in teaching computer skills as there is insufficient software and the CD-Rom in the Nursery does not work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

100. The children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals with regard to their physical development, and some are likely to exceed them, by the time they are five. On entry to the school, several children are inexperienced in the use of paintbrushes, scissors or pencils. Many opportunities allow them to practise finer movements, for example, children use pipettes to add water to powder paint drop by drop to achieve the right consistency. They manipulate materials such as play dough to form the letters in their name and make marks with a variety of writing materials. Children can run, jump, hop, balance and use their body in different ways to move around. The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well for their abilities.

101. Teachers make very good use of language to encourage children in their physical responses. For example, 'be like a flat tyre', or 'a tree in strong wind'. Skills in teaching relate carefully to the management of children, they have a keen awareness of safety factors. During a physical education lesson, the teacher skilfully involved a boy who was being silly, and a possible danger to the others, by helping her to observe how well the class was doing. The children receive very good opportunities to practise their techniques and learn from each other.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

102. Children start at a low level of skill when they enter the Nursery and make very good progress throughout the Nursery and Reception years. They enjoy composing simple music and performing to the rest of the class with their percussion instruments. They experiment and are guided to think for themselves how to make sounds louder and quieter. Children are imaginative in their play and make up their own stories, for example, when making a pirate ship in the indoor play area.

103. The quality of teaching is very good and results in average standards by the time children finish in the Reception Year. In music, their attainment exceeds the expected level, as pupils help to make up simple compositions and can follow picture notation with very good guidance from the teacher. Teachers are highly skilled at developing children's imagination and capturing their interest. The many varied activities are well organised. Children quickly learn their colours and how to mix paint to make different shades. The classrooms are attractively displayed with the children's self portraits and prints made with different materials. Role-play opportunities are planned carefully and enable children to play in imaginary situations and dress up accordingly, but resources are too limited and restrict the number of roles that children can act out. Opportunities to extend learning in design work are limited by lack of resources, for example, for woodwork. Teachers are aware of these difficulties; they bring additional materials from home and buy items themselves, such as hammers. They work closely with parents and encourage them to share their skills, for example, a father brings his guitar and sings to the children.

ENGLISH

104. Pupils in Year 6 achieve standards that are lower than those in other schools. However, this represents steady progress as standards in English tests are adversely affected by the very large number of pupils, over 72 per cent, in the school with English as an additional language. This judgement reflects the results of the 1999 and 2000 national tests but represents a decline in the standards reported in the previous inspection in March 1998 when attainment in English was comparable with the national average. Over the past four years, test results in English show rising standards above that of the national trend but there was a sharp drop in the 1999 and 2000 results. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results in the 2000 national tests were above average. The school has formal targets for 70 per cent of its pupils to achieve or exceed the expected level in the national end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2001. This represents a good but realistic degree of challenge. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards compared with their previous attainment and make good progress at both key stages. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve below average standards in the subject, although their progress in reading is good. Progress in writing is steady, but pupils have the ability to achieve better in this aspect of their work. No significant differences were found during the inspection between the attainment of boys and girls and between different ethnic groups.

105. The school has correctly identified writing and the presentation of pupils' work as areas for development in English and has generally appropriate measures in place to address these weaknesses with support from outside agencies. There are inconsistencies in the teaching of writing skills progressively through the school because of the high turnover of staff and difficulties in co-ordinating the subject.

106. In Year 6, pupils attain below average standards in speaking and listening. In the previous inspection, standards were average. Many pupils talk confidently, readily engage in discussion and answer questions appropriately. However, they frequently have difficulty in choosing precise words to express themselves and are unable to extend their ideas using interesting vocabulary and complex sentences. Some use features of non Standard English in their speech and have an insecure grasp of sentence structure. Although teachers reinforce specific vocabulary in subjects appropriately, there is an insufficient focus on the

development of oral and listening skills across the curriculum and opportunities are missed for pupils to speak in more formal contexts such as prepared speeches and mini debates. Drama and role play are also under developed across the curriculum. Some pupils are careful listeners, but many have difficulty in listening attentively either to their teachers or to others. Teachers do not consistently reinforce to pupils the importance of good listening skills to promote their learning.

107. In Year 6, standards in reading are average and this is a strength of the school. Pupils are interested in books and generally read with enjoyment, accuracy and growing confidence. Higher achieving pupils use the pace and meaning of the text to read aloud with great expression; average pupils can identify and talk readily about main characters and events and lower achievers use their knowledge of sounds when tackling unfamiliar words but often need support to build them up successfully. They are unable to explain their preferences and reflect upon their reading. Skills in location and researching information are satisfactorily developed across the key stage.

108. Standards in writing in Year 6 are well below average and skills in handwriting and presentation are weak. Pupils write for an appropriate range of readers including poetry, story settings, instructions, persuasive writing, play scripts and book reviews. Weaknesses in their listening skills and spoken language undermine pupils' achievement in their written work. As reported in the previous inspection, some have difficulties with the grammar and structure of Standard English and their output is consequently small. Most pupils organise their work in a logical sequence and use an apt vocabulary but they do not have the confidence to develop their ideas in any detail, draw upon a wider range of vocabulary or write at length. The work of higher achieving pupils is thoughtful and imaginative and shows an increasing fascination with, and enjoyment of, language.

109. In all classes, pupils do not take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work. Most pupils either print or use a mixture of printing and joined writing and few use a neat, legible, joined style. Some pupils have not developed a clear understanding of the sound and spelling system and also use punctuation inconsistently. An improving feature of the school's provision is the emphasis on the planning, drafting, editing and refining of pupils' work but information and communication technology is not fully exploited to support writing and enhance pupils' skills in word processing and editing.

110. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are below those found in most schools although this represents sound achievement. Standards in writing are similar to those found in the 2000 national tests but higher standards in reading found during this inspection reflect the success of the school's Reading Recovery Scheme and the use of the National Literacy Strategy. During the past four years, standards in reading and writing have risen steadily, although there was a decline in 1999, but the 2000 results show improvement and standards are higher when compared with similar schools.

111. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are below average. This is a different judgement from the 1999 teachers' assessments when results were very high. The high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language means that many pupils start from a low level of confidence and skills in spoken language. Some higher achievers speak confidently and audibly using a growing vocabulary but many pupils have a limited range of words and indistinct pronunciation and need support to develop their ideas beyond a sentence or short statement. Many pupils listen attentively to stories, rhymes and explanations but a significant number find it difficult to listen to others and take turns in speaking. This interrupts the flow of the lesson and hinders sound learning.

112. Standards in reading in Year 2 are average. Pupils handle books confidently and take their books home regularly to practise their skills. Most read simple texts accurately and fluently. They know how to use their knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words but some do not always use these skills automatically. Higher achievers are developing

appropriate independence and can make simple and correct observations about their reading.

113. Pupils' writing skills are well below average in Year 2. Some pupils are able to communicate their ideas in different forms such as stories, notes and instructions. Their writing shows an awareness of sentence formation but punctuation is variable and they use a narrow range of vocabulary. Spelling relies on the use of phonics rather than a sound knowledge of spelling patterns. Higher achievers show an appropriate understanding of the structure of a story and are beginning to use interesting vocabulary. Most pupils correctly orientate their letters but their control of size and shape is variable.

114. Throughout the school, standards in literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory, for example, Year 6 pupils write letters from evacuees and also make lists of items for evacuees to take with them in information and communication technology as part of their study of Britain since 1930.

115. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory at both key stages. It is very good in the Reading Recovery programme. These are the same judgements as the previous inspection. Strengths in the teaching and learning of English were well illustrated in a Year 4 lesson in which the teacher encouraged pupils to empathise with a character in a poem by exploring 'What has happened to Lulu?' by Charles Causley. The easy rapport between the teacher and his pupils enabled him to create a caring and supportive climate for learning. The pace of the lesson accelerated as the teacher used a series of quick-fire questions – 'What are the really powerful verbs in this poem?' – to challenge pupils' thinking and draw out effective personal responses from them. Under the thoughtful direction of the teacher, pupils animatedly discussed the significance of 'the flapping curtain', 'the crumpled note' and the anguish of the mother. Their contributions were perceptive and imaginative and other pupils listened appreciatively as the teacher insisted that they should support their ideas with evidence from the text. He congratulated his pupils on their sensitivity, which recognised their achievement very effectively and boosted their self-esteem well. Pupils had made very good gains in their knowledge of how to analyse a poem and how a poet conveys moods and feelings. This was the result of a well structured, stimulating approach in which the teacher challenged and motivated his pupils to learn and to respond with maturity well beyond their years.

116. In another Key Stage 2 lesson, there were missed opportunities to challenge and develop pupils' understanding and use of inference and deduction to describe a character. There was insufficient guidance and discussion by the teacher, which led to pupils being unaware of the real demands of the task. They were unable to interpret the shades of meaning in the text and wrote a physical description rather than about the personality of the character which could be inferred from dialogue and actions in the story. Other weaknesses in teaching in this key stage included poor class control which allowed pupils to dictate their own pace in learning, inadequate knowledge of the teaching of basic skills, insufficient challenge for older pupils so that they marked time and over-long explanations by teachers so that pupils became bored and restless when they were not involved in learning.

117. The curriculum is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The format of the literacy hour has been established satisfactorily and most teachers show confidence in managing it. The language policy does not adequately support teaching and learning in the subject. Assessment procedures in English are good which is an improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Planning, although detailed, does not always encompass the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils have suitable targets in literacy to motivate them and give them responsibility for their own learning. Targets for the development of the subject are appropriate, although the use of information when pupils start school in the Nursery and Reception year is not used rigorously enough to identify specific targets for individual pupils' improvement. The quality of marking is variable: some teachers provide pupils with positive

and informative feedback about their work whilst others' comments are simply congratulatory. This was also the finding of the previous inspection.

118. The coordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has temporarily undertaken the role but he is overburdened by other responsibilities and does not have the time to give the level of commitment necessary for a complete overview of the development of the subject. Classroom assistants are not always deployed efficiently especially at the beginning of the literacy hour although they give well-targeted support in group work. Reports to parents do not always give specific information about how children can improve their writing so that parents can be partners in their learning. Resources for English are satisfactory, as in the previous inspection, and most classrooms have an appropriate range of books to support research and study skills. The library is well stocked and an attractive place to browse and enjoy books but it is insufficiently used for independent study. The subject is enhanced by Springboard – a reading development programme, visits to the Globe theatre and an exhibition featuring the work of the illustrator Edward Ardizzone, poetry readings, theatre groups and a link with a school in Madrid. Such experiences effectively give relevance to pupils' learning and support their wider cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

119. Pupils in Year 6 achieve standards that are average. This represents good progress as there are a very high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. The findings of this inspection show an improvement on the 2000 test results, which were below average against all schools but above average when compared with similar schools. The current findings are comparable with the last inspection in 1998 when average standards were reported. Over the past five years, test results in mathematics show rising standards above the national trend between 1996 and 1998, but there was a decline in 1999 and 2000 below the national trend. When compared with similar schools, this school is achieving above average standards. The school has formal targets for 70 per cent of pupils to achieve or exceed Level 4 or above in the tests in 2001. This represents a good and realistic degree of challenge.

120. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards for their abilities and are well supported by special educational needs assistants in group work activities as work is well planned for individual needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language generally achieve in line with other pupils of this age and some achieve above average standards. No significant differences were found between the attainment of boys and girls and between different ethnic groups. The monitoring of attainment by gender and ethnicity is good.

121. The school's improvement planning shows appropriate recognition of the need to develop aspects of mathematical problem solving and the provision for additional support for pupils who are borderline for achieving average results. Moreover, higher achieving pupils are to have the opportunity to work together to raise their attainment further in the mathematics club and by having planned and challenging work within class lessons. The improvement of links between mathematics and information and communication technology is correctly identified for development. The use of regular test results to assess pupils' particular needs is developing well and is having an impact on standards. This represents good progress since the last inspection, when assessment was a weakness. Pupils are making good progress across the school as a whole and this shows greater consistency and good improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory. The school is working to improve the presentation and marking of mathematics appropriately, although with the recent changes in staff, this is not totally consistent. At the 1998 inspection, marking was found to be unsatisfactory. Improvements have brought this to a satisfactory standard overall, although written comments by teachers do not often pose a further challenge for pupils. Time for pupils to do corrections to their work is not sufficiently built into

the daily programme. Furthermore, there are considerable inconsistencies in the way in which homework supports pupils' learning.

122. In Year 6, pupils use and apply mathematics to draw graphs in science and interpret the results of different data using bar charts and line graphs. However, although information and communication technology is used to help pupils with this work, there is insufficient development in the use of these resources within class lessons. In history, pupils work out the difference in periods of time using time lines. In design and technology, they draw simple but accurate plans, measure and cut materials correctly, but the measuring of weight and liquids is underdeveloped as part of food technology. In art, pupils have the opportunity to explore symmetry and mathematical pattern in their drawing.

123. In Year 6, pupils use the four rules of number to solve problems by breaking calculations down into steps and sometimes use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, although this is better when teachers intervene directly to challenge and reinforce work. For example, when pupils explained what happened when £105.20 is multiplied or divided by 10, 100 and 1000, the teacher had to help them to explain their results using accurate tens, hundred, thousands, tenths and hundredths when explaining the new value of each digit in the answer. The very lively telling of a story about a bus driver multiplying the fares for a class of pupils made this very meaningful to pupils and resulted in good learning and recording to two decimal places and an understanding of how to round numbers up. Most pupils are confidently looking for patterns in calculations and results and are developing logical thinking when solving word problems. There are strong links with their numeracy work, which is being implemented well and is having a good impact on pupils' progress and attainment. For example, higher achieving pupils can see the pattern of the six and five times tables when mentally working out how much money six people would get if a lottery prize of £363,630 was shared, whilst pupils of average ability can do this, but have to break it down and write down bits of the answer as they go using long multiplication. Higher achieving pupils confidently use calculators to solve problems and make accurate choices about which operation to use. Overall, most pupils can confidently recall addition facts for all numbers up to 20 and can calculate what has to be added to any two digit number to make 100. They are also confident with the terminology of using inverse number operations.

124. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 make good progress and achieve well for their ability. They manage simpler two digit multiplication problems and can do addition and subtraction using numbers up to 100 with help. However, on occasions, it is evident that a few pupils are struggling with number work, as they are not using practical resources effectively to reinforce their understanding. An example of this is that a few pupils who do not really have a good basic understanding of place value are expected to solve and record problems without practical apparatus. Higher achievers are achieving well for their abilities as lessons are well planned to meet their needs and assessment information is used effectively to group pupils in order to extend them. In 1998, higher achieving pupils made good progress and this is comparable with the findings of this inspection.

125. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in Year 2 attain average standards and this shows an improvement in their attainment compared with national tests, which were below average in 2000 and well below average in 1999. When comparing the results of this school with similar schools, they achieved above average standards.

126. At the time of the inspection, the Year 2 class was being taken by a temporary teacher. The good quality teaching in this class was having a positive impact on the progress that pupils made in their learning. The findings of this inspection match the average findings of the 1998 inspection. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve average standards and are achieving well, but are not always able to explain their work fully. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as they are very well supported and those with statements are well integrated for their ability.

127. In measuring, pupils in Year 2 of average ability, confidently estimate measures using a meter and are beginning to measure accurately using centimetres. This accuracy results from good teaching whereby the teacher is constantly assessing pupils by observing their errors and then correcting them with plenty of practical work. The good planning and very good use of support assistants ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning of accurate mathematical vocabulary. This close support helps pupils to keep on task, make accurate metre strips using newspaper and have opportunities to make reasonable estimation of answers, by comparing lengths up to 20 centimetres. Pupils are confident in addition and subtraction to ten and higher achieving pupils know by heart the addition and subtraction facts to ten. These pupils also understand that multiplication is repeated addition and can use their two, three and five times tables to solve simple practical problems. They can also do some sharing work, but are not clear that multiplication is the inverse of division, although they are mostly confident in this rule for addition and subtraction. They can count in twos and make a good attempt at counting in fives, although they lose direction around 30. There is considerable inconsistency in pupils' understanding of place value, although many can order numbers to 100. Pupils are beginning to explain why answers are right or wrong. The use of information and communication technology resources for handling data is insufficiently developed. Work is often recorded on worksheets that are carefully designed by teachers for the pupils. The development of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect on standards.

128. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. It ranges from very good to satisfactory and is a considerable strength of the school. The quality of support for newly qualified teachers is very good and is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and their good progress in learning. The best lesson was in Year 5 and was taken by the temporary visiting advisory deputy. This lesson was very good because the teacher had immediate presence in the class and started the lesson with rapid and challenging multiplication questions which pupils answered confidently. Furthermore, he was aware of the pupils with special educational needs and ensured that they were well integrated. His control of the class was very good and resulted in very good concentration and pace of learning. Very good use of mathematical vocabulary and focus on mathematical patterns ensured very good learning overall, for example, when he explained how $3 \times \pounds 2.50$ can be quickly solved by doing $3 \times 25 \times 10$. As a result of the clear instructions, praise, clearly set boundaries for behaviour and energetic input from the teacher, the pupils showed very positive attitudes and this all had an impact on the better than average attainment.

129. All other lessons, except one, were good. There was one satisfactory lesson and no unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics. In Year 1, the good lesson on subtraction ensured solid foundations in this area of learning as the teacher constantly assessed the pupils' understanding and worked systematically through calculations up to ten. A Year 2 lesson was a good example of how good planning and behaviour management result in good learning. For instance, the teacher smiled but waited until all pupils did exactly as she expected before giving focused group teaching. Furthermore, she kept reminding the pupils that she was not to be interrupted by praising those who put their hand up and waited for help. The lesson taken by the co-ordinator was also an example of systematic teaching which made use of good ongoing assessment. In this lesson, the teacher was working using a grid for thousands, hundred, tens and units to explain place value position. He quickly became aware that some pupils could not explain the value of '0' in 70 and higher achievers were uncertain about how to place 6400 on the grid. As a result, he went back to early place value work and, by the end of the session, all pupils had made good progress in explaining place value movement by ten and higher achieving pupils could do this by 100. In Year 6, the teacher had good subject knowledge and pupils worked busily although some needed to be reminded about how and when to listen. A particular strength was the good planning for higher achieving pupils who used calculators to convert the Nigerian Naira to pounds and could confidently do the reverse of this. The teacher used good vocabulary and pupils made

very effective use of The Financial Times to widen their cultural development. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and they teach the basic skills well. Expectations are high and lessons are challenging.

130. The co-ordinator has taught in the school for seven years, but only took over the co-ordination of mathematics earlier this term. He is enthusiastic about the development of the subject and has re-evaluated and prioritised aspects of mathematical development in light of the recent changes in staff to develop their training. The current improvement plan is clear but general, as areas have not been broken down into small tasks upon which success can be measured quickly. Time for monitoring the subject is satisfactory in terms of looking at planning, evaluation of pupils' work and provision of resources, but monitoring of direct teaching is underdeveloped, with the exception of the very good monitoring and support of the newly qualified teachers. However, the monitoring of teaching is built into the spring development planning. Learning support assistants give good help to pupils in group activities and sometimes this is very good, when they ask challenging questions. However, at the beginning of numeracy lessons, some are not using their time well enough. The co-ordinator is a positive role model for teaching as he has strong subject knowledge and shows a deep commitment to the development of this subject. The subject complies with the requirement of the National Curriculum and contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately.

SCIENCE

131. The findings of the inspection are that the standards attained by the pupils in Year 6 are average. This finding is the same as the previous inspection but shows an improvement against the school's results in the 2000 national tests, where they were found to be lower than average. The assessments of the present Year 6 class show them to be of better ability than the pupils who took the tests last year. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Over the five years from 1996 to 2000, standards show an improvement in line with national trends until 2000 when the national trend in improvement was better than the school's. Overall, pupils achieve good standards for their ability and make good progress in their learning.

132. By the age of 11, pupils use the resources that they are given for experimental work but lack skill in devising their own experiments to investigate their activities. The investigation in last year's Year 5 shows good understanding of a fair test when investigating the properties of wood. Pupils describe the functions of some important plant and human organs, are aware of methods such as filtration for separating simple materials and can classify materials as solids, liquids or gases. They have a sound knowledge of magnetism and use symbols accurately to draw an electrical circuit.

133. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are average which agrees with the teachers' assessments in 2000 which showed all pupils to be attaining the national expectation. This finding shows a significant improvement on the findings of the school's 1998 inspection and the 1999 assessments, when standards were found to be below average.

134. By the age of seven, pupils compare materials and record their work in simple tables and charts. They understand the importance of diet and exercise for good health, sort materials according to their properties and understand why some materials are useful for specific purposes. Pupils recognise and name a number of sources of light and can construct an electrical circuit to make a bulb light up.

135. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are satisfactory at both key stages, and these pupils make good progress. This shows an improvement on the last inspection when teaching at Key Stage 2 was judged to be unsatisfactory, although pupils made satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning were good in Year 4 where the teacher

had a lively and animated approach, which caught and retained the pupils' interest in the lesson on parts of a plant. Here, the teacher's very good subject knowledge helped pupils to make good progress in their learning and, as a result, pupils were keen to contribute their ideas and new knowledge. The objectives of the lessons were discussed with the pupils so that they knew what they were supposed to learn. Questions were used to make the pupils apply intellectual effort and to think for themselves - "if the seed grows, why do you not get one plant growing out of another?" The management of the pupils was good and promoted a good working atmosphere. However, in some science lessons, the work sampling showed that marking does not often help pupils to think scientifically. In some lessons, over direction of the pupils' work by the teacher results in insufficient development of their initiative and their investigative skills. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher had to work hard to ensure pupils settled to the task and sustained concentration. At both key stages, teachers still do not ensure that pupils make sufficient use of information and communication technology in this subject, which was a weakness at the previous inspection, but there is satisfactory use of measuring to develop their mathematics.

136. The subject is capably managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored but there is currently no programme to monitor classroom practice or for the co-ordinator to gain an understanding of pupils' attainment across the school. The use of end of topic tests has improved assessment, which was found to be unsatisfactory in the previous report. Learning resources for science are good. The pupils show good attitudes to the subject, take care of resources well and co-operate successfully in group work. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development, for example, through the study of life cycles and care for the environment. The teaching of science meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART and DESIGN

137. It was only possible to see two art lessons during the inspection and, therefore, judgements are made from looking at pupils' work, the art displays around the school and discussion with pupils. The findings reflect those in the school's previous inspection. Although attainment is average, the range of experiences offered to pupils is insufficiently broad. There is little evidence on display to indicate that pupils are acquiring skills in three-dimensional work, clay work or that they make use of computers. There has been satisfactory progress in art since the last inspection as the school now uses a progressive scheme of work and has purchased more resources. Pupils achieve appropriately overall. However, there is no procedure for identifying gifted and talented pupils and this is a minor weakness.

138. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is average, with some above average attainment in drawing when pupils work in small groups and are well supported by adults. Pupils show increasing confidence in using various media and techniques. They are satisfactorily developing their skills in observational drawing using different types of pencil to create different effects. They have an appropriate understanding of the range and use of colour and blend and mix colours effectively to produce different tones and textures. Pupils extend their range of techniques in other media, for example, batik. They apply the style of artists, such as Picasso's blue period, in their own work, and look at the original work of an artist from Nigeria.

139. By the age of seven, pupils achieve average standards. They look closely at objects and have produced observational drawings of their own mouths which show a developing eye for detail in the way they draw the fine lines on the lips. They practise blending colours on a separate piece of paper till they are satisfied that the shade matches their skin tone. Pupils are learning to refine their work over a period of time, rather than rush to complete their work within a lesson.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages, although one lesson in Key Stage 2 was good. Overall, lessons are well planned and organised with clear teaching points communicated at the start of the lesson. Effective support and guidance are given on an individual basis once pupils work independently. Teaching was best in Year 6 because the teacher encouraged the pupils to look at the portrait of the 'Weeping Woman' and of 'D.H. Kahmweiler', by Picasso and he asked focused questions to help pupils to examine specific details of the drawings. From this, pupils began to use their imagination well to describe the images which they saw in these abstract paintings. Good learning resulted from this as pupils then drew faces in two different profiles using lines to demarcate areas for abstract features. Both the teacher and the support assistants intervened and helped them to improve their drawings and express their feelings about their work. As the work was challenging and made interesting, pupils achieved higher than average standards and showed excellent attitudes and behaviour in this small group lesson. This lesson showed good cultural development which was not otherwise so evident in the general art curriculum. For example, pupils rarely visit galleries or receive lessons from local artists and there are no extracurricular art activities. There are missed opportunities to develop spirituality in art.

141. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well to produce work in which they can take a pride. Currently, the school does not have procedures for identifying and supporting gifted or talented pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve average standards, but there are missed opportunities to develop descriptive vocabulary when pupils are supported by assistants. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory, but monitoring is very limited. Displays are satisfactory

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

142. It was only possible to see one lesson on design and technology which was in Year 5, as work is blocked throughout the year. However, from evaluation of teachers' termly planning, photographic evidence and discussion with teachers and pupils, indications are that pupils achieve average standards in this subject at both key stages. This includes pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Pupils who have the ability to achieve higher than average standards are not identified in planning, as the school does not have procedures for this. The curriculum is not sufficiently well balanced. Progress and standards were unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, now they are satisfactory. Attainment and progress are satisfactory at Key Stage 1.

143. In Year 6, pupils make powered wheeled toys and design collection boxes. They dismantle boxes and evaluate some products. Work in textiles includes the design and making of a bag. Overall, pupils are clear about simple design processes and record and modify their ideas. Nevertheless, links with information and communication technology are poor for drawing their own simple design, although the headteacher does use the digital camera with pupils to record the work that they have completed as a means of assessment. Pupils have limited opportunity to develop their understanding of work in three-dimensional construction, use mouldable materials and develop a wider understanding of food technology.

144. In Year 2, pupils complete focused practical tasks in three topics that develop skills in food technology, assembling and making products and in using different fabrics. Their attainment from past examples of work and discussions with pupils indicates average attainment in Year 2 and effective links with mathematics for measurement work and art when using textiles to design a multicoloured coat.

145. Teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson seen. There were appropriate links with music as pupils in Year 5 designed and made shakers, having drawn up their ideas in a previous lesson. This lesson was a good example of how product analysis is not strongly embedded in the design process. Although this lesson was appropriately planned and the teacher ensured that all pupils understood how to go about the task of making a shaker, the

limited resources of paper cups, paper clips and rice, did not help pupils to make choices for themselves and evaluate the success of different materials. In this respect, the teaching did not make good use of the variety of manufactured shakers in the music store. In general, the pupils loved this lesson entitled 'shake, rattle and roll' and, as a result of their enthusiasm, they quickly achieved the task. They worked co-operatively and performed with their instruments showing natural rhythm. Overall, the quality of learning was satisfactory as pupils showed creativity and worked on joining and finishing skills, but there were missed opportunities to develop their wider understanding of design and use of tools in the making process.

146. The range of resources is too limited for the requirements of this subject and it hampers pupils' attainment. This was also identified at the last inspection. For example, there are no construction sets which can be controlled by linking them to the computer. The range of tools and materials for construction is insufficient. Furthermore, although Key Stage 1 do some food technology, it is underdeveloped at Key Stage 2 and there is no extracurricular provision for this subject. The school has not made the most of using local resources in helping pupils to develop their ability to understand the design and making process from conception to completion and the amount of work for product analysis is not consistently developed. However, as pupils move through the school, they make a variety of functional items that show good links to science. For example, in Year 4 and 6, force is explored in the design of balloon and elastic band powered buggies. There are good links with English in some classes as pupils make pop up moving features in books. The co-ordination of the subject was being overseen by the headteacher at the time of the inspection. Since the 1998 inspection, a scheme of work has been produced and some new resources have been purchased, but assessment is not consistent or formalised. Overall progress since the last inspection is satisfactory and indicates satisfactory leadership to date, although the current position is unsatisfactory as the headteacher is overseeing several other subjects and cannot realistically develop design and technology to its full potential.

GEOGRAPHY

147. No geography lessons were seen because the subject was not taught during the inspection. However, judgements are based on pupils' work, some displays of topic work, discussion with staff and pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning. Some aspects of geography, such as map work and co-ordinates, occur in other subjects, but links with information and communication technology are too limited.

148. Overall, the indications are that pupils in Year 6, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, attain average standards and achieve appropriately for their abilities. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. By the age of 11, pupils extend their understanding of geographical vocabulary such as source, tributary and estuary. They study different locations both in this country and abroad. Pupils take the train to Eynesford and learn about a ford, stiles, flowers and meadows. They look at the location and culture of places in the Caribbean islands and benefit from two residential trips in Year 4 and Year 6, to support their geography work.

149. By the age of seven, pupils learn basic mapping skills, carry out fieldwork in the local area and study the local shops. Pupils learn about rivers through a Thames Study Day and gain knowledge about the weather. Pupils' attainment is average and they achieve appropriately as at the time of the last inspection.

150. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was overseeing the co-ordination of this area of the curriculum but he is too overloaded with curricular responsibilities to develop this subject to its full potential. At the last inspection, resources were found to be limited and

there was no monitoring of teaching or assessment of pupils' work. Overall, there has been insufficient development in these aspects due to the school's placing its main emphasis on improving other aspects of the school's work as identified in the former key issues. Recently, the school has adopted a scheme of work which shows some appropriate development in this subject and there is a satisfactory understanding of how to develop further when a permanent co-ordinator is appointed.

HISTORY

151. Throughout the school, standards in history are similar to those found in most schools. This was also the judgement of the previous inspection. In this inspection, classroom observations were supplemented by an analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of displays and planning and discussion with teachers and pupils.

152. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Britain since 1930 and of past societies, such as the Ancient Egyptians and the Romans. They have a growing sense of chronology and the concept of a timeline and are able to use appropriate vocabulary to refer to the passage of time. Year 6 pupils have sound insight into the Blitz and its aftermath and the plight of evacuees. In Year 4, pupils understand the impact of invasion such as the Roman occupation of Britain and the consequences of Boudicca's revolt. Year 3 pupils look at hieroglyphics and have an appropriate knowledge of the customs and beliefs of Ancient Egypt. Younger pupils in the school learn to use vocabulary indicating an awareness of time. They examine changes in their own lives and can distinguish between aspects of their lives and those of past times such as 'old' and 'new' toys. Achievement is sound at both key stages.

153. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve satisfactory standards. However, pupils in Key Stage 1, especially higher achieving pupils, have limited methods of recording their work. In Key Stage 2, there is a clear focus on key skills and historical language is developed soundly but pupils' ability to identify and explain why the past is represented and interpreted in different ways is under developed. Personal study skills are satisfactory but higher achieving pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to undertake sustained research.

154. The quality of teaching and learning in history is satisfactory throughout the school. No judgement was given about teaching in the previous inspection. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both at Key Stage 2. One was judged to be good and the other unsatisfactory. Strengths in the teaching and learning of history were evident in a Year 4 lesson where pupils derived evidence from pictures of Roman artefacts. The teacher skilfully used a pupil's question from the previous lesson – 'How do you know?' as a starting point for discussion, which immediately captured pupils' interest and attention. They spoke confidently and offered ideas and relevant information very well. Pupils' enthusiasm and motivation were sustained well by the teacher when he introduced the notion of their being historical detectives looking for clues like Sherlock Holmes and sifting through evidence. Activities effectively built on their previous knowledge as pupils focused upon the teacher's question 'What does this tell us about the Romans and how they lived?' By their lively and thoughtful responses, pupils showed that they had gained sound understanding of what an artefact could tell them about Roman Britain and could compare them with similar objects today. This was the result of the pace, security and challenge of the lesson and the teacher's good emphasis on respect for historical evidence. Other strengths of teaching and learning in history are imaginative use of resources, which actively involve pupils in their learning and an effective balance between giving pupils information and enabling them to learn through enquiry, observation and investigation. Weaknesses include poor behaviour management so that pupils' concentration begins to wane and failure to insist on high standards in the presentation of written work.

155. A sound policy supports teaching and learning in the subject. This was not in place at the previous inspection. Teachers' planning is detailed although it does not encompass the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. Assessment is unsatisfactory as it relies too heavily on the recording methods of individual teachers. This was also a finding of the previous inspection. The coordinator provides sound direction for the subject and has a clear view of its future development. He monitors displays and teachers' planning but there is no classroom monitoring. Targets for improvement are appropriate. Literacy skills are satisfactorily developed in writing letters and newspaper articles and numeracy skills are evident in timelines that increase in complexity, as pupils get older. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support learning. In the last inspection, resources were judged to be inadequate. They are now satisfactory and are supplemented by loans from the Resources Education Library. History makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. The curriculum is enriched by the school's interest and involvement in Black History Month and visits to the British Museum, Globe Theatre, Golden Hind, Imperial War Museum and Cuming Museum in Southwark. The visits of local residents who talk about their personal experiences as evacuees give pupils good insight into the period and bring the subject to life.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

156. There has been little significant improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Standards remain below average throughout the school because pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use computers and develop appropriate knowledge and skills in all aspects of the programme of study. There were few opportunities to observe distinct lessons during the inspection and there was very little previous work in evidence.

157. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is below average. Furthermore, these pupils are not achieving high enough standards for their age and ability. Pupils can handle basic text and data but at an insufficiently high level. They use a variety of fonts, colours and sizes, are just beginning to use e-mail and the Internet and can access CD-ROM information for research. Standards of attainment are low in controlling, monitoring and modelling as the school lacks some basic resources. Pupils have few opportunities to control events in a predetermined way, sense physical data, and explore patterns and relationships with the aid of computer simulations or models. Pupils make little use of computers in other subjects. Although the school has a scanner and a digital camera, there is little evidence of their use.

158. In Year 2, attainment is overall below average and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in extending their knowledge and developing their skills. There has been little improvement since the last inspection when progress was also judged to be unsatisfactory but standards were average.

159. By the age of seven, pupils can generate and communicate ideas using text and pictures at a basic level. They show limited knowledge of the keyboard and competency in using the mouse. Pupils have few opportunities to use computer simulations to explore imaginary situations but in a Year 2 lesson, they gained their first experience of giving direct commands to produce a variety of outcomes when using controllable toys.

160. There was limited opportunity to observe direct teaching but other evidence indicates that, because of the limited range of opportunities offered to the pupils, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory across the school. Although pupils made unsatisfactory progress, no judgement was made on teaching at the last inspection. When pupils are working on computers, teachers show sound awareness and intervene appropriately. This was evident in the Year 4 class, where pupils were beginning to learn about spreadsheets. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory in year 6 and the teaching by the short-term supply teacher in Year 2 was good, as she skilfully introduced pupils to the concept of control.

161. The new co-ordinator has carried out an audit of staff skills and has identified appropriate training needs. The school has adapted local guidelines to ensure that pupils receive a balanced programme, but this is not consistently followed by staff. Although the ratio of computers to pupils is adequate, many are old. However, computers, including those in the computer suite, were not well used during the inspection. This was also a feature of the previous inspection. The school lacks resources for developing control and for sensing external events. There is little assessment of pupils' progress and limited knowledge of the skills, which pupils bring from home. The links between information and communication technology and other subjects is considerably underdeveloped and poor for music and design and technology in particular. Although the school is planning expenditure under government initiatives to improve the provision, the subject does not fulfil National Curriculum requirements and pupils are not using the existing resources often enough.

MUSIC

162. No music lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, but in Year 6, standards in music are similar to those found in most schools. This finding is comparable with the findings in the last inspection. In Year 6, pupils sing with expression and use technical language, for instance, staccato, ostinato and legato. They understand the difference between pulse and ostinato. They sing in unison and in two parts very successfully and many can sing scales with accurate pitch. They understand that musical instruments have developed and changed, and design and make their own, for example, tambourines and shakers. They learn to play simple tunes from notation, such as 'Jelly on a plate', but opportunities to compose and perform their own work are insufficiently developed and in this respect pupils' use of information and control technology is poor and therefore, work does not comply fully with the National Curriculum. However, pupils perform in the annual nativity play and carol service. Currently, there is no specialist teacher of music as at the last inspection and this is why singing was not judged to be as strong as before. There is no formal procedure for identifying pupils who are gifted and talented in music and this is a weakness as higher achieving pupils are not sufficiently recognised and helped to achieve higher standards. Assessment is too limited and has not progressed since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

163. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but occasionally, tasks are insufficiently challenging, and some pupils become noisy and inattentive. This adversely affects their learning as time is wasted and teachers do not always achieve all the planned work for the lesson. Opportunities are missed for full creative effort from the pupils, many of whom have natural rhythmic ability. The school does not have specialist teachers to harness the pupils' natural enthusiasm. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable from good to barely satisfactory.

164. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory as they enjoy visits from a Ghanaian music group and Year 5 pupils composed and performed a fanfare at a pageant at the Globe Theatre. Pupils in Year 6 received hands-on practical experience with Gamelan instruments in a workshop at the Royal Festival Hall. However, there are missed opportunities to develop a wider appreciation of different classical and contemporary composers in assemblies and teachers' planning does not make consistently good use of music to widen pupils' spiritual and cultural development. There is a recorder group at Key Stage 2, but no other extracurricular activities, although pupils share their music in church services. Leadership in the subject is limited as there is no permanent co-ordinator and the headteacher, who is overseeing the subject, does not have specialist knowledge of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

165. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe two lessons at Key Stage 2. In the Year 5 games lesson, pupils showed appropriate skills in defending and attacking in a game of hockey. In a session with a visitor, Year 6 boys showed good rhythm and control of

movement in dance, in the context of Black Culture. At the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be average and this matches the findings of this inspection. However, pupils attain below average standards in swimming. The co-ordinator reports that few pupils in Year 6 can swim 25 metres.

166. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is average. Pupils plan and perform simple skills with safety and control the linking of actions. They make simple judgements and discuss what they and others have done. They use space and change direction and level suitable to their age. In Year 2 classes, they show appropriate development of throwing and catching skills and understand the effects of exercise on their bodies. In Year 1, pupils can dribble a football with both feet and show appropriate control using a hockey stick.

167. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are good overall at Key Stage 1 and were satisfactory in the Year 5 and Year 6 lessons observed. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. Teaching has now improved to good at Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory across the school as a whole. Teachers start physical education lessons promptly and in a well-organised manner. Warm-up activities are appropriate and interest the pupils, who work at a steady pace. Teachers show sound knowledge of the subject in the instructions and demonstrations that they give and these factors, along with their use of pupils to demonstrate, help to ensure that the pupils understand what they are doing and acquire new skills. This was particularly evident in a Year 1 lesson, where enthusiastic teaching motivated all pupils to make good progress in practising throwing skills.

168. Pupils, especially higher achievers, have virtually no opportunities to take part in school teams in inter-school competitions to develop interest by participating in the extracurricular sports activities and outside clubs. There are no opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1. Extracurricular sporting activities are unsatisfactory which supports the views of parents. The school reports little sporting tradition within the community. The lack of organised sport denies pupils the opportunity to understand teamwork and sporting behaviour. Health and safety were satisfactory which is an improvement on the last inspection but pupils were not seen setting out gymnastics equipment.