

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **WILLOW TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northolt

Middlesex

LEA area: Ealing

Unique reference number: 101902

Headteacher: Mrs D Harvey

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods  
21079

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 December 2000

Inspection number: 225260

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Priors Farm Lane Northolt Middlesex
Postcode:	UB5 5DY
Telephone number:	0208 845 4181
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Mallam
Date of previous inspection:	13 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L Woods 21079	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs C Webb 9614	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing accommodation and learning resources
Mrs P Hoey 1395	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography	
Mrs E Pacey 25925	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Assessment
Mr K Hobday 21372	Team inspector	English Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
Mr R Battey 2866	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	How high are standards? Efficiency
Mrs S Metcalfe 20003	Team inspector	Art and design History Religious education Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Willow Tree Primary School is situated in Northolt, in the west London Borough of Ealing. It is a very large primary school, formed from the amalgamation of three former schools, housed in an impressive new building. There are currently 781 boys and girls on roll between the ages of 3 and 11, including 89 children who attend the nursery part-time. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, with 44 per cent of pupils from ethnic minority groups and 12 per cent of pupils being refugees. Their attainment on entry is below average overall. Thirty-five per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is very high compared to the national picture, with 12 per cent of pupils at an early stage of language acquisition. Thirty-one per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly average. About half of these pupils are at Stage 3 and above of the Code of Practice for the identification of such pupils, and eight have statements of special educational need<sup>1</sup>. The very small number of children from traveller families have been fully and successfully integrated into the school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school. Whilst standards in English and mathematics are below average by the end of both key stages, they are improving steadily, and pupils' reading skills have significantly improved since the last inspection. Good teaching overall is a significant factor in supporting these improving standards and in creating the good attitudes pupils have towards their work. Relationships throughout the school are very good, and pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in all the activities provided. Financial control and management are sound and the headteacher provides dynamic leadership for the school. As a result, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils have good attitudes to school and work hard. They behave well and take responsibilities seriously.
- Relationships throughout are very good and an atmosphere of mutual trust pervades the school.
- Teaching is good and has a significant impact on improving standards and pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- Provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- As a result of the impressive provision for information and communication technology, and teachers' expertise in its use, pupils' understanding of its value in supporting their learning is equally impressive.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English and mathematics, which remain below the national average at the end of both key stages, could be improved.
- Provision for the youngest children and the balance of the curriculum for other pupils needs addressing in light of changes in national requirements. The physical education programme does not meet requirements in relation to swimming. Resources in some curriculum areas need improving.
- The school needs to consolidate and improve the use it makes of its wealth of assessment information.
- Curriculum managers need to play a more active role in monitoring the quality of provision in their subjects.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made sound progress in addressing the issues raised by the previous inspection in January 1997. Standards in English and mathematics are rising steadily, although these remain below the national average by the end of both key stages. Standards in science have improved significantly and the school has made good progress in improving the standard of reading throughout the school. Monitoring of the curriculum in year groups is good; all parallel classes receive similar experiences through close liaison and co-operation between their teachers. Not all subject managers, however, have an equally clear view of the delivery of the curriculum throughout the school. Regular assessments of pupils' achievements take place and the school is aware that it needs to make greater use of these to monitor pupils' progress. Resources have improved in most curriculum areas and those available for information and communication technology are impressive. The school has a detailed and comprehensive school

<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

improvement plan that clearly identifies areas for development, and is in a satisfactory position to continue improving.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	D	D	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	E	C	C	C

  

Key	
very high	A *
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E *

The table shows that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 was below the national average in English, and in mathematics was well below the national average. In science, the school's results were close to the national picture. Compared with schools having a similar intake of pupils, attainment in English and science was average, although it was below average in mathematics. By comparison with similar schools, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Over the last three years, whilst levels of attainment have been below the national picture, the trend shows standards improving steadily, although the picture is more mixed in mathematics than in the other two tested areas. The school is pleased with its results, which broadly match its targets. Standards in individual years are affected significantly by a high level of pupil turnover, the number of refugee pupils who join the school and the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language in each year group.

Results from the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. By comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. Taking the last three years together, the trend at Key Stage 1 shows standards to be improving slowly, but to be consistently below the national average in all tested areas. As with the older pupils, variations in standards are explained by the high numbers of pupils, many of whom have special educational needs or learning English as an additional language, who join or leave the school.

The majority of children join the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup>, the majority of children exceed the Early Learning Goals<sup>3</sup> in personal, social and emotional development through good teaching in this area. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development children are on course to attain the goals. However, in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development they are unlikely to attain the expected goals. Inspection evidence shows that standards in writing and mathematics are also likely to be below average by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. In reading and science, however, standards are on course to be average. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations and those in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are satisfactory throughout the school.

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning.

<sup>3</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in their lessons, and keen to work hard and please their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well both in and out of the classrooms. They are polite, courteous and considerate of each other, their teachers and other adults.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils enjoy warm relationships with adults and with each other. They enjoy the many responsibilities they undertake and carry these out with serious concentration and responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although attendance is below the national average, it is improving steadily. Pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all arrive on or before time in the morning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	satisfactory	good	good

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

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to the steadily improving standards in pupils' achievement. Teaching was at least satisfactory in over 98 per cent of lessons seen. It was good or better in 54 per cent and very good in 8 per cent. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory, which accounted for less than two per cent of those observed, which represents a substantial improvement on the results at the last inspection.

At Key Stages 1 and 2, good and very good teaching is particularly noticeable in lessons in English, information and communication technology and science. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and provides a clear structure for lessons. Teachers are also using the National Numeracy Strategy to provide well-structured lessons in mathematics. In mathematics, there is a significant proportion of very good teaching, which features a high level of challenge. In other mathematics lessons, however, teachers have low expectations of both the speed and level of difficulty of pupils' work, allowing too much time for easy tasks so pupils make less progress than they might. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils skilfully and have very good relationships with them, and pupils respond well to the genuine praise they receive. Pupils want to please their teacher by working hard. Unacceptable behaviour is rare and there are few interruptions to the smooth flow of the lessons. These high expectations of pupils' behaviour, however, are not always matched fully by similar expectations about the work they complete, particularly relating to standards of presentation and handwriting.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage classes is satisfactory and often good. All staff clearly know and understand the needs of children in early years and of the children in their care. Staff are very successful at ensuring that children feel secure, valued and confident, and at enabling them to work with purpose and a sense of achievement. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. These pupils enjoy the support provided by experienced classroom assistants as they complete work that is usually well matched to their needs. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is also good. The experienced part-time teacher works hard to produce or adapt suitable resources for these pupils. However, in some cases class teachers expect too low a standard of work from pupils with English as an additional language or from those with special educational needs, particularly when these are not directly related to learning difficulties.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The curriculum covers all required subjects, although it does not meet the statutory requirements for physical education. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. However, the balance of time allocation between subjects is unsatisfactory and some receive very little emphasis in the curriculum. Curriculum planning does not ensure fully that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed progressively. Some elements of the curriculum for the new Foundation Stage are not covered fully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Provision is soundly led and pupils' individual education plans are improving. Teaching is good, particularly in ability sets, and pupils make steady progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Provision is well led and teaching by the specialist staff is very good. When this is not available, however, pupils' needs are not always met fully. Pupils make steady progress in their acquisition of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. It is very good for pupils' personal and social development, good for their moral and satisfactory for their spiritual. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, with good provision for pupils' understanding of life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Staff know the pupils well and procedures for ensuring their welfare and well-being are good. Assessment procedures are established, but the information from assessment is not yet collated in an accessible or useful format.

Parents are supportive of the school's aims. The quality of information they receive is satisfactory, but somewhat infrequent. Some parents, particularly those of older pupils, feel distanced from their children's activities in school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and is well supported by governors and senior staff in ensuring the smooth running of the school. Departmental managers and year group leaders have a valuable role in ensuring pupils have similar experiences in parallel classes, but subject managers do not have sufficient input into monitoring work in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors take a keen interest in the work of the school, visit regularly and bring a good degree of expertise to their roles, which they take seriously. Their committees keep an appropriate overview of the different aspects of school life.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Governors discuss and challenge results and trends, and the targets in the school improvement plan. However, they have limited involvement in setting these targets and in establishing the cost-effectiveness of decisions made. The headteacher regularly monitors progress on targets for improvement, but some important areas are behind schedule.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Specific grants are used appropriately, and 'best value' principles applied, ensuring that the school receives high quality goods and services.

The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum. The accommodation and the resources for information and communication technology are impressive, but resources in some other areas of the curriculum are unsatisfactory.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Nineteen parents attended the meeting with inspectors and 128 returned the questionnaire.

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• They behave well and develop mature attitudes.</li> <li>• Teaching is good, and staff have high expectations.</li> <li>• The school is well led and approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minority of parents do not feel the school works closely with them or that they are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Parents would like to see more activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors fully support parents' positive views of the school. Inspection evidence shows that whilst information for parents is satisfactory in quality, it could be more frequent. Inspectors also support the view that the range of activities outside lessons could be improved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. At the last inspection, standards for children under five were judged to be average in relation to national expectations in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Children's personal and social development was judged to be good. Current inspection findings show the majority of children begin the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out by the nursery staff. By the time they are five years old, the majority of children exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development. This is through good teaching in this area. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development children are likely to attain the goals. However, in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development they are unlikely to attain the goals. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported and make satisfactory progress.
2. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils by the age of seven were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics for the proportion achieving the expected Level 2 or above. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well below the national average for reading, below the national average for writing, and very low in comparison with the national average for mathematics. By comparison with similar schools, the proportion achieving Level 2 and above, was below the national average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. In the 2000 teacher assessments for science, the proportion achieving expected Level 2 or above was well below both the national average and standards in similar schools.
3. Taking the last three years, 1998 to 2000, together, the trend in Key Stage 1 shows standards to be below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Variations in standards in the school are explained by the high numbers of pupils, many of whom have special educational needs or are learning English as an additional language, who join or leave the school in all years. Inspection findings are that for the current group of pupils in Year 2 standards are average in reading and science but below average in writing and mathematics. Improvement over 2000 results is linked to good teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers, not having reliable assessments of pupils' competence in science, greatly underestimated the pupils' attainment.
4. At Key Stage 1, standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations and those in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are satisfactory and meet expectations for pupils of this age. Despite their low standards, pupils have made satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In all other subjects, their progress is also satisfactory and is comparable with their acquired standards.
5. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils by the age of 11 were below the national average in English and science for the proportion achieving the expected Level 4 and above. In mathematics, the results were well below the national average. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was close to the national average in English and science, but below the national average in mathematics. By comparison with similar schools, pupils' results were average in English and science, but below average in

mathematics for the proportion achieving Level 4 or above. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the trend shows standards at Key Stage 2 to be below the national average in English, mathematics and science, but improving steadily. As at Key Stage 1, standards in individual years are affected significantly by high pupil turnover, the number of refugee pupils joining the school and the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language in each year group.

6. Inspection findings are that for the current Year 6 pupils, standards are likely to be below average in English and mathematics, but average in science. Whilst English standards continue to be below average, they are improving, and the school has improved standards from well below average to below average in mathematics and has improved attainment in science from below to now average levels. These improvements are linked to good teaching, a successful implementation of national strategies and the grouping of pupils into sets, based on their prior attainment, with booster classes for science. In information and communication technology, standards meet national expectations and in religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education meet expectations for pupils of this age.
7. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in all subjects. Pupils make good progress in reading, but progress in other core literacy skills is hindered by too few opportunities for pupils to use the school library for research and independent study. Additionally, insufficient attention is given to the development of handwriting. For example, many older pupils at Key Stage 2 are still using print and not a cursive style of writing. Insufficient opportunity is given for pupils to apply their written skills across the curriculum. There is too much acceptance of pupils using words or pictures, rather than them being given opportunities to write sentences for their descriptions of their findings, in such lessons as science, geography, history and religious education. Pupils make sound progress in developing their mental arithmetic skills through regular practise at the beginning of mathematics lessons. The application of mathematics in other curriculum areas, and pupils' problem solving skills, however, are less well developed.
8. The progress that pupils make across the school is, however, sometimes patchy. Due to planning the taught curriculum across years, rather than from year to year, insufficient attention is given in some subjects to developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in a progressive manner as they move up the school from year to year. This uneven progress is seen in art and design and geography in particular. Additionally, the school does not always set suitably challenging targets informed by reliable assessments to raise standards further. There are many occasions when the projections teachers make of the future levels of attainment are too low.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall. The most progress is made in literacy and numeracy lessons, where they are taught in a smaller group and a classroom assistant is often available to give them additional help. As there is less help in other lessons where literacy skills are also required, such as history or religious education, those with limited reading and writing skills make less progress than they might. The targets specified for many pupils in their individual education plans are insufficiently precise. Consequently, teachers and support staff sometimes provide only general assistance. Pupils are unable to work towards successive, clearly defined targets, evaluating their own success as they proceed.
10. Pupils learning English as an additional language make steady progress overall. Where class and specialist teachers are able to plan together, then provision for these pupils is well matched to their specific needs and they make good progress. However, when

teachers do not have the opportunity to plan together, then the work is not always well matched to the needs of pupils and they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. These pupils, however, do not always have full equality of opportunity. When they are supported by the teacher employed under specific funding or the bilingual support worker, then they make good progress overall. Unfortunately, for pupils who do not receive such support, or when the supporting adults are not present, there is a tendency to put these pupils with groups supported for special educational needs, despite their needs being in relation to their English fluency, not their overall abilities. This can leave them unchallenged by the range of activities planned for them and considerable underachievement occurring. Although many teachers plan extension activities for pupils who finish work early, talented and gifted pupils are not clearly identified and a curriculum drawn up that supports their particular needs.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. The school has successfully maintained pupils' good attitudes to learning, as reported in 1997. Parents are very satisfied with the values the school promotes. Behaviour remains good overall. As a result of high expectations and the many opportunities offered to pupils to take responsibility, their personal development is very good. Children and pupils like coming to school and most arrive on time. Attendance has improved although, at 92.5 per cent, it is still below the national average.
12. Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and soon know what is expected of them. They quickly learn the difference between right and wrong, and develop good social behaviour. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children play co-operatively together. Those using the modelling materials in the corridor outside the classroom, for example, happily admired each other's attempts at birthday cakes. When they transfer into the reception classes from the nursery they are already familiar with their environment and proud to be staying all day at their school.
13. Children and pupils are eager to learn and enthusiastic about school, and quickly develop a good work ethic. They are very polite, holding doors open, and are keen to talk to visitors about various aspects of school life. They are proud of their new environment and look after it well. Pupils are confident that their views are considered seriously and their contributions valued, and they have well-developed self-esteem and confidence. This is boosted through assemblies by the headteacher when she tells them they are the 'bee's knees' and the 'cat's pyjamas' if they have done something particularly well, which they greatly appreciate. The bullying production, seen by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, resulted in 'oohs' and disapproving murmurs when the bullies started pushing and shoving, and especially when glue was put on a biscuit then thrust into the victim's hands. Children and pupils are caring of each other. They understand that what they do or say may affect others and their responsible attitudes contribute well to the school's positive ethos.
14. All classes have pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds, many speaking English as an additional language, and they are represented in all the ability groups within a class. Teachers are careful to present positive images in their use of resources and are careful with their language choices to ensure understanding, and present clear language role models to support all pupils. Pupils mainly work in ability groups regardless of gender, but in subjects that involve physical contact, teachers are sensitive to religious and cultural needs. For instance, in a mathematics lesson requiring pupils to measure parts of a partner's body such as arm length, head size etc, the teacher ensured that Muslim girls worked with a female partner, but without making a fuss and drawing attention to the situation.

15. Behaviour is good overall and pupils want to please their teachers and achieve well. Relationships are very good, with children, pupils and staff enjoying a feeling of mutual trust. Pupils in Year 1, for example, spent an enjoyable 20 minutes unscrambling codes and creating their own during a mathematics lesson. They helped each other, automatically, without thinking. The concentration shown when walking along an upturned bench and doing star jumps in a reception physical development lesson was intense. In a Year 3 music session, the announcement of the song 'Daddy's taking us to the Zoo tomorrow' was greeted with cries of 'oh yes'. This was then sung with great gusto. Outside in the playground pupils enjoy 'letting off steam' and inevitably minor incidents occur through some boisterous behaviour, but none observed was malicious. Indeed if one of their number is hurt there are always two or three volunteers waiting to accompany them to the welfare room.
16. Although the school has a significant number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, some of whom have statements relating to this area, it was not easy to identify them during the inspection. This is a measure of the good progress these pupils are making in controlling their own behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They behave well in the classroom and try hard to complete the tasks they are given. When teaching is less inspiring, however, a few adopt passive attitudes and fail to concentrate on their work.
17. Pupils' personal development is very good. All are expected to act responsibly and even the youngest children take their register duties very seriously. Year 6 pupils offer their help to teachers at the lower end of the school during their break-times and act as effective dinner monitors. They help with parents' consultation meetings, escorting parents and dealing with their cards. Before the 'table top' event, where Key Stage 2 pupils 'bought' a table for £3 and were selling their unwanted toys, the headteacher and deputy headteacher had given them advice about merchandising and realistic pricing; they were good shopkeepers, careful with change and did not push their wares. School journeys, made by Year 4 to a Devon farm and by Years 5 and 6 to a French camping site, give pupils good experience of the world outside Willow Tree. Participation in the junior citizenship day alerts Year 6 pupils to some of the difficulties and dangers existing locally and beyond. Pupils are ready and well prepared for the next stage in their education. Before they leave they enjoy their formal leavers' dinner when staff wait on them.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. The overall standard of teaching is good and is a strength of the school, making a significant contribution to the steadily improving standards in pupils' achievement. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in 54 per cent of lessons and very good in 8 per cent. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory, which accounted for less than 2 per cent of those observed. This is a substantial improvement on the results at the last inspection, when a third of lessons were judged to be good or better and 13 per cent were unsatisfactory.
19. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage classes is satisfactory and often good. All staff clearly know and understand the needs of children in early years. However, they are not fully secure in their knowledge of the Early Learning Goals, particularly of the 'stepping stones' to learning. This results in some elements of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development receiving insufficient emphasis in the nursery, and this has a significant impact on the work in the reception classes. In particular, it is the element of linking sounds and letters in communication, language and literacy and the element of developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems in the mathematical area of learning that are under-developed. All Foundation

Stage staff are very successful at ensuring that children feel secure, valued and confident, enabling them to work with purpose and a sense of achievement. Very good relationships are established between adults and children, and staff know individual children very well. All staff have high expectations for sensible behaviour, mutual respect and co-operation. Staff meet regularly to plan and assess the activities offered, review how children react and whether they make progress according to their abilities. Most adult support is used effectively, although there are occasions in the nursery when staff focus solely on one activity and do not gain a clear overview of other children's needs. This results in a number of children receiving no adult attention for a considerable period of time.

20. At Key Stages 1 and 2, good and very good teaching is particularly noticeable in lessons in English, information and communication technology and science. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and provides a clear structure for lessons. The detailed guidance it contains enables teachers to plan work at an appropriate level for pupils in each age group. Now that they are more familiar with the content, most teachers are confident as they teach. Their clear expectations enable pupils to learn at a good rate. Teachers are also using the National Numeracy Strategy to provide well-structured lessons in mathematics. The proportion of teaching that is at least good is lower in mathematics than in English, although there is a higher proportion of very good teaching. A feature of this very good teaching is a high level of challenge. For example, in the initial mental session of a Year 5 lesson, the teacher steadily increased the range and complexity of her questions so pupils made very good progress in understanding decimals. By contrast, in some lessons teachers have low expectations of both the speed and level of difficulty of pupils' work. They allow too much time for easy tasks so pupils make less progress than they might.
21. Teachers manage their pupils skilfully and have very good relationships with them, because they apply clear rules consistently, so everyone feels secure in their classes. Pupils respond well to the genuine praise they receive. Reward systems are used well. For example, in Year 4, one class is able to use the computer suite at lunchtime as a reward for their good work and behaviour. The prospect of this special treat is an effective stimulus, spurring pupils to greater effort. Pupils appreciate instances of humour and want to please their teachers by working hard. As a result, unacceptable behaviour is rare, even amongst those with emotional or behavioural difficulties; there are few interruptions to the smooth flow of the lessons and the time for learning is maximised.
22. The high expectations that teachers have about pupils' behaviour, however, are not always matched fully by similar expectations about the work they complete. Expectations relating to standards of presentation and handwriting are too low, particularly in Key Stage 2. For example, although handwriting skills are taught in English lessons, teachers do not expect pupils to use these skills in all their written work. Consequently, many pupils, even at the upper end of Key Stage 2, continue to print instead of using joined writing. Their lack of fluency slows the pace at which they complete written work. Some teachers use time targets effectively to ensure work is completed. In other classes, teachers allow too much time for a task and pupils produce far less work than they should.
23. In the better lessons, teachers' extensive knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, the subject is an important factor. A lively confident style and good pace transmits this enthusiasm to the pupils. Teachers introduce, and use, vocabulary specific to a subject, then encourage pupils to use the new words so that there is frequent reinforcement of their learning. There is a good balance between exposition by the teacher and activity by the pupils. These features were evident, for example, in lessons in Year 6 history on Ancient Greece, Year 5 music on composition, a Year 2 English lesson in which a descriptive

poem was written, a Year 2 science lesson on the effects of cooling on materials and a Year 1 English lesson on letter writing.

24. Teachers make appropriate use of a number of resources to enhance their teaching. They are very proficient in using the interactive whiteboards installed in each classroom. The potential to use these to display texts and illustrations is used well. Occasionally, however, teachers take insufficient care in preparing the texts they use, not checking them for spelling or grammatical errors. Where there are assistants to support the class, they are well briefed and play a significant part in advancing pupils' learning. In a Year 1 science lesson, for example, the classroom assistant effectively assisted pupils to read words and apply them to a large picture. In a Year 5 literacy hour, the assistant was given the specific task of observing the involvement and concentration of a particular group of pupils to enable the teacher to evaluate her own teaching after the lesson. Often, though, support assistants have a less active role at the whole-class stage of the literacy hour and they are insufficiently involved in advancing pupils' learning at this time.
25. Teachers plan their lessons conscientiously and thoroughly in year groups teams. This practice enables subject expertise to be shared amongst the group of teachers and is an efficient way of planning lessons. Just occasionally, however, it results in a lesson, which has been insufficiently adapted to the particular class being taught. Tasks are too easy or too hard for the pupils and they make less progress than they might. Few teachers use assessment and evaluation to adapt the plans for subsequent lessons to take account of what they have discovered through the assessment process, especially in respect of the learning needs of individual pupils. Homework tasks are planned effectively to reinforce, consolidate and occasionally to extend the learning that takes place during the lesson.
26. Teachers' marking of written work is too variable. There is a good policy statement on this, but it is not being fully implemented by all teachers. Several teachers mark carefully and with attention to the criteria for the particular piece of work, such as imagination, content or grammatical accuracy. They show they value the pupils' efforts by adding a suitable written comment. In the best instances, teachers help pupils to understand their own gains in learning by noting the progress they have made, but only very rarely do they indicate the next step the pupil needs to take. At the other extreme, some marking is superficial or even inaccurate.
27. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. These pupils are mostly in the lowest sets for literacy and numeracy lessons where numbers are kept small. They enjoy the support provided by experienced classroom assistants as they complete work that is usually well matched to their needs. This support is provided both within the classroom or as they work in small groups in the shared areas outside the classrooms. As a result, they make at least satisfactory progress.
28. Teaching by the specialist teacher employed from ethnic minority achievement grant funding is very good. Her planning is clear and matched to the specific needs of pupils from an assessment of their fluency. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with her, many pupils not targeted for her support plead to join her sessions, even though they know that she would require them to work hard. She has a very good knowledge of the curriculum to support English language learning and, although she does not speak pupils' home languages, her communication skills, pace and challenge to their learning encourages the rapid acquisition of basic vocabulary, and knowledge and understanding of English. She supports pupils in small withdrawal groups at the same time as the rest of their classes have the literacy hour, and by planning with teachers ensures that the texts and work within the group matches that of the rest of the class. The teacher receives valuable support from the bilingual support worker. Being from the Indian sub-continent she speaks Hindi as a home language but also a range of others from that continent, and is



thus able to support these pupils from their first moments within the school. She makes detailed observations on pupils' progress and shares these with the specialist teacher effectively.

29. Although her timetable is predominately language-based, she tries to choose activities that give pupils the opportunity to use a full range of vocabulary from across the curriculum. During the inspection her Year 4 group were focused on the Beowulf story. Not only had she taken the text from the class book, she had adapted the language to challenge the group and develop comprehension by rewriting the text to specifically support this group. She encouraged the correct use of geographical and historical vocabulary, by locating the story in place and time, discussing home life and houses, family relationships and the weapons appropriate for the time period; and promoted pupils' personal and social education by considering friendship and family relationships.

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

30. Throughout the school, overall, the quality and range of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum is at an early stage of development in the nursery and reception classes. The activities provided cover all the six areas of learning appropriately. However, there are elements in the communication, language and literacy and mathematical development programmes in the nursery that require more careful structuring to ensure that literacy and numeracy skills are being targeted effectively, particularly for the four-year-olds and more-able three-year-olds.
31. The curriculum provided at Key Stages 1 and 2 includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as sex education and education about drugs misuse. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. However, the physical education curriculum at Key Stage 2 is not meeting statutory requirements in relation to swimming. This was a concern raised by parents, which is supported by the inspection findings. Religious education is in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented fully.
32. There is no whole curriculum overview. This makes it very difficult to monitor the time assigned to each subject and elements within subjects. As a result, time allocation is not well balanced. Most subject schemes of work have an appropriate overview to ensure that there is no repetition in work carried out, but there are no overviews for art or music. A great deal of time is given to English and mathematics, which limits that available to other areas of the curriculum such as geography and art. As a result, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills sufficiently in all subject areas. This lack of time also affects the balance within subjects. For example, within design and technology, there is insufficient time spent on developing design skills especially at Key Stage 2. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop library skills, and carry out independent research and investigations in subjects such as in mathematics and science.
33. Schemes of work for most subjects are based on the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but the use of this guidance is at an early stage and not all subjects are taking full advantage of it. As a result, some schemes lack clear guidance for teachers on exactly what pupils should learn as they move from class to class. The school is aware of this and has plans to update the schemes in the light of the revised curriculum and to make them more consistent. Teachers' medium-term planning is satisfactory, although it does vary in quality. Much is carefully adapted and designed for the needs and interests of the pupils. However, other plans consist of photocopied sheets, which do not match the needs of pupils closely enough. As a result, there is not

always enough challenge in the tasks given to pupils and this restricts their attainment and progress.

34. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, have broadly equal access to the curriculum. The school is increasingly effective in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice satisfactorily. It provides very well for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs through its programme of personal, social and health education. It is aware that the individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties are insufficiently precise and is working to improve them. Pupils with statements of special educational needs have several areas of difficulty. Their individual education plans address the focus areas within these appropriately.
35. Teachers and support assistants work hard to meet as many needs as they can, but have too little guidance in the individual education plans to construct programmes of work for the pupils. Extra support is mostly confined to literacy and numeracy lessons, so that pupils have no additional support in, for example, science, where they equally need to use literacy or numeracy skills. Pupils are regularly withdrawn from their classes to work in small groups on literacy or numeracy work. This is effective, but when this withdrawal takes place from lessons in other subjects or during the daily act of collective worship, pupils' entitlement to a full curriculum cannot be assured. The effects of this withdrawal are insufficiently monitored. The potential of information and communication technology to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs through the provision of highly motivating, individualised programmes of study has not yet been sufficiently developed.
36. The school provides football for pupils in Year 6 and athletics during the summer as additional activities. A drama club is open to all pupils in Key Stage 2, which includes elements of dance and singing during the year. Staff regularly support pupils with information and communication technology activities during lunchtimes. However, overall the range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities, considering the size of the school, is unsatisfactory. This concern of some parents is supported by inspection findings. Pupils in Year 4 enjoy their residential trip to Devon, and in Years 5 and 6, pupils learn to appreciate the rigours of outdoor life on their camping trip to France. Pupils have visited the British Museum, Hampton Court, the Millennium Dome and local places of worship. Visitors such as the Fire Brigade, the local police, a Rabbi and a theatre workshop enhance the pupils' education effectively.
37. Members of the local community as well as parents and grandparents help regularly in school. On Remembrance Day, the Year 6 class assistant gave a fascinating account of the experiences she and her brother had as evacuees. Christian ministers and leaders of other faiths talk to pupils. The school has established good primary/secondary liaison. A Year 7 physical education teacher and helper, for example, teach hockey weekly in school to Year 6 pupils, and the school welcomes their work experience and 6<sup>th</sup> form students. Pupils take part in the summer literacy and numeracy schools hosted by a local secondary school to improve their skills. Last year pupils in Year 6 went to Walford for football training from Brentford, and rugby training with members of the Harlequins and London Irish teams.
38. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where provision was judged to be satisfactory overall.

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and provide pupils with appropriate opportunities for reflection and prayer, but not all give pupils the chance to do so without distraction. In more than one act of collective worship during the inspection, the adult leading the assembly called for a moment of silence, but then continued addressing the pupils throughout the period of reflection. Assembly leaders use faith stories well to identify common features of beliefs and focus on how a belief affects people's actions and relationships. The headteacher, for instance, linked the faiths of Islam, Judaism and Christianity, encouraging the celebration of each as an individual belief while drawing together common characteristics, tenets and places. During the inspection, however, music was not used to develop a spiritual atmosphere, nor did pupils sing during assemblies, except in reception. Religious education supports pupils well in acquiring knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of others and the development of spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Instances of awe and wonder occur in the curriculum and although these are not planned for, most teachers take the opportunity to develop them when they do occur. In history for instance, Year 3 pupils gasped with awe when a character in a Roman school showed how to record and correct errors on a wax tablet. In Year 4, during the reading of the Beowulf story, pupils considered with wonder a drawing of a dragon coiled round a chest of gold. In both these instances the teachers took advantage of the reaction to enhance learning further.
40. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Class rules are on display in most classes and all staff have a positive approach to behaviour management. Teachers use group sessions known as circle time well to give pupils the opportunity to think about others' feelings and how they themselves could contribute to the happiness and well being of their friends, families and the community in which they live. During the inspection a theatre group spent the day in school giving a performance, then workshops, about bullying to pupils at Key Stage 2, which provoked thoughtful responses from the pupils. Pupils have recently moved into their new school building, and they are very proud of their environment, keep the building tidy and resources in their correct places. To complement this, pupils in Year 4 have recently completed a project in geography concerned with rubbish and recycling, and they have decided views on care for the environment. The school is effective in developing a harmonious atmosphere in which the pupils' different backgrounds, cultures and faiths are respected and valued. Displays, assemblies and resources support this work appropriately. All the adults in the school set a good example to pupils, provide good role models and encourage good relationships.
41. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. In assemblies and personal, social and health education sessions, issues such as kindness, friendship and caring for others are taught very effectively. The nature of self-esteem is discussed and pupils with low self-esteem are given positive encouragement. The school aim, to provide pupils with the skills to cope with changes and difficulties, is met successfully. Positive encouragement to the development of collaborative skills, through teamwork and co-operation, is consistently given in lessons. At break and lunch times pupils play well together; on school journeys pupils care for each other and new junior pupils are given a 'buddy' from Year 6 to support them in their early days within the school. Throughout the school pupils undertake a wide range of jobs, shoulder responsibility competently and seriously, and enjoy raising money for charity.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, while the provision for pupils' understanding of life in a multi-cultural society is good overall. Pupils learn about and participate in the richness of British and western culture through music, art, geography and history. Visits to galleries, museums and other places of interest bring culture alive and stimulate their interest in different traditions and events. The National Literacy Strategy has introduced pupils to a range of literature, poetry, authors and illustrators

from Britain and round the world. In religious education lessons, pupils study the major world religions and are aware of the important festivals such as Remembrance Day, Christmas, Easter, Diwali and Eid. With over a quarter of the school coming from different ethnic communities and over 30 languages spoken within the school, pupils are used to seeing labels, texts, art, artefacts and photographs celebrating cultures from round the world in their environment, and to living in a harmonious community.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

43. The school has maintained the good pastoral care reported during the last inspection and has effective measures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Good procedures for child protection are followed closely. Both the headteacher and designated teacher have participated in recent multi-agency training and all staff are aware of these issues. Liaison with local agencies is well established and used, with regular meetings held when appropriate, for example, for case conferences. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. Six members of staff have up-to-date first aid certificates and practice is good. The welfare assistant is always on hand to deal with the minor accidents that occur and to provide 'TLC' (tender loving care) when appropriate. All incidents are recorded. Risk assessments take place regularly and are reviewed whenever the health and safety committee meets.
44. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance have been improved and are now satisfactory, although the school has been generous in authorising absence in some instances. Lists are made of latecomers and these are noted in the registers but no late book is kept, making punctuality difficult to monitor centrally. Class teachers have the responsibility to follow up absence and only involve the deputy headteacher when their attempts meet with no success. Regular meetings are held with the educational welfare officer. Class attendance is read out in assemblies. Procedures for improving punctuality are not yet very effective and remain an area to be improved.
45. The school has effective procedures for ensuring good behaviour and all staff implement the policy consistently. Rewards vary from year to year and 'raffle tickets' are eagerly sought in Year 4. Sanctions are well known and perceived as fair; pupils do not wish to be sent to stand against the wall for a short period 'out of play', during the lunch break. Those whose names are recorded in the behaviour records are well supported. Staff provide good role models and are trusted to deal effectively with any worries pupils may have. The school's high expectations and positive ethos of being kind to, and aware of, others ensure that bullying or harassing behaviour is a rare occurrence. There have been no permanent exclusions and no fixed-term exclusions this term.
46. Induction for children and pupils who speak English as an additional language is well planned. They receive good support from the specialist teacher and are well integrated with their peers. Those with special educational or other needs are well supported by others in the class and the school's procedures. A few parents expressed concern that the special educational needs of their children are not identified and met at an early enough stage. It is, however, clear that the school has an appropriate set of procedures to identify these pupils. It uses a combination of test results and concern expressed by class teachers, applying clear criteria to decide where extra support can be introduced. Whenever possible, pupils with English as an additional language are assessed in their own preferred language to discover whether they also have special educational needs.
47. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported. For example, those in Years 3, 4 and 5 are regularly taught in a small group by the special educational needs manager on techniques to help them cope with their emotions, such as anger

management. This has a very positive effect on their behaviour and, in turn, on the progress in learning of all the pupils in their classes.

48. The school makes effective use of the external support available to it, including the speech therapy and psychology services. There is very good liaison with these services. This was evident in an annual review meeting attended during the inspection in which it was apparent that the educational psychologist had very good knowledge of the pupil whose statement was being reviewed through her previous formal and informal visits. This helped her to make a very positive contribution to the successful outcome of the meeting.
49. Procedures for promoting pupils' personal development are good. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility from a young age. Teachers know that if they ask for assistance this will be given willingly. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy helping the Foundation Stage children during break-times and those who act as dinner monitors carry out their responsibilities well. Citizenship cups are awarded annually to one member of each class, as are cups and plaques for outstanding academic achievement and for significant progress. Local police officers talk to pupils and can, with parents' permission, be involved when an individual's behaviour, either in or out of school, is causing concern. Rail representatives alert pupils in Years 2 and 6 to rail safety. Participation in the junior citizenship day raises awareness of some of the problems to be faced outside the school environment. Pupils in Year 4 benefit from their residential trip to Devon, recalling fond memories of the farm and its animals. Those in Years 5 and 6 learn to trust their peers and develop self-reliance on their camping trip to France, when, accompanied by the headteacher, they experience the rigours of outdoor life. Year 6 pupils look forward to their weekly hockey lesson, taken by a Year 7 teacher. This gives them an opportunity to see how teaching differs at secondary school and to get to know one of the teachers.
50. Assessment was a key issue in the last inspection report, which has not been fully addressed. A range of procedures is in place, but they are inconsistently used and few are being used to inform planning. The school currently has no manager for assessment procedures and the policy for assessing and recording pupils' work is due for review. The latest discussions about assessment in the school show that many issues have been raised and recognised in the development plans for the future.
51. The assessment used in the nursery is insufficiently closely linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum for children's progress and achievement to be recorded accurately. This term the nursery has introduced useful assessment procedures to determine children's attainment on entry at three years old. These are to be used to gain a picture of individuals and a profile of overall attainment of the groups attending each session. The elements relating to writing in communication, language and literacy, however, are not identified. A tracking system to record individual pupils' responses to the opportunities offered has recently also been introduced. The observations are placed in the children's record files. Whilst such strategies provide valuable information about children's responses to activities, it also means that the adult is unable to support children's learning for a considerable time during the session.
52. Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 know their pupils well and use their knowledge to check work and encourage pupils during lessons. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are tested at regular intervals throughout their time in school. The results of the tests are recorded each year and a prediction is made about their future attainment. However, there is no formally agreed, consistently applied use of the predictions to plan work specifically for groups of pupils in classes who learn at different rates so that they can reach or exceed the forecast levels of attainment. As a result, their progress and attainment are frequently

limited. A great deal of data has been collected, but it is not yet gathered together in an accessible or useable form. As a result, it is not possible to track and monitor pupils' progress clearly or effectively as they move through the school. The end-of-key-stage tests are analysed to show the attainment of boys and girls. However, assessments are not being analysed to target specific areas of the curriculum that need to be developed in order to raise attainment.

53. A new system of setting individual targets for pupils in English, mathematics and one other area chosen by the pupils is being trialled by some year groups. These are shared with parents and pupils during parents' evenings. However, the targets are not being implemented consistently within the trial year groups and the system has yet to be reviewed. There is no system in place for pupils to evaluate their own work to show that they know what they have to do in order to improve.
54. Pupils are grouped according to ability in English and mathematics. However, in these and other classes both the recording and use of teachers' assessments of pupils' day-to-day work to help plan the following lessons are inconsistent. Nearly all teachers keep individual records of their pupils' work but these vary in quality. Not enough account is taken of exactly what work groups of children need to move on to in order to make good progress. As a result, work is not always planned to challenge all of the pupils and this restricts their progress.
55. Teachers regularly meet in groups to moderate pieces of pupils' work and agree the levels being attained. However, the system for all teachers to share and agree their understanding of the levels of work attained is not fully developed. As a result, teacher assessments are not secure. This has been identified by the school as an area for future development. Established systems for assessing work in subjects other than English mathematics or science are insufficient.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

56. Parents are all supportive of the school's aims and ambitious for their children. They are happy their children are able to come to this school but some, particularly those of older pupils, feel distanced from their children's activities in school. Parents regret, for example, they are no longer invited to class assemblies. Those delivering and collecting their children to and from school value opportunities to speak to the class teacher about any concern, and the headteacher is frequently available to talk to parents in the playground. However, some parents who want to make an appointment feel somewhat daunted by the procedures needed to see the headteacher in a school of this size.
57. Parents who speak English as an additional language enjoy good planned induction through the specialist teacher. Key Stage 2 pupils know the content of any letter sent home in case their parents do not read English. Nursery parents have easy access to staff and are encouraged to stay until their children settle. Despite the school's efforts, it is not able to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs sufficiently in a positive partnership to meet their needs. Consultation evenings are used to review the progress made by pupils and parents who attend help to formulate the individual education plan, but most are not sufficiently involved in assisting with meeting their children's targets.
58. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory, but the amount they receive is not. Whilst the brochure, pamphlets and governors' annual report to parents contain useful data, newsletters are not sent out regularly and notice of some events, such as Harvest Festival, arrive very late. The majority of parents like the annual report, although some would like to receive this in advance of the summer meeting. Parents' attendance

at consultation meetings, to which their children are invited, is good. The turn out for the literacy meeting was also good but not at other meetings held for them. Some parents have benefited from the after-school information and communication technology classes and helpline run by the headteacher, and the majority have signed the home/school agreement.

59. Some parents help regularly in school and enjoy hearing children read or helping with any other activities as directed by the teacher. Sadly parents have not, however, been in school to share their national traditions, music or cooking, the school thereby missing opportunities to celebrate its rich cultural community. Most parents help their children at home where they can, with reading, spelling and tables. However, the home reading records are just that and many do not contain any comments from teachers to assist parents in helping their children with the work they do at home.
60. Few events are held by 'The Friends of Willow Tree' due to difficulties in attracting parents on to the committee to run these. However the association benefited from the 'sale' of tables at the Key Stage 2 'table top' event, when many parents welcomed the opportunity for their children to dispose of outgrown toys. Some had difficulty restraining younger siblings from buying these back! Funds raised are used to augment the school's resources.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

61. The headteacher provides energetic and dynamic leadership for the school with the able support of the senior management team. She is fully supported by the staff and governors and the vast majority of parents. All staff work as an effective team, with a high commitment to raising standards and developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The school has a positive atmosphere in which pupils work hard and enjoy learning.
62. Governors are very supportive. The chair of governors has a long association with the school and is a frequent visitor. Governors have a good overview of its work, strengths and areas for development through regular visits, both informal and with a specific focus. They bring a high degree of expertise to their roles, and keep up-to-date with educational developments and school issues through appropriate training, regular meetings and reports from the headteacher and subject managers. They discuss and challenge results and trends, such as the information available on the school's performance in National Curriculum tests and the targets in the school improvement plan. However, they have limited involvement in setting these targets and in establishing the cost-effectiveness of decisions made.
63. Management of the school is satisfactory overall. The senior management team includes the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teacher who also acts as manager for special educational needs. They meet daily to discuss immediate issues and weekly to consider longer-term plans. Their close working partnership is clearly evident and effectively ensures the smooth running of the school. However, not all aspects of the school's life, for example the new Foundation Stage, are represented within senior management, which means that not all viewpoints are voiced at this level. The deputy headteacher meets weekly with departmental managers, which enables her to keep a good overview of the day-to-day life of the school and deal with any issues that may emerge. With such a large school, the co-ordination within year groups has a high priority. Year team leaders make a valuable contribution to the management of the school, particularly in ensuring that parallel classes have similar experiences, for example, by working closely together to produce weekly lesson plans.

64. The quality of teaching is monitored on a regular programme by the senior management team and governors. These visits have a clearly defined focus, for example, looking at library use by the deputy headteacher. Subject leaders play a part in this monitoring when their curriculum area is a focus for development, most recently in mathematics. Formal monitoring visits generate a useful written feedback, and these, together with the headteacher's informal visits to classes, ensure she has a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development in teaching.
65. Subject managers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Each has produced a detailed action plan for the development of their areas of responsibility, but most are uncertain about their freedom to implement these plans. They keep a broad overview of the curriculum, through monitoring teachers' medium-term planning. Senior management also reviews teachers' planning half-termly to ensure all pupils are receiving similar experiences. However, unless the subject is a focus area, this is too infrequent and is not sufficient to pick up on inconsistencies, or ensure a full picture of the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Monitoring of pupils' work is also undertaken by subject managers, but this again is infrequent, except in English and mathematics, and does not involve enough people to ensure the standards achieved and pupils' progress as they move through the school are monitored effectively.
66. The manager of the Foundation Stage plans the reception programme of learning with other members of the year group and has oversight of the nursery planning. She recognises the need to train staff in the content and use of the Foundation Stage curriculum, introduce relevant assessment procedures and monitor classroom practice. The resources in the foundation years are unsatisfactory and the budget agreed for the financial year will do little to address the issue.
67. The special educational needs manager is a senior teacher with very good levels of expertise and experience. She knows the pupils with special educational needs well. Her other duties include the support of newly qualified teachers and membership of the senior management team, but there is a generous amount of time available for her work co-ordinating special educational needs. However, a large proportion of her time is taken up with administrative duties. She is supported well by an able governor who also serves as a governor at a local special school. She has a clear idea of the priorities the school needs to address and has compiled a good action plan for this purpose.
68. The finance provided for pupils' special educational needs is used well and most statutory requirements are met. However, the governors' annual report to parents contains insufficient information about how the school uses its finance and does not inform parents about how successful the school's policy has been. There is scope for further monitoring of the effectiveness of the school's provision. For example, some classroom assistants are under-employed during the initial whole-class part of the literacy hour. There is also a need to increase resources for some pupils. There is a shortage of suitable books for older pupils in Key Stage 2 whose reading ability is very low, for example.
69. Unfortunately, funds allocated by the standards fund only allow the specialist teacher for pupils learning English as an additional language to be in school on a 0.6 timetable, the remainder of the devolved budget being spent on 20 hours a week for a bilingual support worker. The bilingual support worker knows the pupils and the working practice of the school well. The specialist teacher keeps full and detailed records of targeted pupils, as well as details on other non-targeted pupils through the school. These records are shared with class teachers and are used to complete official documentation and the forms from the local education authority's Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant service. These records are not yet integrated into teachers' record-keeping, although all admission profiles and current levels are shared with class teachers.



70. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive and detailed document covering most aspects of the school's work. Priorities are discussed with all staff, and the plan formulated by senior management who share and discuss the completed document with the governing body. The headteacher tracks progress towards completing action points on a regular basis, which shows clearly where success has been achieved, such as continuing to raise levels of achievement, but also where areas are behind schedule, for example improving early years provision.
71. The school has sufficient, well-qualified teachers and trained class assistants, a number of whom are bilingual, to deliver the National Curriculum. Year and department leaders have been appointed, with appropriate responsibilities. With such a large staff, whole-school staff meetings only take place at the beginning of each term or when necessary, with weekly staff meetings held for smaller groups.
72. The school has good induction and mentoring procedures to support newly qualified, supply and unqualified teachers, and those newly appointed to the school. Graduate student teachers and those on work experience from a local secondary school are well supported, and benefit greatly from working alongside teachers. Performance management training for appraisers and appraisees is well in hand and staff interviews will be completed by the end of January. Teaching and non-teaching staff are encouraged to go on courses to improve their training and expertise. Any training they undertake is shared appropriately and recorded on individuals' files. The efficient bursar, administrator, receptionists, caretaker and welfare assistant make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school.
73. The school's impressive accommodation, specifically designed after the amalgamation of three local primary schools and completed 18 months ago, is good for the number of pupils on roll and for the delivery of the National Curriculum. The Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 classrooms each have separate entrances, cloakrooms and toilets. Useful shared practical areas outside each classroom link the foundation and key stages around this airy building. The large hall, with purpose built stage and drama room, small hall and atrium are used well for physical education, assemblies and presentations. The well-equipped welfare room is situated close to the front hall. All of the school's accommodation is well decorated and cleaned. Pupils who have a physical need are supported appropriately. The building has appropriate ramps to ensure access to all classes and a lift between the ground and first floors. Unfortunately, acoustics within the halls result in an echo when several people talk at once, which could handicap hearing impaired pupils when the halls are used for physical education, if pupils are unable to hear teachers' instructions clearly.
74. Most of the rooms on the first floor are used for administration purposes. The staff-room, resources room and library are also situated up the stairs. Because of the need for supervision, it is not easy for pupils to access the latter for independent research.
75. The school grounds are extensive and very well secured, with high chain link fencing and good quality padlocks fitted to the gates, which are kept closed when pupils are on site. Closed circuit television deters intruders and all who enter the building have to speak first with the receptionist. Vandalism is very rare and litter minimal.
76. Overall the school's resources to teach the National Curriculum are unsatisfactory, although this represents a significant improvement over the very poor position found by the previous inspection. The 'state of the art' information and communication technology resources are impressive. These include interactive whiteboards in every classroom and two separate computer suites. E-mail is used regularly for communication between

pupils, teachers and the headteacher. Resources for teaching English are satisfactory, although many of the books are old. There is a sufficient number of books in the library, but again their condition is barely satisfactory and too few are for younger pupils. Not all sections are fully labelled. Many of the books in classrooms are not in good condition. The number of mathematics, history, art and music resources is satisfactory, although these are still limited for the teaching of mathematics. There are insufficient resources for science, design and technology, and geography. Some of the good resources for teaching pupils who are learning English as an additional language, including bilingual texts, have been provided by the teacher. Resources in the Foundation Stage are in variable condition and do not match the demands of the curriculum.

77. The school makes satisfactory use of local resources, pupils visiting the local mosque and other places of interest. Ministers from local churches and the Rabbi are amongst visitors who have talked to pupils this term.
78. The school has good procedures for the day-to-day management of its income and expenditure, which are well administered by the bursar. She supplies detailed information to the headteacher, senior management team and the governors to aid their decision-making. When making purchases, the school applies 'best value' principles effectively, ensuring that it receives high quality goods and services. Within the overall low income per pupil, compared to other London schools, specific grants are spent appropriately. Funding for learning resources within the set budget is well below average compared to other schools and is mainly dependent on extra monies the school may receive during the financial year, as a result of past uncertainties on overall running costs of the new building. Spending on education support staff, administration and clerical staff and other staff costs, by contrast, however, is very high compared with all schools. Now that the move to the new site has been completed, governors should assess how staff with management and other responsibilities are deployed, the effectiveness of this, and the deployment of funds for the services it provides, to establish firmly the cost effectiveness of their spending decisions.
79. Standards in English and mathematics are below average by the end of both key stages, but are improving steadily and pupils' reading skills have significantly improved. Good teaching is a significant factor in enabling these improving standards to be achieved and in creating the good attitudes pupils have towards their work. Relationships are very good; pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in all the activities provided. Taking these factors into account, together with the sound financial control and the dynamic leadership of the headteacher, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should now

- continue efforts to raise standards in English and mathematics throughout the school by:
  - ensuring all elements of the communication, language and literacy and mathematical development areas of learning in the Foundation Stage are covered fully;
  - placing a greater emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills;
  - improving standards in pupils' handwriting and presentation;
  - improving pupils' use of the library for independent research;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake investigations and solve problems in mathematics; (*paragraphs 1-5, 7, 82, 86, 94-106, 107-112*)
  
- improve the curriculum balance and coverage and pupils' progress by:
  - ensuring statutory requirements in physical education are met fully;
  - reviewing the time allocated to each subject to ensure all areas are fully represented;
  - improving planning in all subjects to ensure pupils' knowledge and skills are developed progressively;
  - considering ways to broaden the scope of activities for pupils outside lessons;  
(*paragraphs 8, 19, 30-33, 36, subject paragraphs*)
  
- consolidate and improve the use of information gained through assessment by:
  - making sure that agreed systems of assessment are used to provide relevant information on pupils' standards and progress;
  - collating this information in a useful and manageable way to enable targets to be set for individual and groups of pupils;
  - ensuring assessment is systematically monitored;  
(*paragraphs 19, 25, 50-55, subject paragraphs*)
  
- improve the management of the school by:
  - considering representation of all aspects of the school's life on the senior management team;
  - providing subject leaders with sufficient opportunities to manage and monitor the quality of provision, and pupils' standards and progress in their areas of responsibility;
  - ensuring the cost effectiveness of spending decisions is evaluated appropriately;  
(*paragraphs 62-67, 69, 78, subject paragraphs*)
  
- continue raising levels of resources throughout the school, and particularly in the Foundation Stage.  
(*paragraphs 76-77, subject paragraphs*)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor points could be included in the governors' action plan:

- improve precision of targets on the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs; (9, 34, 35)
- raise teachers' awareness of the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language within their classes; (10)
- improve expectations in a minority of classes and address the very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching; (20, 22)
- make better use of classroom assistants in a small number of lessons; (24, 68)
- improve consistency in the quality of marking; (26, 105, 11)
- ensure withdrawing pupils for additional help does not affect their access to the curriculum or statutory collective worship; (35)
- continue efforts to improve communication with, and involvement of, parents. (56-59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	113
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8	46	44	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	45	692
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	202

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	141

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	208

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	71
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	79

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	44	41	85

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	31	29	37
	Girls	30	29	33
	Total	61	58	70
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (84)	67 (70)	82 (87)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	26	36	28
	Girls	24	29	27
	Total	50	65	55
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	59 (56)	77 (57)	65 (68)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	41	32	73

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	26	25	34
	Girls	23	18	26
	Total	49	43	60
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (55)	58 (55)	82 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	16	27	24
	Girls	21	20	20
	Total	37	47	44
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	51 (43)	64 (49)	60 (49)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	31
Black – African heritage	43
Black – other	25
Indian	41
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	5
White	361
Any other minority ethnic group	74

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	25.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	276

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999 / 2000
	£
Total income	1,315,298
Total expenditure	1,266,505
Expenditure per pupil	1,794
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12,905
Balance carried forward to next year	35,888

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	782
Number of questionnaires returned	128
Percentage returned	16%

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	23	2	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	39	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	40	10	3	4
The teaching is good.	59	36	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	36	14	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	36	12	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	35	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	28	12	10	20

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**

80. Children enter the nursery part-time at the age of three years. They attend nursery for between three and five terms, before they join the reception classes together with other children who are new to the school, to begin their full-time education.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

81. The development of children's personal, social and emotional skills is a strength in the nursery, and staff in the reception classes also give this area of learning a high priority. As a result, children are well on course to exceed the standards expected of five-year-olds nationally. Their progress in this area of learning is good. The organisation of the nursery, with each adult responsible for a group of children, helps them to settle quickly into the routines and develop a sense of belonging to the community. Staff in the reception classes have also created environments where respect, understanding and the celebration of differences underpins all the work. All staff provide good role models and as a result children develop a positive self-image and recognise that every one has something special to offer. Children from different cultures and beliefs work together well, share resources fairly and take turns appropriately when using equipment. They have positive attitudes to learning, select activities thoughtfully and work with concentration. Staff use snack times well to teach good manners and the skills of courtesy and politeness. Children show a well-developed level of social skills at the beginning of the reception year. Their behaviour is good and they are well aware of what is right and wrong.

**Communication, language and literacy**

82. The majority of children begin the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening and, despite sound progress through the Foundation Stage, are unlikely to reach the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy by the time they leave reception. In the nursery, staff are sensitive in the way they ask questions in order to encourage children's confidence in oral work. In the reception classes, children build on their previous experiences and a number speak with increasing confidence in group and class discussions. Elements of the literacy framework are used well by the reception staff to promote talk and discussion.
83. Both nursery and reception children show a love of books and make a sound start to reading as they listen with interest to stories and poems. They understand that the illustrations tell the story as well as the print. They are keen to predict what might happen next in a story and to talk about the main characters.
84. Children in the reception classes develop a good understanding of the initial sounds of words through the effective, systematic approach used by the staff and the regular practice opportunities provided. Most children in these classes name the sounds taught this term and select them in simple texts. They also know the letter names. In the nursery, opportunities to teach the recognition of letters by their sound name are provided. For example, at the beginning of each session adults encourage children to recognise the initial sound of their first name as they gather in their small groups. However, in the nursery, there is an absence of a well-defined, systematic approach to teaching sounds. In addition, opportunities to develop this work further so that children can associate patterns in words, rhymes and syllables are not exploited. This results in



children's awareness of similarities and differences in sounds being limited. They are not challenged appropriately.

85. Nursery staff encourage children to 'have a go' at writing, and children confidently write for a variety of purposes such as writing a letter to Father Christmas. They discuss effectively the features of writing with them and demonstrate correct pencil grip and letter formation. Children in the reception classes, in the role-play activities, write orders for take-away food, list items purchased in the clothes shop and record injuries in the hospital. Supplies of paper, pencils and crayons are easily accessible and children's work is carefully displayed and given value.

### **Mathematical development**

86. The majority of children make sound progress in their mathematical development through the Foundation Stage, but are unlikely to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning as a result of their poorly developed skills when they join the school. Good routines established by staff at the start of the session in the nursery involve counting the number of children in the group. Through regular daily practice, three-year-olds begin to understand the importance of numbers in every day life. However, from this promising start teachers provide insufficient opportunities for children to use their growing understanding of number to solve mathematical problems. On occasions, the questions asked by the staff do not develop children's thinking skills appropriately and help them to organise their ideas logically so that they can explain what they have done. In the reception classes, children continue to have difficulty with problem solving work and addition and subtraction operations, although staff encourage children to solve many practical problems during snack time and other activities.
87. In the nursery, almost all children count to five and some children count beyond. They recognise and name some numerals. When children join the reception classes, the majority count to ten. Nursery children know some two-dimensional shapes such as the triangle, and reception children recognise more. Children enjoy the opportunities provided to learn sorting and matching skills through using games, jigsaws and puzzles. In the reception classes, children become increasingly familiar with larger numbers through daily activities and the playing of games. They develop a sense of order and sequence as learn the days of the week and discuss what they do to prepare for school each day.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

88. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is in line with expectations for their ages. The majority of children enter the nursery from play-group settings and have a basic knowledge of the world around them. Three-year-olds, for example, recognise and name a range of zoo animals such as the giraffe, tiger and monkey. In their home corner play, they talk about the fruit and vegetables they are using and identify their favourites. They use the computer with confidence when supported sympathetically by an adult and a number are gaining sound mouse control. In the reception classes, children use the computer independently and handle the mouse with increasing dexterity to select items on the screen. In both age groups, children use tools and resources sensibly as they cut and join things together confidently. For example, children in the reception classes made glove puppets and selected a variety of imaginative materials for the face and hair.
89. Nursery children talk a little about their families but, despite the sensitive level of conversation and questioning by staff, about three-quarters are unable to articulate their thoughts clearly. Reception children speak more confidently about where they live and their time at home. Staff show a genuine interest in all the children do, and by the use of

skilful questions enable them to make valuable contributions to discussions. Adults support children well in investigative activities, for example, exploring with serious concentration the changes that occur to ingredients when making ice cream using a bag of ice cubes for the freezing process.

### **Physical development**

90. Children's physical development is in line with expectations for their ages. The secure play area with easy access, and the nursery's successful provision for outdoor play, is a significant factor in helping children make sound progress in the development of their physical skills. They use wheeled toys confidently and gain an awareness of space and others as they steer skilfully on a circular track. Staff give clear instructions and encourage children to offer ideas to develop their play. The sense of fun, coupled with high expectations and appropriate praise, contribute equally to children's social development as well as their physical skills.
91. Children in the reception classes have a playtime with the rest of the school. As a result, they do not have the same access to the extended periods of play the nursery have. They do, however, have the use of a school hall and during lessons reception children use the space well, and climb, balance and jump confidently. The teacher's imaginative use of music in one lesson encouraged children to respond enthusiastically in both the main activity and in the cool-down period.

### **Creative development**

92. Children in the Foundation Stage meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their creative development. They make sound progress and respond well to the many opportunities offered by the staff. Through art, music and stories, children in the foundation years develop the ability to use their imagination and observe well. Staff are adept at giving children ample scope to select materials for themselves and time to experiment, and they only intervene at appropriate times to teach key skills. Children make interesting collages from a range of materials in all classes. Reception children have daily opportunities to express their ideas in paint. Their paintings are lively and colourful showing their interpretations of, for example, the weather, rain and snowflakes in a variety of artistic forms. Nursery children, unfortunately, do not have this daily experience. Reception children communicate their feelings and ideas with increasing skill and confidence. Nursery children sing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* and other favourite songs with enthusiasm as they rehearse for their end of term concert, accompanying these competently with actions and percussion instruments.
93. Children enjoy using imaginative role-play to develop stories. Nursery children, for example, play out home themes such as shopping, cooking and taking care of babies. A little boy worked very hard on the family ironing. The take-away shop in a reception room is a hive of activity as orders are taken from other children in the class, telephone messages are received and food cooked and delivered. The children are very effectively supported by an adult, who extends the scenario well and introduces children to a relevant range of vocabulary. The role-play area for one reception room is outside the classroom, however, and staff do not have the same opportunity to model the creative play as effectively as they wish to.

## ENGLISH

94. Standards overall in English are below average by the end of both key stages, although in reading, standards are average throughout the school. This reflects the attention given to this aspect of the subject following the previous inspection and represents a substantial improvement, as standards then were judged to be well below average in reading. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress through both key stages.
95. National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show that standards were well below average in both reading and writing. About three-quarters of pupils reached the expected Level 2 in reading, and around seven in every ten pupils reached this level in writing. A much smaller proportion than expected reached the higher Level 3 in both aspects of the subject. Inspection findings indicate that the present Year 2 pupils are performing better than this. Standards in reading are broadly average, but are below average in writing and in speaking and listening. The school is achieving a slow but steady improvement in standards, which is to some extent masked by variations between successive cohorts.
96. At Key Stage 1, standards of listening are better than those of speaking. Pupils listen attentively to their teacher, answering questions or following instructions correctly, and they are encouraged to listen closely to their peers. Their spoken responses tend to be brief, although by the end of the key stage they are more likely to reply with complete sentences. When speaking about subjects that particularly interest them, many pupils speak more extensively and with animation.
97. The literacy hour is having a strong impact on pupils' acquisition of reading skills. Most pupils are learning to use a variety of strategies, such as the context of a word or the sounds contained within it, in order to read. By the end of the key stage, most pupils read simple texts confidently and begin to develop good expression. Pupils benefit from extra periods of time spent reading and from the school's consistent expectation that reading books are taken home every day for further practice. This emphasises the paramount importance of the activity. However, the school's practice of using a very wide variety of reading schemes, although beneficial for many, does not help the weaker readers who become confused by the disparity in vocabulary between successive books they choose to read. Many of these pupils obtain little help at home and so fall further behind.
98. The school is aware that pupils' writing skills fall below what is expected and is focussing its energies on improving this aspect of English. In consequence, a good proportion of the literacy hour is spent on writing activities. By the end of the key stage, most pupils know that sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop, but do not always put this knowledge into practice. This is because much of their written work does not take the form of continuous narrative so they have little opportunity to practise their skills of punctuation. Pupils learn common spelling patterns and this is having a good impact on their writing. Higher-attaining pupils write simple poems, following the teacher's model effectively. Lower-attaining pupils distinguish between story and instructional writing and make sound progress in learning how to spell simple words. Many pupils of all abilities form letters well enough to begin to learn how to join them. Some teachers have begun to encourage pupils to do this. However, there is insufficient teaching of the process of joining particular letters together. Simply practising joins that have not been thoroughly taught leads to some pupils' work becoming illegible.
99. The school's results in national tests in English at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved at a faster rate than the national picture. Standards remain below average, although they compare favourably with those of similar schools. In 2000, two-thirds of pupils reached

the expected Level 4 and a quarter reached the higher Level 5. This proportion reaching Level 5 is similar to the national picture and represents a good achievement when judged against pupils' standards when they enter the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the 2001 results are likely to be broadly similar, although with fewer pupils attaining the higher level, particularly in writing, speaking and listening.

100. By the age of 11, standards in speaking and listening are below the expected level, with speaking rather weaker than listening. Some pupils logically explain their opinions on the Titanic disaster, using words precisely and confidently. However, well-projected voices speaking at length are rare. Pupils mostly speak in quiet voices, but recognise that language should be varied to take account of whom they are talking to. Many pupils use a very limited vocabulary and have difficulties in thinking of suitable adjectives. Sometimes the teacher's use of questions demanding only literal recall limits pupils' development of reasoned argument and deduction. The use of drama and role-play to develop confident speaking is under developed in both key stages.
101. Most pupils are competent readers by the time they leave the school. Reading is accurate and quite fluent, although some otherwise good readers fail to use punctuation to provide emphasis as they read aloud. Pupils use inference and deduction successfully. For example, Year 6 pupils infer that the Hobbit is cheerful because he wears bright clothes. The vast majority are keen on reading and are developing clear personal preferences. Some lower-attaining readers, however, are struggling with books that are too difficult for them. This is leading to some disenchantment with the activity. Library skills are relatively weak. Pupils have too little experience of using their own library for research purposes and few are adept at using the classification system in use in most libraries.
102. The failure to develop fluent, joined handwriting at the end of Key Stage 1 or the beginning of Key Stage 2 has a considerable impact on the standards in writing by the age of 11 years. Very many pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not join their letters and for them the process of writing is laborious and slow. Teachers' expectations about handwriting and the presentation of work are frequently too low. They do not insist that pupils use their newly acquired skills across the whole range of their writing. In some instances, their own handwriting in pupils' books or on the board does not present a good enough role model.
103. Most pupils spell at the expected level for their age, although more prone to making careless mistakes than they should be. They have a satisfactory grasp of grammar. Many write well-planned and detailed stories using their lively imaginations. Some good examples of good quality writing were observed in work by Year 6 pupils to change fairy tales into poems. Lower-attaining pupils have achieved mastery of basic sentence structures and punctuation. Few pupils, however, are fully competent in using the skills of planning, drafting and refining their work to create a high quality result.
104. English teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and sound, although with many good features, in Key Stage 2. There were no unsatisfactory lessons in the subject. The structure provided by the National Literacy Strategy is used well to plan interesting lessons meeting the needs of most pupils well. Occasionally, however, the need for younger pupils not to have to sit still on a carpet for too long is forgotten. The final part of a lesson is often used well to extend pupils' learning as well as to consolidate what they have learnt already. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils read the poems they had written about animals. They were asked to explain why they liked each poem and had to think hard to produce more extended answers. Teachers' good relationships with their pupils give quieter members of the class the confidence to speak in discussions, as they know their contributions will be valued. Support staff are occasionally used effectively at the

beginning of the literacy hour, for example, to observe target pupils and gauge their level of involvement. More often, however, these staff are relatively under-employed during this part of the lesson.

105. There is too much variation in the standard of marking by teachers. The majority mark very conscientiously, but in a few instances marking is either negative in tone or excessive, sometimes undeserved praise is lavished on the work. Many teachers have low expectations about how work is presented. This is particularly true of handwriting when teachers expect joined handwriting only in handwriting lessons, so that pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop fluency.
106. The manager for English, including literacy, is well qualified for her role but has insufficient time to develop the monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school. She is aware of the need to improve the scheme of work so that it accords more closely with national guidance. Some portions of the current scheme give insufficient guidance to teachers. For example, the handwriting scheme does not make clear when and how pupils should be taught to join letters. Schemes of work in other subjects make little reference to the way in which they should be used to develop or enhance literacy skills. In consequence, these other subject areas are under-used to provide relevant and interesting ways to do this. Although it is evident that organising pupils into groups based on ability allows more-able pupils to make good progress, the school has not evaluated the effect upon other pupils. In particular, it has not examined the effect in Key Stage 1 of placing pupils in lower sets where they have no role models to encourage better reading, writing or speaking. Resources for literacy are inadequate. Many of the reading books are worn and unattractive and there is a shortage of suitable books for older boys with limited reading skills. The library contains many elderly or dilapidated volumes and several subject areas require augmentation.

## **MATHEMATICS**

107. The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results in 2000 show that standards in mathematics are well below average when compared to other schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. The 2000 test results for the end of Key Stage 2 indicate a decline in standards over those in 1999, to well below average when compared to schools nationally and below average when compared to similar schools. Results in mathematics over the past four years have varied considerably with each group of pupils taking the tests, some of which included substantial numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Evidence, from the scrutiny of work and lesson observations, indicates that attainment at the end of both current key stages is likely to be below average. Achievement in national tests and standards in lessons observed during the current inspection are similar to those found at the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented appropriately but it is too early to assess its impact on teachers' expectations and pupils' attainment and progress.
108. At both key stages there is an appropriate emphasis on developing numeracy skills and each lesson begins with mental and oral work in mathematics. Although this is helping to develop pupils' mental agility, this remains below average and restricts their progress. At Key Stage 1 pupils successfully order numbers to 20 and can count accurately in 10s to 100. They learn to tell the time in hours and know the difference between digital and analogue clocks. Pupils use coins accurately to work out shopping problems linked to their work in tables and round numbers up or down to the nearest 10 with great ease. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils rapidly identify number sequences such as odd and even numbers and x2 and x3 tables. They confidently double numbers and make up their own word problems with ease. Pupils accurately identify simple fractions of shapes such as halves and quarters and extend this to calculate fractions of numbers quickly and

competently. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 understand what happens when numbers are multiplied by 10, 100 and 1000. They look at number patterns of  $\times 2$ , 5 and 10 to help them learn their tables and learn what happens when combinations of odd and even numbers are added and subtracted. Pupils begin to understand the place value of decimals in practical situations such as measuring when changing centimetres to millimetres. More-able pupils convert miles to kilometres and back with confidence and understanding. Pupils learn why square numbers get their name and develop a good understanding of what a square root of a number is. This is extended to learning about triangle numbers and their number patterns. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they are given a broad range of mathematical experiences covering the full requirements of the National Curriculum. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to explore and investigate mathematics on their own. There is some evidence of mathematics being used in other areas of the curriculum, for example, time lines in history and graphs in information technology and science. However, this is an area that has yet to be fully developed.

109. Both lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work over time indicate that progress in mathematics is too slow. Pupils in both key stages are taught in ability groups, which helps teachers to focus on the needs of the class. However, teachers do not always have thorough and accurate enough information of what pupils have learnt before and this frequently leads to them set work that lacks challenge for groups within the sets. For example, more-able pupils at the top of Key Stage 2 were completing division sums more proper for children two years younger, because the teacher was unsure of their ability. On occasions, teachers give too much direction without realising that the pupils have reached accurate conclusions amongst themselves already and this hinders progress. For example, pupils quietly discussed sequences of triangular number patterns before the teacher had finished talking about the first two examples. The almost total lack of errors in the great majority of books, whilst building pupils' confidence, indicates that teachers' expectations are not high enough and that the work set is too easy. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language are provided with satisfactory support in mathematics and make appropriate progress.
110. Pupils work conscientiously at their mathematics. They concentrate well and listen carefully to instructions given by their teachers. They are keen to succeed and enjoy their work. When given the opportunity they explain their mathematical thinking clearly. However, in most classes there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to explore and discuss mathematics independently.
111. The quality of teaching at both key stages is almost always at least satisfactory, with half being good and one in six lessons very good. Nearly all teachers have a satisfactory understanding of mathematics, which they encourage their pupils to share. Good lessons are well prepared and based on good planning with clear indications of what pupils are expected to learn. However, teachers are not all clear about the levels of work that should be expected from their pupils or what their pupils can achieve. As a result, some of the planned activities lack challenge, which restricts pupils' progress. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, too much time is wasted by pupils waiting for their turn and the teachers' knowledge of mathematical conventions is not adequate and results in incorrect rules being taught.
112. Assessment opportunities are identified on lesson plans for mathematics, but there is little evidence of assessment being used as a basis for planning in order to build on what pupils already know, understand and can do. Most teachers keep records of what their pupils have done, but these vary in quality and usefulness from simple tick lists to very good evaluative comments that make a good basis for planning the next stage of learning. Teachers keep useful records of pupils' mathematics test results and use these to predict

future achievement. However, the tests themselves are not being analysed to indicate areas of mathematics that need improvement for the next stage of learning, for either individuals or groups of pupils. Trialling of target setting for individuals in mathematics has begun in some year groups. Marking of pupils work varies in quality; some teachers make useful evaluative comments about the work whilst others just tick. As a result few pupils are clear about what they need to do in order to improve their work. Following a monitoring exercise, the subject manager has identified many issues that need to be addressed to improve mathematics at the school, and has written a good, clear and relevant action plan to develop mathematics in the future.

## SCIENCE

113. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 broadly attain the standards expected nationally in all areas of science; scientific enquiry, life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. The 2000 national tests paint a similar picture for pupils in Year 6 and also show that standards were comparable with similar schools. Year 2000 teacher assessments of pupils in Year 2 were far too low. Teachers assessed them as well below average levels. Inspection findings, samples of pupils' work, lesson seen and displays, showed pupils actually attain, at the age of seven, broadly average levels. Standards are improving. At the last inspection in 1997, standards for both 7 and 11-year-olds were below average.
114. There are no marked differences in the performances of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are suitably supported. They make the same, satisfactory progress as all pupils across the school.
115. In the current Year 2, teachers challenge pupils well and most pupils successfully predict what would happen to materials if they were heated or cooled. In the lessons seen, pupils clearly explain, with excitement, how their predictions were made and relate to experiments on the heating and cooling of liquids and solids. They all successfully identify that butter and chocolate will melt and were intrigued by the question, 'what is it in tomato sauce that prevents it from freezing?'
116. Across the school, samples of previous work show a good use of graphs to record data and pupils are given good opportunities to develop their scientific enquiries. By the age of 11, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the differences between the properties of various materials. They apply their knowledge of reversible and irreversible changes to predict successfully whether or not other changes are reversible. Samples of previous work show pupils reaching satisfactory standards when studying life processes and the effects of micro-organisms and differences in light sources, the movements of light and reflections and how solids can be dissolved.
117. An analysis of pupils' work across the school shows they make consistently good progress. Teachers have a good scientific knowledge. They extend their pupils' understanding well with the use of appropriate scientific words. Teachers encourage pupils to make predictions, which means pupils' enquiry skills are developed satisfactorily. However, due to subject resources being limited, pupils are given too few opportunities to conduct their own first-hand experiments. On many occasions they have to observe teachers conducting experiments. In the one area where resources are sufficient for a whole class, pupils experiment successfully with their given materials to make electrical circuits and to test how to make a bulb brighter or dimmer. Across the school there are some minor weaknesses in the way pupils record their work, and there are insufficient resources for them to use computers to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results.

118. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a number of strengths that account for pupils' good progress. Teachers plan together well in year group teams. Good questioning and explanations and use of scientific terms encourage pupils to explain and clarify their thinking. Pupils across the school show at least good, and sometimes very good, attitudes towards their work. They are enthusiastic, concentrating with high levels of motivation on their tasks.
119. Pupils are assessed according to their attainment on the adopted schemes of work. When teachers level these attainments, however, they do not sufficiently take into account the level descriptors stated in the National Curriculum programme of study. This has led to the very inaccurate judgements in the teacher assessments at Key Stage 1. The subject manager has recently given up a full-time appointment and now teaches groups of pupils, on a supply teacher basis, for approximately two days a week at the school. The subject was previously satisfactorily co-ordinated, but it lacks the systematic monitoring for effectiveness. The joint planning across year groups, whilst good in itself, leads to insufficient consideration being given to the development of standards and pupils' progress as they move up the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

120. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be sound with satisfactory progress being made in both key stages. During this inspection there was insufficient evidence to make judgements on the standards and progress of learning as it was not possible to see any lessons. However, the work on display, for example in history and science, gives evidence of the range of art and design skills taught to pupils to ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are satisfactorily met.
121. In work on the Ancient Greeks, for example, pupils have made detailed paintings of ships of war and Greek armour. Three-dimensional death masks in card, gold paper and paint, along with painted tomb scenes, support the work on the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils have used detailed pencil drawings in close observational studies of people, then a beige wash, to reproduce the effects of Victorian sepia photographs. Younger pupils used leaves to make autumn prints and glue and frosting for snow effects in winter scenes. Older pupils have made puppets and marionettes such as stick figures for pupils to retell the Rama and Sita story from religious education while younger pupils have made glove puppet faces of different wools and buttons onto a sewn outline of their hands. There was little work on display giving a full range of possible media such as clay, papier maché or 'Modroc' and only a limited amount of collage using other than card and papers. Large three-dimensional models were not seen, nor was there a lot of evidence of pupils using a range of fabrics. Older pupils have an exercise book labelled 'music, art and design technology' and these are used as sketchbooks, but while younger pupils have used these books for their designs, there is only a little evidence of the systematic and progressive development of skills in the work of older pupils.
122. Art supports the provision for the spiritual and cultural development of pupils well. Older pupils have looked at the style, colours and textures of works by artists such as Matisse, Van Gogh, Picasso and Kandinsky and used these observations in their own work. In one class, pupils are grouped to examine the work of artists such as Klee, Van Gogh and Constable among others, with central resources boxed with a small example of the artists work attached to each.
123. The curriculum for art is drawn from a published scheme of work and matches art and design skills to knowledge about art and artists. There is no overview grid of the curriculum attached to the scheme of work. It is not clear how the teachers within each



key stage ensure the development of skills and the extension of knowledge from one year to the next rather than just repeating work covered earlier. The manager for art is also the manager for physical education and music. He monitors the provision for art within the curriculum by seeing copies of teachers' plans and looking at that work in display. In-class observations of standards and the quality of teaching are difficult because of time factors; rather he relies upon teachers coming to him with problems and their needs. Assessment of pupils' standards and progress in their learning is in line with the scheme of work and are drawn from matching work to the level descriptors of the National Curriculum. Resources for art are satisfactory overall, each year group workstation containing a range of paints, papers, glue and brushes. The budget for art is spent on consumables, but there is a need for a wider range of photographs and prints of the work of ethnic and female artists to link the subject more closely to the school community.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations at both key stages. On some occasions, however, for example in Year 6, standards fall below expectations. This is due to the school just recently starting to address the subject appropriately. In the Year 6 lessons seen, the opportunity for pupils to develop, plan and communicate their ideas for designing were limited. Too much emphasis is given across the school to making, with pupils having insufficient opportunities to design and, in particular at Key Stage 2, to develop their ideas. Opportunities to consider the users and use of their designs and to employ information from a number of sources are under-developed. When the school was last inspected, few lessons were seen and standards and progress were below expectations. The school has moved forwards from this position due to the manager discerning the need for development and resourcing levels being increased. She provides teachers with evaluation sheets and ideas for teaching, which help improve teachers' knowledge of the subject and impacts positively on standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, now overall achieve satisfactory standards and make satisfactory progress.
125. In the lesson seen at Key Stage 1, satisfactory standards result from good teaching. Here, Year 1 pupils successfully complete pictures with moving parts. The teacher has carefully evaluated their progress through information from past lessons, and gave some of the class cutting tasks to improve their skills before proceeding with them to making moving pictures. Pupils, with good levels of support from the teacher and support assistants, generated their ideas well, using pictures to show what they wanted to do. Pupils clearly describe how their product works, with good levels of understanding.
126. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall. In the two lessons seen, one in Year 5 and one in Year 6, however, the evaluation of pupils' products is given insufficient emphasis. In Year 5, pupils design packages for biscuits they are making. In small groups, they successfully make the biscuits. They understand what they are doing well, supported by clear, relevant explanations from the parent helper. The teacher also supported the pupils' developing designs well. However, she did not always encourage pupils to relate their design to the purpose of the products and how, when made, it could be successfully stored on the shelves of shops. The teacher challenged pupils' thinking about the impact of their design well, through her effective questioning. In a Year 6 lesson, making templates for the top of a shoe, pupils recalled accurately the soles they had previously made. The teacher supported the pupils' making skills well, but allowed them to use their template on their own feet without sufficient thought being given to the planning, purpose and development of designs before modifying their templates.

127. Pupils are well motivated by the subject. They work sensibly together, concentrating hard in developing their tasks. They do not, however, always get the help they need to improve as the subject is not effectively assessed. The subject manager sees this as an area for development. She has a good action plan addressing the subject's needs, which has been submitted to the school's headteacher and senior management team, although this has not yet been accepted by them or the governors. The manager has no time to monitor and evaluate provision to discern where standards need improving. Despite recently receiving more substantial funding, the subject is under-resourced for the number of pupils in the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. The last time the school was inspected there was insufficient evidence in Key Stage 1 on which to make any judgements about standards in geography. In Key Stage 2, standards were in line with national expectations, and have stayed the same. Current inspection findings show standards in Key Stage 1 are also appropriate for their age.
129. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of the immediate local area, as a result of careful planning for an expedition to the nearby shops and the relevant recording activities for the follow-up work. Pupils made lively plans and maps of the route taken with reasonable accuracy. They understand positional language such as 'behind' and 'in front' and make sound progress in developing basic geographical skills. In Year 1, pupils begin to extend their understanding of places beyond their environment, as they work hard at locating and recording the countries of origin of a range of foods. Daily observations of the weather, beginning in the nursery, encourage pupils to observe changes in conditions and to understand their effect. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a sound awareness of locations beyond their own and immediate environment.
130. At Key Stage 2, there are good links to geographical aspects within history topics. For example, when pupils study the Romans, they acquire some background geographical knowledge about the location of Italy, its major cities and its climate. Similarly, in the study of the local housing estate, pupils develop their mapping skills and extend their knowledge of changing land usage over time and its effects on communities and commerce.
131. In Year 4, pupils were helped to think analytically and logically about the strategies to prevent litter being dropped on the school playgrounds and the effect of this on the environment, through the skilful questions asked by the teacher. They showed great maturity as they considered the possible infestation of vermin and the effect on small animals if they ate the cartons or empty packets. Pupils were equally concerned about noise levels and their effect on others in the community. They have positive attitudes to geography, are enthusiastic about participating in discussion and work with concentration to complete the task. Geography makes a sound contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of pupils. It is helping pupils to develop their understanding of a wider community than the family or the school.
132. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. The school has recently adopted national government guidelines that provide a useful framework, although its introduction has not yet had an impact on pupils' attainment. The way the geography curriculum is organised and the limited resources for the subject means that skills are not developed systematically through the key stages. There are no regular assessment opportunities planned in geography and the pupils' attainments are not recorded systematically. The manager has no opportunity to monitor the classroom teaching and learning to ensure greater consistency and to identify strategies to raise standards. The resources for geography are inadequate. There is little evidence of

children's use of information and communication technology in the subject and few planned links with numeracy or literacy.

## HISTORY

133. At the time of the last inspection standards in history were 'sound' and the rate of progress satisfactory for pupils at both key stages, and these standards have been maintained. All pupils reach levels of knowledge and understanding appropriate for their ages and make satisfactory progress. The progress in the rate of learning for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is good. This is due to the high quality of teaching in Year 6, where one of the teachers is also manager for the subject and uses her expertise effectively to support pupils' learning.
134. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past by learning not only about such events as the Gunpowder Plot, the Stuart Kings and the Great Fire of London but also from such events. They retell stories and use role-play to discuss, for instance, the Gunpowder Plot, considering why the plot was hatched, taking the parts of the different peoples involved, both Protestants and Catholics. Teachers encourage pupils well to consider a range of information sources such as using the Internet, computer programmes, the library, drawings and pictures to support their learning. This work is successful because the teachers have a clear understanding of the subject, as shown in carefully prepared questions for discussions that challenge and sustain learning, and plan tasks that support pupils' development as historians.
135. At Key Stage 2, learning continues to be satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge and understanding about peoples of the past such as the Romans, the Egyptians, the Victorians and the Ancient Greeks increases as pupils continue to develop their historical researching skills. Pupils gain clear understanding of chronology via refining time lines from general 'before' and 'after' Christ to more detailed dates and graphs. By considering common themes such as warfare, houses, homes, Gods, sports and the role of women for each of the peoples and ages, pupils make effective links with life today. These they consider in their personal, social and health education work as part of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
136. Teaching is good throughout the school and particularly good in Year 6. Teaching motivates and encourages pupils who respond positively to their work. This was well illustrated in a Year 6 lesson, where the teacher focused pupils carefully to analyse the images on Greek vase pictures, to learn about education in Athens. As a result of careful preparation, the good use of questions and the pace given to the session, pupils were able to compare the education of Greek boys and girls and compare their findings with education today. The teacher had high expectations that by the end of the lesson pupils would have consolidated existing learning, acquired new knowledge and understood some of the reasons for the differences between then and now. This she did by a mixture of questioning, explaining and prompting, getting pupils to distinguish between fact and opinion.
137. The subject is well led though not very well resourced, considering the breadth and range of the curriculum and the size of the school. Artefacts in particular are not plentiful overall. The scheme of work is drawn from the units of a published scheme and matched appropriately to other topics within each year group. An overview grid by year group and term ensures the systematic development of skills and knowledge. The manager monitors progress via medium-term plans and pupils' work in books, especially focusing on inquiry based skills developments. At present, she is not able to monitor classroom practice so is not able to identify strengths and support weaker areas, rather she relies

upon discussions and assessments of pupils' work for the assessment of pupils' progress.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

138. Standards in information and communication technology are on course to be in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. This represents a positive improvement over the position found by the previous inspection, when they were below expectations, and reflects the schools total commitment to maximising on the opportunities provided by the new technology.
139. Resources for the subject are impressive. Teachers make full use of the 'state of the art' resources available to them, and their positive role model is very effective in creating a good understanding in pupils of the value of technology in supporting their learning. The flexibility of interactive white-boards enables teachers to make very good use of pre-written lesson material and to develop pupils' ideas as lessons proceed. Teachers' confidence and expertise significantly supports the development of the same qualities in the pupils. Teaching is almost always good, both in whole class lessons and in the new computer suites. Pupils in Year 1, for example, use a graphics program to create lively Christmas designs. They confidently experiment with the program's functions, using shapes, line styles and colour-fill, and move on to the main aim of the lesson enthusiastically. The high level of adult support in this session ensures pupils' problems are dealt with quickly and their enthusiasm maintained. Older pupils in Year 4 extend their skills effectively in a more challenging activity that involves resizing and repeating their designs and changing colours. Very good teaching reinforces the aim of the lesson, to create repeating patterns, and reminds pupils of what they already know. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm is caught by the pupils as they vie with each other to answer questions. During the practical session, the quality of learning is very good as pupils co-operate closely to share their discoveries and learn from each other. In both these sessions, pupils make noticeable gains in their skills and understanding, and the quality of the finished work is striking.
140. Work in information and communication technology in all classes is linked effectively to different areas of the curriculum. Pupils, for example, use a database to create graphs in Year 2, linked to their mathematics work. In Year 3, they create thoughtful posters about bullying in connection with their personal and social development, and lively extended writing in Year 5 on *The Mouse-hole Cat*. Pupils in Year 6 competently research topic-work on CD-ROM and the Internet. Within these activities, pupils' specific information and communication technology skills are developed well, together with their understanding of the wider value of the technology to support and improve their work.
141. The subject is led and managed well, with a comprehensive action plan showing future development, for example, in improving the use of control technology and implementing the system for assessing pupils' standards and progress. All staff are highly competent, make very good use of resources already and are keen to extend even further the use of the computer suites, which are a recent addition to the school's provision. The school is highly effective in sharing its knowledge and expertise with the wider community, and staff give their time freely and regularly to provide valuable training for teachers from other schools.

## **MUSIC**

142. Standards in music are satisfactory throughout the school, which maintains the picture found by the previous inspection. From the earliest age, pupils enjoy making music and sing with enthusiasm. They handle percussion instruments carefully and sensibly, and begin to copy rhythms with varying success when tapping them out on their hands. They

learn the words to songs very quickly and remember them very well. Pupils enjoy putting actions to songs including learning to sign the words for any hearing impaired audience. This awareness of the needs of others makes a sound contribution to their social development.

143. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make steady progress when singing in two parts. They develop a good awareness of the importance of clear diction when singing. They successfully learn about pitch and tempo. Older pupils make good progress during lessons on notation. They know and understand the names and values of notes and use their knowledge well to organise and control sounds when making their own compositions. Although there were no opportunities to observe the use of instruments at Key Stage 2, conversations with teachers and pupils indicate that standards in this aspect of music are satisfactory. However, there are missed opportunities for listening to music and for singing in assemblies and there are few occasions during the school year when pupils are given the opportunity to perform for other pupils or parents. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
144. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and work well together to write their own compositions. Their enthusiasm for singing is clear, when cries of 'yes' greet the introduction to a favourite song. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, most is good and one very good lesson was observed. The good and very good teaching is characterised by enthusiastic teachers who have a good knowledge of music, which they communicate well to their pupils. The scheme of work for music is based on a commercial scheme and is under review in the light of the revised curriculum. Resources for music are satisfactory and include an appropriate range of instruments. However, the central store for the instruments is not easily accessible, especially for the larger instruments, and this makes it difficult for teachers to make the best use of them. There are no opportunities for children to develop their music through extra-curricular activities such as a school choir or by learning to play instruments. This is a great pity given the skills of some of the teachers and the pupils' obvious enjoyment of music. The curriculum manager has a clear action plan, which demonstrates a well-defined direction for the subject in the future.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations at both key stages, which presents a similar picture to that found by the last inspection. Boys and girls achieve equally in activities available, but the school provides too few opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. It leaves too much to pupils in Year 6 learning, or learning to apply, their swimming skills in water-based activities on school journeys or in association with a local secondary school. It does not, therefore, meet the statutory requirement to provide swimming activities and water safety consistently across the whole of the key stage from Year 3 to Year 6.
146. During the inspection period only one lesson was seen taught at Key Stage 1. Pupils respond well to their teacher's input and enthusiasm, performing dance movements, individually and in groups, to music. Pupils are closely involved, as the lesson progresses, in evaluating their performances. Encouraged by the teacher, they suggest appropriate improvements to their performance. The lesson finished well, with the teacher explaining what happens to their bodies when exercising.
147. At Key Stage 2, five lessons were seen. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with 40 per cent of the teaching seen being good. A good Year 6 outdoor lesson was seen where the teacher supported a good range of warming-up activities and aided pupils' stick and ball control skills for hockey well. A Year 3 lesson showed pupils

attaining satisfactory standards when using small and large apparatus to perform a range of controlled and balanced movements. Pupils confidently use the apparatus well. Most balance successfully on a beam and can stop their movement, achieving a balance position halfway along the beam skilfully.

148. Pupils across the school work hard at their tasks, with good levels of enthusiasm and interest. The school offers a suitable range of activities for dance and gymnastics and, in the summer, athletic activities. Up to 50 pupils attend a weekly football club and the school's success in matches is celebrated in the range of trophies on display. Sadly, the successful netball club has had to be suspended temporarily, through staff absence, but the school has hosted the Borough Saturday Netball League. The school provides appropriate outdoor and adventurous activities during residential visits for Years 4 and 6. It has established good links with the local sports college, to extend further the range of opportunities for its pupils. Lessons are taken regularly by a visiting Year 7 specialist teacher from the secondary school. Resources for the subject overall are satisfactory. The manager, however, has insufficient time to monitor and evaluate standards in the subject or to support teaching in developing the programme of study to meet more fully the requirements of the present National Curriculum.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be sound at both key stages with satisfactory progress being made, although at Key Stage 1 no lessons were seen and judgements were made on work samples, displays and teachers planning. In this inspection, religious education was seen taught across the school. Standards are judged to be satisfactory overall with pupils' knowledge and understanding in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils at the age of seven are making satisfactory progress and those aged 11 are making good progress in their rate of learning overall.
150. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and predominately good at Key Stage 2, though there was one unsatisfactory lesson in the lower part of the key stage. Lessons are planned to take advantage of pupils' own knowledge, especially those of different faiths who are willing to share their beliefs and customs with others in the class. Lessons for older pupils take advantage of work covered in earlier years, especially Bible stories about and by Jesus, for instance the Christmas story and the symbolism of the Christingle. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good knowledge of the signs and symbols from a range of faiths and consider their importance in such as marriage ceremonies and worship practices. This was particularly evident when Year 6 pupils were looking at a video of the Hindu wedding of one of their teachers. Not only were the Hindu pupils in the class able to support the learning of the rest, others in the class could compare the service with weddings they had attended - Christian, Muslim and Sikh.
151. Teachers use a range of interesting methods to challenge learning and enthuse pupils. In Year 2, the teacher recalled secular symbols for Christmas, trees, cards, calendars and presents, before introducing pupils to the Scandinavian custom of Christingle, with the focus of Jesus as the light of the world, and the opportunity to make a Christingle orange for themselves. In Year 4, the teacher used role-play to enable pupils to consider how behaviour is governed by belief with pupils becoming the shepherds hearing of the birth of Jesus from the Angel Gabriel and reacting as believers and then as non-believers in a God. Great hilarity was caused when the Angel Gabriel addressed a sheep instead of the shepherd! In each class, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and make connections between what they hear and everyday life. Teachers' questions are carefully formed to guide without indoctrination, and pupils respond well by concentrating, working hard and learning as much as they can as well as enjoying their work.

152. Teachers' lesson plans are clear with objectives directly drawn from the scheme. The curriculum grid and samples confirm a breadth, balance and continuity between the faiths planned for each year group. In most of the lessons, teachers did not need to spend much time on behaviour management. The structure of their lessons, the challenge and appropriateness of resources and the careful match of task to pupils' individual needs ensure that all work hard and are keen to take part in the lesson. In the weaker lesson, teaching strategies rather than activity and subject knowledge handicapped learning. The questions prepared to guide learning were focused on literal recall rather than enabling pupils to think about the story of the Buddha and the Swan. Activities related to literacy skills, being mainly cut and stick the story into the correct sequence, and resources such as glue were not sufficient in quantity to enable pupils to make progress through to extension activities. Because of a slow pace, the intended summing-up session was not reached so this reinforcement of learning was not covered.
153. The subject does not have a manager at present; the headteacher is acting as 'caretaker' until an appointment is made in the new year. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in the rate of their learning by in-class observations, an analysis of pupils' books and teachers' plans and discussions. She encourages staff to make good use of local resources, particularly places of worship, and the use of the expertise of religious leaders from the community. Although the school has a range of resources, the number of artefacts to support religious education across this large school is insufficient. The new manager should take the first opportunity to match and extend the range of these in line with the agreed syllabus and scheme of work to drive learning forward.