

INSPECTION REPORT

REIGATE PRIORY COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Reigate

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125070

Headteacher: Mrs. Gilly Cox

Reporting inspector: Mr. Robert Greatrex
19924

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th October 2000

Inspection number: 224893

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bell Street Reigate Surrey
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Helen Samuel
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

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Robert Greatrex 19924	Registered inspector	History	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Teaching and learning
			Leadership and management
			Key Issues for action
Sue Pritchard 9519	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
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		Information and communication technology	
		Design and technology	
Brian Farley 15271	Team inspector	English	
		Geography	
		Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
Phillipa Holliday 27574	Team inspector	Art and design	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Reigate Priory is a very large junior school with 535 pupils on roll, from seven to eleven years of age. It is housed in a Grade 1 listed building, giving the school a unique character. The proportion of pupils who join the school with attainment at or above the level expected for seven-year-olds is above average. Fifteen pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, a figure below the national average. The school has identified 97 pupils as having special educational needs, five of whom have statements of special educational need. Both of these figures are similar to the national average. The school has 15 pupils for whom English is an additional language, a figure higher than most schools. The school has a good reputation locally and numbers are rising.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Reigate Priory is a very effective school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are good and the school provides a very rich and varied curriculum to which every subject makes a stimulating contribution. The quality of teaching is good; teachers are skilled and the enthusiasm with which they teach is infectious to the pupils who consequently try their best. The headteacher, ably supported by senior staff and governors, gives the school strong leadership and a clear sense of purpose. The school is well managed. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and they contribute much to their own learning. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards across the whole curriculum are good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership and management are purposeful; the school's aims are fully reflected in its work and the expertise of all is fully exploited to the benefit of the pupils' education.
- The curriculum is rich, varied and broad and supported by an excellent range of high quality extra curricular activities.
- The excellent provision for social and personal development is an important factor in the pupils very positive attitudes to school and learning.
- Parents play an important part, instilling a love of learning in their children.

What could be improved

- The school is judged by the inspection team to have no significant weaknesses.

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 good progress since the previous inspection in 1996. Much has been done to improve assessment in all subjects. It is now an integral part of lesson planning and used much more effectively. Teachers' uncertainty and lack of confidence in some of their teaching has been fully resolved. In mathematics, teachers have a far greater understanding of correct terminology and language. French has been reorganised. However, the most notable improvement has come in information and communication technology (ICT), largely because staff training has been carefully tailored to meet their precise needs. In the meantime, literacy and numeracy initiatives have been successfully implemented and good standards maintained and, in several subjects, improved. Largely because of the clear leadership, good quality teaching and positive climate for learning, the school is well placed to improve further.

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	A	B	C
mathematics	C	A	A	B
science	C	B	A	C

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

Standards reached by 11-year-olds in the 1999 national tests were above the national average in English and well above in mathematics and science. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards are a little above average. Results in 2000 fell slightly in English and mathematics, and rose slightly in science. As yet, there are no national comparisons for 2000.

Over the last four years, the overall trend in the school's results shows an improvement at a similar rate to schools nationally. English results have been consistently good. Mathematics results have risen steadily during this period, and those in science more dramatically.

When English, mathematics and science results at age 11 are compared with the same pupils' results at age 7, a far greater proportion of pupils are reaching levels higher than those expected for their age. Clearly they make good progress in their four years at Reigate Priory. Even so, the school has fallen short of its targets, particularly in English. This is partly because a number of pupils generally considered more able moved from the school after the targets were set but before the tests were taken. It is also partly due to lower results in writing. Good evaluation and analysis has led to staff training and curriculum change to rectify this. The targets set for 2001 are equally challenging. Inspectors judge that the school will come much closer to achieving these.

Current standards are good throughout the curriculum. Standards in numeracy are good. Recent improvements in literacy, particularly writing, are proving beneficial. Scientific knowledge is good, particularly in the older years. Standards in ICT are good and rapidly improving. In religious education, pupils have a particularly good knowledge and understanding of world faiths. Standards are excellent in history, where the pupils have an impressive understanding of events and times. Standards are good or very good in all other subjects, due largely to the very rich curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good overall and improve as pupils move through the school. Pupils are keen to learn and consistently try to improve. They contribute much to their own learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall and very good in lessons, contributing to the good work rate. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils welcome opportunities to take responsibility and do so impressively, for example seeing the role of 'prefect' as one of helping others rather than enforcing rules. They enjoy very good relationships with staff and one another. Parents state that their children leave the school as 'well-rounded individuals'.
Attendance	Good. Punctuality is generally good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better in nearly every lesson. It was good or better in three-quarters of lessons, and very good or excellent in nearly a quarter. Three of the 86 lessons seen were judged excellent, and two unsatisfactory. The good standard of teaching at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

Fundamental aspects of the good quality teaching and learning are the teachers' enthusiasm and the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils respond very positively to the good climate for learning created by teachers, particularly the enthusiasm and fun they engender, and the co-operation and trust they inspire. Discussions, for example, are skilfully led and even the youngest pupils quickly learn to participate fully.

Lessons generally are well structured and the clear learning objective gives teachers a good focus. Consequently, teaching is very purposeful. Generally pupils are fully aware of what it is they are to learn, and this helps their rate of learning. Lesson plans include carefully organised tasks that closely match the pupils' different abilities, so that all make good progress.

English is well-taught and skills used well in other subjects such as history. Mathematics teaching enables pupils to consider different ways of working problems out, and so extend their learning. In literacy and numeracy lessons skills are taught well and all elements are included although the summing-up session is occasionally lost because of poor time-keeping. This is an important part of the lesson and offers opportunities for review, consolidation and extension.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very rich and broad curriculum with many interesting and stimulating activities, including visits. There are increasingly good links between subjects, for example English and history. The range and quality of extra curricular activities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans include clear targets, and methods that might be used to teach them. These help staff prepare tasks closely matched to pupils' individual needs, beneficial to their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of these pupils are as carefully checked as those of other pupils. All current pupils have good English competence and are fully involved in the curriculum and general life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good. Much is done to overcome the potentially overwhelming size of the school. Innovative events such as 'Bonding Day' and 'Friendship Day' do much to extend pupils' personal and social development, which are both excellent. Cultural awareness is very good and provision for spiritual development good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A good deal of thought has gone into how the school is structured and managed, to take advantage of its size whilst still enabling pupils to feel part of a community. For example, a teacher and classroom assistant move with the pupils to their next year group each year, offering good pastoral care. Assessment is an effective tool to aid pupils' learning and track their progress. Procedures for child protection are in place and effective. Although much is done, the school needs to seek further ways of fostering pupils' well-being, and to encourage a minority of the local community to be more responsible.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, ably supported by senior staff, gives the school strong and effective leadership. Management structures are very good, maximising the benefits of the variety of skills, attributes and experiences brought to the school by staff. All staff share a common commitment and sense of purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors give the school much practical help and support, whilst still questioning policies and procedures. They regularly evaluate aspects of the school and use this information well in decision-making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Reigate Priory is an evaluative school, staff are constantly looking for ways to improve, particularly their own teaching and the learning opportunities they provide for pupils. Evaluation is increasingly well used, for example in the identification of relative weaknesses in writing.
The strategic use of resources	Resources available to the school are used well, particularly to support the priorities set in the school development plan. The principles of best value are applied and, for example, the school compares how it uses resources with a similar sized school, to see if lessons can be learnt. There is an adequate number of staff who form a very effective team. The school is unique; housed in a Grade 1 listed building. Much is done to take full advantage of the positive aspects of this and to minimise the disadvantages. Learning resources are generally good and in some subjects such as ICT and history, very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons is excellent. • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school has high expectations of their children. • They are comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents raised no significant concerns.

Inspectors confirm parents' overwhelming support for the school, especially the areas listed above that parents feel are particularly strong.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999, results were above the national average in English and well above it in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected level in English and mathematics was above the national average, but the proportion going on to reach a higher level was a little below the national average. In science, a larger proportion reached a higher level, well above the national average. When comparisons are made with similar schools, standards are a little above average in English and science and by a greater proportion in mathematics. In 2000, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was slightly lower in English and mathematics, and slightly higher in science. The proportion reaching a higher level was similar in English and science but fell in mathematics. There are no national comparisons for 2000 available yet.

2. The trend over the last four years has been for results to improve at a similar rate to schools nationally. In English, results have been consistently above average. In mathematics, results show a consistent year-on-year improvement, above the national trend. In science, results have improved very recently, since the time the school introduced specialist teaching in the eldest year group.

3. Pupils make good progress through the school. The vast majority of pupils enter the school with average attainment. However, because of the high proportion of pupils with this level, the attainment of the group is above the national average. One example of progress can be found by comparing the results achieved by the pupils who took the 11-year-old national tests in 2000 with the results they achieved when they took the 7-year-old tests four years earlier. In the four years pupils spend in the school they are expected to improve by two National Curriculum levels. In English, about the same proportion gained the level expected of 11-year olds as gained the level expected of 7-year-olds four years earlier. However, the proportion who gained a higher level increased by about three times. In mathematics, again the proportion gaining the expected level is similar but the proportion gaining a higher level has doubled. In science, the picture is similar. Clearly these results demonstrate that the school is successful in moving a good proportion of pupils on to higher levels. Nine parents in every ten who returned the questionnaire agree that their children make good progress in the school.

4. In 2000, the school failed to reach the target set for it in English, partly because of the relatively lower attainment in writing, and partly because a number of pupils generally assessed as more able and likely to reach higher levels, left. It fell one percentage point below the target set in mathematics. Targets for 2001 are equally challenging. Work being done on writing currently is beneficial and the school is likely to come much closer to the target set in English in 2001. In mathematics, too, the school is likely to be very close to the target.

5. Standards in English are above the national average. Progress is good and the literacy hour is generally used well, although the plenary session is occasionally too short to be fully effective as a review and evaluation of progress made. Pupils are given many good opportunities, for example in role-play and the evaluation of lessons and topics, to express their ideas and opinions and to learn to listen to those of others. The well above average standards in speaking and listening reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Reading standards are above average. Teachers help to give pupils a love of

literature through the wide range of authors and styles used in literacy, and often linked to work in other subjects. During the inspection activities in Year 4, for example, used a Dickens' text whilst pupils also studied the Victorians. Their work in history, particularly their re-enactment of a 'Victorian School Day', gave them a much greater insight into life at the time. This helped their understanding of the text and enabled them to gain a much deeper understanding of the characters involved. Standards in writing are broadly average. The analysis of past work in particular reveals recent improvement following the school's emphasis on this area, and inspectors judge standards to be set to rise further.

6. Standards in mathematics are above average. The teaching of pupils in 'sets', grouping pupils of similar ability, and the numeracy lesson are considered very beneficial and pupils are making good progress. This is particularly the case in number skills. The vast majority of pupils show good mental agility for their age. They handle number problems quickly, confidently, and with good levels of accuracy. They have particularly good views on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different strategies they might use to solve problems, and their discussions are very useful to their general understanding. Work on shape, space and measures is now of a good standard, an improvement since the previous inspection.

7. Standards in science are also above average with a larger proportion of pupils reaching a higher level than in either English or mathematics. This is an improvement upon the standards at the time of the previous inspection, when they were judged average. This has largely been due to the provision made for older pupils in particular to practise and hone their scientific skills through well-planned experiments and investigations.

8. Literacy skills are increasingly well used in other subjects. Particularly strong are the links between English and history. Much good discussion of historical events and times, for example an evaluation of their re-enactment of Victorian times, hones pupils' discussion skills. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to write in a variety of styles for a wide range of purposes, sometimes following the reading of very demanding historical text.

9. Numeracy skills are particularly well used throughout the curriculum, for example when Year 6 find the mean in a science investigation, or when they analyse census information in history or handle data in information and communication technology.

10. One of the school's major achievements has been in maintaining and improving high standards in many other subjects whilst steadily improving standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Parents at the meeting spoke enthusiastically of the way the school develops the 'whole child', giving a very wide range of opportunities so that their children's potential is drawn out and developed, no matter what subject or area it lies in. Those at the meeting were very impressed with the depth of knowledge and high standards their children achieve in subjects such as history and music.

11. Standards in religious education are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and have improved since the time of the previous inspection. Knowledge of world faiths is good, and the expertise and knowledge of visitors used well to extend pupils' understanding. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are good and show a similarly good improvement since the previous inspection. Overall ICT competence and confidence has increased markedly and is used well in many other subjects. In history, standards are excellent. The building, museum and associated artefacts are all used very effectively to give pupils a depth of understanding rarely found in pupils of their age. Standards in art and design are very good, an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have good knowledge of materials and processes and use this effectively in their own work. Standards in design and technology are good. Skills are well taught and then

opportunities given for pupils to practise them in 'design and make' activities. Again, standards have risen since the previous inspection. In music, standards are good. Pupils perform, compose, listen and appraise with skill. Once again, standards have risen since the previous inspection. In physical education, the good standards reported by the previous inspection have been maintained. Standards are particularly high in gymnastics and games. Owing to the organisation of the time table, it was not possible to judge standards overall in geography. However, the limited number of lessons seen and analysis of last year's work indicate that the good standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Tasks they are given closely match their abilities and needs. Classroom assistants work effectively with teachers to see all work is worthwhile. The positive attitudes of the pupils, too, are important factors. They want to learn and listen attentively to both teachers and classroom assistants.

13. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress. Although their needs are carefully assessed, all have good levels of English competence and are confident and successful learners.

14. Pupils identified by the school as having particular aptitudes also make good progress. The school identifies strengths in whatever curriculum area they lie. Subsequently, as well as work well matched to their capabilities in lessons, these pupils receive regular additional teaching from subject specialists and this is very beneficial to the progress these pupils make. The needs of more able musicians and artists are as well catered for as are able mathematicians or scientists.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The previous inspection found pupils' attitudes to their learning to be positive with social skills well developed. Current findings show the attitudes of pupils to be very good across the school. A very high proportion of parents replying to the questionnaire agreed that their children like school.

16. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the link between positive attitudes and good progress. They willingly attempt the tasks set for them whatever the level of challenge it presents. Examples of pupils losing concentration and employing time wasting tactics are rare but occasionally evident, for example when pupils have spent too long sitting and listening to the start of the lesson. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, respond particularly well when the work is explained to them in an enthusiastic and lively manner and is suitably challenging. This was exemplified in a Year 5 lower set mathematics lesson, where the teacher skilfully engaged all pupils in a brisk session of simplifying fractions by using the right balance of demonstration, games and the pupils' own findings, to make learning clear-cut and fun. Partly because of their enthusiasm, all pupils made very good progress in the lesson.

17. Pupils are very co-operative and friendly towards one another, including the tiny minority who at times find it hard to make and keep friends. Very good relationships have been well maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are friendly and supportive of one another, and there is a very good rapport between pupils and staff. There are frequent instances in lessons where the strong and positive relationships have helped promote an "I can do that" attitude amongst the pupils. Whilst working in pairs and groups, pupils try hard to help each other by their thoughtful exchange of ideas and methods. For example, in a visit to an educational software manufacturer, pairs of pupils from the different Year 4 classes worked together exceptionally well in interpreting instructions, entering data and exploring the consequences of their joint decision making. In assemblies, both teachers and pupils share a

sense of glowing pride when the work and deeds of individual pupils are recognised as worthy of merit.

18. The behaviour of pupils is good overall and often very good, particularly in classes. The school's very good procedures for behaviour management successfully prevent any pupil who behaves in an unacceptable way from impinging upon the learning of others. In the year prior to the inspection no permanent exclusions were made. All parents spoken to during the course of the inspection were very happy with the good standard of pupils' behaviour in school. Pupils are very good at exercising the right amount of self-discipline to behave at their very best in assemblies and when out and about representing their school. Individually they are keen to talk and learn from the adults they meet during the day. With very little intervention from their supervisors, pupils behave maturely in the dining hall and demonstrate well-developed social skills. They play happily together in the playgrounds, responding positively to the instructions they are given for their safety and well-being. Pupils confidently report to their teachers if they feel someone is being unkind either to them or their friends. Arguments between pupils are usually short-lived and easily forgotten. On the intervention of an adult, pupils willingly apologise to those they have upset and promptly amend their behaviour. The high standard of pupils' behaviour encourages teachers and supervisors to have higher expectations of their maturity and responsibility.

19. Pupils show a very good level of personal responsibility and use their initiative well. Their capacity for independence and personal study is very well developed through school clubs, council, educational visits and focused activity days. Parents also play their part, supporting and encouraging their children's revision and personal study at home. In school, the carefully planned lessons enable pupils to contribute their own thoughts, ideas and methods of working. This, too, is advantageous.

20. Pupils talk with delight about their experiences on educational journeys and visits, particularly those involving an overnight stay. They eagerly participate in the excellent range of extra-curricular activities, which help them acquire and develop new skills in music, sport, games and information and communication technology. Through their school council a number of the older pupils are beginning to show that they can question, discuss and negotiate new initiatives in school with a fair degree of responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities they have to assist in the smooth running of the school. They carry out their tasks diligently and with minimal reliance on adults. Amongst their other duties, elected pupil monitors discourage any irresponsible behaviour in corridors and classrooms during wet-playtimes whilst recognising that their principle role is to help others. Almost all pupils show they can organise their free time to complete the homework activities they are set.

21. There are frequent examples of pupils operating and thinking independently in lessons, particularly when they are required to act and respond quickly as in, for example, their daily sessions of mental mathematics. Pupils are very good at asking questions to help them extend their knowledge and understanding of a topic. Their perceptive questioning often enlivens lessons. A very good example of this was seen in a lesson on Hinduism. Pupils asked a series of relevant questions such as "Were the people frightened by the Gods or did they see them as their friends?" "Were they trying to please them by bringing them gifts?"

22. The attendance of pupils is good. Since the previous inspection, pupils have maintained levels of attendance above those achieved nationally. Pupils are usually only absent because of illness. Few parents arrange family holidays during term time. Registers are called and marked in accordance with statutory requirements. The punctuality of pupils is satisfactory but the number of late arrivals rises steeply when traffic problems in the town are at their worst. Teachers ensure that any pupil arriving late is quickly given the information they

need to participate fully in the lesson without disturbing the progress of the other pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is of a similar standard to that reported by the previous inspection, when it was described as a strength of the school. Nearly all teaching seen was satisfactory or better, three-quarters was good or better and nearly a quarter was very good or excellent. Three of the 86 lessons seen were judged excellent, and 2 unsatisfactory. Excellent and very good teaching was seen throughout the year groups. Very significant factors in the good quality of teaching are the close teamwork, allowing one teacher to learn from another, and commitment and enthusiasm of staff for their work. More than nine parents in every ten who replied to the questionnaire agreed that teaching is good. Parents attending the meeting held prior to the inspection were full of praise for how teachers enthuse their children.

24. Literacy and numeracy initiatives are taught well, carefully following the framework and structure for these lessons. Tasks are well matched to pupils' differing abilities and classroom assistants are well used to support individuals or groups. Generally, all elements of the lessons are equally well-taught although some teachers fail to keep to the lesson structure and find there is little time left for the summing-up. This is an integral part of the lesson, and consequently opportunities for review, consolidation and extension of the task through discussion are lost.

25. Teaching is based on clear lesson planning which gives a good structure to sessions. Teachers know precisely what they are doing, and regularly inform their pupils of the lesson objectives. The pupils are consequently better able to focus clearly on what they are expected to achieve. Very often teachers refer back to the lesson objectives in the summing up of the session, exploring with pupils what they have learnt and often taking their learning one step further. Lessons move on at a good rate. A Year 3 design and technology lesson, for example, was planned very carefully so that pupils learnt and practised the skills needed in the task before it was introduced. On the very few occasions that lesson objectives are less clear, or the teacher does not share them with the pupils, there is less clarity and pace about the learning and less progress takes place.

26. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and this is very beneficial to pupils' learning. Where a pupil struggles to understand, for instance, these teachers are able to go back and explain more thoroughly, perhaps using a different approach or example. Where the knowledge of the individual teacher is no better than satisfactory, the teamwork in year groups is very beneficial. These teachers are able to learn from their colleagues and share their expertise. On the very rare occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, however, it can be because the teacher relies too much on other teachers' planning and does not fully understand the work being taught. On a few occasions, too, the teacher's explanation can be too long and pupils lose interest and drift away from the task. On these occasions, pupils learn far less.

27. The positive relationships between teachers and pupils, reported by the previous inspection, continue. This wonderful rapport is a significant factor in the climate in lessons and the ensuing good pace. Pupils listen to their teachers and respond enthusiastically to their questions, guidance and instructions.

28. Teachers are enthusiastic professionals, and their pupils respond very positively. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, the teacher used her voice and posture to set the scene for a reading from a Dickens' novel. She gave the pupils a real feel for the characters and their personalities. By her manner of speech and pose she gave the pupils useful clues about

them. In the discussion and their own work the pupils were able to give very good description and fully meet the lesson's learning objective. In this and many other lessons, good learning was fun.

29. Pupils respond very positively to the stimulating challenges they are given. In a Year 4 music lesson, for example, pupils showed great interest when they were asked to find their own starting points. In a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson, the teacher had clearly matched work to pupils' different levels and the more able pupils were given a more challenging task. This caused a buzz of excitement and determination to succeed. Teachers know their pupils and their capabilities well. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, the teacher refused to accept work from some pupils as 'finished', instead pointing out areas where they might develop their work. As a result, their final piece was of a higher standard.

30. Marking, such as in a Year 5 literacy group, is generally informative and useful to pupils in offering guidance on what they should concentrate upon next. This is beneficial to pupils' progress. Teachers go on to take this further, giving pupils individual and group targets to aid their learning. Pupils respond very positively to this and are keen to achieve the goals set for them. Many pupils are encouraged to set their own targets and this is also beneficial to their learning. During lessons, teachers are constantly assessing their pupils' progress and ensuring all understand. Most, but not all, use questioning well to check pupils' are on the right track. When they find that several pupils share a similar misconception, such as in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, they quickly recognise this and bring the pupils together again for further explanation. Consequently no time is wasted and no pupil confused.

31. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and classroom assistants plan work that is well matched to the targets in individual education plans. When appropriate, they use these plans as working documents. Very careful records are kept to track pupils' progress and learning. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together to make sure that these pupils have the support and guidance they need. Withdrawal is used sparingly and appropriately, wherever possible learning taking place in the classroom. Teachers also plan and provide many challenging activities for more able pupils.

32. Homework is very effective and an integral part of much learning. Activities set are appropriate and closely linked to the curriculum in lessons.

33. Resources are well used, particularly to illustrate lessons. Excellent use is made of the museum and associated artefacts so that pupils can work with copies of original documents. In these lessons, such as a Year 6 activity researching local history, although the documents are often demanding in text and language used, pupils persevere and work hard to understand.

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

34. The school curriculum is very good and the school draws heavily on its cultural and historical background to the benefit of pupils' learning. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have both been fully and effectively implemented overall and a strong curriculum focus is placed upon raising standards in English, mathematics and science. The school also manages to provide a very broad and balanced range of opportunities which fully meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils, whatever their abilities. Overall, the curriculum is rich and varied, every subject making a stimulating contribution. Work in lessons is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Parents at the meeting spoke warmly about the school curriculum and how it helps develop their children in the widest sense, giving them good firsthand experience through numerous

educational activities and opportunities. Learning is fun, they say.

35. An important factor in the effectiveness of the curriculum is the year group teams. These staff meet very regularly to plan tasks for their pupils and review past work. Expertise is readily shared, so that every teacher benefits from their collective expertise and experience. They review past work to analyse the curriculum and make any changes necessary for the following year, and to assess the progress their pupils make. In these important ways their teamwork is very beneficial to pupils' learning.

36. The provision for personal and social education, including health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse, is very good. Visitors, including the police and a 'life education caravan', are very effectively used to support the curriculum and strengthen pupils' awareness of these issues. Parents see the school as producing 'well-rounded individuals'.

37. All pupils enjoy equal opportunities. Although the school is large, it is organised so that the pupils are treated as individuals and their needs recognised and met. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. An important factor in this are the individual education plans. Typically they have clear targets and objectives with detailed information about the action required by teachers to enable pupils to meet those objectives. This enables teachers to plan activities well matched to pupils' needs and, make quick reference whenever they need to, to the strategies designed to help pupils meet the objectives set for them. Likewise, the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language fully meets the needs of these pupils. More able pupils are identified and additional tasks planned to meet their particular attributes, across all curriculum areas. These pupils are given very well thought out extension activities.

38. An extensive programme of visits adds significantly to the quality of the education provided. Each year pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit. During the year, a range of other visits and visitors help bring the curriculum alive. Visitors to the school make a good contribution to pupils' understanding, for example visits from representatives of different world faiths give pupils greater insight into their religions.

39. An extensive variety of extra curricular activities is open to all pupils from all year groups. Teaching in these activities is of a similarly good standard as lessons and well-supported and popular with pupils and their parents. In response to the questionnaire and at the meeting, parents overwhelmingly supported the range of activities offered by the school, and felt they were of very good quality. They and their children are very appreciative of the time and effort staff put into these activities.

40. No opportunity is wasted to provide a more stimulating curriculum, for example by the use of the surrounding parkland. The local museum, which is housed in the school buildings, is also a source of excellent artefacts which are imaginatively used throughout the school curriculum. Lessons are well planned to take full advantage of this excellent facility, although some lessons would benefit if the class teacher was more fully involved in the planning of them.

41. The school's investment in the pupils' personal and social development is excellent. Judged a strength of the school at the time of the previous inspection, this very high standard has been maintained. Good provision in assemblies and lessons ensures pupils' spiritual development is good. The annual 'Religious Education Week' promotes pupils' understanding, as well as knowledge-acquisition, very well. Praise and reward are regularly used to encourage pupils. There is very little need for sanctions. An imaginative and innovative "Bonding Day" is used to give pupils self-confidence, a sense of belonging and to develop teamwork. A "Friendship Day" is used to address the subject of bullying. Both are

particularly beneficial. Clear behaviour guidelines and boundaries have been established which are implemented consistently by all staff. This has resulted in a very good standard of behaviour throughout the school. Staff encourage pupils to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of the individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a community. A prefect system and a school council from the eldest classes help children take on responsibility and participate in representation and decision-making. Prefects see their role as helping others rather than enforcing rules. In addition to appreciating their own cultural traditions, children also study the richness and diversity of other cultures. More than nine parents in every ten who replied to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their children to mature and become more responsible.

42. Very good links exist with the local community and good opportunities are taken to work with local business, for example in the use of computer software. Although the school works with a relatively large number of both feeder and secondary schools, good links are well established. Secondary schools speak warmly of the knowledgeable pupils they receive.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. Particularly strong are the good procedures for supporting pupils' academic performance and the very good procedures for promoting the pupils' personal development and their behaviour. Parents have a great deal of confidence in the staff who all show a genuine interest and concern for the pupils' personal development. Pupils know they can turn to any member of staff for support and guidance. The trust they have in the security and support they receive helps them concentrate on their learning. Although of a satisfactory standard overall, the school needs to do more to promote the general health, safety and well-being of its pupils. Occasional visitors and the wider community, too, need to be regularly reminded of their responsibilities.

44. Pupils are provided with a high level of support and advice through the very good procedures to monitor their personal development. The good examples set by staff in their relationships with pupils and each other are the basis of the pupils' progress in their personal and social development. Teachers listen patiently to pupils' responses in the conversations they have with them so that they can acknowledge and rectify their mistakes and misunderstandings. Assemblies contribute effectively to raising the pupils' self-esteem by making them aware and proud of their individual achievements. Teachers make effective use of the information they have acquired on the pupils' personal and social development to provide evaluative comment to parents at consultation evenings, and in the annual reports on the pupil's progress at school.

45. There are good assessment procedures for the identification and tracking of pupils with special educational needs. The school keeps detailed information about targets for development, action to meet the educational needs of pupils, review dates and comments. The school consults with parents and makes use of various agencies to support its work. There is rigorous monitoring of the progress the pupils make and their progress is assessed against their personal targets. New targets are identified to build on their previous learning. Pupils' individual education plans are thoroughly reviewed at appropriate intervals. This enables all the pupils to be fully integrated in every aspect of school life and has a positive impact on their attainment and personal progress.

46. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and good attitudes in school. Pupils talk about the strategies for managing their behaviour in terms of rewards and motivation for rule-keeping rather than punishments for anti-social behaviour and rule-breaking. The school very successfully manages the behaviour of its pupils. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other and show kindness and tolerance to all

individuals. They are developing a good sense of equality and fairness in their dealings with each other. Teachers follow clear procedures to ensure incidents such as bullying and harassment, on the rare occasions they occur, are dealt with effectively and consistently. Records are kept and used well to reduce the likelihood of such behaviour recurring. Staff regularly praise and publicly recognise those pupils who behave or act particularly well. All those connected with the school understand what is expected in terms of good behaviour and how it contributes to the smooth running of the school.

47. The effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality in school are successful in maintaining a lower than average rate of pupil absence. The vast majority of parents share the school's view on the importance of regular attendance. The computerised attendance records allow staff quick and easy access to useful data. The school monitors any lateness effectively.

48. Procedures for promoting pupils' well-being and health and safety are satisfactory. There are very good procedures in place to help staff deal with child protection issues whilst maintaining a high degree of sensitivity and confidentiality. All staff are given clear advice about what they should say, look for and do should they uncover any concerns of this nature. Good curriculum policies for sex and drugs education help raise pupils' awareness of the dangers of abuse and how to look after their bodies. Subject matter is shared with parents prior to the lessons taking place. All parents spoken to during the week of the inspection trusted the school to provide sensitive and supportive teaching of the issues involved. Regular assessments are made of the condition of the school site and buildings and governors discuss the order of priority given to the work that needs to be done. However, the assessments fail to encompass the wider range of potential risks to the health and safety of pupils such as the dangers associated with an open pond, and pupils playing ball games in close proximity to stationary and moving vehicles. Furthermore, not all visitors and occasional employees are aware and follow school procedures. A small minority of the local community fail to consider the pupils' well-being sufficiently, for example when leaving dog litter on the site. Whilst to a great extent the school are prevented by various planning regulations from addressing concerns as they would wish, nonetheless more could be done in a number of areas.

49. Procedures for administering first aid are satisfactory with sufficient members of staff appropriately trained. However, pupils in the first aid room are a long way from the adults supervising them and consequently are left for relatively long periods.

50. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' academic attainment and progress are good. Very good progress has been made in the development of assessment since the previous inspection. Curriculum planning and assessment are better linked. Good use is made of the information made available to the school when pupils first join. After this, pupils' progress is assessed and checked regularly and the information used with good result to track pupils' progress over time. Assessment is effectively used to match work to pupils' abilities so that they are provided with appropriate challenge to meet their individual needs. Individuals and groups have targets, often set in collaboration with them, that further help to focus learning and track progress by giving each pupil a clear idea of how they are doing and where they should look to improve next. Assessment in all subjects is used both to track pupils' progress and to check how effective the curriculum is. The latter is particularly well used to modify and refine the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was judged as working towards a successful partnership with its parents. Good progress has been made towards that vision.

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good, as is the quality of information provided for them. The contribution of parents towards their children's learning at school and at home, and the impact parents have on the work of the school, are both now very good. As a result, parents have a very good view of what the school now provides for their children.

52. Through both the parents' meeting with the inspectors and the parents' questionnaires, and comments made by parents interviewed during the week of the inspection, parents' strong support for the school is clear. Parents particularly feel that their children benefit enormously from the excellent range of school activities available to them and the setting in which they learn. Most parents felt the amount of homework provided was generally appropriate for the age of their children.

53. Information for parents is of good quality. Parents take a keen interest in their children's progress at school and cite homework, reading diaries and conversations with teachers as some of the ways in which they keep themselves informed about their child's progress and learning. The informative end of year reports on pupils' progress include useful indicators on what pupils need to do to improve. Consultation evenings are considered useful and informative. Parents know the targets their children are working to in literacy and numeracy, and this is helpful when they support learning out of school. Parents particularly welcome the regular opportunities to work alongside their children in school. This gives parents an insight and much clearer understanding, and also enables them to better help their children out of school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in a partnership to support their children.

54. Parents are well informed of the very many happenings and events in school through the detailed information they receive. However, copies of newsletters, policies and other publicly available school documents are usually kept on file in the office rather than on prominent display. Some parents find this a problem as it hinders quick and easy access to information they may have missed. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report are comprehensive and thorough. The school realises the benefits of an active and constructive dialogue with parents and regularly canvasses their views on various issues.

55. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and home is very good, as is the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school. Meetings are very well attended and parents give enthusiastic support at all events involving their children. They help to maintain the high standard of pupil behaviour in school by praising their children when they bring home special certificates for good work and attitudes. By showing a keen interest in these occasions, parents promote a strong feeling amongst their children that their schoolwork is valued and individual success is attainable. This has a very firm and positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to their learning. A good number of parents respond positively to the teachers' requests for help in classes or on educational visits out of school. As well as written guidance, the school has evenings set aside to explain the role of the voluntary helper. Parents have exceptional fund-raising abilities. Many give freely of their time and expertise to fundraising events and social activities and regularly raise large sums of money. Parents provide a high level of support for their children's education at home by helping with reading, spelling, tables, information and communication technology studies and project work. The encouragement and support they give to their children's music practice is altogether evident when the school orchestra plays in assemblies and concerts. The assistance given by parents to the work of the school is very good. It has a very positive impact on the pupils' personal, social and academic development.

56. Parents, who have children with special educational needs, are fully involved with the school in all aspects of provision. The procedures for this are clear and effective.

57. Parents are seen as full and active partners in their children's education. The school sees parents as a major resource and a close partnership is encouraged and sought.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is very good and provides a clear and focussed educational direction for the work of the school. Governors play their part, both by supporting the school in many practical ways, and by participation in its evaluation and development. Nearly every parent who replied to the questionnaire agreed that the school is well managed and led. At the meeting, parents spoke warmly of the strong leadership given by the headteacher.

59. The headteacher is successful in her main aim, to raise the quality of pupils' learning and the standards that they attain whilst continuing to offer a very broad, balanced and rich curriculum that sends pupils to secondary school very well equipped to take advantage of the opportunities provided there. She has a clear understanding of what works well and the areas in which the school could improve further. Her management style encourages and enables staff to exploit their skills, expertise and interests for the benefit of the pupils, and stamp their personalities on the school.

60. Very good management structures are an important factor in the school's continued improvement. The senior management team ably and fully supports the headteacher and plays a full and active part in the life and development of the school. They bring a good range of expertise and experience to their discussions and decisions. Despite the relatively large number of staff, the headteacher and senior management team work hard to involve everyone. Most decisions are made after staff are given appropriate opportunities to offer their views. Consequently, a very strong team spirit has been developed that effectively supports the work of the school.

61. The headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators regularly review the work of the school and monitor its effectiveness. The school uses evaluations of teaching and learning to agree areas for improvement. Monitoring is regular, systematic and thorough. Subject co-ordinators generally have other teachers, in different year groups, to assist them. This brings to any discussion a good range of expertise and experience, and enables more cohesive development to take place. Co-ordinators welcome the opportunity to try out their ideas on other teachers, and gain their views.

62. The Governing Body is very supportive of the school. Governors are actively and practically involved in the work of the school. Individual expertise is used well. Each governor has a specific link with a class and subject. They therefore develop a direct role and involvement related to both the curriculum offered to pupils, and their pastoral care, as they move through the school. There is good liaison between school and governors, regular reports from senior staff and co-ordinators help governors to keep abreast of what is happening in the school. Regular visits enable governors to build upon this and take a more active role in decision-making. Governors question and discuss aspects of the school's provision appropriately. They generally meet their statutory responsibilities well, although a more systematic approach to monitoring and recording health and safety issues such as risk assessment is needed.

63. The school development plan is a useful tool for school improvement. The views of all are canvassed and considered before priorities are set, so giving everyone an opportunity to play a role in where the school is going. There are regular reviews both at the end and during each year. It is the basis for all decisions and at the heart of the school's future.

64. Spending decisions are carefully and prudently made. There is a clear emphasis on the educational priorities of the school when budgets are set. The cost effectiveness of changes are evaluated, generally by comparison with the improvement in the education provided for the pupils. Governors receive regular and clear budget information that enables them to fulfil their roles effectively. Care is taken to ensure that the principles of best value are applied. Governors regularly debate spending decisions, the relative merits of the choices facing them and the success of recent investments. They compare, for example, their spending on various areas with that of a similar-sized school. The school makes good use of grants and additional monies it is given. Funds are wisely spent. The school is beginning to look at its future targets as a starting point for longer term budgetary decisions.

65. The school is very well managed and the school day runs smoothly. Good use is made of new technology to support day-to-day administration. Computerised attendance registers, for example, give up-to-the-minute information and patterns in attendance.

66. Provision for special educational needs is well managed. A skilled team of classroom assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils and help them meet the objectives in their individual education plans or statements of special educational need.

67. The school has an appropriate number of teaching staff with a very wide range of experience and expertise. This is used wisely and all staff are encouraged to contribute to the quality of education provided. Staff are well trained, often by other members of staff, such as in the recent changes in information and communication technology provision. The needs of each individual are regularly discussed and fully met. Arrangements for the induction of newly qualified staff and staff new to the school are good and these staff are quickly made to feel at home and part of the team. The school is at a satisfactory point in the implementation of performance management.

68. Accommodation is good overall and includes good quality specialist rooms for a number of curriculum areas including information and communication technology. The outside areas are spacious and include a very large grassed area. The school is housed in two separate buildings and divided by a public route, and this is not ideal. In addition, although some classrooms are very spacious, a number of teaching areas are small. Despite the pupils' good behaviour, this can impinge on the working of the class.

69. Resources are generally good. Resources for history are superb and, for a number of other subjects including information and communication technology and music, very good. The library has a good number and range of information books and classes are generally well equipped for numeracy, literacy and other subjects. Very occasionally, learning in one class is delayed whilst resources are obtained from another class in the year group.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. The school is judged by the inspectors to have no significant weaknesses.

Minor issues that should be considered by the school:

- Through more systematic and thorough risk assessment, the headteacher and governors should put in place additional systems that promote pupils' well-being, and monitor their use more closely.
(Paragraphs: 43, 48, 49, 62)
- The school should continue to promote the pupils' health and safety to the wider community by:
 - making all regular and casual visitors aware of school procedures, and ensuring that they are followed
 - encouraging the general public to show more consideration for the pupils' health and safety.(Paragraphs: 43, 48)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	26	43	25	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	513
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	97

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	65	55	120

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	52	53	58
	Girls	51	48	52
	Total	103	101	110
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 ()	84 ()	92 ()
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	48	54	54
	Girls	50	47	48
	Total	98	101	102
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 ()	84 ()	85 ()
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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	5
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	2
White	495
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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)	20.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	244

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	945 201
Total expenditure	944 689
Expenditure per pupil	1 816
Balance brought forward from previous year	4 603
Balance carried forward to next year	5 115

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	553
Number of questionnaires returned	223

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	40	48	1	0	11
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	35	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	42	7	1	12
The teaching is good.	58	35	1	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	40	6	1	12
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	29	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	29	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	39	3	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	21	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	29	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	30	0	1	1

Other issues raised by parents

The relatively high percentage of replies in the 'don't know' category were largely from parents and carers of pupils in Year 3, who had joined the school a very short time before the inspection questionnaires were distributed.

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

ENGLISH

71. National test results for 11-year-olds in 1999 were above the national average, but average when compared with similar schools. Almost nine in ten of the pupils reached the standard expected for their age, compared with the national average of seven in ten. The proportion of pupils reaching the next higher level, almost three in ten, was above the national average. These results compare well with those from the previous inspection in 1996 when standards in tests were above the national average. Over the last four years' tests, the performance of pupils in English was well above the national average. Standards have remained above average. Boys and girls do equally well, and results in English are similar to those in mathematics and science.

72. The school reached the target set for 2000. The target set for 2001, that very nearly nine in ten pupils reach or exceed the expected level in the national test, is challenging.

73. The findings of this inspection indicate that by the end of Year 6, the pupils' overall attainment in English is above national expectations. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language, and those who are more able, make good progress.

74. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain well above average standards in speaking and listening. Most engage readily in discussions, are confident in expressing their views and offer ideas and relevant information when this is required. Even many of the youngest pupils, who have just joined the school, exhibit this characteristic because they are given good opportunities to contribute to discussion and teachers quickly establish the right atmosphere for learning. This ability to engage in discussion in a mature manner was observed, for example, in a Year 5 geography lesson on the effects of erosion. Pupils were confident when answering questions and made good use of the appropriate geographical vocabulary to develop their viewpoint. They expressed their ideas clearly and thoughtfully. On the very few occasions where pupils were less effective in speaking and listening, it was generally because they failed to listen carefully to their teachers and therefore responded inappropriately to question asked or tasks set.

75. Overall, standards in reading at the end of the key stage are above average. Higher attaining pupils read with accuracy, are fluent and read with good expression. They read text with understanding and tackle difficult words with confidence. They talk about authors that they enjoy and can make some comparisons between them, although the range of authors read is often rather narrow. Pupils of average attainment are generally fluent, can discuss what they have read and use a range of skills, including phonics, to tackle unknown words. They make good use of their reading skills in their class work in all subjects. Lower attaining pupils are enthusiastic about reading. Although they do not always read aloud accurately, they can often relate the content of what they have read in some detail. They use their knowledge of phonics and sometimes the context of what they read to work out unfamiliar words. The use of research skills tends to be variable from class to class across the key stage, largely depending upon the level of challenge and interest in the task and the expectations of the teacher. In a Year 6 history lesson, pupils used several original documents to research information about the evacuation at the beginning of World War Two. Although the text was difficult to read, pupils were enthralled and persevered. This,

coupled with the very good support they received from the staff teaching them, enabled them to succeed.

76. Standards in writing by the end of the key stage are average overall but there is evidence of recent improvement so that a good and growing proportion of pupils reach good standards. This is largely due to the school's greater emphasis on writing standards and better use of opportunities to write in other subjects. Pupils write for a good range of purposes and readers including letters, poems, note taking, accounts, recipes, postcards and stories. When the subject matter is well presented and interesting, pupils write in a lively and thoughtful manner. This was seen in a Year 6 history lesson when a set of lower attaining pupils imagined that they were evacuees and had to write home to their parents. The imaginative quality of writing that resulted was of a good standard. Most pupils write in an organised way, sequence their ideas and choose appropriate vocabulary. Their writing is often thoughtful and imaginative. This was exemplified in a Year 4 lesson when the pupils imagined that they were in a school described in Dickens novel 'Hard Times.' Very good use was made of an appropriate range of vocabulary by pupils to describe their feelings and their fears. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in spelling, punctuation and grammar, although the quality of handwriting and presentation of work can vary. In some of their work, a small proportion of pupils lack care and effort. Throughout the school, planning of written work by pupils is satisfactory and there is appropriate emphasis on drafting, editing and rewriting.

77. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning in English is good and the high standard reported by the previous inspection has been maintained. The teaching in almost one in five of lessons was very good. One lesson seen was judged unsatisfactory. The knowledge that teachers have to teach the subject is a strength, as is the way in which they use various strategies to enthuse and interest pupils. Clear exposition and competence in teaching basic skills ensures that pupils know what to do and how to do it. Lesson objectives are made clear to pupils and this, too, is useful. These objectives are often referred to during lessons so that pupils can keep a focus upon what the outcome of their work should be. Teachers are particularly effective in the way that they use questions to advance the understanding of pupils. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher, by the use of stimulating questioning, drew out ideas from the pupils in order for them to write a new character and scene into a 'Harry Potter' story that they already knew. Teachers make good use of praise and encouragement. They are very effective in helping pupils to improve their work when they discuss it with them. In some classes, constructive marking of a very high quality reinforces this. In addition, teachers use classroom and learning support assistants with good effect to support the work of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are very well managed and good use is generally made of time. In a small proportion of lessons teachers talk for too long and pupils become restless, but not disruptive. Teachers use available resources effectively to engage the interest of pupils, and the use of information and communication technology is developing satisfactorily. Where teaching was judged unsatisfactory, the teacher's knowledge was unsure and the explanation given to pupils confused them.

78. Since the previous inspection there has been good progress made in provision for the subject. The school has provided pupils with more opportunities for drama and role-play in lessons. There has also been more emphasis upon poetry. For example, in Year 6 a study of the poetry of World War Two has provided pupils with an insight into conditions of the time and given them an imaginative and thoughtful perspective into the history of the period.

79. The subject is very well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Priorities for development have been identified and acted upon successfully. Assessment procedures in English are good. All pupils have individual targets and close records are kept of their progress so that teachers can ensure that teaching closely matches the level of difficulty to each pupil. Some monitoring of teaching has been done, but on a limited scale. However, the co-ordinator has a firm grasp of the aspects of English that need to be improved and has carried out some training for staff to make the necessary improvements. The school has successfully implemented the literacy hour and standards in literacy reflect those found in English. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is good and particularly in history where the pupils show considerable ability in their use of language in writing. English makes a powerful contribution to the spiritual and moral education of pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

80. National test results for 11-year-olds in 1999 were well above the national average but average in comparison with schools like Reigate Priory. More than eight pupils in every ten reached the standard expected for their age or higher, compared with the national average of seven in ten. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level, a third, was also much higher than the national average. In 2000, the proportion reaching the expected level was similar although the proportion exceeding it fell. There has been no significant variation in the results of boys and girls over the last four years and no significant difference between results in mathematics and those in English and science.

81. Test results over the last four years show that standards have risen steadily year-on-year. Since the previous inspection standards in mathematics have risen consistently at the end of Key Stage 2. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 6, the pupils' overall attainment in mathematics is good and previous standards have been maintained.

82. The school very nearly reached the target set for it in 2000. The target set for 2001 is realistic but equally challenging.

83. The work seen in pupils' books throughout the school reflects these steadily improving standards. Both the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in each year group and the proportion exceeding it are increasing gradually. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making good progress.

84. By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach good standards in mathematics and their knowledge and use of number is particularly strong. They demonstrate good mental agility, and, when using particularly large numbers, check that their results are sensible. They have good mental recall of multiplication facts and work with good speed and accuracy, for example when adding and subtracting decimals or reducing a fraction to its simplest form. Most measure with good accuracy and draw angles with similar care. They construct graphs and diagrams accurately and draw simple conclusions from them, often in research associated with subjects such as history.

85. The vast majority of pupils confidently tackle problems and use the four operations appropriately to solve them. They are keen to answer their teachers' questions and enjoy discussing the various strategies they have used. Most perform mental calculations accurately and quickly. Older pupils estimate and measure well. Many understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition, and use this to check their results. They change improper fractions into mixed numbers, and know the sequence of square, triangular and prime numbers and the relationship between them.

86. The quality of teaching seen was good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is used successfully to produce effective learning. In the best lessons, teachers clearly explain the purpose of tasks and they indicate they have high expectations of what can be achieved. Consequently pupils know what they are looking to achieve, and try hard. Teachers use questioning well, both to probe what pupils know and understand and to extend their learning by challenging them to use their knowledge in new situations. In these lessons, pupils invariably show interest in their work and put much effort into meeting the challenge. Teachers consistently help pupils develop the appropriate vocabulary and encourage them to explain their understanding and strategies. The good use of skilled learning support assistants makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning for those pupils with special educational needs who consequently make good progress.

87. The management and control of pupils is good. Teachers consistently set clear expectations of pupil behaviour and attitudes and pupils respond well. Pupils' attitudes are good; they are enthusiastic and show interest in mathematics lessons. Many pupils spoken to in Year 6 listed mathematics as one of their favourite subjects. Relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils themselves, are very good. Resources are handled well and pupils consistently record their work with care.

88. Teachers' planning is good. Learning objectives are clear, activities are well structured and include opportunities for assessment. Planning builds carefully on what has gone before and meets the needs of the whole range of pupil ability well. The grouping of pupils by ability throughout the school helps teachers to match teaching more closely to pupil needs. Lessons have a clear focus and teachers refer to the learning objectives regularly, reminding pupils of what is to be learnt. Homework is regularly set; it is effectively used in a number of ways, for example to reinforce recent teaching. The quality of most teachers' marking is good, with comments on what has been successful and guidance about what needs to be improved.

89. Assessment in mathematics is good. During the course of the lessons, teachers observe pupils and question them to assess their understanding, knowledge and skills. They make good use of this information to intervene and support pupils in the lesson and to plan subsequent lessons. Praise and acknowledgement of pupils' efforts and positive attitudes is used to motivate and inspire pupils. Tests are used regularly to check the current levels of attainment and progress made by pupils.

90. Good use is made of teaching resources. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics is good and in the majority of classes well related to the learning objective.

91. Co-ordination is good. Both the newly appointed co-ordinator and his predecessor have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of development in mathematics. They work well together, for example to produce a comprehensive 'action plan' for the development of mathematics. The targets in this plan are the right ones. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced with good staff training, support and guidance.

SCIENCE

92. Results in the 1999 national test for eleven-year-olds are well above the national average, but average when compared with similar schools. Nine in every ten pupils reached the expected level and four in every ten went on to exceed it. Results in science are similar to those in English and mathematics. The average level achieved has risen steadily

since 1997 and is now well above the results achieved at the time of the previous inspection. This improvement was at a faster rate than achieved nationally, and a significant number of pupils are achieving well above the national average. The 2000 results show that standards have continued to rise.

93. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional subject, and most of the more able, all make equally good progress. The work seen in pupils' books throughout the school reflects these good standards.

94. Most pupils in Year 6 are able to describe and conduct a fair test, for example to measure the amount of heat a potato could retain when wrapped in one of six different materials. All pupils made sensible predictions prior to the experiment, demonstrating good use of their prior knowledge, about which material would help to retain the heat most effectively. They went on to record the temperatures carefully over a fixed period and analyse the results. They could hypothesise about manufacturing decisions regarding the selection of the second most efficient material against cost considerations and product protection for fast foods. This was largely because the teachers were very clear about what the pupils were expected to learn and had planned the activities very well to support this. Pupils use their numeracy skills well, for example when finding the mean to correlate the results from all groups using the same material. Pupils made good progress and achieved well. The teacher and learning support assistant were able to move around individuals and small groups checking and discussing their results and conclusions. The pupils received good quality feedback and this helped them to develop their ideas well. All pupils made good progress as a result.

95. Towards the end of the key stage in particular, the pupils' experimental and investigative skills are good. Because these skills develop alongside pupils' knowledge and understanding, critical thinking skills are good. Pupils achieve above the level expected. However, more opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to practical activities and evaluate their results at the start of the key stage would enable them to develop these skills earlier.

96. Although standards in science are very good, progress is slower at the start of the key stage than towards the end, generally because lessons for younger pupils are too strongly focused on classroom activities themselves rather than on what pupils should learn from them. In the Year 3 work on materials, comparisons between paper towels and their ability to absorb liquid did not clearly identify what pupils were expected to learn from the experiment. The fair testing control factors were quite complex for most of the pupils and much of the lesson was spent with the teacher explaining the results and insufficient pupil involvement in the experimental and investigative science activity.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers place good emphasis on developing the language of science right from the start. There is a careful development of the correct use of words and an understanding of their meaning. This helps pupils to express their ideas accurately both verbally and in writing. Activities are generally well managed and classroom assistants used well, particularly to ensure that pupils understand the tasks and activities they are to undertake. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good and this ensures that explanations are generally clear and succinct. Teachers assess how their pupils have done both during and after the lesson. This provides a clear and accurate view of pupils' relative achievements and understanding. This is used effectively to evaluate the success of current work and plan the next lesson. Teachers marking is constructive and takes pupils learning forward.

98. The curriculum is well-planned and organised. Learning objectives and tasks are clearly stated and closely matched to pupils' ability levels, including more challenging follow-on tasks for the more able pupils. This is beneficial to the rate of pupils' learning in particular. Information and communication technology is used well in some lessons and this needs to be extended. Greater time to reflect on the work carried out needs to be planned into some of the younger classes, particularly to encourage pupils to use their literacy skills to explain what they have learnt in a scientific context.

99. The previous science co-ordinator played a major role in whole-school planning. Schemes of work have been produced for all years. The clarity of these plans contributes significantly to the good standard of work seen. They include detailed expectations of what 'all' 'most' and 'some' pupils should be able to do following the teaching of each topic. Pupils' performance against these expectations is recorded so that teachers' can plan appropriate work when teaching related topics.

100. Assessment is used well and a significant factor in the very good improvement since the previous inspection. This has included an excellent analysis of common errors in the national test for eleven-year-olds, and has provided the staff with clear targets for teaching to raise pupils' achievement in the subject. This work would now benefit from more direct monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art and design are very good and pupils make very good progress from year to year, an improvement since the previous inspection.

102. Standards develop successfully through the school and are well above national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils are keen to explore their ideas by using their knowledge and understanding of materials and processes to create a wide range of effects. Some pupils choose and arrange objects for a still-life drawing, carefully discussing the effect they are trying to create, and how their composition may look. Work in sketch books shows that pupils of all abilities make good progress. Pupils have good pencil control. They observe carefully and closely and demonstrate a good sense of proportion and composition. The most able appreciate the movements of plants and attempt to reproduce this in their work. Tasks are carefully matched to pupils' ability levels so that the least able, for example, also make good progress but with a more limited focus.

103. The quality of learning is good. Pupils are well motivated, enthusiastic and have high levels of concentration, which becomes even more sustained in the older years. Pupils are able to select appropriate materials and use them carefully through an awareness of their limitations. In their work, pupils show that they learn from examples of work presented to them by expressing their ideas and opinions and adapting their work accordingly to improve it. Pupils review each others' work constructively, for example 'I like the way she has used

crosshatching to create the texture on the hat'. They use art vocabulary well, showing a good understanding of terminology and with direct reference to the lesson objectives.

104. Teaching is good overall and often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and an enthusiastic approach. Most also have good artistic ability. Resources are used effectively to enable the pupils to succeed in the task set. There are high expectations of behaviour and the quality of pupils' work. Questioning is open-ended, skilful and encourages participation and motivation. Cross-curricular links are much in evidence, particularly in the introductory part of lessons and summing up sessions, effectively reinforcing learning.

105. Planning, co-ordination and monitoring are a strength of the subject. Lesson plans contain explicit teaching points, cross-curricular and information and communication technology links. Tasks set are evaluated to ensure pupils progress at a good rate. The co-ordinator regularly undertakes a scrutiny of work and maintains an extensive portfolio, which shows the very high standard of art and the contribution it makes to the life and work of the school, for example in pupils' cultural development and activities associated with school events and productions. Good training on both art teaching and the presentation and display of pupils' work is beneficial to staff. Pupils' work is sensitively displayed around the school. It is stimulating, interactive and shows the use of a range of materials and techniques.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards in design and technology are good. The pupils make good progress as they move through the school, an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make particularly good progress in their understanding of the design and make principles involved in the subject. The clear leadership in the subject, alongside the effective teaching, has contributed to the present good quality of learning by all pupils.

107. In many classes, good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils have opportunities to draw initial designs and ideas, develop them into working models and from these extend their work by making high quality products. Good emphasis is given to teaching skills and then offering pupils the opportunity to practise and hone them through the design and make process. In Year 3, for example, pupils worked on priming or starter skills for pop up cards. They looked at two types and discussion of the application for each type of card designed formed the introduction and summary of the lesson. Pupils worked hard to develop the skills of scoring the card and manipulating the stepped and triangulated mechanisms. They learnt how the card is constructed before thinking about who to design a card for and the suitability of the pop up message. The scheme of work is equally clear and well-written for all tasks in all year groups. It introduces pupils to a full range of materials through their four years in the school, making good use of the purpose built food technology room. In Year 6, work is carried out over a short but intensive period of time. This enables pupils to focus more clearly and produce high quality work.

108. The quality of teaching is consistently good and the pupils' learning is purposeful. Work is carefully planned and teachers are aware of how the subject can support the pupils' learning in other subjects such as history and mathematics. In lessons, teachers carefully demonstrate and explain the nature of the work that pupils are to undertake. They have high expectations of pupils and set them good challenges. The teachers pay careful attention to enabling pupils to reflect and consider the quality of their finished work and suggest ways in which it could be improved. The subject is taught with enthusiasm and this has a direct bearing on many pupils' attitudes towards the subject. The pupils use equipment sensibly and effectively and are very aware of the standards expected, and generally achieve them.

109. The quality of leadership is good. The co-ordinator gives good support and guidance on planning the pupils' learning, and this helpful in ensuring that the curriculum builds year-on-year and expertise is shared. The quality of resources to support teaching is good and carefully organised to allow pupils ease of use and access. The pupils' work is imaginatively displayed and supported with relevant resource material such as books or artefacts. The co-ordinator is aware that the use of control in design is under-represented in the curriculum and improvement is planned.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Owing to the organisation of the timetable, no teaching of geography was observed in Year 6. It is not possible therefore, to make an overall judgement about standards in geography or if standards differ from those found in the previous inspection. A scrutiny of the planning for geography indicates that the geography curriculum is implemented fully.

111. In the limited number of lessons seen, standards were above the national expectation. For example, in Year 5 pupils make accurate use of geographical vocabulary when they describe the erosion that results from the action of water on hard or soft rock. They recognise that physical processes, such as erosion and deposition, can affect and alter the landscape over time. Younger pupils describe the physical and human features found on a simple map and begin to draw conclusions about the reasons why certain features are found where they are, for example the relative locations to one another of houses, roads and schools.

112. A particular strength of the subject is the residential visits made by pupils in each year group. These visits add considerable value to the geographical provision, giving many good opportunities for pupils to learn and practise skills such as map-reading firsthand.

113. The overall quality of teaching is good with half of the lessons seen judged very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and in the best lessons convey this with an enthusiasm that arrests the attention of pupils and fires their imaginations. Whole class discussion leads pupils to contribute from their own knowledge, or sometimes propose their own 'theories.' For example, how erosion can result in the development and change of the course of a river. Where teachers enter into a dialogue of question and response with pupils, they make good progress in learning and acquiring understanding. Imaginative teaching that draws upon the use of visual aids, and in one lesson a CD-ROM programme on the development of a river system, is a very effective way for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their learning capabilities. This is well rewarded. Pupils behave very well, enjoy their work and make good progress.

114. The new co-ordinator is an enthusiastic and effective manager who has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to develop the subject. A new scheme of work and planning format has been introduced to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum. The current focus, on improving assessment, is appropriate.

HISTORY

115. Standards in history are excellent throughout the school. Whilst the site and the museum resource lend themselves to high quality work, the excellent standards are achieved through good curriculum planning and very good teacher knowledge.

116. Pupils throughout the school have excellent skill levels and a depth of understanding well beyond the norm. Partly because the work they are given is so relevant and interesting, they are able to describe reasons and results of actions so fully. Careful research enables them to recognise how historical fact can be interpreted. In discussion, Year 6 pupils are able to use specific historical evidence, often from more than one source, to convey an opinion. Invariably, these opinions are valid. They know, for example, that the Blitz was designed to lower morale and reduce supplies and munitions.

117. Teachers make very good use of the museum, visits, visitors and artefacts to bring history alive for the pupils, and this is very beneficial to their progress. Pupils enjoy working, for example, with copies of original documents, aerial photographs, old maps and census information. Their work using these resources is invariably of very good depth. They know, understand and use very effectively oral evidence from witnesses and documentary sources such as photographs. Even when the original text is difficult, they persevere to read and understand. On the rare occasions they become frustrated, a teacher or class-mate is on hand to help. Long after the event, pupils have very clear understanding of the historical days they re-enact. The quality of discussion, for example to evaluate and compare a Year 4 Victorian Day with the present, is very good.

118. The quality of teaching is very good overall. A particular strength in teaching is the teachers' knowledge. This is very good, and it enables the teachers to go well beyond the mere factual in their teaching. The explanations they give, the way they 'set the scene', all contributes to the depth of the pupils' learning. The careful choice of hymn and prayer in the Victorian assembly, the teachers' vocabulary and demeanour, all bring history to life. On these occasions, teachers and visitors dress accurately in role and pupils respond positively, they and their parents fully entering into the spirit of the Day. Consequently, because the pupils know so much about what contributed to historical events, they are better able to make links and to hypothesise.

119. Careful curriculum planning ensures tasks are always relevant, generally begin with the practical, and very often use the main school building or town as a starting point. All this helps the pupils to place their work into an historical perspective, and gain a greater understanding of the chronology of different events.

120. The very good links to other subjects are also beneficial. New learning in one reinforces and consolidates existing learning in another, whilst giving pupils the opportunity to make sense of how things fit together. Information and communication technology is used effectively to enrich learning in most periods studied, although more could be done. Pupils are enthralled, for example, by the answers to the questions they pose to World War Two evacuees, using a CD-ROM.

121. Very strong links are made to literacy, and skills learnt during these lessons are practised and honed in history. Pupils write imaginative pieces, often in the first person, to describe life as an evacuee or as a Victorian working child. Notes and diaries are kept during many studies. Poetry is used to very good effect, such as in a piece about 'Dunkirk', 'Nothing but sorrow came into my head as I thought of the soldiers on the beach lying dead'.

122. Management is very effective. The curriculum is carefully organised, matched closely by the resources, visits and visitors chosen to enrich and extend the work. Pupils produce 'mind maps' at the beginning of each study, showing what they already know and raising some questions to explore. Together with staff, pupils evaluate each study and the progress made, and this is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in information and communication technology are good and there has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection. This is largely because of the improved access to hardware and software and more direct teaching of the subject.

124. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. There are many examples of pupils working at or above the expected level across most elements of the subject. The subject is used with increasing effectiveness to support work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 designed and set up a scientific database. They classified by characteristics and purposes and interpreted information in answer to specific questions. The more able pupils completed this task quickly and went on to devise more complex questions that extended their knowledge and understanding of the topic through the interrogation of the database. They learnt the advantages of using computer technology when handling and interpreting data, particularly when searching for patterns and relationships. Pupils worked in pairs, and shared the inputting and manipulation fairly. They listened to one another's views and opinions, and responded to them in their own actions and statements. The teachers' own good knowledge and understanding had been well used to explain the procedures and to produce a stimulating demonstration. The pupils knew what to do and could get on with their task quickly and effectively as a result. They concentrated and collaborated well. The teacher was able to move around the class, responding to difficulties quickly and checking pupils' progress and understanding generally. The teacher had set a challenging task and the pupils responded positively, made good progress and achieved well. The teaching observed was consistently good. This good quality education is found in all year groups. Pupils in Year 4, for example, used a set of instructions to control events, such as an image moving around a screen, and to complete a complex set of instructions that produced some unexpected results. The more able pupils could plan a sequence in advance and appreciate the need to be very specific when setting instructions.

125. Most pupils have well-developed basic skills and are now much more confident and competent users than at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers are using these skills more often and more effectively to support learning in other subjects. Good use was made of information and communication technology in a Year 3 literacy lesson to support spelling work and in a Year 5 Geography lesson using a CD-ROM program to show examples of erosion and the effects of transportation on the environment. Use of the Internet as an information source is also developing well, for example to gather information for project work.

126. Curriculum planning is very good and maps how and when the key skills will be taught, then used in other subjects and finally developed further in the whole class sessions. Good links with a software developer, organised through governor involvement, enrich the curriculum and provide stimulating learning opportunities for pupils. Assessment information and records of pupils' achievements are in place and used well. Helpful advice and supporting documentation is available to staff using the technology suite. The good quality technician support makes a positive contribution to the curriculum's effectiveness.

127. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and there is a clear and appropriate direction for future developments. Staff training is beneficial in raising teacher knowledge. Training goes alongside curriculum and resource improvements, enabling staff to gain the understanding and confidence needed to use the equipment better. The effective use of the technology suite is clearly supporting good quality learning. Particularly beneficial is that all pupils can receive instruction simultaneously in the suite and then use the data saved and matched computers to continue with their work back in the classroom.

MUSIC

128. Standards in Music are good, representing an improvement since the previous inspection.

129. Pupils make good progress in music as they move through the school and, by the end of Year 6, standards exceed the national expectations. Pupils quickly build confidence in performing and composing, listening and appraising. They compose effectively, developing their ideas within musical structures as when composing a playground action song. Less able pupils make progress through the regular emphasis on clapping activities to improve co-ordination and control, so that they can maintain their own part. More able pupils make progress through using complex musical ideas, an effective style and by taking the lead in lessons. About one quarter of pupils take advantage of the extensive range of tuition also offered, and opportunities for pupils to join the school choir, orchestra, and recorder groups are very popular.

130. The quality of learning is good. Pupils are attentive and generally keen to take part and contribute their ideas. They are able to listen and apply knowledge and understanding while exploring musical processes. For instance, in a lesson using ostinato to create a rhythmic piece, pupils were able to select untuned percussion instruments that would produce the sound they wanted. All pupils are involved in their learning and enjoy making music. They are sensitive to each other's performance and learn from one other. For example when improvising a sung response, most pupils could complete the task when they had heard a more able pupil sing.

131. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. It is characterised by good subject knowledge and many teachers have good personal musical ability and appreciation of what the subject offers pupils. Teachers' expectations of pupils' concentration and performance are high. Together with the teachers' enthusiasm and sensitivity, these motivate pupils to express themselves to the best of their ability. Effective open-ended questioning promotes understanding and participation. On the rare occasions that pupils' attention wanders, teachers are quick to put this right. In assembly, pupils participate and sing well and the orchestra is a recognisable asset.

132. Planning, leadership and monitoring are good. Staff receive regular training and this develops their musical ability and appreciation. Information and communication technology is used appropriately. There are regular assessments planned in lessons, so that teachers have an accurate understanding of their pupils' relative strengths and weaknesses. Some very good use of assessment, by both staff and pupils, was seen when more able pupils were produced a group composition, which was videoed and subsequently evaluated. Pupils have been involved in several demanding and successful productions, which promote their personal development. In addition, there are many community links that give pupils further good opportunities for public performance. There is a good number and range of instruments. All resources are well organised and stored where they are easily accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. The good standards in physical education have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. An extensive range of good quality activities are well-taught.

134. Over their four years, pupils' progress is good and standards are above national expectations, particularly in gymnastics and games, when pupils leave the school. In some games' lessons pupils make particularly rapid progress, largely because of the good quality of teaching they receive. Pupils also make very good progress in lessons where they are given time to experiment with and develop their own ideas. Tasks are well matched to pupils' ability levels and consequently they learn at a good rate. For example, more able pupils are given a more challenging task in a Year 3 football skills session. All pupils are fully involved and enjoy the activities presented to them. They are dressed in appropriate clothing. The school teams continue to maintain a high level of involvement and success in inter-school competitions. The subject is generally well resourced for all activities and the resources are accessibly stored and well maintained. However, there are insufficient gymnastic mats to service a class lesson and better marking of the playground would enable a more efficient use of the space.

135. The quality of learning is good and often very good. In all activities, pupils' movement is lively and exciting, reflecting the open-ended and stimulating challenges that have been set. Pupils of all abilities maintain good levels of concentration and work hard. They listen carefully to instructions and rarely need clarification. They are fully conscious of safety when handling apparatus and exercise good levels of self-discipline when working in groups and team activities. Pupils are able to evaluate their own work and that of other people sensitively, using technical vocabulary and with direct reference to the lesson's learning objectives. Pupils are confident in performance and when using more challenging apparatus and equipment.

136. The quality of teaching is good, and in some lessons, very good or excellent. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm and subject knowledge is communicated very effectively and demonstrates a high level of understanding of pupils' physical needs and development. In these lessons, a situation where progress is slow is identified quickly and an appropriate reinforcement activity is initiated to refocus the task. The use of open-ended questioning is skilful and enables pupils to draw upon previous learning and develop it. Lessons are well planned and have explicit learning objectives. Expectations of performance and behaviour are high, for instance, the emphasis on quality when executing a balance.

137. Planning, co-ordination and monitoring are very strong. Staff training on invasion and striking and fielding games, and the able-pupils initiative, have been beneficial to the raising of standards. The staff's shared commitment to the improvement of physical education is very high. There are extremely important community links in place for the development and motivation of pupils, particularly for the more able pupils. These include a link with a professional football club. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities which are available to all year groups. There is a particular emphasis on cardio-vascular activities and many pupils enjoy the rigours of cross-country running across the challenging contours of the Park. This activity is well taught.

138. Through the curriculum and associated activities, physical education makes an important contribution to the aims and work of the school, particularly the pupils' personal and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. The provision for religious education has improved considerably since the previous

inspection. This is largely due to a good policy that supports the well-planned curriculum and enables the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus to be met fully. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, both in their learning about religion and learning from religion. By Year 6, standards are above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus.

140. Pupils knowledge and, particularly, understanding of world faiths is good. The well-planned curriculum carefully links visits from local religious leaders to tasks in school so that pupils learn, whenever possible, through direct and firsthand experience. A 'Religious Education Week' is held annually to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture, and that of others. Much is done throughout the year to raise spiritual and cultural awareness, too. Pupils understanding of the richness and diversity of religions, and their understanding of the distinctive features of religious traditions, are both good. They are able to formulate thoughtful views on religious issues. Pupils' ability to use appropriate terminology to explain matters of religious belief is good.

141. The quality of teaching is good overall. Planning is very thorough and the close liaison between year group teachers shares expertise and ensures a continuity of approach. This is a strength in planning. Teachers are confident in their teaching, well supported by a very useful, clear and comprehensive scheme of work which closely follows the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers make good use of religious artefacts, books and other source material to illustrate and explain their teaching. Their knowledge and understanding of the subject is good. Partly because tasks are stimulating, pupils' behaviour is good. They are responsive and interested in the subject matter and often make thoughtful and constructive comments. Drama is used very effectively as a means of expression to illustrate religious stories and as a means to empathise with characters within them. Good use of questioning is used to establish what has been learnt and where more work has to be done. In one instance, for example, pupils were required to give the biblical reference as an answer. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and are keen to learn about different faiths. They are respectful of other religions and of religious practices.

142. Pupils' personal development is promoted well through activities associated with religious education. They are encouraged to work within a 'code of conduct' which emphasises co-operation, tolerance and respect for others.

143. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The newly appointed co-ordinator and her predecessor have a good grasp of the subject and current and future development plans are appropriate.