

INSPECTION REPORT

FURZE PLATT JUNIOR SCHOOL

Maidenhead

LEA area: Windsor & Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 109842

Headteacher: Mr P. Jaques

Reporting inspector: Ms W. Crouch
12172

Dates of inspection: September 18th – 21st 2000

Inspection number: 224873

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oaken Grove Maidenhead Berks.
Postcode:	SL6 6HQ
Telephone number:	01628 410099
Fax number:	01628 410570
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C. Godbold
Date of previous inspection:	June 26 th – 29 th 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Wendy Crouch	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	The school's results and achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
John Brasier	Lay inspector		How well the school works in partnership with parents
Michael Turner	Team inspector	English Equal opportunities	How well the pupils are taught How well pupils are cared for
Frances Thornton	Team inspector	Science	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Leadership and management
Beryl Buteux	Team inspector	History Geography Religious education English as an additional language	
Stephen Barker	Team inspector	Art and Design Design and technology Information and Communication technology	Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

PKR Educational Consultants
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 3JH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Furze Platt Junior School is a large one with 311 7 – 11 year old pupils on roll. It has a mixed intake, but many pupils are from educationally and socially advantaged backgrounds and 28 are entitled to free school meals. Just 6.4 per cent of pupils are from non-white ethnic groups and a few pupils are at an early stage in learning English. The number on the register of special educational needs is below average, although the number with statements is above average. Standards on intake are above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective in achieving above average standards in tested subjects, art and music, providing good teaching and learning and positive leadership and management by senior staff and governors. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves good standards in reading, speaking and listening, numeracy, science, art and music
- Ensures pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes through constructive relationships
- Cares well for its pupils
- Has useful educational links with neighbouring schools

What could be improved

- Progress made by higher attaining pupils
- Use of assessment to plan work which regularly challenges pupils
- Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of teaching
- Roles of subject co-ordinators in developing their subjects
- Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and become independent learners

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in June 1995. It has maintained a positive ethos. Schemes of work have been written for all subjects. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed in monitoring provision, but postholders do not yet directly influence colleagues or evaluate teaching. Provision for higher attaining pupils is made through setting arrangements in literacy and numeracy, but there is still a lack of challenge in planned work especially in non-tested subjects. Not all collective worship meets statutory requirements. Facilities for information and communication technology have been improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	D
mathematics	B	A	A	C
science	B	A	A	C

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

Standards in national tests are well above average in mathematics and science, although average when compared with similar schools. In English, standards are average compared with the national results, but below average in relation to similar schools. Inspection findings judge reading to be a strength of the school. Pupils are regular, enthusiastic readers who comprehend well. While most writing is accurate, pertinent and neatly presented, spelling has some shortcomings and pupils rarely write at length. Pupils develop good knowledge of number and skills in calculating, although they do not always confidently apply their skills in a range of situations. Pupils' scientific knowledge is good, but they are less secure in investigating and applying science.

Trends in results over time are broadly in line with national ones. The school has set and achieved reasonable targets.

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Although higher attaining pupils are achieving good standards in national tests, they are often not working hard enough or accepting regular challenge in their daily work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Positive attitudes shown by interest in work and eagerness to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons and assemblies, but occasionally inconsiderate when pupils are unsupervised. Pupils are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Constructive relationships produce harmony. Responsibility is undertaken conscientiously, but pupils rarely plan and evaluate their own work or take initiative.
Attendance	Very good.

Pupils engage in lessons with enthusiasm, but sometimes become inattentive if not actively involved in their learning. They usually listen to others' ideas, values and opinions sensitively. Pupils co-operate well in play and work. Bullying is rare and effectively handled.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	N/a	N/a	Good

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

8 per cent of lessons were very good, 55 per cent were good, 31 per cent satisfactory and 6 per cent unsatisfactory. The teaching in English and mathematics is good and planning is effective in ensuring pupils acquire essential knowledge and skills. Teachers have effectively adopted the literacy and numeracy strategies and focus appropriately on basic skills in these areas and use these across the curriculum. Planning is thorough, and includes good attention to pupils' speaking and listening. Questioning is effective. Pupils are required to concentrate in lessons and complete much written work. When expectations of pupils are high, work is suitably demanding, but because this is inconsistent, pupils are not always required to make sufficient mental effort. Although teachers assess pupils' work regularly, they do not always use the information effectively to ensure all pupils make best progress. A few teachers lack subject knowledge in English, design and technology, information and communication technology and music.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced, with appropriately detailed planning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Support by specialist staff and in classrooms ensures pupils make good progress against the targets set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are appropriately supported in spoken English so they can fully benefit from the opportunities provided by the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall with strengths in social and moral areas. Relatively limited opportunities for spiritual development, and multicultural dimensions underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well, ensuring pupils are safe and happy.

Partnership with parents is productive. Parents work in school to enhance pupils' learning and there is an active School Association. Communications are regular, but tend to be formal. Reports on pupils are detailed but do not give targets for improvement. The curriculum includes all subjects, but timetabling for information and communication technology was unsatisfactory at the time of the inspection. Good attention is given to developing pupils' personal, social and health education, including arrangements for individual help and advice if necessary. However, pupils are not always expected to be independent learners. Opportunities to consider spiritual experiences are incidental rather than planned.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory leadership and effective management is provided by the headteacher and senior staff. Good standards and a positive ethos have been maintained.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors are actively involved and influence the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school does not rigorously monitor and evaluate its work. It does not decide on ways in which it will measure success.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are generally appropriately used, but long-term plans are sometimes not made and new initiatives are slow in being implemented

The school has suitable priorities, and works satisfactorily towards these with appropriate delegation of responsibilities. However, subject co-ordinators still have limited influence in practice. Financial matters are efficient and the principles of best value are appropriately applied. There are sufficient staff including experienced support assistants who contribute much to the learning of pupils with special educational need. The accommodation is adequate, although the information and communication technology suite is cramped and has reduced library provision to very limited space. Learning resources are adequate for the taught curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Good teaching The friendliness of the school and its openness to parents to talk with staff. Standards in music and drama Pupils' general progress Standards of behaviour in class	Homework Extra-curricular provision Reporting on pupil progress Leadership and management Progress of higher attaining pupils Instances of inappropriate behaviour outside lessons

The inspectors agree with the parents about the school's strengths and also about their reservations on the progress of higher attaining pupils and behaviour of unsupervised groups of pupils. Concerns about information on pupils' progress are also shared. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities voluntarily run by staff is provided. Appropriate homework is provided to enable pupils to practise and consolidate their learning. While leadership is sound overall, comments by some parents about lack of new initiatives are not unfounded.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. National curriculum test results in 1999 showed that pupils' attainment in English was above average nationally but below average in comparison with other similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining level 5 was above average nationally, and broadly in line with the average for similar schools.
2. Inspection evidence suggests that standards in English are improving, although there is still a concern about underachievement given the above average attainment of the school's intake. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in reading and handwriting. The school achieved the reasonable target for the subject and standards have improved since the last inspection. Boys are achieving slightly higher standards than girls.
3. Most pupils are confident orally and have broad vocabularies with which they fluently and precisely communicate their ideas and opinions. They can make interesting and well-argued points. Pupils throughout the school listen well and respond to instructions accurately. Speaking and listening is used effectively across the curriculum and pupils also have the opportunity to express their ideas and to affect school policy through the school council.
4. Standards in reading are a strength of the school. Pupils read both fiction and non-fiction fluently and with enjoyment, including reading for pleasure at home. They know about the structure of books and can talk knowledgeably about characters and describe their favourite incident in the story. The best readers can predict outcomes in their stories and discuss genre. Most pupils use indexes, contents, skimming and scanning to find information. When reading aloud they display a knowledge of punctuation and the need for appropriate pausing, emphasis and inflection.
5. Writing is generally good throughout the school, although there are shortcomings in spelling and extended writing. Most pupils write imaginatively and descriptively as well as short pieces of functional prose, poetry and letters. Handwriting throughout the school is neat and well formed, with the majority of pupils using joined script. Whilst higher attaining pupils are often accurate spellers, many pupils' spelling is erratic.
6. In 1999 national tests, attainment in mathematics was above average compared with schools nationally, although average compared with similar schools. Standards improved further in 2000, when the school achieved its reasonable target for the subject, and trends in attainment are broadly in line with those nationally. The number of pupils achieving a higher level (level 5) was well above average. Girls do slightly less well than boys although both do better than their peers nationally. The school has maintained above average standards since the last inspection.
7. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' attainment is above average particularly in numeracy skills. The highest attaining pupils are able to read and round numbers in three decimal places, while the majority of pupils can competently multiply and divide numbers by 10 and 100, including reading resultant decimal answers. However, pupils are not always confident with their multiplication tables, and a significant number cannot apply their number skills to written problems such as those involving mass. Pupils sometimes write answers which are clearly unreasonable and many

younger pupils still count on their fingers when doing standard calculations. Pupils have appropriate knowledge in shape and space, and can handle data adequately when required to do so, although information and communication technology is rarely used to support mathematics work. Setting arrangements enable higher attaining pupils to make more rapid progress and ensure that pupils in Years 4 and 6 are given more demanding work, including at best, extension activities which involve investigation. However, regular opportunities to ensure progress in problem-solving and investigation, and situations in which pupils apply their learning are relatively limited.

8. In 1999, standards in external tests in science were well above the national average, as they have been for the past three years, and results are in line with the average for similar schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils attain standards in lessons that are at least in line with the national average. They have a good understanding of the key elements of how we see, including that objects are seen when light from them enters the eye. Higher attaining pupils trace the path of a torch beam and can explain that it is reflected from the mirror. Pupils learn that when the angle at which the light hits the mirror is changed, the path of the reflected light also alters. Pupils' attainment in scientific enquiry is lower than in other aspects of science, particularly when drawing conclusions related to their scientific knowledge and understanding.
9. Standards in art and music are good. Pupils are tuneful singers and confident performers, with good awareness of rhythm. In art, pupils are aware of visual qualities in work, confidently explore ideas and modify their work accordingly. Year 5/6 pupils make perceptive comments about the work of well-known artists and use these effectively in their own work. In design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education pupils attain satisfactory standards, although skills in information and communication technology are not regularly used across the curriculum to support pupils' learning.
10. There is an above national average number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, but most of them are confident in writing English as well as speaking English fluently and very few of them need additional support. Pupils with whom English is an additional language are making satisfactory progress and including some being in the top sets for mathematics.
11. Those pupils who have special educational needs relating to language use are provided with opportunities for supported learning by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and her team. Pupils have clearly identified targets in their individual educational plans and these form the basis of the additional support they are given and are incorporated into teachers' lesson plans where appropriate. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress across the curriculum. They are actively encouraged to speak in lessons and often make telling responses. For example, in a design and communication technology lesson where a pupil was making a picture frame for a photograph, he described his pets with confidence. Pupils with statements of special needs make good progress through the school often with good support from additional adults in the classroom. However, pupils who are gifted and talented do not regularly receive the additional challenge that they need if they are to make best progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they usually behave well. Pupils enjoy coming to school – 92 per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire felt their children liked attending - and they are confident about taking a full part in the daily activities they are offered. They are usually keen to learn, although their initial enthusiasm in lessons is sometimes dulled by too much teacher talk and a significant minority do become restless and inattentive under these circumstances. Pupils enjoy active tasks and are eager to participate when practical activities are planned. Pupils listen to each other and adults, sharing thoughts and ideas readily such as in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson on adverbs, although the number of pupils volunteering to contribute to whole class discussions is often small. Pupils develop constructive relationships with each other and adults. They are tolerant of each other and usually respond sensitively to each others' opinions and views. Pupils are justly proud of their achievements when successful, and talk animatedly about their work as in a Year 5/6 art lesson where they produced impressive close observational drawings of apples.
13. Pupils usually behave well in lessons and work constructively in groups and pairs as well as completing individual tasks conscientiously. For instance, in a Year 5/6 athletics lesson, pupils encouraged their partners and helpfully retrieved balls and shuttlecocks for them while also scoring their successes at each activity. Pupils with special educational needs are also well integrated into the life of the school and all pupils enjoy working together. Pupils are polite and courteous and show respect for adults, including visitors to the school. When supervised moving around the school and in assembly, pupils also behave well and move in an orderly and sensible fashion. However, when left unsupervised in classrooms, corridors and courtyards a small but significant number of pupils lack maturity and exhibit inconsiderate or boisterous behaviour. In a queue for a physical education lesson, for instance, pupils push and shove for position once the teacher is out of sight. They can also become noisy when overexcited as in a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson when given the opportunity to play a number game to practise addition to 100. There have been no exclusions in recent years and rare occurrences of bullying are eliminated so that pupils feel confident that any instances will quickly and appropriately be dealt with by staff.
14. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility and carry out their allocated duties sensibly. Younger pupils help newcomers in Year 3 to settle into school and responsibly undertake classroom duties such as distributing and gathering resources. Older pupils conscientiously undertake schoolwide duties such as operating the CD player in assembly and assisting in the library. Representatives on the school council take the responsibility seriously and are proud of changes effected as a result. However, pupils seldom plan and organise their own work and, during the inspection week, rarely showed initiative. Although willing to participate in posing questions when asked to do so, as in a Year 5/6 history lesson on World War II, they seldom ask any of their own volition. Likewise, although pupils do not regularly evaluate their work, they can share thoughts and opinions and make resultant suitable modifications when asked to do so, as in a Year 5/6 design and technology lesson on producing a prototype using a cam mechanism.
15. Attendance rates are very good, being above the national average, and most pupils are regularly punctual. Registers are usually completed satisfactorily at the beginnings of morning and afternoon sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. In the last inspection in 1995 the quality of teaching and the quality of learning were both judged to be good. Pupils' development of knowledge and understanding were also good. Teaching was judged to be good in English, mathematics, science, history, geography and generally good in music. Teaching in other subjects was sound. During the current inspection the situation has largely been maintained. 85 lessons were observed of which 8 per cent were very good, 55 per cent were good, 31 per cent satisfactory and 6 per cent unsatisfactory. Almost all unsatisfactory lessons were those taught by inexperienced teachers who were only in their second week of teaching at the time of the inspection. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and for pupils with English as an additional language it is satisfactory. Learning support assistants contribute effectively to learning working with individuals and small groups.
17. Standards of teaching are good in English, mathematics and science. The implementation of the literacy hour is generally good with some adaptation of the scheme to enable the school to tackle its strategic goals of improving spelling and extended writing. Where the literacy hour is less than satisfactory, teachers display a lack of knowledge or a misunderstanding of the plans and lesson structures, leading to overlong teacher input, misleading information to pupils or a lack of opportunities for pupils to participate actively. In numeracy, teaching is generally good and never less than satisfactory. Pupils are taught numeracy skills effectively through a range of activities but receive limited opportunities to develop skills in investigating and applying their mathematics.
18. Good use is made of speaking and listening across the curriculum with pupils making significant contributions in art, history, science and geography and especially in personal, social and health education lessons where discussion and verbal interaction were the means of learning. Most teachers employed a good combination of open and closed questioning to elicit information from pupils and to encourage them to contribute ideas and feelings on the topic under discussion. In all lesson notes key vocabulary is identified and in most, teachers display the words on the board and use them in the lessons, helping pupils to expand their language and grasp key concepts. Pupils apply their reading skills effectively across all subjects of the curriculum, and write competently when recording answers. Appropriate use is made of numeracy skills in science and design and technology.
19. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, with the exception of information and communication technology and design and technology where knowledge and understanding are still being developed. In music and English there were a few lessons in which misunderstandings or misuse of language led to errors in pupils' understanding.
20. In the majority of lessons, objectives are clearly stated in plans, written on the board and outlined to pupils at the beginning of the session, providing pupils with a clear focus for learning and teachers with a secure framework. Lesson plans are well structured and organised to ensure achievement of learning objectives. In a few instances it is apparent that teachers have not fully understood the lesson plans and adapted them to the needs of their particular classes. Good examples of revision at the beginning and end of lessons are also offered.
21. Teachers use questioning effectively to revise, establish pupils' level of knowledge and understanding and to encourage pupils to contribute ideas and information. In one Year 6 history lesson, pupils ask the teacher a variety of questions about evacuees which she answers in detail and praises them for their interest. However,

pupils are not often heard to ask their own questions of teachers during lessons.

22. In general, teachers' expectations are satisfactory with a few examples of high expectations. In a Year 4 science lesson, clearly differentiated tasks are demanding and in one Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils are set challenging writing tasks with high expectations from the teacher. Teacher expectations vary, with some providing more work rather than more challenging work for the most able. Where teachers fail to match tasks to pupils' different levels of attainment and do not expect enough of the pupils, the level of achievement is merely satisfactory. In one Year 3 English lesson high attainers were given more work than the others but it was of the same level.
23. Teachers manage their classrooms and pupils well and handle movement within the classroom and changes from whole class to group work effectively. Behaviour is generally well handled, although there is inconsistency in its management in Years 3 and 4. Lessons are generally conducted at a satisfactory pace, but the best are brisk in pace with a lively and involving atmosphere.
24. There is appropriate use of resources in lessons including relevant worksheets and textbooks and effective use of the whiteboard and overhead projector, particularly in literacy, and numeracy. Computers are used in a few lessons and are seen by pupils as very enjoyable and useful aids to learning, such as in a Year 6 lesson, they were used by one group for rewriting a text from a new viewpoint using cutting and pasting as well as editing facilities. However, they are infrequently used in many lessons where they could provide useful opportunities for independent study. Some of the best lessons use pictures and artefacts to good effect. In Year 5/6 history, pictures of evacuees provided the basis for analysis and discussion. In some art lessons, pastel drawings by staff and other pupils were used as exemplars and in Year 3/4 literacy lessons a 'treasure chest' with mysterious contents was used to stimulate writing. The special educational needs co-ordinator produces large and colourful work cards and games for her pupils to use in their learning.
25. On-going assessment is generally satisfactory, but teachers' clear knowledge of their pupils' work and progress derived from the classroom and from marking is rarely recorded and used to adapt lesson planning on an ongoing basis. The teachers know their pupils well and adjust their aims for individuals, but little recording of these judgements is apparent. In one Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher revised the previous lesson on verbs effectively before going on to teach about adverbs – making the link clear to the pupils, and in numeracy one teacher planned work using a wider variety of numbers on finding pupils could readily answer questions using multiples of 5 and 10. In the best lessons there are examples of teachers reinforcing previous learning where outcomes are judged to be unsatisfactory, before proceeding to the next stage. The quality of marking is generally satisfactory with some good examples which provide feedback, encouragement and, at best, set targets for improvement. Some marking is less useful because it does not give details of why work is good or in need of improvement, but few examples of ongoing assessment are recorded
26. Homework is used effectively to reinforce or practise new learning in English, particularly in reading and spelling, and in mathematics. Some older pupils are usefully asked to find information to bring in to the next lesson in history and in science.
27. Pupils' learning is good in most lessons with skills being developed alongside knowledge and understanding. In a few lessons where structure is unclear and where teacher talk dominates, pupils tend to lose concentration and work at a more leisurely

pace. Where teachers actively encourage them, pupils contribute to discussions in a lively and intelligent manner and answer questions enthusiastically. In many lessons there are small groups of pupils who are the biggest contributors, but in the best lessons teachers ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to respond and the special educational needs pupils are actively encouraged. Listening is good generally, with pupils attentive throughout lessons. In a few lessons where teacher talk dominates, pupils are less involved and tend to become restless and inattentive.

28. Most pupils work conscientiously at the tasks set, but where there is seldom inducement to work at a brisker pace or to aim for higher levels of attainment. As a result, they do not often give maximum intellectual effort. Where pupils are suitably stimulated and encouraged they work at a brisk pace and concentrate on their work throughout the lesson. Pair work and small group work is used effectively in many lessons and this often succeeds in increasing pupil involvement, interest and achievement. Pupils' understanding of lessons and application of the skills being taught is generally good.
29. In both literacy and numeracy pupils are divided into sets, which helps to match their learning targets more appropriately and to maximise progress and opportunity. This works in terms of providing basic work at which most pupils can make steady progress, but there is still room for more rigorous planning within sets in terms of level of challenge and amount of work expected.
30. Learning support assistants contribute effectively to learning in most lessons, particularly with pupils with special needs and with English as an additional language, although they are occasionally inactive during whole class sessions in numeracy. They are very helpful and challenging with individuals and with small groups and enable the teacher to have more flexibility in supporting learning. Regular meetings take place between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the team managers of the upper and lower juniors to discuss the utilisation of the learning support assistants. This allows measures to be taken to meet the needs itemised in the individual education plans to ensure good progress for pupils. For example, a query about the amount of reading practice received by one pupil was immediately taken up by the special educational needs co-ordinator for discussion with the relevant team leader. The special educational needs co-ordinator effectively supports individuals and small groups both in classrooms and in withdrawal situations. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are well utilised. In one very good lesson the teacher captivated the pupils' imagination when they were being urged to find words to describe the face of a pirate and there were audible sighs of disappointment when they were told that the lesson had to stop. Gifted and talented pupils have no special provision apart from that achieved incidentally by setting.
31. Pupils with below average attainment in reading have been identified and it is proposed that they will receive extra support in school, that they be assessed and monitored for progress and that home/school reading records are provided for them. This was not observed and it is understood to be happening later this term. Similarly the group of high attainers has been identified and it is proposed that special assessment, progress and targets be organised for them. Again this has not yet been put into practice.

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

32. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum as it did at the time of the last inspection, with provision beyond the national curriculum, including drama and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum takes account of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school provides opportunities for the teaching of information and communication technology but delivery in this subject is variable. For example, there are limited opportunities for the use of information and communication technology in mathematics and science. Use is made of resources within the community, visits and other activities contribute to pupils' learning and there are good curricular links with the adjacent infant and secondary schools which help continuity of learning and enhance opportunities to use a range of resources otherwise unavailable. Pupils' personal development is promoted through the opportunities for the pupils to take responsibilities within the school council, the library and for the CD player in assembly although there are limited opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
33. The key issue at the last inspection to develop schemes of work for all subjects has been fully dealt with. Programmes of study are covered in all subjects. They are being revised to ensure they meet with the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The teaching time has been increased and meets the recommendation for taught time. The time for foundation subjects is just below average, but the school is working towards the new requirements. Plans take account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Provisions made for statemented pupils are generally implemented although there are delays in providing speech therapy which the school is unable to influence. Individual educational plans are well disseminated through the school to all those who need to know.
34. The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, race or religion. Although boys do slightly better than girls in national tests there is no evidence of this being due to gender bias. Pupils have access to all subjects within the school. Setting and regular assessment in English and mathematics has helped teachers to match the work to pupils' different attainment. In science and the foundation subjects, teachers ensure that all pupils have access to the taught curriculum. In many lessons, teachers provide extension work for the most able pupils and support those who need it. However, not all teachers use the results of assessment to set work which challenges the wide range of pupils' attainment in each class. As a result, the curriculum is not always precisely matched to the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the whole curriculum. There is some concern about time lost through attendance at peripatetic music classes but these are rotated in order that pupils do not lose too much of any one curriculum area.
35. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to enhance pupils' learning by organising a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports such as netball, football, cricket and rounders and drama, choir, orchestra and peripatetic music. Year 6 pupils also produce a school magazine which provides useful practice for their computer skills. Parents are pleased with the provision for music and drama and are particularly pleased with the residential trip. Some parents expressed concern that not all activities are offered to the younger pupils. However, the inspectors found that extra-curricular activities except form competitive sports are offered to all pupils.
36. Spiritual, moral social and cultural education opportunities offered to the pupils are generally good overall as they were at the time of the last inspection. The provision for social and moral education is good. In many classes, the pupils have developed their own code of practice and these rules are clearly displayed in the classroom.

Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils understand what is expected in lessons and respond well. Staff have a positive and supportive manner and they provide a good model for the pupils. The taught programme of personal and social education deals with a range of moral and social issues. This is complemented by work done in assembly and other subjects such as religious education and drama. The school has developed an effective and supportive 'buddy system', which pairs Year 4 pupils with Year 3 pupils. Within lessons such as science and personal and social education, there are opportunities to work in groups. There was a very good opportunity for pupils to co-operate in a personal and social lesson on responsibility. Pupils from Years 3 and 4 had to find other members of their group by co-operating and helping others.

37. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Teachers value their ideas, for example in a science lesson, the teacher valued pupils' ideas on light. Several subjects such as art and English include opportunities for reflection on special moments. For example, there was an opportunity in English when the pupils were describing a character in *Good Night Mr Tom*. In art, pupils were amazed by the effects of water. In assembly pupils were awed by the development of the horse chestnut, in religious education, pupils reflected on the Ten Commandments. In assembly, there were opportunities for prayers in the lower school and class assemblies. However, in both assembly time and religious education lessons, whilst they made a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development, opportunities for spiritual development were sometimes missed. Not all assemblies are acts of collective worship because sometimes there is no opportunity provided to reflect or pray.
38. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Several subjects such as English, art, music, dance and science, encourage pupils to explore their own cultural traditions. Activities including concerts and dramatic productions provide good opportunities for awareness of the range of cultural events. In art the pupils can explore the work of artists such as Miro and Mondrian. However, the school provides a limited amount of work on understanding the diversity and richness of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Policies and procedures for child protection meet the statutory requirements and the way in which they are applied is very good. The designated person has been trained, regularly attends courses including recent ones on bereavement and parental illness, and ensures all staff have appropriate information and advice. The school has appropriate relationships with outside agencies and the designated person regularly attends case conferences on pupils with problems. Health and safety policies are in place and procedures are generally satisfactory. The premises are inspected regularly and reports of any problems are passed to the headteacher and governors' premises sub-committee. There is adequate provision for first aid, and fire drills are held regularly. There are some potential hazards, however, one of which is the condition of the slabs in paved areas around the school - many of which are tilted upwards - and carpet tiles in several classrooms are loose and slip.
40. Concern for pupils' welfare is taken very seriously with a very good counselling and pastoral care system available for pupils and their parents. The personal, social and health education curriculum deals sensitively with safety, care and protection issues and helps to inform pupils of their rights and responsibilities. Pupils are well looked

after in the school with counselling, pastoral care and personal and social health programmes all contributing to a positive atmosphere. All staff including learning support assistants and playground supervisors are vigilant in areas of pupil safety in lessons and around the school.

41. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The school takes non-attendance seriously and has appropriate procedures in place for following up any persistent absences. Teachers know their pupils well and relationships throughout the school are constructive, which ensures behaviour is good whenever pupils are supervised. The school has clear policies for promoting and monitoring good behaviour. Teachers generally operate a positive reinforcement policy. In the few instances where behaviour was less than satisfactory in lessons there are inconsistencies in the application of this policy. Appropriate rules and codes of conduct are clearly displayed in classrooms, and pupils contribute to their production. Where necessary, pupils' behaviour is monitored throughout the day to ensure individuals learn more appropriate responses. School learning assistants and playground supervisors have good contacts with staff and regularly discuss any concerns about behaviour. However, outside of the classroom, behaviour is less consistent, with instances of inconsiderate or boisterous conduct in areas of the school away from the playground such as the courtyards, corridors and grassy areas where supervisors and staff are out of sight. This adversely affects some pupils' overall maturity. There is no evidence of bullying in the school according to staff and pupils. One parent reported that there had been bullying in the past, but that it had been effectively dealt with. Appropriate procedures are in place to provide counselling for any pupils who are bullied and for the perpetrators.
42. The school has no problems between groups of different origins and all groups are well integrated in the school. Pupils whose parents chose for them to be excluded from religious education are placed in another class for that period in order that their education is not interrupted.
43. There are effective policies and procedures for the assessment of pupils including national tests and standardised reading and spelling tests. Assessment is used effectively to form the sets for literacy and numeracy and pupils are re-assessed at regular intervals. Pupils generally make regular progress and this is monitored by marking and classroom observation and in some instances assessed on a half termly basis. However, there is little evidence of ongoing assessment informing short-term planning or target setting for individual pupils, and plans for extra assessment, monitoring and support for low attaining readers and pupils identified as gifted have not yet been put into action. Pupils are still not achieving levels in line with similar schools in English. Assessment is effectively used to identify pupils with special educational needs. They are identified primarily on the recommendation of teachers, but this is checked against assessment data to ensure that all have been identified. Assessment and monitoring of those pupils with special educational needs is regularly carried out by the special educational needs co-ordinator and their individual education plans are regularly updated. The special educational needs co-ordinator herself checks the capabilities of pupils and places them at the appropriate level. There are consistent procedures for placing pupils on the register and these automatically lead to decisions about the help needed. Parents have an opportunity to comment and also receive reports before the annual review meeting for pupils with statements of educational need. All parents attend the reviews. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the whole curriculum because withdrawal from lessons is staggered across the subjects. There is currently no call for special disability aids, but facilities are being improved because one of the parents is

disabled. External agencies, such as educational psychologists and behaviour support staff provide a valuable service for both school and pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents think well of the school as they did at the last inspection and there is an appropriate home-school agreement. They are particularly appreciative of the quality of teaching, the school's approachability, the standard of behaviour and the way their pupils mature. There is a small minority that is concerned about homework, the range of activities outside lessons, the pace of working and the management of the school. The inspection team agrees with the positive comments. It does not judge any of the negative aspects to be unsatisfactory, but none of the concerns raised is felt to be a strength of the school.
45. Parents, whose involvement with the school is good, help the school in a variety of ways. Some were observed helping in design and communication technology and art lessons and staffing the library. Parents also help with out-of-school activities and accompany pupils on visits. They hear readers, help in cookery lessons and assist with sports lessons. There is a strong School Association, which arranges social events and raises funds for the school. Parents are very supportive and respond well to requests for help. There are no parents who never come to school.
46. The school's communications with parents are satisfactory. It has a comprehensive prospectus that is well designed and interestingly written, but the Governors' Annual Report and newsletters are often more formal. Annual reports on pupils' work are very comprehensive, for example reporting in mathematics on 25 different aspects [by means of a tick list] together with a written comment. There are, however few targets for improvement and no guidance to parents on how targets might be met. Parents are not consulted on the curriculum or major developments, although the school does listen to comments that come through the School Association. There are ample opportunities for parents to give information to the school and the school lists emergency contact names and telephone numbers for pupils. There are appropriate opportunities every term for parents to meet teachers to discuss their child's progress. There is also an opportunity to discuss the annual report on their pupils. The parents of pupils with statements of educational need attend their annual reviews and have all the relevant reports to study before the meeting.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher and senior managers provide satisfactory leadership and management, which is not quite as positive as at the time of the last inspection. Staff with management responsibilities, such as the deputy headteacher, the team managers and the special educational needs co-ordinator, are effective in carrying out their management responsibilities. The school has good aims and clear educational priorities based on raising standards. The leaders of the school share a common purpose and together with the staff and governors they put the pupils first. The school has worked hard to implement all the key issues identified in the last inspection report. Governors, staff and pupils are committed to learning. Since the last inspection the school has continued to improve the high levels of achievement in mathematics and science and is working hard to improve standards in English. The school has maintained the positive climate for learning and schemes of work have been developed for all subjects. The role of the subject co-ordinators has been developed

and they monitor the curriculum. There are some examples of challenge for the more able pupils but this is an area that requires further consolidation. However, the school does not always provide a daily act of collective worship.

48. The school improvement plan is satisfactory. It has been planned with all staff and governors. The plan has clear links to national priorities. Involvement in the process of development makes staff aware and committed to what needs to be done. At present, the school improvement plan lacks clear success criteria. There are links between improvement planning and financial planning, but the final plan is not linked to finance.
49. The governors bring to the school a good range of expertise. They are informed by reports from the headteacher and some reports from curriculum co-ordinators. Governors find out for themselves how things are going by visiting lessons. Each half term the finance committee receives a report from the finance officer. The special education needs governor has made sure that the school practice conforms to the code of practice. Governors are aware of their statutory duties and with the exception of the provision for collective worship, they ensure that these are met. Governors have improved their role in shaping the direction of the school. The chairman of the governors together with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher identify priorities for the school improvement plan. Governors concern themselves with initiatives, which affect the school. They relate finance to key priorities. For example, they agreed finance to install a computer network within the school.
50. The school carries out a review of standards using national and local data. Although results continue to be well above national averages, the school has identified writing, spelling and handwriting as areas for improvement. It is taking action to improve these key areas. The subject co-ordinators monitor the curriculum. The school intends to monitor teaching. At present, there is formal monitoring of the newly qualified teachers but no regular monitoring of teaching. Some other plans to improve standards and provision such as monitoring and promoting reading have been slow to be implemented.
51. The school finances are efficiently managed and carefully monitored by the governing body. The spending of government grants is carefully accounted for and allows for spending on teachers' professional development in identified priority areas. The school has completed the few recommendations in the last audit report carried out by the local education authority. Although there is good control of the budget, there is insufficient analysis of the effects of spending decisions on the quality of outcomes, for example the effects on teaching or standards. When contracts come up for renewal, the school considers alternatives.
52. Within the school, there is delegation of responsibilities, and staff know their responsibilities. The role of the subject co-ordinators has improved. They are fully involved in the provision and monitoring of the curriculum. The school intends to involve the co-ordinators in the monitoring of teaching. The school is providing support to the newly qualified teachers and the deputy headteacher has developed a comprehensive programme of training and development. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the ten learning support assistants well, has a good relationship with the team leaders, has good records and motivates her staff well. She is well supported by the special needs governor. Although gifted and talented pupils are identified by the school, they are specifically excluded from the special educational needs co-ordinator's responsibilities and no other member of staff takes a lead in developing provision for these pupils.

53. The school makes satisfactory use of the new technology, including information and communication technology. Extensive use is made of administrative software, including finance modules. The use of the Internet has been introduced across the school.
54. The staff is suitably qualified for the subjects they teach. There are a few inconsistencies in knowledge, but these are dealt with by support for individuals or in-service training for the whole staff. For example, there has been extensive training on literacy, numeracy and more recently on scientific enquiry, where there are some concerns. Further training for information and communication technology is planned in response to an identified need. Staff are hard-working and staffing numbers meet the needs of the pupils. The learning support assistants have received relevant training and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school is in the process of introducing Performance Management. Staff development procedures are clear, well-targeted and good use is made of in-house training. Staff development is focused on national and school priorities.
55. The quality of the accommodation is good. However, since the last inspection the small library has been converted to an information and communication technology suite, which is too small for the teaching of a whole class. The library facilities are now unsatisfactory, although, the school is attempting to raise funds to redress this. The standard of display around the school is good. Teachers use pupils' work effectively to improve pupils' learning and to create a stimulating environment. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school grounds are used effectively as a resource for science and environmental work and for physical education.
56. Taking into account the pupils' high standards of achievement on entry, the school maintains high standards in mathematics and science and satisfactory standards in English. The school provides a sound quality of education at average costs, and therefore the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. To further improve the effectiveness of the school and raise standards the school should:
 - Ensure optimum progress is made by higher attaining pupils by:
 - ensuring there is regular open-ended work in planned tasks;
 - making these pupils exert more effort.
(*paragraphs: 7, 8, 11, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 43, 46, 47, 64, 68, 69, 70, 89, 101, 102*)
 - Regularly use assessment information to plan work which challenges all pupils by:
 - providing consistent feedback to pupils on their work and expecting them to respond to it;
 - setting appropriately demanding individual targets for pupils to improve
(*paragraphs: 25, 29, 31, 34, 43, 46, 64, 65, 70, 75, 76, 82, 89, 93*)
 - Assiduously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.
(*paragraphs: 17, 19, 50, 52, 54, 65, 82, 88, 92, 93, 95, 98*)
 - Enhance the roles of subject co-ordinators to enable them to develop their subjects by:
 - evaluating the effectiveness of planning to ensure consistency of delivery;
 - providing opportunities to directly influence classroom practice.
(*paragraphs: 17, 19, 20, 54, 65, 70, 71, 73, 82, 89, 93, 95, 96, 99*)

- Provide regular, planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their work and become independent learners by:
 - incorporating tasks which require them to plan, organise and evaluate their own work;
 - encouraging pupils to ask questions and take initiative in lessons;
 - increasing activities which require investigation and application;
developing the use of information and communication technology and the library.
(paragraphs: 7, 9, 14, 17, 21, 24, 32, 66, 68, 69, 70, 73, 76, 79, 80, 81, 88, 91, 92, 101)

- The governors should also consider the following minor issue:
 - improve planned opportunities for spiritual development and enhance multicultural awareness.
(paragraphs 37, 38, 66, 101)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	55	31	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	311
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	60

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	39	38	77

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	33	34
	Girls	28	26	34
	Total	55	59	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (78)	77 (70)	88 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	34	32
	Girls	25	30	28
	Total	52	64	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (71)	83 (73)	78 (86)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	6
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	290
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.2
Average class size	30.9

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
--------------------------------	-----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

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

	£
Total income	509601
Total expenditure	513223
Expenditure per pupil	1672
Balance brought forward from previous year	18184
Balance carried forward to next year	14562

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	267
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	30	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	39	8	4	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	46	5	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	42	15	3	7
The teaching is good.	46	46	0	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	37	7	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	25	0	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	29	15	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	50	7	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	39	41	7	7	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	46	5	0	13
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	30	24	12	7

Other issues raised by parents

Parents made positive comments about standards in music. They like the 'open door policy' and feel the school is happy and friendly.

There are some concerns about being kept informed about pupils' progress between formal meetings. Some parents do not feel higher attainers are sufficiently challenged. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are cited. While leadership is sometimes praised, other parents feel initiatives are not always carried through and fresh ideas are not forthcoming.

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

ENGLISH

58. National curriculum test results in 1999 showed that pupils' attainment in English was above average when compared to other schools nationally but below average in comparison with other similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining level 5 was above average nationally and broadly in line with the average for similar schools.
59. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are improving, although there is still a concern about underachievement given the above average attainment of the school's intake. The school achieved the fair target set for it in national tests. Pupils with statements of special needs make good progress through the school and are given very good support both in and out of classrooms. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in reading and handwriting, although they have fluctuated recently. There is an above national average number of pupils for whom English is an additional language but very few of them need additional support and those who do are adequately supported. Pupils actively use skills in speaking and listening and in reading across the curriculum to support learning in all subjects. Writing skills are adequately employed particularly in geography and history.
60. Pupils enter the school with good standards in speaking and listening and make satisfactory progress because most teachers focus on oral skills and question skilfully to evoke responses and encourage pupil contribution. Most pupils are confident orally and have broad vocabularies. They fluently and precisely communicate their ideas and opinions when they are encouraged to do so. Pupils throughout the school listen well and respond to instructions accurately. Some of the younger and less able pupils tend to lose concentration when the teachers' lesson introductions are overlong. Pupils make interesting and well-argued points in response to teacher questions in all year groups. Pupils with special educational needs are actively encouraged to speak and often make telling responses – for example in a design and communication technology lesson where a pupil who was making a picture frame for a photograph, described his pets with enthusiasm. Talking and listening were also used effectively as part of a Year 5/6 history lesson on evacuees and in a Year 3/4 personal, social and health lesson on co-operation. The use of talking and listening in the literacy hour is generally good, with teachers of the best lessons ensuring that all pupils speak during their lessons. Speaking and listening is used effectively across the curriculum, for example in drama, pupils followed a topic of 'resisting persuasion to do things you don't want to do'. They use pair work and an oral drama game as well as discussion to explore the idea. Pupils also have the opportunity to express their ideas and to affect school policy through the school council, for example they have changed policy to enable girls to wear trousers to school and persuaded the canteen to serve hot soup in winter.
61. Overall standards in reading are a strength of the school. Pupils throughout the school read both fiction and non-fiction fluently and with enjoyment. They know about the structure of books and are able to talk knowledgeably about characters and plot and describe their favourite incident in the story. Most pupils have well developed library skills and can use indexes, contents, skimming and scanning to find information. The most able use the Internet with ease. Most pupils speak of reading their own books at home, being read to and reading to parents and of belonging to the local library. When reading aloud they display a knowledge of punctuation and the need for appropriate pausing, emphasis and inflection. The best readers can predict

outcomes in their stories and discuss genre (one boy differentiates between science fiction, fantasy and fairy tales). Pupils are able to use a variety of skills to read unknown words, including phonics, initial letter, and context clues. One very able pupil said, " If I can't read it I use the dictionary because it not only gives a definition it also tells you how to pronounce a word."

62. There are plans in the school development plan for extra provision for low attainers in reading with extra support, regular assessment and records of achievement including a home/school reading diary. This had not been implemented at the time of the inspection.
63. The standard of writing is generally good throughout the school with the exception of spelling and extended writing. Most pupils can produce good examples of imaginative and descriptive writing as well as short pieces of functional non-narrative prose. There are good examples of poetry, letters and persuasive writing. Handwriting throughout the school is neat and well formed with the majority of pupils writing in joined script. Spelling is less satisfactory, but much attention is being paid to remedying this with regular practices and relevant homework.
64. The teaching of English throughout the school is generally good with some inconsistencies. Where teaching is good or better the lessons are lively, challenging and fast paced with good use of visual aids, fluent and well-presented talk or reading, positive encouragement and high expectations, including pupils being involved in the teacher's introduction. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is an absence of challenge, low expectations and a slow pace and loss of pupil interest and concentration. In some of these lessons, teachers talk for too long and do not involve pupils actively. In some instances the shared reading and writing is too brief, lacked interest and engagement and pupils gain little from this section of the literacy hour. Where this happens little work of quality is produced. In a minority of lessons unsatisfactory subject knowledge leads to pupil confusion and inaccurate work. Classroom management is good with teachers moving pupils and furniture for sets, for sub-groups and for particular kinds of work, such as circle time, shared reading and drama, in order to facilitate learning. In many cases the lessons are not sufficiently challenging for high attainers. Despite setting by prior attainment, the work is not sufficiently well matched to ensure maximum individual progress and expectations are not high enough. In one Year 3/4 lesson the higher attainers quickly finish the common writing exercise but their further work is another similar task rather than a more challenging one. Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers correct, advise and set targets for improvement. Few pupils are regularly heard to read by teachers. One group has been identified by tests to be under-performing readers and there are plans to give them extra support, but they were not in action during the inspection. The literacy hour was generally well planned and is helping to improve standards in English. Lessons make good use of the structure to improve reading, writing, speaking and listening and pupils' knowledge and skills. A useful plenary session where pupils report as well as the teacher summarising is particularly effective. One good example involved Year 6 pupils retelling an episode from *Great Expectations* with a different narrator.

65. The subject co-ordinator has written the scheme of work and policy and works with teachers on short term plans but has had limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues and to monitor teaching. The school development plan has identified a need to improve handwriting, spelling and extended writing. Assessment in English includes standard tests and teacher assessment and examples of work and exercise books are kept to provide information on progress. Reading records are being created but most teachers do not have up-to-date assessments of reading. There is little evidence of assessment being recorded consistently or of it affecting the pre-planned lessons and schemes of work on a daily basis, which does not facilitate target setting for individual pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and do make informal assessments to inform their planning for different groups of pupils. The school has a good record of performance drama (usually three productions a year) including their millennium production which was carried out jointly with the secondary and infant school and written and aided by local parents and community.
66. There are sufficient textbooks and classroom resources and a well-stocked library. In general the non-fiction is more recent and broad-ranging than the fiction which needs more books which relate to multicultural society. Although pupils had a good knowledge of library and research skills there is little use of the library as a resource for research and independent learning during the week. It is used to change books at lunchtimes and after school with parents acting as helpers.

MATHEMATICS

67. In 1999 national tests attainment was above average compared with schools nationally, although average compared with similar schools. Standards improved further in 2000, when the school achieved its reasonable target for the subject and trends in attainment are broadly in line with those nationally. The number of pupils achieving a higher level (level 5) was well above average. Girls do slightly less well than boys, although both do better than their peers nationally. The school has maintained above average standards since the last inspection.
68. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' attainment is above average particularly in numeracy skills. The highest attaining Year 6 pupils are able to read and round numbers in three decimal places, while the majority of pupils can multiply and divide numbers by 10 and 100, including reading resultant decimal answers. However, pupils are not always confident with their multiplication tables, and a significant number cannot apply their number skills to written problems such as those involving mass. Year 5 pupils can use doubling to work out the 16 times table. Younger pupils can add and subtract mentally to 100 and know multiples of 5 and 10 and can count forwards and backwards to 100 using these. However, they often write answers which are clearly unreasonable and many younger pupils still count on their fingers when doing standard calculations.
69. Setting arrangements enable higher attaining pupils to make more rapid progress and ensure that Year 6 pupils are more appropriately challenged by demanding work, including extension activities which involve investigation. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are often well supported by additional adults in the classroom and make good progress. Pupils whose first language is not English make progress similar to their peers, and an appropriate proportion of these pupils are in top sets. However, regular opportunities for problem-solving and investigation and situations in which pupils apply their learning relatively limited, as is the use of information and communications technology to support mathematics work. Numeracy

skills are appropriately used particularly in science and design and technology.

70. As at the time of the last inspection teaching is good. 60 per cent of lessons were judged good or better and never less than satisfactory. The numeracy strategy has been effective in ensuring this consistency. Lessons have clearly stated objectives which are often shared with pupils so that they know exactly what they are expected to learn. There is a good level of direct teaching involving a variety of demonstrations, explanations and activities in which pupils actively participate so that pupils learn a variety of mental strategies and methods. Pupils' errors are often used effectively in oral sessions to show how numbers operate and why the answer cannot be correct, thus improving their understanding of a decimal system. Pupils' errors are not often used in feedback on written work. In the best lessons there are high expectations of pupils' mental capabilities such as the Year 6 pupils who have to place two-place decimal numbers correctly between whole numbers. Pupils often respond to challenge well, requesting larger numbers and harder examples. Brisk pace in many mental sessions often promotes mental effort and sustained concentration and the regular focus on relevant mathematical vocabulary in all lessons enables pupils to acquire the essential words with which to explain their thinking such as Year 3/4 making up 'number stories' using increase, total and plus. However, not all teachers expect pupils to be explicit when offering answers, to share reasoning and to attempt to generalise for themselves. Teachers are also prone to reveal whether an answer is correct, with the result that pupils do not always share misconceptions so that they can be discussed and dispelled. Teachers are often good at intervening to ensure pupils complete the tasks set for them, and also pitching questions at appropriate levels for individual pupils so that they can successfully contribute. However, the information obtained is not always effectively used to ensure next work is best matched to pupils' needs, and the number of pupils contributing is low in many lessons, with boys frequently dominating discussion. Homework is appropriately set and good habits for its completion are being established. However, more effective use of homework would reduce the need for consolidation in lessons such as learning tables.
71. The co-ordinator has been active in planning the curriculum and providing informal advice and support, but has had limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues. Appropriate assessment information, including standardised tests and teacher marks, is gathered and used to form sets and identify pupils for additional support, but not to ensure all pupils are making the best progress possible.

SCIENCE

72. In 1999, standards in external tests for 11 year olds were well above the national average. Since the last inspection, there has been further improvement in standards.
73. In the science national tests for 11 year olds, pupils' results have been well above the national average for the past three years. The results are in line with the average for similar schools. Throughout years 4 - 6, most pupils attain standards in their lessons that are at least in line with the national average. The higher attaining pupils attain standards that are above the national average. Pupils attain the full range but there are more pupils attaining the higher grades. Pupils have a good understanding of the key elements of how we see. In one lesson, most Year 6 pupils understood that objects are seen when light from them enters the eye. Higher attaining pupils trace the path of a torch beam and can explain that it is reflected from the mirror. They learn that when the angle at which the light hits the mirror is changed, the path of the reflected light also alters. Overall, pupils' attainment in scientific enquiry is lower than in other aspects of science, particularly when drawing conclusions related to their scientific

knowledge and understanding. In all lessons, pupils' achievement is equal to that expected. They make at least satisfactory progress. The level of achievement of the pupils is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. When they entered the school, pupils' achievement was above the national average and they sustain this throughout their time at the school. Girls and boys perform equally well. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

74. Teaching in science is good. In all the lessons seen it made at least a satisfactory contribution and in eight out of ten lessons it made a good contribution to standards attained by pupils. In all lessons, teachers have sufficient knowledge of science and can confidently teach a wide range of abilities. Lessons include a good variety of activities, which stimulate pupils' interest. The skilled teachers provided exciting opportunities, for instance, for Year 5/6 pupils to investigate with light and mirrors with the result that pupils' attitudes to work and rates of learning are nearly always good. They are well motivated, settle quickly and work hard. In a Year 3/4 class, the teacher provided a good range of materials to help pupils understand the difference between rough and smooth wood and strong and weak metal and plastic. Teachers value pupils' ideas so pupils have good relationships with the teacher and work effectively in groups when carrying out practical work. For example, older pupils co-operated to sort materials into transparent, translucent and opaque groups. In another lesson, in a Year 5/6, the teacher valued the pupils' ideas on light. Another teacher, stimulated interest by providing an activity in which pupils had to prepare a question on materials as part of a game show. All teachers paid good attention to teaching the correct science vocabulary and display key words to help pupils learn technical language. In Years 3 and 4, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of materials. In Years 5 and 6 pupils increase their understanding of how we see things. Pupils take a pride in their work. The celebration of pupils' work in the good science displays is promoting the subject.
75. Most teachers introduce the lesson clearly and draw together the main points at the end of the lesson. Clear objectives are communicated to the pupils. Most teachers work at a good pace, but in a minority of lessons the teacher discussion lasted too long and the pupils became restless. Most teachers manage the pupils well. Pupils have a good understanding of what they know through regular oral feedback and marking but not necessarily what they need to improve on. Teachers are aware of pupils' special needs; they work with the special needs co-ordinator to support these pupils. Together with the learning support assistants, they provide good support in science lessons. For example, in one class the teacher had developed support sheets to enable low attaining pupils to record the properties of materials. The high and medium attaining pupils were expected to write the advantages and disadvantages in their own words.
76. Little use is made of information and communication technology in science lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work on a regular basis, and provide support and help pupils to improve their work, but pupils are not always expected to respond to the teachers' comments and teachers do not use assessment information to plan work in science at different levels based on the pupils' prior attainment in science. Since the last inspection, a scheme of work for science has been developed and training for scientific enquiry has been provided.

ART & DESIGN

77. Standards in art are good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Information derived from displays around the school and from portfolios of pupils' work, supplements evidence from lessons that pupils experience a good range of media. Pupils are aware of the visual and tactile qualities in their own and in other pupils' work. They are careful in their creative activities, yet confident and willing to explore ideas, modifying their work accordingly and pupils have personal sketchbooks in which they can experiment with techniques. Year 5/6 pupils make perceptive comments about the approaches and themes of established artists and replicate these effectively in work of their own. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make regular progress in developing skills and exploring ways of representing their thoughts visually.
78. Teaching is good in most lessons and always at least satisfactory, resulting in good learning in all the art lessons observed. Pupils in both the lower and the upper school take pride in their work and enjoy producing it. Teachers are well prepared and structure their lessons effectively. What the pupils are expected to achieve is made clear and teachers intervene sensitively, guiding pupils in the use of techniques, discussing work as it progresses and encouraging pupils to evaluate their efforts for themselves. The skills of upper school pupils in handling a range of pencils, for example, enable many to produce high quality sketches. They have been taught about colour and composition and use their knowledge to inform their work. Teachers respect pupils' initial responses to established styles and allow pupils to develop their preferences. For example, in a lesson exploring the artist Mondrian, pupils initially expressed reservations about the effectiveness of his work. Encouraged to produce some work of their own in Mondrian's style, pupils subsequently commented critically from the point of view of their own practice, revealing a deeper understanding of and respect for the artist's approach.
79. Resources for teachers include useful collections of exemplar materials for dealing with particular themes. Active work by the co-ordinator in producing good subject documentation, with much practical guidance for staff, is improving provision. Assessment sheets help teachers to focus lessons on pupils' learning, informed by prior attainment, and are available for the pupils to use in evaluating their own progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. Standards in design and technology are satisfactory across the school. Pupils use a range of materials and tools. They produce plans, sketches and prototypes, and engage confidently in making products which is an improvement since the last inspection. In preparing themselves for the construction stage pupils plan carefully, assembling what they will need and they use written notes or sketches as aids to design. They readily assess their own work in terms of the lesson objectives and the areas where improvements could be made. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make regular and steady progress in planning, making and refining a variety of products.
81. The teaching was good in over half the lessons observed and was never less than satisfactory, leading to at least satisfactory learning. Where teaching is best, there is a clear goal for the lesson, ensuring pupils know what they are trying to achieve and why. There are appropriate and sufficient resources and effective intervention, ensuring that pupils are learning techniques throughout the lesson and are constantly evaluating their work. Teachers use their own and other pupils' examples to guide and

support each step. Pupils are assigned to tasks individually or in pairs but, in practice, often share in the making process and offer thoughtful suggestions as to how models might be improved. Collaboration is good during lessons, with pupils enthusiastically helping one another, identifying problems together and celebrating individual and collective successes. For example, lessons were observed in which pupils needed to produce components before assembling a simple cam mechanism. Pupils are encouraged to participate fully in the evaluation part of lessons, so effectively learn from each other as well as from their own direct experience.

82. Although resources for design and technology are adequate, access is not easy which is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinator does not evaluate standards and there is no policy for the subject, although a recently drawn-up action plan details some priorities for the future. There are no arrangements for the assessment of pupils or for ensuring managed progress and planning is not sufficiently rigorous in terms of coverage and continuity. The school also acknowledges that some staff lack subject knowledge and that this affects the breadth of opportunities made available to pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

83. There were no opportunities to observe any lessons in geography during the inspection so no evidence is available to make a judgement on teaching or pupils' learning in lessons. However, a detailed analysis of pupils' topic books and humanities projects was supported by interviews with pupils and provided evidence that geographical studies are conducted in accordance with the requirements for the National Curriculum. Progress of all pupils including those with special educational needs is steady, and satisfactory standards are attained as at the time of the last inspection.
84. Because year groups are combined into Years 3 / 4 and Years 5 / 6 throughout the school, teaching is planned over a two-year cycle to avoid any repetition. Younger pupils research an environment study at Sedbergh in the Yorkshire Dales comparing this with studies of their home locality of Maidenhead. Pupils support their findings using secondary sources such as aerial photographs which are photocopied into their notebooks. Older pupils study developing localities in India comparing the rural way of life which is very different from their own experiences of an urban community. Pupils use aerial photographs, plans and diagrams to record similarities and differences. Evidence is found across a selection of notebooks that pupils from lower ability groups attempt similar work appropriately adjusted for their understanding of the more complex geographical features.
85. Although no geography lessons were observed, careful scrutiny of the notebooks kept by older pupils from previous terms provide evidence of a fair coverage of geographical topics. Pupils have made a detailed study of changing climatic conditions and the effect of weather worldwide on geographical features. Pupils have contrasted extremes of climate, e.g. polar conditions, low temperatures with high temperatures and sandstorms in desert regions. One pupil was intrigued and wrote in her notebook "the people who live in these deserts have to cut open a cactus to get a drink". Pupils are becoming confident users of maps to indicate the reasons for the changing seasons in the northern and southern hemispheres. Pupils are developing geographical skills by interpreting keys and symbols to recognise where regional changes occur. In their notebooks pupils draw grids and maps identifying areas of tropical, temperate, dry, cold climates.

86. In an interview, pupils from all ability groups discussed their geography lessons enthusiastically showing a very positive attitude towards their work. They explained that they explored a theme through projects integrating studies in history, geography, science, design and technology and art. The theme pupils chose to tell about was rivers. They explained about the River Nile and its modern purposes for irrigation, transport, tourism referring to the civilisation of Ancient Egypt studied in history lessons. Pupils confidently described how they used maps, diagrams, graphs for recording aspects and features of different rivers they had studied. Pupils spoke confidently and coherently about what they had learned and the skills they had developed. For example, explaining how waterfalls are formed one boy said, "The water erodes the soft rock and the hard rock is left so that there is just enough space for the water to drop down and waterfalls are formed. If there are several channels of water these form a cascade". One girl told excitedly of continuing these 'water studies' through design and communication technology. She explained how a Pringles tube filled with salt coloured with wax crayons and a wash of bluey-green paint could be transformed into a musical instrument that made "the gentle sound of the sea".

HISTORY

87. Standards in history meet expectations as they did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' attainment is in line with that usually found in pupils of a similar age and they all make regular progress including those pupils with special educational needs. By the end of Year 6 the older pupils develop an awareness of the past through their detailed studies of the lives of pupils of their own age evacuated from cities all over Britain at the onset of the Second World War. Pupils use books and photocopied pictures to help their historical research. In some good lessons pupils are intrigued by genuine artefacts in a suitcase containing all the belongings a boy was allowed to take with him on his evacuation to the country. Younger pupils develop an understanding of ancient history through their comparisons of the games in Ancient Greece with the World Olympics that are taking place in Australia in Year 2000.
88. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good features. In the best lessons teachers set a brisk pace of delivery and there is a good balance between teacher input and pupils' activity. Teachers use a variety of approaches to ensure the active participation of their pupils in the learning process. As a result, in all year groups pupils have a good attitude towards their history lessons and tackle their historical studies enthusiastically. In Year 3 / 4 pupils enjoy making lists of the similarities and differences between the athletic competitions of the ancient Greeks and those in Sydney in our own time. They notice that the Greek games were for male competitors only, commenting on this discrimination! Pupils in Year 5 / 6 enjoy taking part in a role play about evacuee pupils. Pupils can work co-operatively in small groups as well as on individual tasks in a whole class situation. Drama skills are used for historical interpretation as pupils imagine the thoughts and feelings experienced by the evacuees. Pupils try to share the evacuees' emotional turmoil by playing out the scene for their class. Less successful lessons occur when teachers spend too long on introducing the activity or rely too heavily on published worksheets which inhibit pupils from researching and organising their own historical information. Opportunities for pupils in all year groups to find out about events, people and changes over time independently through their own study are sometimes limited. Learning support assistants work well with class teachers to support the teaching to pupils with special educational needs. A good example was seen in a Year 3/4 class where an autistic pupil was guided towards recording discoveries in his topic notebook. Pupils with

English as an additional language progress satisfactorily according to their prior attainment.

89. The co-ordinator for history is responsible also for overseeing geography. This ensures that well-integrated medium term and short term plans are consistently applied between parallel classes and across year groups. Long-term plans are being implemented for better use of information communications technology to enable pupils in all year groups to access information from the Internet, CD-ROM's and databases. Assessment procedures do not currently provide a uniform system of monitoring pupils' performance according to their prior attainment with the result that higher attainers are not always appropriately challenged to improve their performance.
90. Wall displays provide visual stimulation and efforts are made to deploy material resources to provide the best possible opportunities for learning. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits from a Theatre in Education Company 'Learning Through Action' which offers programmes of study on the Greeks and the Tudors. Pupils in Year 5/6 plan to visit H.M.S. Belfast at Tower Bridge for a presentation of 'Britain At War' to extend their studies of the Second World War.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. Overall standards are broadly satisfactory as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, information derived from class timetables, pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers suggests that information and communication technology is under-emphasised as a core subject and as an important contributor to learning in other subjects. This aspect of learning has not been developed satisfactorily since the last inspection report. Not all pupils make the same progress, so while higher attainers and those interested in the subject regularly practise and use skills, less confident pupils including some of those with special educational needs make more limited progress. Those pupils currently timetabled for lessons are making progress. Pupils can edit and present articles by manipulating font, text, size, colour and graphic images, and use the spell-check facility, save and print outcomes. Some impressive pupils' work was noted, such as the Mathematics Masterclass books, in which high attainers described experiences in a series of inter-school lessons, displaying evidence of high level word-processing and presentational skills.
92. The quality of teaching is sound to good, although it is acknowledged that inspectors were able to see relatively confident staff taking lessons. Confidence and expertise is an issue for a number of teachers, a fact identified in the school's short-term training plan. In lessons observed, teachers have the benefit of detailed plans, clearly indicating what the children are expected to learn. The teaching is enthusiastic and takes account of the needs of pupils of all abilities and previous experience. Teachers are careful to use specific terminology where appropriate and intervene effectively to ensure that pupils have opportunities to reinforce skills and to move on when they are ready to do so. Pupils learn satisfactorily. They are well-motivated and readily exchange ideas and practical assistance. The majority of pupils can generate, develop, organise and present work with confidence. In one lesson a news article about tigers was used to extend the skills and stimulate the creativity of older pupils. Other work samples, to support learning in mathematics and science were also of a high standard but reflected extra opportunities for interested and able pupils rather than comprehensive teaching programmes for all.
93. Accommodation and resource provision for information and communication

technology has improved significantly. The new information and communication technology suite offers the capacity, albeit in tight conditions, for whole class lessons, but the school acknowledges that extension of the facility is essential to alleviate the currently cramped conditions. The co-ordinator has worked hard to bring about improvements, but there has been limited time for supporting other staff, monitoring standards and developing provision even though many staff lack confidence in the subject. The development of assessment arrangements has been limited.

MUSIC

94. As at the time of the previous inspection, attainment in music is above expectations. Standards in singing are good. Pupils tunefully sing a range of songs with clear diction, controlled pitch and an awareness of mood. They can sing in two parts as in lower school assembly when they sang *Can't Put Your Muck in Our Dustbin* and some older pupils are confident to sing alone or in small groups. Pupils can echo and sustain a range of complex rhythms such as by clapping and snapping fingers, and older pupils contribute to assembly by accompanying the hymn with percussion instruments. Year 5/6 pupils can also listen carefully to recorded music and identify different rhythm patterns. There is regular use of technical vocabulary, and older pupils can respond appropriately to elements of standard musical notation as in their lesson on pitch using *Happy Birthday to You*. Although no composing was observed, pupils can suggest suitable alternative arrangements for a piece when asked to do so, including changing key and dynamics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, who are often well supported by additional adults or their peers, all make good progress.
95. Most of the teaching of music is good, although one lesson observed was satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Lack of subject knowledge in the subject accounts for most shortcomings and in these lessons objectives remain unfulfilled. The better lessons proceed with a brisk pace and are often fun. Appropriate links are made to the scientific principles of sound so pupils understand why changes occur. Expectations are high and pupils respond by making considerable efforts to improve or develop new skills such as reading notation independently. Teachers correct posture, breathing or handling of instruments so that pupils perform better, and because pupils achieve success, which is suitably praised, they enjoy their work and participate enthusiastically. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged by questioning or extension tasks.
96. The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of opportunities to receive peripatetic instrument tuition, extra-curricular recorder classes and chances to perform in school productions. These include regular links with neighbouring schools. The co-ordinator, ably assisted by a colleague, has produced detailed plans which enable all class teachers to teach the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. Physical education provision was adversely affected by inclement weather during the inspection week with the result that athletics lessons were reduced to limited activities in the hall or were cancelled, and games had to take place on the playground. As at the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment in both strands are satisfactory although higher attaining pupils are sometimes underachieving. Pupils' ability to jog, shuttle run and do standing jumps is sound. They can pitch a large ball from a lying position and most can overarm throw a shuttlecock a fair distance. Many pupils find it difficult to sustain knee raising while hanging on the wallbars for half a minute. In

games most pupils throw and can serve a ball with a racquet with reasonable accuracy. They can reliably return balls sent directly to them and some are beginning to develop rallying. The progress of all pupils including those with special educational needs is regular and steady, although pupils with additional skills, often acquired outside school, are often not challenged in lessons.

98. Teaching is consistently satisfactory but only one lesson is good. Planning has clear objectives and games activities show development of skills within each lesson. Lessons are well organised and pupils are usually well managed. Most lessons start with an appropriate warm up, although the effects are sometimes negated by overlong introductions. Instructions are precise and teachers sometimes demonstrate activities appropriately so that pupils know what is expected of them. Safety is appropriately stressed, although a significant number of the pupils are permitted to walk to the hall with shoes undone or not put on properly. Sufficient time is usually allocated to each task for pupils to improve and to exert physical effort. In the best lesson, pupils are provided with useful opportunities to evaluate performance so that they know how to refine their work, correction of ineffective practice so that skills are improved and pupils are used as exemplars so that peers can see successful work. This results in pupils taking responsibility for their own learning and persevering with their practice. The teacher is vigilant about pupils' performance and makes timely interventions to correct or further challenge. Where there are shortcomings, lessons proceed at a slow pace so that pupils lose interest or inadequate control results in some pupils behaving inappropriately or acting inconsiderately. Classroom assistants are often effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs to make progress or to record their efforts, but they are not always given specific roles. As at the time of the last inspection, insufficient attention is given to improving the quality of pupils' work.
99. Planning is now more comprehensive than at the time of the last inspection and ensures continuity, and there is a cultural element within provision for dance. The co-ordinator did work with colleagues during the inspection to introduce newly incorporated activities, but mainly for organisational purposes, not as part of a focussed strategy to help teachers improve the quality of pupils' work. A number of extra-curricular activities, mainly in sport, enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for pupils to compete in tournaments, and older pupils can go on a residential visit to Wales for an outdoor education course. Constructive links with the neighbouring secondary school enable pupils to use facilities which would otherwise be unavailable to pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. Judgements based on the observations of three lessons and two assemblies are reinforced by analysis of all pupils' work that is available, discussions with pupils and with the co-ordinator for religious education. Attainment is satisfactory overall and progress is regular. Lessons and assemblies are accessible to all groups of pupils including those who do not follow the Christian faith. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs learn well according to their prior understanding. The scheme of work is planned over a two year cycle to avoid any overlap within the mixed age classes. Younger pupils study Christianity and Sikhism while older pupils compare the similarities and differences between Christianity and Judaism. Pupils record their findings in their notebooks often adding pictures and diagrams to show how well they have understood the stories they have been taught.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. For example in a good lesson seen in Year 3/4, pupils were excited by comparing the jobs of working people today with similar occupations in biblical times. Pupils contrasted the tasks of builders, carpenters, teachers, fishermen, tax collectors to the time of Christ with those of the present day. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their work and show interest in learning about the beliefs and festivals of other faiths. For example, one girl wrote sensitively about Divali sharing her joy and wonder at this fascinating festival of light. Older pupils in a Year 5/6 class considered the relevance of the Ten Commandments for our lives today. One boy questioned "Nobody could keep all those Ten Commandments perfectly could they?" The teacher countered with "What do you think Jesus wanted us to do then?" The boy replied thoughtfully "I think he wanted us to try our best." Such perception is rare. Sometimes learning opportunities are missed. Pupils do not always explore the moral issues implicit in the bible stories studied and the large number of worksheets used in notebooks do not show whether there is any depth of moral understanding realised by the pupils through their studies.
102. The sound standards established at the previous inspection have been sustained. The subject is appropriately led by the co-ordinator for religious studies who collates the medium-term and short-term plans for teaching by integrating these with the demands of the Berkshire Agreed Syllabus. Assessment is based on the different outcomes produced so that all pupils are offered equal opportunities to benefit from the teaching of religious education throughout the school, but as a result pupils are seldom challenged.