

INSPECTION REPORT

Ash Hill Primary School

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110261

Headteacher: Mrs B Ridyard

Reporting inspector: Mr G Bassett
21500

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th November 2000

Inspection number: 225182

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Herbert Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd. J Wilkinson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G Bassett	Registered inspector 21500	Science, Information and communications technology, Special educational needs, English as an additional language.	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school managed?
Mrs L Keyworth	Lay inspector 9169		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for the pupils? Partnership with the parents.
Mrs M Powell	Team inspector 19387	English, History, Geography, Religious education, Music, Under fives	
Mr J Iles	Team inspector 23566	Mathematics, Art and design, Design and technology, Physical education, Equal opportunities.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ash Hill Primary school has recently changed its name from Micklefield Primary School and is situated in the east of the town of High Wycombe. It stands in spacious grounds that are surrounded by woodland. The school has 173 pupils on roll and is smaller than average in comparison to other primary schools nationally. There are equal numbers of boys and girls. Most pupils come from rented homes in the area around the school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average but as the school does not provide school meals it is difficult for this figure to be accurate. The number of pupils on the special needs register is very high and includes 12 pupils with statements. The school has a designated unit for special educational needs and these pupils are included in the class groups. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is much higher than the national average. These pupils have mother tongue languages of Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali. The children's attainment on entry to the school at the age of 4 years is generally well below average for children of this age. Very few children have the advantage of either pre-school education or play group experience before they join the reception class. At the time of the inspection, there were 18 children in this age group and they are taught as a reception class.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school no longer has the serious weaknesses that were identified in the last inspection and is making good progress in the development of its educational provision. Overall, the standards in English, mathematics and science have improved since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils that reach the expected Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science has increased. In English and mathematics, the tests results for 2000 show that the standards are still below the national average. However, the overall attainment levels have continued to improve, with some pupils exceeding the expected Level 4 to reach Level 5. The school still needs to improve these standards further. In science the results are now close to the national average. The improvements overall made by successive cohorts of pupils are good and their rate of improvement in English and science has been greater than that seen nationally. The pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school. The quality of the teaching is generally good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 and this is improving the pupils' interest and attitudes to their work and thereby raising standards. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics and science. The quality of leadership is very good and the headteacher gives very clear direction to the educational developments and work of the school. The subject managers have a firm understanding of their roles in developing and monitoring the subjects of the National curriculum and religious education. The cost per pupil is above the national average, but considering the very good quality of leadership, the overall good quality of much of the teaching and the good progress that most pupils make by the time they are eleven, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides a very good direction to the work of the school.
- The overall quality of the teaching is good. In particular, very good teaching of the basic skills is raising standards and increasing the rate of the pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 2.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress considering their very low attainment on entry to the school.
- The provision for the pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good.
- The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is also very good.
- The school provides excellent equality of opportunities and the staff expect all pupils to be included in all aspects of school life.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good, and for their cultural and multi cultural development it is very good.
- The procedures for promoting good attendance and good behaviour are very good.

What could be improved

- The school needs to build upon the standards already achieved to improve the pupils' attainment further in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of the teaching in Key Stage 1 needs to improve with better classroom management and higher expectations.
- The quality of the pupils' work in information and communications technology needs to improve at Key Stage 1
- The teachers need to have a rigorous whole school approach to the recording of ongoing assessments to enable them to judge each pupil's progress and to know how well each one has learned the skills and knowledge that have been taught.
- The governing body must ensure that the school brochure and the annual report contain all the statutory requirements.
- The parents need to become more involved in their children's learning and in the support of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has subsequently made substantial improvements. In the last inspection report the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in many aspects of management and teaching. At that time, the present headteacher had only recently been appointed to the school and had had no time to improve the quality of educational provision. Since then under her very good leadership, the school has met all the key issues raised in the report and has made good improvements to the management of the curriculum. The quality of leadership has improved substantially and the headteacher is the driving force behind all the improvements that have been made. There is a whole school approach to the developments made within the school, and the school development plan is much better for having clear general aims, targets to be met and criteria to show success. The National Curriculum is now fully established and the subject managers take full responsibility for the monitoring and development of the subjects. The teachers' expectations have been raised and the development of investigative work is being established, particularly in mathematics and science. The governing body now takes a more active role in the school's development. It has established committees that are giving them a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the school. As a result, the governors are in a position not only to oversee the budget but also to help to shape the future direction of the school. With the establishment of this strong leadership, the school is now well placed to continue these good improvements in the future.

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	E	E	E*	E*
mathematics	E*	E	E*	E*
science	E*	E	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table above shows that the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are reaching standards in English, mathematics and science, which are well below the national average in English, science, and mathematics when compared to all schools. The comparison with schools of a similar type is unreliable as the school does not provide any school meals and consequently many parents do not make claims for free school meals or packed lunches. On

these results the school falls in the lowest 5 per cent of all primary schools in the country. However, the results for the most recent national tests 2000 show that standards have improved in English and science and in mathematics there has been just a slight improvement. Consequently, the pupils' standards still need to be improved. From the calculations made upon the numbers of pupils that reach each Level 2 to 5 in the national tests it is evident that the results of successive groups of Year 6 pupils have steadily improved over the past four years, even though overall results are still well below the national average. When comparisons are made with the national average the school's rate of progress is better than that seen nationally in English and science and only slightly below that for mathematics. The school has succeeded in reaching the targets it has set for pupils over the past 2 years. The results in science and English are the best for several years because some pupils are now exceeding the expected levels to reach Level 5. Considering that the children have very low attainment when they enter the school at the age of 4 years, most pupils are making good progress by the time they leave at the age of eleven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have good positive attitudes to school and to their work, by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Their behaviour in and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Their personal development and their relationships with one another are good.
Attendance	There are several pupils who spoil the attendance rates for the school and cause it to be below the national average. Some families have been prosecuted for their child's absences.

The pupils in the main have positive attitudes to the school and show an interest in their work. Their behaviour in and around the school is good. Their personal development and their relationships with other pupils and staff are all good. However, the attendance of a small minority of frequent offenders is unsatisfactory and this causes the overall attendance figures for the school to be below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Of the 48 lessons seen during the inspection 92 per cent were satisfactory or better. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when 19 per cent were unsatisfactory. During the recent inspection 27 per cent of lessons were good, 25 per cent were very good, and 6 per cent were excellent. In total 58 per cent of all lessons seen were good or better. This is a good proportion of good or better teaching and has a beneficial impact upon improving the pupils' progress and attitudes to school. In Key Stage 1 there were 8 per cent of lessons where the quality of the teaching was either unsatisfactory or poor. These were in mathematics, science and geography. This has a detrimental impact upon the pace of work and the rate of progress that the pupils make in these lessons. This is particularly so in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. The teachers in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 have very good skills for teaching literacy and numeracy, but there are weaknesses in Key Stage 1 where the classroom management needs to improve and the teachers' expectations need to be higher.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, experience excellent equality of opportunities and all staff ensure that every pupil is fully involved in all aspects of school life.

The school now needs to develop a more rigorous whole school approach to recording the pupils' progress systematically and accurately. The records should show how well the pupils have learned the skills and knowledge that have been taught and what they can do. This will enable the teachers to decide more readily what the pupils need next to be taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Key Stage 2. However, there are some weaknesses in Key Stage 1
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teachers and learning support assistants provide very good guidance and support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils with English as an additional language receive an appropriate curriculum and very good support from the specialist teacher and the learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good whereas the cultural development including the provision for multi cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Apart from a small number of health and safety issues already noted by the headteacher, the school provides a very caring environment for all pupils.

The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to involve the parents in the life of the school and in the pupils' learning. The parents' response is inadequate despite these efforts. However, the parents of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs attend regular meetings with the teachers to set targets for the future term.

All curriculum subjects meet the statutory requirements. The school now has schemes of work firmly established and based upon the Curriculum 2000 and the national guidelines. There are strengths in the curriculum provided for the youngest (Foundation stage) and the oldest pupils (Key Stage 2) in the school. The teachers in both of these age groups develop the curriculum in an imaginative and innovative way and this is beneficial. There are weaknesses in the teaching of the numeracy and science curricula in Key Stage 1. Even though there are good school guidelines and the teachers' planning is detailed sufficiently, the classroom management routines are unsatisfactory and consequently the aims of the lessons are sometimes not fulfilled. The school carries out end-of-year assessments well, but does not yet have whole school procedures to record ongoing assessments to show how well all pupils acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding and to indicate their progress over a period of time.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher provides very good direction to the educational development and work of the school. The subject managers are developing their planning and monitoring skills effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors give the headteacher, staff and pupils good support. They have a good insight into the strengths and weaknesses in the school and now play an active part in shaping the future development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school regularly monitors the quality of the teachers' planning and the quality of teaching in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology. Targets are set for areas of improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The resources are deployed effectively and with the exception of those used for information and communications technology are satisfactory.

The headteacher works closely with all staff, and since the last inspection has been the driving force behind all improvements. The subject managers have now established good procedures to monitor the provision and develop their subject responsibilities. The qualifications of the teachers and other staff are adequate and in many instances their experience and expertise are good. The accommodation is spacious and all areas are used effectively for the benefit of all pupils and staff. The learning resources apart from those for information and communications technology are satisfactory.

The school has good procedures to ensure that good value for money is achieved when purchasing goods and equipment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like the school and they are making good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard and is helping them to mature. • The quality of the teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed and they feel comfortable about raising concerns and making suggestions. • The pupils' behaviour in school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not think that their children get the right amount of homework. • They would like to see more out of school activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the parents. In their view, the teaching is good and often very good, but in Key Stage 1 some teaching is not satisfactory. However, the inspectors do not agree with the parents about the out of school activities because the range of regular clubs outside school time is good. However, the setting of homework is inconsistent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection, the pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Since then the standards have improved. The evidence from this inspection and the results of the national tests for 2000 and the trend over recent years show that the standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are rising even though they are still below average in these subjects.
2. The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 for 1999 and 2000 show that the proportion of the pupils that reached the expected Level 4 or above was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, in this year's tests there was a significant improvement in the results in English and science. There was also a slight improvement in mathematics, with a higher proportion of the pupils reaching Level 4 or above and a small number of pupils reaching Level 5. The inspection evidence shows that the standard of the work completed by the present Year 6 cohort is higher than the test results for 1999 and 2000. Comparisons made with schools of a similar type (i.e. with 20 - 35 per cent of free school meals), show that results for 1999 were well below the average in all three subjects. This comparison is unreliable as according to the school's data there is a higher entitlement to free school meals than the number of pupils that are registered.
3. An analysis of the trend in the results over the past four years shows that successive groups of eleven-year-old pupils have improved in their overall performances even though the standards have remained well below the national average. The progress made by successive groups of pupils in English and science shows that the rate of improvement made by the school exceeds that found nationally. The pupils' progress in mathematics has improved significantly over the same period of time but has not kept pace with the national trend. In recent years, the boys have reached higher standards than the girls in all three subjects.
4. In 1999, the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that there was a significant dip in the standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics. Moreover, the proportion of pupils that achieved the expected Level 2 or above was very low compared to the national average and to the average of similar schools. However, in the tests for 2000 the overall performance was better than in the previous two years even though the standards in reading and writing remained below the national average. The results for mathematics were close to the national average. Despite the fact that the children's attainment on entry to the school has dropped substantially over successive years the progress they make is satisfactory.
5. Most children do not have the advantage of pre-school experiences and when they enter the school, at the age of four years, their attainment is very low. During the Foundation Stage and throughout most of Key Stage 1, the teachers compensate for this by providing many pre school activities to widen the pupils' familiarity of early pre-school literacy and numeracy skills. They extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them and spend much time in establishing the early stages of each pupil's personal and social development. Consequently, most of them make slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics and standards are still below the national average by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1. Many have either English as an additional language or special educational needs. They speak neither clearly nor confidently, but make good progress because of the well organised speaking and listening activities in the Foundation Stage.
6. The development of the pupils' reading and writing becomes more focussed during Key Stage 1. Although standards are well below average most pupils can sound out letters and parts of words and can use picture clues to help them to "read" words. In this aspect of literacy, the pupils make satisfactory progress. Their writing skills are still weak at present, but many pupils are not sufficiently challenged with appropriate writing tasks. They are often required to draw rather than write, and this has a detrimental impact upon the standards reached by the end of Key Stage 1.

7. The work completed by the pupils since September in mathematics shows the progress in Year 1 and 2 to be unsatisfactory in numeracy and this has a detrimental impact upon the standards they should reach by the end of the key stage. In science, the pupils record mainly through drawing with only a few of them writing labels or simple sentences. By the end of Key Stage 1 it is evident from the discussions held with some Year 2 pupils that they have a better knowledge and understanding of science themes than is reflected in their written work and that most have made satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge and understanding since the beginning of the year. For instance, most know that creatures live in different habitats. They record their work in drawings and in some instances with the help of the teacher they used a table to record drawings of 'minibeasts' they found on the school grounds. However, the progress made in the acquisition of investigative skills is unsatisfactory.
8. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved significantly and many pupils make articulated responses to questions. The proportion of the pupils on course to reach the expected Level 4 in reading is broadly in line with the national average at this point in the school year. They are able to select information from books and from the CD-ROM's by using an index and contents list effectively. A few can skim for information and their overall progress in developing their reading skills is good. This good progress is reflected in the quality of the writing seen at the end of the key stage even though the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 is below the national average at present. Considering, their very low standards of attainment when they enter the school, most pupils make good progress in English by the time they leave.
9. In mathematics, the pupils' standards are improving, but are still well below the expected level for their age. Most pupils can recall number facts and can apply the four processes for calculation when solving problems. They are enthusiastic about their mathematics. They work confidently with large numbers and many have a good understanding of degrees and different angles. In science, they are gradually developing their investigative skills, but as yet do not devise either their own experiments or their methods of recording.
10. At the end of both key stages, the quality of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other people's faiths and beliefs in religious education is above the expected levels identified in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages. The quality of their work in information and communications technology is below the expected levels in Key Stage 1. **(This is a key issue for action)**. However, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 make good progress and reach standards that are in line with the expected levels in word processing and handling data.
11. The quality of the pupils' work in physical education, and art and design are above those standards expected at the end of Key Stage 2 and in history, geography, design and technology it is broadly as expected.
12. In all subjects the quality of the pupils' work is weakened by the below average standards in literacy and numeracy. The majority of the pupils have very low levels of attainment when they enter the school. Taking this into consideration, it is evident that nearly all, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make good progress and are achieving well against their previous attainments by the end of Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils of all ages have a good attitude to the school. The vast majority from the Reception class upwards are enthusiastic to come to school and have a positive attitude to learning. This is helped by the Breakfast Club, which provides a warm and caring atmosphere and a very good start to the day. The attitudes of the children under five are generally good but because they have had either little or no pre-school experiences they have difficulty working in a focussed manner at a task of their own choosing. Some of the children lack sustained concentration and find it difficult to take part in simple conversations with each other. Many are not inquisitive and they neither investigate nor make use of the many facilities that are provided for them with any imagination. The pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2 they are good. When participating in communal activities, such as

assembly, the attitudes of almost every pupil are very good. The pupils find the after school activities interesting and enjoyable.

14. The vast majority of the pupils of all ages, especially those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, respond positively to tasks and try hard to give of their best. Most of the older pupils have a purposeful attitude to their work; for example, when learning French in Year 6 all the pupils listen, concentrate and participate with interest. The behaviour of most of the pupils in the Reception age range and in Key Stage 2 is good. In Key Stage 1 the behaviour of the pupils in most lessons is satisfactory, but it does deteriorate on occasions. This is due, in part, to the low expectations of the teachers and in some instances to their ineffective management and control of the pupils.
15. When the pupils move around the school they walk purposefully and they are courteous to staff and generally considerate to others. They are trustworthy and take their responsibilities seriously; for example when taking a visitor to a different part of the school they are polite and hold open the doors. The older pupils help the younger ones in the Breakfast Club and during wet playtimes. The younger pupils, when returning the class register, act in a responsible manner. The classroom duties, for instance getting and returning equipment for a games lesson, are performed efficiently and with good heart. As the pupils become older, they are eager to take on responsibilities and when given the opportunity to use their initiative, they are very pleased to help in all sorts of ways, in and around the school. The pupils' involvement in many aspects of the school life has improved since the last inspection.
16. Their relationships with all adults and each other in the school are good. The inspection team agrees with the parent's views that friendships between individuals and within groups across all cultural backgrounds are good; some friendships being very strong. In lessons, the pupils co-operate with each other and with their teachers and other adults. They look after each other by taking turns, sharing equipment and helping each other when working in pairs. They listen to each other and respect each other's views willingly, having respect for other people's differences, particularly their feelings, values and beliefs. For example, the pupils in Year 5 are beginning to understand and respect the needs of others when discussing the children's working conditions during Victorian times.
17. The pupils' are confident enough to speak to teachers individually, and in lessons all answer questions with confidence. They are expected to be courteous in lessons and no incidents of intimidation, bullying, sexism or racism were seen during the inspection. The pupils have a growing understanding of right and wrong and they are polite and thoughtful towards others. The rate of attendance has improved since the last inspection, but nevertheless the attendance figures are below the national average. Unauthorised absence is a significant concern and has increased substantially since the last inspection despite the fact that the school uses many ways to improve attendance. This growing rate of unauthorised absence is now primarily due to a few families, some of whom have been prosecuted for this.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of the teaching is generally good overall but there are variations in the quality with some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics and science in Key Stage 1. Overall the quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory overall. The quality of the teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall despite the small number of lessons where there were weaknesses in the class management and where the pace of work was too slow because of low expectations. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 it is good overall and often very good or excellent.
19. Of the 48 lessons that were seen in this most recent inspection, 92% were of a satisfactory or better quality. Nearly 60% of all lessons seen were good (27%), very good (25%) or excellent (6%). Of the remaining almost 33% were satisfactory but 6% were unsatisfactory and 2% (1 lesson) was poor. At the time of the last inspection in 1998, 19% of lessons seen were judged to be unsatisfactory.
20. This level of good and often better teaching that the school demonstrates now has an extremely positive impact upon the pupils' attitudes to their work and to the quality of their learning. This is

particularly so in Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation stage where it is a strength of the school and is the reason that most pupils are making good progress. The rate of progress of the majority of pupils in these two Stages is now good, and is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

21. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is a strong feature of the school. The children enter the school with well below average attainment. Most pupils in the present Reception age group have had no pre-school experiences, and the tasks devised by the teacher to provide the children with the skills that most children nationally would have already mastered are good and often very good. The children settle quickly and, with the skills of the teacher and the learning support assistant, they make good progress in literacy and numeracy considering the well below average standards they achieve on entry to the school. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well and this has a beneficial impact upon each child's progress. As a result of patient teaching and very good support in the practising of skills, most pupils can trace over letters and write a few letters independently, by the time they reach Year 1.
22. The teachers and the learning support assistant are conscientious and raise the confidence and self-esteem of all pupils, who already are showing positive signs of good social development. The half term and weekly planning of the lessons is very good. These plans are very detailed with clear learning objectives, related and interesting activities, as well as on going assessment criteria that are used effectively to decide what each child needs to be taught next. The teacher's good expectations are communicated well to the children. From the very early days in the Reception class, the teacher demonstrates class management that is firm, fair and very good. In a stimulating environment where the children know that there are high standards of behaviour, they gain new skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. The pace of work is good, and the children build securely upon what they have previously learned. They move slowly towards achieving the early learning goals though many children remain well below the national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage.
23. Where the teaching is best, the teachers have high expectations. Their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good, and they have developed very good skills for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They are secure in their knowledge of the schemes of work that are now firmly established. The overall planning in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. Some teachers write the objectives for each lesson on the board and share these with the pupils to actively involve them in the work planned for them. This is an appropriate strategy and helps the pupils to gain an understanding of what they are learning. For example, the pupils in Year 3 understood that they were to discover how acids attack their teeth and were amazed that vinegar could dissolve the shell of an egg to leave the egg sac containing the yolk. The teachers and the learning support assistants have good support strategies for all the pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
24. When the quality of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent, the activities planned are imaginative and innovative. These challenge the pupils very well and extend and strengthen their skills and understanding. In a Year 4 English lesson, for instance, the teacher used newspaper headlines about the floods to help the pupils to understand the difference between a fact and an opinion. Other pupils in Year 6 working in a darkened room were shown that we can only see an object if it either gives off or reflects light. In these very good lessons, the teachers used searching questions that deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding. They give the pupils time to reflect upon their answers but probed more carefully with follow up questions to ensure that they have completely understood what they have been taught.
25. During the inspection, the teaching in three lessons in Key Stage 1 was of an unsatisfactory quality and in another lesson it was poor. **(This is a key issue for action)**. In these instances of unsatisfactory teaching, the pace of the teaching is too slow and many pupils become restless because they are given work that is too easy. This eventually leads to a noisy classroom that distracts everyone and as a result the pupils' progress slows down significantly. When the teaching is poor there are weaknesses in controlling the class and a significant number of the pupils are not engaged in the activities. Consequently, in these weaker lessons few, if any, pupils make sufficient progress.
26. The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is very good in Key Stage 2 and most of the time it is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The learning support

assistants are well deployed, know what they are to do and give these pupils very good support. Where they are used best, they share the plans for each lesson and this has a beneficial impact upon the quality of the pupils' work. Individual educational programmes generate specific learning objectives for the pupils with special educational needs and assessment records are completed once a week to set new targets when appropriate.

27. The school does not yet have an agreed system for recording on-going assessments so that each pupil's progress can be accurately tracked. Consequently, the teachers rely too often upon their memories to ascertain what progress the pupils have made. Nevertheless, many have devised their own methods for recording either a weekly or a daily assessment to show what each pupil can do and understand following the teaching of particular topics. Some of these individual systems are good and could form the basis for a whole school agreement. This would ensure that a more rigorous recording procedure is employed to track smaller steps in each pupil's progress and to identify how effectively each one has acquired specific skills and knowledge. **(This is a key issue for action).**
28. The organisation and setting of homework is inconsistent and, therefore, unsatisfactory. There is no organised timetable for homework to enable the teachers, pupils and parents to support and enhance learning across subjects effectively. The good practice evident in some classes is not found in others **(This is an area for improvement that the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan)**

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

29. The curriculum is appropriately broad and includes all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. Overall, good progress has been made since the last inspection when a key issue was to ensure that all aspects of the programmes of study were covered in full. The curriculum has been reviewed and policies written for all subjects. The planning is now of good quality and guides the teaching and learning effectively. In English and mathematics, the subject managers systematically monitor how effectively their subject plans are implemented across the school and assess how effective the teaching has been in raising the pupils' standards. This enables them to identify strengths and areas for development.
30. The school has adopted the schemes of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority [QCA] for all subjects. This ensures that the learning objectives build upon what the pupils have been taught previously and that tasks become more challenging as they make progress. There is good evidence to show that this process is beginning to raise achievement, especially in Key Stage 2. In addition, the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies.
31. The children in the Foundation Stage receive an appropriate curriculum that fulfils the requirements of the nationally agreed "Early Learning Goals", and this leads them purposefully towards the National Curriculum. There are effective systems for co-ordinating the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The children receive a wide range of exciting opportunities, which promote positive attitudes and interest in learning. This is a strength of the school.
32. Although the curriculum plans throughout the school are comprehensive the implementation of these plans is inconsistent. For example, while the range of activities for pupils in Key Stage 2 classes is good, the activities planned in mathematics and science in Key Stage 1 are unsatisfactory. The difference lies in the narrower range of experiences designed by the teachers for younger pupils. In this case, the activities do not sufficiently challenge, encourage independence or excite the pupils fully. In contrast, the pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy an extensive range of opportunities to develop their independence. The activities included in the planning of the curriculum are innovative and imaginative, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The good quality of this curriculum in Key Stage 2 draws on the subject knowledge of the teachers and is reflected in the high quality of their teaching. It results in the pupils learning at a faster pace.
33. The school's curricular provision for the pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language is very good. It supports the learning targets identified in each pupil's individual

education plan. The very good use of the multi-lingual staff ensures that all pupils know what they are expected to do and have a better understanding of what they have been taught. The national Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs is followed, and parents are appropriately involved in their children's learning. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the equality of opportunities is excellent. Great care is taken to ensure that all pupils are equally valued.

34. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education underpins the curriculum and is good. Sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of moral and social development. The pupils have been involved in forming the school rules and are taught right from wrong. The adults provide good role models to enable the pupils to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. All staff place good emphasis on the importance of family values and there are positive relationships between the school and the community. The school also has a good range of clubs, which give opportunities for all pupils to be involved in country dancing, art, sport and music. This enables them to represent their school and to value the contributions they can make to team and group performances.
35. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good, and for their cultural development it is very good. The school raises pupils' awareness of cultures past and present through subjects such as history and geography. The multi cultural dimension in particular is very good with the pupils having opportunities to experience a broad range of cultures within their locality and beyond. The teacher supporting the pupils with English as an additional language makes a strong contribution to assemblies, which support the development of understanding of the similarities and differences between world faiths and religions.
36. In assemblies and lessons, the pupils have opportunities to reflect on fundamental events in their lives. For instance, in a good Key Stage 2 assembly the pupils were helped to consider the importance of being truthful. The teacher encouraged quiet reflection on being true to oneself and gave examples from legends and every day life. In this way, pupils were helped to recognise responsibilities to other people. The teachers are quick to seize opportunities to develop the self-esteem in pupils, especially for those with special educational needs, by valuing their contribution to life both within the school and also in the community. Collective worship fulfils statutory requirements and makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
37. The pupils' social development is promoted effectively. They have many opportunities to take responsibility and to help each other. For example, the Year 6 pupils have learning partners in information and communication technology, and a buddy system supports the children throughout their time in the school. The pupils are encouraged to say 'please and thank you' and to welcome opportunities to greet visitors. Many pupils are given tasks around the school and they collect registers, set up the hall for assembly and hold doors open for others. They are encouraged to put the needs of others before their own and understand why taking responsibility is important to the life of the school. When working in groups, they respect and help each other especially in Key Stage 2. Charities are well supported by the school. The good links with the community, for example the local football club and neighbouring schools, make a significant contribution to the pupils' development.
38. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. It plays a significant part in making the school a happy, friendly and well-ordered community in which everyone is valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school cares for each pupil effectively and instils in each one a sense of belonging by their being trusted and treated as equals.
40. The pupils feel safe and secure as the staff provides good levels of pastoral care. The teachers know their pupils well and are fully aware of their emotional needs. They respond to their needs in a positive and supportive way and involve outside agencies when necessary. As the pupils enter school with attainment that in most instances is well below the standards expected, the school has established very good procedures and practices to support all their needs. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and detailed. The inspection team identified some health and safety issues, which have

been communicated to the headteacher and governing body. **(This is an area for improvement that the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan)**

41. The staff are very safety conscious, the caretaker keeps a watchful eye in the school playground and the newly formed health and safety committee of the governing body is gathering information to ensure that the school functions as a safe and secure environment. The arrangements for child protection are good, and there are close links with social services. The designated teacher has undertaken relevant training and all teachers and staff are aware of the need for vigilance. The identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs and the pupils with English as an additional language are good. These pupils are effectively supported by outside agencies and by the specialist teacher. Healthy living, personal development and health and safety are prominent features of the personal, health and sex education policy. For example, the pupils in Year 5 have good insight into what you need to do to be healthy, and understand the need for a balanced diet and exercise.
42. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. All members of staff, including the lunchtime assistants, are suitably involved in ensuring acceptable levels of behaviour and have high expectations. They nominate a class for good behaviour, and this award is presented in assembly each week. The school's house system promotes good behaviour and all pupils enjoy the rewards of stickers and stars to show they have performed well. Bullying is positively discouraged and the staff, pupils and parents know what to do should it occur. When incidents of poor behaviour occur, they are dealt with swiftly and appropriate reprimands are given. In certain circumstances, the pupils are sent to the headteacher and the parents or carers are informed. The pupils of all ages play well together in the communal playground; the staggered play-times ease the congestion that would otherwise occur if all were at play at the same time.
43. The recording and monitoring of attendance has been reviewed and the procedures are very good. Overall, there are very good procedures for promoting good attendance. Individual absences are diligently followed-up by the newly appointed attendance clerk. She reports to the deputy headteacher who is made aware of poor patterns of attendance of individual pupils. The registers are marked correctly and they comply with the statutory requirements. There is a clear and thorough procedure for monitoring absence, which includes close liaison with the Educational Welfare Officer. This enables the patterns of absenteeism to be identified easily. Regular attendance and punctuality are positively rewarded with class awards each week.
44. The statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 are carried out appropriately; the results are recorded accurately on each pupil's record card and promptly communicated to their parents. In the Foundation Stage, the arrangements for initial assessments as children enter the school and on-going assessment for the Early Learning Goals are effective. However, in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the procedures for recording each pupil's progress in each National Curriculum subject and religious education on a regular and frequent manner are not uniform across the school. So far the teachers set specific targets for each pupil and these are pasted in the fronts of the subject books. This is an innovative procedure and enables the pupils to understand the aims for their development. Although the teachers carry out assessments of each pupil's attainment and progress, they try to carry too much information in their heads for the whole year. This is not satisfactory and a whole school system for recording assessments of progress in all subjects needs to be devised. For example there are inadequate records to accurately plot how well each pupil is progressing in developing reading skills, as the records are merely a list of books taken home. Consequently, the monitoring and recording of each pupil's skills in reading is inconsistent and ineffective. There are no references either to the pupils' word attack skills or to their ability to use research skills. Nevertheless, many teachers have reliable systems that could form the basis of a new whole school approach to recording. **(This is a Key Issues for action)**
45. The pupils' annual written reports are good and thoughtfully presented, but as yet do not identify sufficiently well what the children need to do next. The targets are set effectively for the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
46. There are some health and safety issues that should be considered by the governing body **(This is an area for improvement that the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan).**

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The parents and carers express the view that they are content with what the school provides. All their children like the school. Conversely, the school sees the parents as a rich resource with an important contribution to make and all staff and governors try very hard to involve them in the education of their children and the life of the school.
48. The parents who have English as an additional language are successfully encouraged by the specialist teacher to participate in the development of their child's language skills. There is a small core of parents who assist the school through fundraising, concerts and helping in class. A dedicated group, which regularly helps with the Breakfast Club, recently redecorated the room used for breakfast and lunch. This has made the room very pleasant for the pupils to use. However, many parents do not support the school enough and show very little interest in their children's school and education. Some of the parents help with their children's reading, but for the vast majority of the pupils there is little evidence that their parents have any impact on their learning. **(This is an area for improvement that the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan).**
49. The quality of information to the parents has improved and is now good. The parents appreciate the new format of the governors' annual report, which is lively and informative. The draft document of the new prospectus is eye catching and includes photographs of school activities. However, both of these new documents omit statutory information and the governors will need to seek advice before preparing the next issue. **(This is an area for improvement that the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan).**
50. The quality of information provided for the parents with regard to special educational needs is very good. Important information about the setting of targets in each pupil's individual educational programmes is communicated very effectively. The school involved the parents in the formulation of the school's new home-school agreement and the new notice board at the front the school (made by a parent) are just two of the many ways in which the school tries hard to reach parents. The information to the parents through the pupils' written annual reports is generally good but there are instances where the information for some subjects does not specify precisely enough what the pupils can do, and most reports do not identify what the pupils needs to do to improve in each subject. The school misses an opportunity to work with the parents of the children in Year 6 to ensure the pupils are informed about sex education and issues of puberty. The policy is due for review.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership of the school is very good and the management is very effective. The strength of the leadership is evident in the good progress that the school has made in fulfilling the key issues identified in the last inspection report.
52. The headteacher is very conscientious and provides a very clear direction to the educational developments and the work of the school. The acting deputy headteacher gives the headteacher and staff good support and advice, and is actively involved, with the headteacher, in creating a cohesive team of staff and governors. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, and there is now a very effective management team that is purposeful and creative. The school no longer has the serious weaknesses that were identified in the previous inspection and has made good progress by improving all areas that were of significant concern.
53. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked very effectively in partnership with the Local Education Authority to bring about substantial improvements in the financial state of the budget, which was found to have a serious deficit at that time. The governors are fully involved in the final decisions that are taken in setting the annual budget. The head teacher, with the support of the finance

committee, presents the full governing body with alternative spending options for discussion before the budget is finally approved. They monitor the monthly expenditure effectively with the help and advice of the head teacher and the finance committee. Consequently, they are able to make informed decisions about priorities. For example, the governing body is fully involved in the development of the provision of better information technology equipment throughout the school. This development is detailed in the school development plan, which is presented to the governing body for their final approval. They take an active role in the final preparation of this school plan and are fully aware of the priorities and costs involved. The school now has a healthy budget, and the Governing Body and headteacher have prudently considered the use of a proposed carry forward into next year.

54. The governing body is now fully aware of its responsibilities and is actively involved in shaping the future of the school. Many governors visit the school regularly, some working in the 'Breakfast Club', whilst others observe the pupils at work. The chair of governors meets the headteacher at least once a week. Through these visits and the actions of the committees for finance, curriculum and community, the governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a good understanding where improvements still need to be made and give the headteacher and staff good support.
55. The governing body is anxious to provide pre-school education to raise the pupils' attainment before entering the reception class. They believe that a nursery would improve the pupils' attainment not only on entry but also as they progress throughout the school. The school has the accommodation to provide a nursery, but the school's budget is insufficient to finance it.
56. The thorough development of the responsibilities of the subject managers is most noticeable in the establishment of the schemes of work for each subject. These are firmly based upon the national guidelines for subjects and The Curriculum 2000. The headteacher and subject managers monitor and support the development of each subject. The quality of the teachers' planning has improved significantly since the last inspection, and the plans now identify effectively what skills and knowledge the teachers intend to teach and list appropriate activities to support these objectives. This improvement has had a beneficial impact upon the quality of the teaching especially in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. The subject managers have monitored and supported the teaching in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Each teacher is given a feedback following the observation of the lesson. The strengths and areas for future development are discussed and form elements of an action plan.
57. An end of year assessment is recorded for each one to show the National Curriculum level they have reached. However, the school has not yet devised a simple and common way to record ongoing assessments of what each pupil has achieved for each subject even Consequently, the teachers do not have a continuously up-to-date picture of what each pupil has learned well and what they have struggled to understand. **(This is a key issue for action).**
58. The school makes very good use the available resources. In particular, the resources allocated for the pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language are used very effectively. The staff who have an overview of the provision for these pupils ensure that all funding is used carefully to enable all of them to have an excellent equality of opportunity.
59. The learning support assistants are highly valued by the school, and they provide very good support to all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
60. The school makes efficient use of the grants allocated to the school. The headteacher governors and staff have taken appropriate and correct decisions to improve the quality of information technology resources throughout the school. The in-service training has proved beneficial in the development of the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the planned information technology training will enhance the teachers' skills and knowledge in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support the teaching of other subjects.
61. The school has good procedures to ensure that good value for money is achieved when purchasing goods and equipment.

62. The staffing levels are good throughout the school, and the teachers with greatest experience of teaching in Ash Hill School are deployed in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. This has a beneficial impact for the children as they enter the school and also as they prepare for secondary education. However, those who are new to the school often need additional support to help them gain experience of the school routines and the expectations for the pupils' behaviour patterns. They are helped and advised in these matters by the headteacher, the senior members of staff and an advisor from the Local Education Authority. The resources, apart from those for information technology, are satisfactory. The old computers are fully used throughout the school, but they are of limited use in the teaching of numeracy, literacy, control and modelling.
63. The accommodation is spacious and good. There are large classrooms and several areas that the school has adapted for use as craft and information technology areas. The library has adequate resources and the hall and outdoor areas also provide good facilities for physical education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The headteacher, governors and staff should build further upon the recent successes to raise the pupils' standards of work in English, mathematics and science throughout the school by:-

- (1) improving the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 by:-
 - a) ensuring that the teachers' plans identify more precisely the skills and knowledge that they intend to teach, especially in regard to literacy and numeracy,
 - b) ensuring that the classroom management routines are more rigorous, fully understood and followed by all pupils, so that the work planned is carried out purposefully and builds upon each pupil's prior learning
 - c) ensuring that the teachers' expectations are raised so that each pupil is challenged appropriately.

(paragraphs 10, 25 and 27)

- (2) improving the quality of the pupils' work in information and communications technology in Key Stage 1 by:-

- a) agreeing a list of skills to be taught in each year group,
- b) ensuring that the computers are used to support the teaching of other subjects,

(paragraph 129)

- (3) establishing for the whole school an easily managed system

- a) for recording the on-going assessments of each pupil's achievements
- b) to show how well each pupil is acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding,
- c) to track each pupil's progress

(paragraphs 27, 44 and 57)

The governors should also consider including the following areas for improvement within their action plan and endeavour to

- i) ensure that the setting of homework is regular and consistent across the school **(paragraph 28)**
- ii) address the concerns about health and safety that were verbally reported to the headteacher and the governing body **(paragraphs 40 and 46)**
- iii) involve the parents more effectively in their children's learning and in the support of the school **(paragraph 48)**
- iv) ensure that all the statutory requirements are included in the school brochure and in the governors' annual report to parents **(paragraph 49)**

THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS UNIT.

The provision for the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The school has a unit for 15 pupils, but at present not all these places are filled. The number of pupils on the special needs register (73) is very high for a primary school of this size. All members of staff are responsible for the education of these pupils, and they are guided very effectively by the head of the unit, and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). All these pupils are fully integrated into the classes and in most instances are taught in their correct age group. Each pupil has an up-to-date individual education programme and nearly every parent is involved in the setting of new targets each term. The learning support assistants give very good support and they work very closely and effectively with the class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and head of the unit to maintain good progress for almost all pupils. The SENCO and head of unit keep the governor with responsibility for SEN well informed of the progress being made throughout the school. Outside agencies are used very well to support the needs of the pupils as and when necessary and are supportive of the school's aims for the pupils. The school staff maintain good links with all services, and because of the very good levels of support from within and outside the school most pupils make good progress even though they achieve levels in English, mathematics and science that are well below the national averages for their ages. The pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are given very good guidelines and incentives to comply with the

acceptable standards of behaviour agreed by the staff and the other pupils. The unit for the pupils with special educational needs has achieved good results and provides good support and excellent equality of opportunities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	25	27	33	6	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	173
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	35

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	73

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	32

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	40
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6%
National comparative data	5.4%

School data	1.7%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	14	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	1	7
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	14	10	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	58	42	75
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	8	3
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	15	19	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63	79	58
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	11	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	11
	Girls	3	1	2
	Total	9	6	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35	23	50
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	11
	Girls	3	2	2

	Total	7	5	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	27	19	50
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	24
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	1
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	17

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	4.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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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	3	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
	£
Total income	401385
Total expenditure	397225
Expenditure per pupil	2171
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	4160

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	183
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	44	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	44	5	2	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	58	9	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	42	23	7	2
The teaching is good.	42	49	0	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	53	7	2	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	47	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	40	7	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	23	65	2	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	44	51	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	56	5	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	47	19	0	7

The parents feel that the school is well managed and led, that the quality of teaching is good, that the pupils are expected to work hard, that they make good progress and that the school helps their children to mature. They feel comfortable in approaching the school, that the school works closely with them and that they are well informed about their children's individual progress. A minority of parents feels that their children do not get the right amount of homework and that the school does not provide an interesting range of after school activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the parents. In their view, the teaching is good and often very good in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2, but some teaching is not satisfactory in Key Stage 1. However, the inspectors do not agree that the parents about the out of school activities because the range of regular clubs outside school time is good. However, the setting of homework is inconsistent.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has continued to improve since the previous inspection. It is now very good in most areas. However, the facilities to promote physical development through outdoor play are still inadequate and restrict the children's progress in this area. A very small minority of the children has pre-school experience, so there is little information available about the progress of most children when they enter the reception class. It is greatly to the school's credit that the needs of the children are promptly assessed. This helps the adults to plan appropriate tasks with a result that the children make rapid early progress.
66. The children's communication skills are very limited when they enter school. They have very little experience of either number or other aspects of mathematics. Their social skills are very underdeveloped. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, many children make satisfactory progress in their personal development, but their skills in language and mathematics, although they improve markedly, are still well below average. Even though the attainment of many children falls somewhat below the early learning goals, the teaching is very good and ensures that all make progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. As a result of the sensitive support of the adults, the children respond well to most class routines. They learn to co-operate in groups and become much more aware of how they should behave towards each other. At this early stage, a few children still snatch equipment and are generally somewhat self-centred. By the time they leave the reception class, most children achieve the early learning goals, become more co-operative and learn to sustain tasks for longer periods. This reflects the way the adults, while establishing very clear expectations of behaviour, also develop the children's self-confidence and self-esteem. During a mathematical activity involving spotting the missing number on a number line from 1 to 6 all the children showed great pleasure and satisfaction when an individual child succeeded. The adults are unfailingly courteous and considerate towards the children. This provides a very good role model for the children, for example, to say "please" and "thank you" at the appropriate times.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The children have well below average language and communication skills when they start school. Many have unclear speech, a very restricted vocabulary for expressing their ideas and feelings and find it difficult to listen for sustained periods of time. Their reading experiences are very restricted, but because the adults present books in an exciting way, the children respond with interest and enjoyment.
69. The adults are very consistent in developing the children's vocabulary in order to encourage them to be more communicative, for example, in group activities. When they begin school, the children find it very difficult to create dialogues together in order to act out home play, for example. By the time they begin Year 1, the majority have not reached the early learning goals, but they do progress in their ability to respond to each other's remarks and ideas.
70. The children's early listening and comprehension skills are limited. During a game of "Simon says" the majority were quite unable to discern when or when not they should carry out a specified action. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, their listening skills improve and they succeed in understanding instructions for carrying out tasks such as those in design and technology.
71. The adults are already beginning to develop the children's writing skills. Most are unable to write either their name or even any individual letters when they start school, but as a result of patient teaching and much practice, they can trace over letters and write a few individual letters by the time they begin the statutory curriculum at Key Stage 1. The children are consistently encouraged to appreciate

that writing communicates meaning, and they are beginning to “write” little notes which mostly consist of marks on paper, but which represent the early beginnings of writing.

72. The children’s reading skills progress satisfactorily from a very low base. This is because the adults encourage them to enjoy books and are systematically teaching them how to link letter sounds with their names. They all know how books are organised and can turn pages in the appropriate direction. They are very eager to share books with adults. This applies even to children with severe literacy needs.

Mathematical development

73. The emphasis on practical experience of number, shape and measures is effective in developing the children’s understanding of aspects of mathematics and how they relate to the real world. Their attainment does not reach average levels by the time the children enter Year 1, but the majority make satisfactory progress, for example, in saying number names to ten and matching numerals to objects. The children’s poor language skills restrict their ability to talk in mathematical terms, for example, to describe concepts such as “heavier” or “lighter” or to use words to describe position.
74. The adults provide highly appropriate experiences for the children to engage in mathematics, for instance, through playing group games using large dice, using construction materials to count bricks and blocks, or making railway carriages with Lego blocks. Few of the children acquire adequate language skills for solving problems by themselves by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. The overall attainment in this area is a little below average by the end of the Foundation Stage. The teaching is nevertheless good. The children are taught the names of many basic items, such as body parts, fruit and vegetables, the names of animals and where they live. Through talking about these things, the children begin to make sense of their world. They learn about what animals need to live and what plants need to grow. Their awareness of change is fostered and they discuss seasonal changes, changes in their family or in the local area. The weakness that affects their progress is their limited ability to speculate and ask questions about why things happen. They have some opportunities to learn that the movement of the mouse can change the images on a computer screen and that the “Roamer” can be programmed to move in different directions. Their skills develop slowly from a very low base that requires and receives much adult support.

Physical development

76. The programme for indoor physical activities is well planned so that the children’s confidence to extend what they can do develops well. However, the outside environment is not sufficiently imaginative to contribute significantly to the development of the children’s physical skills. They show a good awareness of how to use indoor space safely and put in a considerable amount of effort during activities that involve running, skipping and using their bodies to make different shapes. Their co-ordination is developing well and in this aspect they are reaching the early learning goals. They greatly enjoy opportunities to combine music and movement in the form of dance. Many of the children become adept at using small equipment such as glue spreaders, scissors and brushes. This is because the adults supervise their activities well and insist upon correct grip from an early stage. For example, all succeeded in joining card and paper to make some exciting model rockets.

Creative Development

77. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children are in line to achieve the early learning goals in art. This is because they are given opportunities to choose and use a range of materials and equipment for example to print and to produce pictures using different colouring media. Their skills in music are somewhat weaker as they have little early experience of using instruments creatively. They enjoy singing and chanting rhymes, but their sense of pitch is lower than expected. The adults are alive to the benefits of stimulating the pupils’ creative abilities.

78. The children's creative development, for example through role-play, is limited because of their restricted language skills. They are well supported by the adults who help them to develop characters and story lines that they can eventually role-play independently. This is a slow process, but through regular practice in acting out some of the stories they read in class, many children develop sufficient imagination to create their own scenes. The narrative skills of the adults that bring alive characters and events in stories such as those based on the bears, stimulate the children to imitate the adults' tone of voice and actions.

ENGLISH

79. The pupils' standards in English at the age of eleven have improved since the last inspection. However, the youngest children have been entering school with declining literacy skills, and as a result standards in Key Stage 1 have fallen below those reported at the last inspection in 1998. The results in the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that standards are well below those of pupils in similar schools and also well below the national averages in all aspects of English. There is evidence that this downward trend has now been arrested. The standards achieved by boys and girls in the recent national tests in 2000 were markedly higher, and they made satisfactory progress. The inspection findings match the recent test results.
80. The youngest children, when they begin school do not speak clearly and confidently, and their concentration is poor. They have little experience of either reading or writing. Although their literacy skills are still well below average when they start the statutory curriculum for Key Stage 1, they make good progress relative to their language ability on starting school. This is because the activities for speaking and listening are well organised, and the adults are assiduous in developing good listening habits so that the children imitate the adults' clearer speech patterns. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils begin to talk more confidently, but their progress is slower than it could be if listening skills were more consistently developed in lower Key Stage 1.
81. By the age of eleven, standards in speaking and listening improve markedly. During a religious education lesson, for instance, many pupils made incisive and well articulated responses to a taped account of the life of a famous leader. The pupils for whom English is an additional language speak with enthusiasm about books they read. They talk convincingly about why certain stories interest them and about their own reading habits. The additional support they receive is of very good quality and makes a major contribution to developing their vocabulary and their ability to articulate their opinions.
82. Taking account of the pupils' limited early reading skills, most make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 1. Their attainment is still below the national average level, but their ability to sound out parts of words and to use picture cues to help them "guess" words is developing satisfactorily. A few pupils read fluently and accurately, injecting considerable expression into their reading, but many are still at the level of reading simple sentences rather mechanically.
83. The older pupils are increasingly benefiting from opportunities to read in order to research for information in lessons such as history. Their attainment is likely to match the average levels nationally by the time they reach the age of eleven because most make good progress. Many of the pupils in Year 6 are able to select relevant information from books and a CD-ROM program to make notes on a variety of topics connected with World War II. The support provided by adults when classes make their weekly visit to the library, is effective in promoting the pupils' interest in books and their reading skills. Few pupils possess higher order reading skills or read what are generally considered to be the works of more demanding authors. The pupils with special educational needs are receiving good support, for example, in learning to recognise initial sounds and blends. They are given regular practice in word building so that they develop a range of skills for attacking new words. Nevertheless, there are still a number of pupils whose reading skills are inadequate when they need to use books to support work in other subjects.
84. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' writing skills are generally well below average, but there are signs of improvement by the time they reach the age of eleven. Recent test results indicate a significant increase in the percentage of pupils attaining average levels. However, at this early point in the year,

the pupils' writing skills in Key Stage 1 are still very weak. This is mainly because of low entry levels, but is also sometimes the result of undemanding task setting and inadequate opportunities for the pupils to write their own sentences. The increased range of writing in Key Stage 2, together with the expectation that pupils will produce a satisfactory volume of the work, has a beneficial effect on the development of the pupils' writing skills. Consequently, a satisfactory proportion of the pupils in Year 6 is already beginning to organise their writing into paragraphs. They show some awareness of the different range of language appropriate, for example, for instructional or descriptive writing. They are using more accurately a range of punctuation including question and exclamation marks. Some sensitive use of language can be found in class anthologies of poetry. It provides secure evidence of good teaching that is effectively raising the pupils' awareness of the power of carefully selected words and use of simile and metaphor. There are still weaknesses in the older pupils' ability to write with a high degree of grammatical accuracy and in their spelling. They are not sufficiently able to use basic spelling patterns to write less familiar words. Nevertheless, considering the very low attainment of children when they enter the school, most make good progress in the development of their writing.

85. The pupils' standards of handwriting are broadly in line with the expected levels for their ages. The younger pupils regularly practise their letter shapes, but because the marking of practice exercises is sometimes perfunctory, their progress in developing correct patterns of letters, such as "d" and "g", is slower than it might be. The older pupils are joining their letters and gradually developing an individual style.
86. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall although it is not uniform across the key stage. In Key Stage 2, there is a good proportion of effective teaching and some that is very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen at Key Stage 2. The teachers are generally consistent in their recognition that the pupils' literacy skills must continue to improve. The more skilful teachers have a good understanding of how to teach language and are careful to match work to the pupils' various levels. The basic reading skills are securely taught in Key Stage 1, but at times the writing tasks lack both interest and purpose so that the young pupils are insufficiently motivated to write. At Key Stage 2, the writing tasks are clearly explained and the pupils are given well-structured guidance, which promotes their confidence as writers. This was evident, for instance, during a poetry writing session and again during a lesson where the pupils were required to record information about the Buddha.
87. Literature is used well to raise the older pupils' awareness of effective writing. This was well illustrated when a group of Year 6 pupils were discussing phrases which might provide clues to the kind of writing they would meet in their forthcoming reading of "A Journey to Jo'burg". The adults are committed to promoting the pupils' skills as independent writers, expecting them to plan, draft and edit their work. The skills of the pupils are improving, but they are not yet sufficiently independent in making collections of words for themselves or in the use of dictionaries to check spelling.
88. The pupils who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, often receive individual support to enable them to become increasingly independent writers. Good questioning skills are used to stimulate the pupils to think up words and sentences for themselves. Reading material is carefully selected to help the pupils with their own writing. When writing tasks are set as homework in Key Stage 2, this provides additional valuable opportunities for the pupils to work independently.
89. The quality of the teachers' marking is inconsistent. Where the best teaching takes place, the pupils are clearly shown where their strengths and weaknesses lie. In these cases, written comments relate to the precise targets recorded for each pupil in the front cover of their exercise books. All teachers and classroom assistants record observations about the progress of each pupil, but the current recording system does not contribute to an up-to-date profile of each pupil's developing language competence. There is, however, greater precision in tracking the developing literacy skills of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There is a keen awareness of the need to give every pupil the best opportunity to succeed. The school has already identified (in its Language Action Plan) the need to make and record assessments in a more precise and consistent way.
90. The school's approach to literacy is well managed. The subject manager monitors the teachers' planning and the work of the classes. She also ensures that pupils who need additional support receive

it. She has produced a clear Action Plan that has at its heart the school's continuing drive to raise standards in literacy.

MATHEMATICS

91. The results of the 1999 national tests for mathematics for seven-year-olds indicate a decline in standards since the last inspection. Three quarters (75 per cent) of the pupils reached the expected level 2 or above, but this attainment was very low compared to the national average (86 per cent) and no pupils achieved the higher levels. The results were also very low when compared to similar schools. These results fall in the lowest quartile. The most recent 2000 test results show an improvement with a higher proportion of pupils (84 per cent) achieving the expected levels. The performance of girls was better than that of the boys, but nevertheless the progress made by both was satisfactory. The initial assessment of children entering the school at the age of four years shows that attainment on entry is lower than when the school was last inspected and well below the local and national average. There is evidence that the school's standards have improved over the last four years overall by the end of Key Stage 1, but the pace of improvement is below the national trend.
92. By the age of eleven, the pupils' performance remains very low when compared to national averages and to similar school. The performance of boys exceeds that of girls, and the inspection evidence shows that recent improvement by the end of Key Stage 2 has been good. The trend over the last four years which shows an increase in the number of pupils reaching Level 5 reflects this improvement and while standards remain below average they are rising gradually. The pupils' achievements are now higher than the test results. This is because the quality of teaching has improved and the National Numeracy Strategy is supporting the raising of standards in Key Stage 2. The pupils make the most progress in the Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 2.
93. The quality of the teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection was unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is evident from the lessons seen and from the work completed since September that the pupils' progress is unsatisfactory for this age group. In Years 1 and 2, the pace of learning is too slow. The teachers do not manage the challenging behaviour of a minority of the pupils well and this results in other class members being distracted from their learning. The support member of staff is often not sufficiently well informed of the level and nature of help that she is expected to give to the pupils, and this means that she is not as effective as she could be. Too often the tasks that are planned are not attempted. For example, in Year 2 the teacher did not enable pupils to work with numbers to 100 even though this was planned. This was because the pupils either did not listen or remain in their places to enable discussion to take place. This resulted in a loss of time and the focus of the lesson diminished. Consequently, little learning took place. In a lesson of good quality led by a temporary teacher, the planning was of good quality, the tasks were well matched to the needs of pupils, and the class was managed well. While the elements of the numeracy strategy are appropriately planned, the quality of the teaching is not of a high enough standard to improve standards more rapidly for this age range. Further training is needed to improve the teachers' management of the pupils' behaviour.
94. In the Key Stage 2 classes, the pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics particularly in regard to the mental skills they learn through their daily lessons. The results of the national tests do not accurately reflect the true level of skills and understanding that is seen in the pupils' books. Their below average literacy skills hinder the successful completion of these tests. By the age of eleven, the pupils work confidently with larger numbers, for example when exploring methods of calculation by doubling and adding. High attainers are confident to factorise numbers in a variety of ways and calculate fractions and decimals to two decimal places. The pupils know about the connections between the four rules of number. Standards of calculating using paper and pencil are improving as pupils develop greater confidence and knowledge of patterns of numbers and methods of calculation. They are developing quick recall of number facts and independently apply number facts to problems using the four rules of number. They have a good understanding of types of angles and know that the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180 degrees.

95. The teachers in these classes plan the work thoroughly, using the national framework, and lessons are structured well. They keep up a brisk pace throughout the lessons, developing mental skills through whole-class teaching before setting work at an appropriate level for the various groups of pupils. The teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve are high, and the higher attaining pupils are well challenged. The tasks are also well matched to pupils' levels of understanding and the needs of those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are met well. The teachers use specific vocabulary effectively, for example they restructure questions to ensure that the pupils fully understand the new learning which is introduced. This was evident in Year 6 when the teacher talked about the formula for calculating the perimeter and area of rectangles. However, the use of spreadsheets was not made to help the pupils draw their own conclusions about the relationships between perimeters and areas. By the end of the lesson the pupils used terms such as 'square centimetres' and accurately multiplied length by breadth to solve problems. Their work was presented neatly and pupils were proud of their efforts. The quality of marking was very good and enabled the pupils to clearly understand what they needed to do next to improve.
96. The teachers set realistic targets to support learning, provide challenge and enable the pupils to recognise the good progress they are making. Praise is used effectively and pupils feel well supported by staff. The teachers prioritise the need to raise the pupils' self esteem to accelerate rates of progress. This is a strength of the teaching and makes a significant contribution to the positive attitudes observed in lessons. The teachers' knowledge of mathematics and the requirements of the numeracy strategy are very good. This is why standards are improving and the capacity for further improvement for this age range is good.
97. The pupils have opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects. For example, in a games lesson pupils scored accurately the number of runs in a quick cricket game and in Year 3 the pupils used measures accurately in design and technology to create three-dimensional packages. The pupils' knowledge and skills in handling data are well linked to information and communication technology. They interpret information on graphs and make predictions about the likely outcomes of their investigations. The teachers manage their classes well, using resources effectively to engage all pupils and keep them involved in the lesson. As a result, the pupils work hard and concentrate on what they are doing. Their behaviour is good and they work together well in pairs and groups. They enjoy mathematics and this generates a good pace in their learning. The teachers regularly assess the pupils' learning and monitor their progress. This information is used to set realistic and challenging targets for the pupils and supports subsequent lesson planning. The subject co-ordinator monitors the teaching and learning and this has a positive impact on standards in Key Stage 2.
98. The pupils have few opportunities to use computers to support their mathematics learning, and this is an area for development. The school does not use information technology to support learning in mathematics sufficiently.
99. Mathematics has been managed well during a time of national development. The monitoring of the teaching by the co-ordinator has been very useful in helping the teachers to improve their teaching and accurately identifying the strengths and weaknesses observed during the inspection.
100. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection within Key Stage 2, but progress has been slow in Key Stage 1 and standards of teaching and learning for this age group are unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

101. The pupils' standards in science at the end of both key stages are below the national averages for their ages. This is confirmed by the inspection evidence for all year groups, by the teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the results of the national assessment tests in 1999 and 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2.
102. The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 for the past five years show that overall the school's performance has improved with an increase in the number of the pupils reaching Level 5 and

fewer attaining the lower Levels 2 and 3. In the national tests for 2000 the pupils' standards are now higher than at any time since 1996 and the proportion of the pupils reaching the expected level 4 is close to the national average. The progress that each pupil has made since they entered the school in the reception year is good. At the end of Key Stage 1, the results of the teachers' assessments in 1999 and 2000 show that the pupils' standards are below the national average when compared with the national figures for 1999.

103. At both key stages, the standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. The rate of improvement is faster than that seen nationally and progress is good by the end of Key Stage 2.
104. The work seen in Year 1 and 2 during the inspection shows that most pupils record mainly by making drawings with only a very small number writing labels and simple sentences. This is unsatisfactory and reflects the low expectations of the teachers to encourage the pupils to write about their findings. It inhibits their quality of work and restricts not only their development in investigative science but also their writing development in other subjects. Since the beginning of this autumn term, the pupils in Year 2 have explored creatures that live around the school grounds. The teacher has arranged walks for the pupils in the neighbouring woodlands and around the school. They have carried out investigations about 'minibeasts' and discovered their different habitats. They have used diagrams and tables, which the teacher has prepared effectively, and this gives them good guidance in the development of their future recording methods. It is evident that they have a reasonable understanding and knowledge of the insects and creatures that frequent the school grounds and their progress is satisfactory. Their writing skills need to be practised more often through the science lessons as this inhibits their recording of investigations they carry out and progress is unsatisfactory.
105. By the time the pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, they have covered all aspects of the curriculum for science and have revisited themes several times. This ensures that all pupils steadily build upon their previous knowledge, skills and understanding. From the work inspected in Year 6, it is evident that these pupils have a satisfactory understanding of light. They were seen exploring the properties of light in a darkened room. The teacher arranged very good investigative work and by the end of the lesson all pupils had a very secure knowledge and understanding that objects can only be seen if they either give out light or reflect it from another source. They have experimented with opaque and translucent materials and understand that shadows are formed because light is blocked by opaque materials, such as the tree in the grounds.
106. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good and often very good. At Key Stage 1, it is generally satisfactory although one lesson observed during the inspection was poor because of weak classroom management techniques and low expectations.
107. When the quality of teaching is either good or very good, the teachers have very high expectations and all the pupils understand these. The plans identify the skill knowledge and understanding they intend their pupils to acquire. In most classes, the objectives for the lesson are written on the board. This serves to remind the pupils of what they are doing and helps the teachers to make assessments of what the pupils have achieved by the end of the lesson. The teachers use good questioning techniques to encourage the pupils to make suggestions and to offer answers. In Year 3, the pupils remembered the previous experiments and what they were trying to find out. They were excited when the results of the investigations into the effects of vinegar on eggshells, were disclosed. The open-ended questions help the pupils to think more deeply about their answers. Well-planned experiments are carried out in the Key Stage 2 classes and the teachers are gradually involving the pupils in more investigative work with a beneficial impact upon the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding. This needs to be extended more so that they have opportunities to devise their own experiments and to records the results of their work in their own way. When the quality of teaching is either good or better, the pupils develop very positive attitudes. Most, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. All pupils in Key Stage 2 record their findings neatly and carefully and some times use a computer to record their facts. The science plays a growing part in the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. There is a regular feedback from the teachers in

the lessons where the teaching is the strongest. This raises standards and highlights the need for the pupils to sustain concentration and to behave in a responsible manner to which they respond very well.

108. When the teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 1, the main reasons are that the teaching objectives are not precise enough. The activities do not support the planned learning sufficiently well to ensure that all the pupils make progress. Even the planned objectives were not carried out in one lesson that was observed, and the teaching in this lesson was weak. The pupils were confused, and many did not sustain concentration, chattering aimlessly and causing disruptions that went unheeded. Consequently, the class management was poor. This poor quality of teaching brings about a shallow approach to the learning, the pupils make no progress and the quality of their work deteriorates.
109. The co-ordinator has established effective monitoring of the teachers' plans. She has supported the teaching of science throughout the school and regularly helps with investigative work when smaller groups need to be formed within a class. She gives feedback to the teachers. She has also involved the advisers from the Local Education Authority to help with this process so that in-service training can follow the identification of both strengths and areas for development. This has been successful in most classes and the investigative science has been improved. Nevertheless, there are still developments to be made so that pupils can devise their own experiments and record their findings in their own way.
110. Although specific tasks are set at the end of topics, there is no whole school procedure to record what the pupils can do following the study of a particular science theme. The school needs to develop a simple system to record the pupils' achievements to provide the teachers with reliable information upon which the progress of each pupil can be judged over time and what they need to teach next can be planned appropriately.
111. The resources are sufficient with the exception of the use of information technology, as there are insufficient programs that can be used to help the pupils calculate and record the results of experiments.

ART and DESIGN

112. The pupils' standards are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above those expected for the age group. The standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained while those at Key Stage 2 have improved since the previous inspection when they were described as satisfactory at both key stages. During the inspection, it was possible to see only a limited number of lessons. Additional evidence was obtained by examining a range of the pupils' previous artwork, including some on display, by talking to the pupils and scrutinising the teachers' planning.
113. The pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, with the pupils completing an objective that allows for independent imaginative development. The pupils are urged to plan their work and are encouraged to investigate a range of media and processes. For example, a group of pupils in Year 2 experimented with pastels, creating new effects by rubbing. They successfully applied this technique in their work to produce self-portraits after looking carefully at their faces in mirrors. Most pupils found establishing realistic proportions of facial features very difficult, and many of their drawings were small which suggested a lack of confidence with the task. In Key Stage 2, the pupils made good progress. The emphasis on teaching observational skills linked to shape, colour and texture enabled them to make good progress. Their sketches were well proportioned, their pencil work was strong and they showed confidence and ability in their interpretation of the objects they saw. The quality of the teaching in this lesson was excellent and consequently the pupils' work was of a very high standard.
114. The pupils enjoy their art lessons. They are enthusiastic, keen to respond to challenges and recognise the importance of evaluation to improve their work further. The teachers encourage self-evaluation and through well structured questioning encourage the pupils to examine techniques which have worked well and to discuss those which have been less successful. There is, therefore, a high level of respect shown for other people's work, which celebrates strengths and sensitively criticises areas that could be improved. The pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and strive to meet the high expectations of them.

115. The quality of teaching was good overall, with an excellent example in Year 4. In this instance, the lesson was planned to a very high standard. The quality of visual stimulus was carefully considered with the teacher using a self-made video which illustrated precisely the colour, shape and texture of plants in the natural world. This was matched by the teacher's sensitive use of language which helped the pupils to recognise subtle differences in colour. This work was achieved with confidence and the translation of their lively descriptions into sketches showed maturity beyond their ages. Sketchbooks are used to encourage the pupils to try out techniques, similar to the drafting processes they use in their writing. They are neatly presented and the pupils are proud to discuss the changes they have made to their sketches. They learn from their mistakes and they have a good awareness of the progress they have made over time. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress because the subject is well taught. Art at Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school.
116. A wide range of attractive and good quality displays illustrate the many opportunities that the pupils have to develop their creativity. The classroom work is extended in a very popular art club, which meets weekly and exposes pupils to fresh challenges using a wide range of stimuli. The co-ordinator provides very good support to staff. Her high level of subject knowledge and personal expertise as an artist provide a rich source of inspiration for both staff and pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Only two lessons were observed in design and technology and the following judgements about standards are based also on discussions with the teachers and pupils, scrutiny of planning and the pupils' previously completed work. All these sources indicate that standards are in line with those expected nationally of seven and eleven year olds and are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. All of the pupils throughout the school make sound progress, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
118. By the time they are seven, the systematic development of skills is clearly seen in the pupils' increased confidence to design and make, and in the improvement in their use of materials and tools. In the very small number of lessons observed, the teachers used a range of imaginative strategies to motivate pupils. They linked the projects to pupils' own experiences, which provided a good understanding of the purpose of the design process in daily life. Consequently, the pupils enjoy design and technology. The pupils in Year 2 had planned and made puppets. In their planning, they sketched their designs, labelled them and decided which materials to use. The task became more demanding as the pupils transferred their making skills to felt, glue and sewing. All of the pupils made good progress in developing their cutting and shaping skills.
119. As the pupils progress through the school, they have opportunities to work with a wider range of materials. Investigations by Year 4 pupils to assess the suitability of materials to make money containers demanded a range of cutting and joining skills. These included both hand-sewing and the use of sewing machines. The pupils in Year 6 designed and made slippers. They drew plans, chose fabrics and identified materials to make effective soles. Although they found this difficult, they persevered and were pleased with the outcomes. Good links are made to information and communication technology as they use word processing to record accounts of their work and to describe the difficulty of joining the soles to the upper part of the slippers.
120. The pupils in Year 3 designed packaging for specific purposes. For instance, the teacher reviewed the previous lesson when nets were provided to make three-dimensional shapes. This work prepared the pupils to devise their own containers. Through sensitive discussion and good use of the pupils' ideas the teacher gave everyone confidence to make satisfactory designs. The work linked mathematics and technology well. The pace of the lesson was variable, but increased as the teacher supported pupils in overcoming difficulties. Focussed questioning by the teacher enabled the pupils to share in evaluating their work and to make adjustments to their designs to improve their products.
121. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the standards of teaching and learning across the school. A photographic record of previous design projects provides a useful tool for

monitoring the success of curriculum implementation, but the systems for assessing the quality of the pupils' work are weak.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

122. The teachers' planning now ensures that, overall the pupils develop an appropriate understanding of places, of events in history and changes over time. This has ensured that the standards of work have improved since the previous inspection when attainment was below expectations. The pupils' progress by the end of both key stages is now satisfactory.
123. The pupils in Key Stage 1 can identify and comment upon the use of some features in their local area. They can say where they live in relation to the school and describe their journey to school. They use pictorial sources to develop their sense of the past. For example, they referred to illustrations of Florence Nightingale at the hospital in Scutari to speculate about hospital care at that time and to compare it with what they know about hospitals now. The planning of topics in both subjects at Key Stage 1 is appropriate, but at times the activities selected do not effectively support the intended learning. In one lesson, the aim was for pupils to understand the concept of an address. After a satisfactory discussion, the ensuing task was too difficult and the pupils' written recording was not sufficiently well supported for the majority to succeed.
124. By the age of eleven, the pupils attain standards in history that are above the expected levels and are good overall. Here, the pupils' knowledge of aspects of the past deepens. It is enriched by visits, such as that to Hughenden Manor that brought to life aspects of Victorian domestic life. They appreciate that historical evidence can be gathered from many sources. During studies of the Romans in Britain and of ancient Greece, the pupils refer confidently to archaeological evidence obtained from excavating buildings and the discovery of domestic and military artefacts. The planned geography curriculum is appropriate in its coverage and has the potential for developing the pupils' understanding of the importance of location and raising their awareness of environmental issues. No geography lessons were scheduled for Key Stage 2 during the inspection, so it is not possible to judge the standards that the pupils reach by the end of the key stage.
125. The teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, inspires an enjoyment of history. The approaches are lively and varied, and good use is made of artefacts, video recordings and books. The teachers probe skilfully to encourage the pupils to frame their own questions. A very good example of this was seen during a lesson in Year 6 on Britain since the 1930's. The teachers are alert to opportunities for linking current and earlier learning. The pupils in Year 4 are encouraged to recall the history learned in Year 3 in order to develop their understanding further. They successfully used some of the questions they posed about the effect of the ancient Greeks on neighbouring states to understand the legacy of the Roman invaders in Britain. A weakness in the teaching of history and geography is the inadequate allocation of time for the pupils to record their work in continuous prose. Other forms of recording such as note-taking, labelling diagrams and maps, filling in charts are used appropriately. Where the pupils have the opportunity to write freely, for example after the visit to Hughenden, vivid accounts provide evidence of their enjoyment of the work and their recall of detail.
126. Careful thought has been given to using recently produced national guidelines to plan work. The school recognises the need to ensure that the selected units of work from each subject ensure that the development of historical and geographical skills take careful account of previous learning at each stage.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

127. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standards of the pupils' work in the use of word processing and the handling of information with the use of spread sheets is broadly in line with the expected levels for their age. As yet the school does not have adequate equipment, such as sensors and switches, to enable the pupils to develop similar skills in controlling and monitoring. The older pupils have been involved in communication with another school in South Africa. At present, however the Internet connection is difficult for pupils to use as it is placed in the library and this entails the whole class working in this area so that a few can be supervised using the facilities. So the pupils have saved their letters on disc and

the teacher has sent the emails. This is a sensible use of the technology considering the difficulties that the teachers face. The use of spreadsheets in Years 5 and 6 is better than usually seen in primary classes and above the expected levels for the pupils' ages. For example, they are able to plot graphs from data inputs and can prepare formula to add and calculate average scores.

128. Although they are competent in the use of spreadsheets the pupils do not use this data handling to pose questions and to model situations. For example, they do not record data that could be used to find out the relationships between perimeters and areas or between the circumference and radius of circles. Nevertheless most pupils are making good progress by the time they leave the school.
129. The quality of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and below the expected standards for their age. **(This is a key issue for action)**. They have completed insufficient work for this time of the year, and the teachers do not use information and communications technology to support the teaching of other subjects. The pupils have no opportunities to experiment with controlled toys such as the Roamer, and are restricted in the use of the computers because of the lack of confidence and competence of some of the teachers.
130. There were instances observed during the inspection when the younger pupils in the Foundation Stage used the mouse effectively to drag and drop clothes onto 'Teddy' and these children are developing good skills. This level of involvement does not continue throughout Key Stage 1 and consequently by the time the pupils reach Year 3 their skills have dropped below those expected for this age group.
131. The subject manager is aware of the shortcomings of the equipment used throughout the school and has prepared with the headteacher and the governing body a bid for additional computers. This has been successful and the school awaits the improvements to the equipment. The teachers are to embark upon training to improve the use of computers to support the teaching in other subjects. The capacity for improvement is good and the subject manager is already planning training sessions so that the teachers can become more confident in the use of new programs and to raise quality of teaching and the levels of the pupils' skills throughout the school.

MUSIC

132. During the inspection, one class lesson and one singing session for the whole of Key Stage 1 were seen. The pupils were also heard singing during assembly. Similarly, only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2, as the specialist teacher, who takes the majority of the classes, was not timetabled during the inspection. The evidence for judging attainment in music is, therefore, very slender.
133. The quality of the pupils' work, judged from the limited amount seen, is broadly in line with expected levels and similar to those reached at the time of the last inspection. The pupils sing with enthusiasm and their sense of pitch is adequate. They are developing a satisfactory ability to sing together and to perform to an audience. They generally listen well to each other's performance. In discussion, the pupils expressed an enjoyment of using tuned and non-tuned percussion instruments, of which the school has an adequate range and quantity. Older pupils occasionally engage in composition work, but expressed regret that time for this aspect of the work is limited. During assemblies, the pupils show interest in the music played on entry and learn to appreciate different kinds of music from different times and cultures because the teachers draw their attention to features of the music.
134. The quality of the teaching and the pupils' progress were satisfactory in the music sessions seen. The pupils were encouraged to participate fully and were able to improve their performance as a result of the teachers' comments. In the classes where the class teachers teach the music, two published schemes are used and the teachers have to rely heavily on the accompanying tapes. Some use is made of recently published national guidelines, but there is no comprehensive scheme of work which either fits the time allocated to music or ensures that all aspects are taught in a balanced way. Consequently, there is no assurance that musical skills are developed consistently at each stage. There is an after school choir, but other opportunities for the pupils to engage in enriching musical events outside school have diminished. However, the Year 3 pupils are currently learning to play the descant recorder.

135. There is a clear need for a more structured approach to the teaching of music. The teachers need clear guidance so that the pupils' musical skills can be systematically developed whether they are taught by specialist or non-specialist teachers. The pupils' musical experiences are currently not broad enough for this subject to reach its potential in contributing to their wider education. The assessments of each pupil's progress are currently informal.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and it is not possible to make a judgement about the pupils' standards. However the standards are above those usually expected of eleven-year-old pupils. This shows an improvement in the achievements of pupils in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection when they were described as in line with expected standards at the end of both key stages.
137. The pupils recognise the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy a full range of activities and build on the skills they have developed while they were in Key Stage 1. In Year 4, the pupils created a sequence of movements in response to the teacher's rhythmic beating of a tambourine. The work became increasingly challenging when the pupils, working in pairs, maintained contact with each other. This work was then extended when the pupils were working on apparatus. The teacher monitored their activities closely and used some pupils' good performances effectively as an aid to teaching. The pupils adapted the good practice they saw to improve their own performances and made good gains in progress. A very pleasing aspect of this lesson was the way in which the pupils set out and cleared away the apparatus. They worked quickly and safely and made good gains in their personal development.
138. Swimming instruction is provided at a local swimming pool, where qualified swimming instructors enable the pupils to increase their confidence in water and to improve their style using a range of strokes. By the time the pupils leave the school, most succeed in swimming the required distance and completing the expected standards well. Some exceed these standards significantly.
139. During the period of the inspection, the weather did not allow for some planned outdoor games activities. In Year 6, the teacher very quickly adapted plans, using the hall space to meet the objectives of the lesson. The teacher's enthusiasm, energy and encouragement had a very good effect on pupils' commitment to their tasks. They practised ball retrieving and throwing skills, which the teacher combined to challenge the pupils in an energetic relay race. The activities of the lesson were purposeful and were subsequently applied in a game of Quick Cricket when pupils used the skills that they had practised. Good links were made with numeracy with pupils keeping the scores of the teams.
140. The pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to the subject. They very quickly get changed for activities, sustain concentration and remain active throughout their lessons. Their behaviour is very good. They are conscious of the importance of safety during their lessons and make good, unselfish use of space, ensuring that they do not encroach on to another class member's working area. They are equally diligent working on their own, in pairs or as a team. The pupils value creative criticism of their performances and use this to improve the quality of their work and as a guide to self-assessment.
141. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers plan their work carefully, with clear learning objectives which they make clear to their pupils at the beginning of lessons. The teachers have good subject knowledge, keep instruction time to the minimum and to ensure that there is ample time for pupils to be active.
142. The facilities for games are good. The hard play areas are of good quality and the school benefits from a large field, which is currently used for football. The pupils have the opportunity to attend after school clubs where they are given further coaching to improve their skills. The school also benefits from very good coaching by members of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club.
143. The school has decided to adopt the latest government curriculum guidelines for the subject. This is making a positive impact on the quality of the provision, and enhancing the pupils' personal performances

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. It was possible to observe lessons only in Key Stage 2. The judgements are, therefore, based on a scrutiny of the teachers' planning, discussions with staff and children and written work recorded in Key Stage 2 during the current term.
145. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards of attainment in Key Stage 1, but from the evidence of the teachers' planning it is evident that the pupils learn about important events such as Christmas and harvest in the Christian calendar and also of celebrations such as Diwali and Eid ul Fitr. The younger pupils have good opportunities to recognise features of the lifestyles and beliefs of people of different cultures and can begin to develop recognition that things that are unfamiliar still merit respect. These features are strongly developed during Key Stage 2 where the pupils' knowledge, for example, of the significance of holy books, such as the Bible and the Qu'ran, is more detailed. The quality of the pupils' work is above the expected standards in the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils in Year 4, for example, can confidently explain how holy books have to be treated in a special way. Their knowledge and understanding are enriched by the contributions of other pupils from a range of different faiths. The pupils in Year 6 have reflected in some depth on the role of leaders, such as Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Dr Martin Luther King. They can make meaningful comparisons between the role of these people and that of leaders such as Moses and Mohammed.
146. The pupils learn well when the teachers employ a range of imaginative approaches in their teaching. Interesting tasks have a positive influence on the pupils' behaviour. In a Year 5 class, the early, privileged life of the Buddha was vividly portrayed by some very imaginative, dramatic role-play of the advantages he enjoyed as a young prince. The pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, responded with rapt attention. When questioned at the end of the session, they were able to recall the details well. Similarly, during a lesson on Dr Martin Luther King, the attention of pupils in Year 6 was immediately engaged when the lesson opened with a tape of the song "We shall overcome". During the same lesson, the pupils, in pairs and groups, were able to respond to parts of the story read by the teacher because they were given carefully selected key words to stimulate their thinking. This ensured that every pupil was able to participate in the final review of the learning. The teachers plan their work with care and are sensitive to the opportunities for linking the learning which takes place in religious education lessons to that in lessons in Personal and Health Education. This strategy makes an important contribution to the pupils' personal development. They develop a respect for the place of faith in the lives of different people and also recognise the enrichment that arises from learning about different faiths represented in their local community.
147. The subject is well led. The subject manager ensures that the teachers' planning is compatible with the locally agreed syllabus and that resources are available to ensure lively teaching. There is recognition that, particularly at Key Stage 2, the written recording needs to be of good quality and not restricted to more trivial tasks normally associated with colouring worksheets.
148. The teaching and the pupils' attainment have improved since the last inspection. Their learning in religious education is extended well during school worship and through visits to local places of worship.