

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Francis Edmonds Combined School**

Lane End, High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110320

Headteacher: Mrs N Willis

Reporting inspector: Mr A C JOLLY  
(8750)

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225304

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:	Edmonds Road Lane End High Wycombe Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP 14 881169
Telephone number:	01494 881169
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Wapshare
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr A C Jolly (8750)	Registered inspector	English History Physical Education	What sort of school is it? How high are standard? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Mr R Jones (19491)	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?
Mr I Barker	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information Technology Music	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs C Bond	Team Inspector	Under Fives Art Design and Technology Special Educational Needs	
Mr A Evans	Team Inspector	Science Religious Education Geography Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Francis Edmonds Combined School provides education for 186 pupils and 21 children who attend the nursery for the morning. It is situated in Lane End, a Chiltern village on the outskirts of High Wycombe, which has a combination of housing estates and non-estate housing. Francis Edmonds Combined School serves a wide catchment area.

The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is very high for the county and above the national average. The majority of pupils enter the school with comparatively low skills in literacy and numeracy. The proportion of pupils both with special educational needs and those with statements of special educational needs is well above average.

The main targets of the school have been linked to the previous, critical inspection report and have involved improving the quality of teaching and raising the standards of pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school.

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

Francis Edmonds Combined School is an improving school that has seen a dramatic rise in the standards reached by the oldest pupils in the core subjects English, mathematics and science, though there is still further to go. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory. The headteacher is providing very good leadership to the school with valuable support from the acting deputy headteacher and governors. The quality of teaching is sound and much improved. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher is providing very good leadership.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's practices which are contributing to rising standards.
- High expectations of pupils in Year 6.
- Able pupils achieve well in national writing tests in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' good behaviour.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- Influential Governing Body.

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

- Standards in mathematics.
- Boys' attainment in English.
- Standards in science.

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

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

The school was last inspected in April 1998 when it was found to have serious weaknesses in teaching and attainment in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is much improved from the last inspection report when 45 per cent of it was unsatisfactory. Almost all the teaching in Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory or better.

Pupils' attitudes to learning in Key Stage 2 have improved. Lessons now have continuity and a variety of activities to harness the pupils' enthusiasm for what they are doing. A clear policy has been drawn up for the successful management of behaviour that has ensured

consistently good practice across the school. Good progress has been made in improving the general standard of behaviour. All statutory requirements are now met relating to information and communication technology and the information provided to parents.

Attainment still needs to improve further in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, assessment information is now being analysed much more effectively to set clear attainable targets for the end of both key stages. The Key Stage 2 results obtained under the new headteacher's leadership produced dramatic improvement in all three subjects. Therefore progress overall has been sufficient since the last inspection.

## 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	E*	E	D
mathematics	E	E*	E	E
science	E*	E*	E	E

**Key**

*well above average*     A

*above average*         B

*Average*                    C

*below average*          D

*well below average*     E

This table shows that standards in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 remain well below the national average. Last year's results show a significant improvement in mathematics and science and particularly English where the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level more than doubled. The standards in English were only just below those found in similar schools. Standards in mathematics and science in 2000 remained well below similar schools but no longer in the lowest five per cent. These results show only marginal improvement since the last report but significant improvement under the present headteacher's leadership. The school exceeded its targets last year and has set suitably ambitious targets for the future. Standards otherwise have improved and are now satisfactory in all other subjects. Standards of presentation are sound by the time the pupils leave the school but are variable in the other years. Pupils generally achieve appropriately but standards need to rise to meet the necessary targets in English, mathematics and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES



Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons, responding well to the positive values promoted. They are polite and friendly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms.	Behaviour is generally good both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships.	Very good opportunities are provided and relationships are consistently good.
Attendance.	Satisfactory overall.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ninety two per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better and over two-fifths of the total is good or very good. The teaching is unsatisfactory in only one lesson in every twelve. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection. Pupils are particularly well managed and lessons are effectively planned with clear educational objectives. When the teaching is unsatisfactory it is largely because it lacks sufficient pace, a feature which is most predominant in the foundation stage. The school meets satisfactorily the needs of all pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum.	The school provides a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that meets all its statutory requirements. However the range of extra-curricular activities is less than is generally found.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	There is good provision to meet pupils' special educational needs. Individual education plans are helpful.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good provision for the pupils' social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils.	The school provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils. The monitoring of individual progress is good and child protection policies are effective.

The school works hard to develop links with parents but receives only a limited response which reduces its effectiveness. Considerable emphasis and effort is given to the care of

pupils.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a clear vision of what is needed to bring further improvement and she is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities, have regular meetings and are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has evaluated its performance thoroughly and has analysed what needs to be done in the future.
The strategic use of resources.	The school is making effective use of its resources.

The accommodation is satisfactory, providing a range of specialist facilities. Staffing is adequate but the relatively high staffing costs make significant financial demands on the budget. The resources remain inadequate in some areas. The school applies the principles of Best Value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• Information about the progress of their children</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees that the school works closely with parents. The inspection team shares the strong confidence in the leadership of the headteacher. Although pupils are making satisfactory progress, the recent rate of improvement needs to be sustained to bring about the necessary higher standards in English, mathematics and science.

The inspection team judged that with termly parents' meetings and good quality annual reports, the school is providing all the necessary information about the progress that the children are making. It is true that the extra-curricular activities are restricted, without any sport-related clubs at the moment. However, there are extensive opportunities for learning musical instruments and the curriculum for all pupils provides opportunities to go on a range of interesting educational visits.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection and they are still not good enough; nevertheless standards of attainment of pupils when they leave the school reflect marked improvement under the leadership of the current headteacher.
2. The gap between performance in similar schools and the school's test results has not been bridged since the last inspection report. Nevertheless, the results of the pupils in English, mathematics and science Key Stage 2 National Tests by the time they left the school last summer had increased dramatically under the leadership of the new headteacher. All results rose by at least 50 per cent and the percentage attaining the expected level in English more than doubled. Standards in English were almost in line with those found in similar schools. In mathematics and science much still needs to be done as the standards were both well below the national average and those found in similar schools.
3. The 2000 Key Stage 1 results in reading, writing and mathematics show that the number attaining the required standard remains, as in the last inspection report, well below average. However, the results are distorted by the very low performance of boys. The proportion of girls who achieved the required standard in all aspects was in line with girls' attainment nationally. In contrast only 50 per cent of the boys achieved the required standard in reading and writing and 40 per cent in mathematics as against 80 per cent and over of boys nationally. One positive feature of the Key Stage 1 results is that for the last two years, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in writing has exceeded the national average. However, the proportion attaining the higher level was significantly lower than the national average in mathematics, reading and in the teacher assessment in science.
4. Although the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are effectively in place, standards of literacy and numeracy remain below average. The school is aware of this weakness and has set aside a proportion of each day to work on basic skills.
5. Standards of literacy and numeracy are low on entry to the school but pupils make steady progress in the foundation stage. There is a significantly higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and, specifically, statements of educational need than is found nationally. For example, one half of the oldest pupils are on the school's register of educational needs.
6. Standards of attainment have remained sound in art and music. In all other subjects standards have improved since the last report. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately and make good progress.
7. There is an overall picture of improvement in the work pupils produce. Standards of writing are better in English; the quality of teaching and learning has improved in science and mathematics. Standards in all foundation subjects are sound.
8. The school exceeded its targets in English, mathematics and science and has now set itself more ambitious targets. Under the leadership of the new headteacher the school

has the capacity to meet these targets and sustain the improvement until standards are at least as they should be compared to similar schools.

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

9. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and generally show a keen interest in their lessons and other aspects of school life. They are attentive and eager to contribute their opinions and listen to the views of others in, for example, a Year 6 religious education lesson when they discussed the hidden meaning of symbols. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and the parents confirm this. Attendance is in line with national averages.
10. Behaviour around the school is good. With very few exceptions pupils behave well in lessons and in communal activities such as dining, play and assemblies. They are polite and friendly. The school site and property, including displays of work and photographs are treated with respect and well cared for. The good standards of behaviour are promoted through the school's revised behaviour policies based on seven 'Golden Rules'. These set out clear expectations which teachers reinforce on every suitable occasion and a reward system, which is clearly understood and valued by pupils.
11. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are cared for by the staff, and their achievements and activities, for example participation in a music festival, are celebrated in displays of photographs in the entrance hall. In a 'merit assembly' pupils took pleasure in each other's achievements. At playtime older pupils look after some of the younger ones.
12. They work together well in small groups, for example, creating music using percussion instruments and investigating evaporation in a science lesson. Bullying and oppressive behaviour are not major issues, and when they do occur, are dealt with effectively through the school's systems for behaviour management.
13. A high proportion of parents responding by questionnaire believe that the school helps pupils to mature and become responsible. There are many opportunities for them to do this through undertaking jobs around the school as monitors, looking after equipment and supervising younger children. They raise money for charities and participation in a local project to regenerate a disused pond encourages them to consider some of the wider issues affecting the community they live in.

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

14. The quality of teaching was a major weakness in the last inspection report when 28 per cent of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. This was particularly centred on Key Stage 2 where 45 per cent of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is now much improved and only eight per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory.
15. The nursery teacher who took up her position in September provides a welcoming atmosphere for new pupils. The teaching is generally satisfactory and often good. The teacher has successfully introduced new approaches and has a good understanding of the foundation stage of learning. Good relationships are maintained with children throughout the foundation stage. The weakness in the teaching is that lessons often lack sufficient pace. This applies particularly to reception where it was a major factor in the half of the lessons deemed unsatisfactory.

16. All the teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in half of the lessons it is good or very good. Teachers' planning is good and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to aid the pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are consistently well managed.
17. Almost all the teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and over half of it is good or very good. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. The teaching in Year 6 is consistently good. The teacher has a clear grasp of what standards are needed and the pace at which the lesson needs to progress. The best teaching in Key Stage 2 makes sure the pupils are working to their capacity. Thus a very well taught lesson in Year 4 about the Blitz stimulated a hive of activity with pupils deeply and productively involved in a variety of imaginative historical investigations.
18. The amount of work produced over time is insufficient in most classes and limits the pupils' learning. The teaching is generally well targeted to meet the learning needs of different groups of pupils but there are occasions, however, when the needs of the most able are not fully met and they are insufficiently challenged. Not enough attention is being given to the particular learning needs and styles of boys.
19. Homework is now targeted more effectively to reinforce what is learned in school. However, the response of pupils, particularly in reading does not match sufficiently the intentions of the teachers. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall and good in a few classes, particularly in Year 6.
20. The Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been introduced satisfactorily. Introductions and plenaries are usually effective but the main activity sessions, particularly in mathematics, do not set sufficiently precise targets for pupils within the lessons.
21. Although there are some subjects for which no teacher has specific training, there are no areas where this is a major handicap to the teaching. The teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils but needs to be more focussed on the specific needs of boys in order to raise standards further.

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

22. The school provides a broad and reasonably balanced curriculum, offering the pupils a sound range of worthwhile learning opportunities. The previous inspection found that total weekly teaching time was below national recommendations. A key issue of that inspection report was to improve provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Both these issues have been satisfactorily addressed. Teaching time now meets recommendations in all key stages and statutory requirements for providing the full range of National Curriculum subjects, including ICT, are met. The school also meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship. Religious education conforms to the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. About forty pupils regularly take advantage of instrumental music tuition provided by visiting teachers. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics.
23. Curriculum planning is broadly satisfactory, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. However, this planning does tend to leave long gaps between the teaching of various elements of some foundation subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils have no geography lessons for two whole terms and pupils in Years 1 and 2 have no geography

during the autumn term. Also some sessions in subjects, such as design and technology are too long to maintain interest in the activity. There are satisfactory policies for all subjects, though some, such as religious education, are now in need of updating. English and mathematics are planned according to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Planning for most of the other subjects is based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and it is proving successful in promoting satisfactory standards of work. The headteacher monitors the curriculum through a scrutiny of half-termly plans.

24. The school ensures that all the pupils, regardless of ability or gender, have equality of access to the full curriculum. The school's equal opportunities policy document clearly reflects its aims and values. The headteacher monitors attainment by gender very carefully. Inspection findings indicate that boys are performing significantly less well than girls in English. The school is aware of this and is seeking ways in which boys' attainment might be raised. The English coordinator, for example, tries to purchase new books that will appeal more to boys. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for traveller pupils is given in the classrooms and is directly related to work that the other pupils are doing. Withdrawal for instrumental music tuition is done as carefully as possible, within the constraints of the visiting teachers' timetables. Although there are external ramps, steps inside the building would make access difficult for pupils with severe mobility problems.
25. A significant proportion of parents responding by questionnaire feel that the school does not provide enough activities outside lessons. Inspection findings confirm that, apart from a weekly lunchtime recorder club for about twenty pupils, there are no extra-curricular clubs, as such. However, the programme of extra-curricular instrumental music is extensive. Provision is nevertheless too narrow. There are no school sports teams and no competitive matches are played against other schools. Within the curriculum itself, the school does enhance the pupils' learning significantly through a wide range of worthwhile visits that take place during school time. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils have visited Sulgrove Manor, Cassiobury Park and Milton Keynes. A residential visit next July to Dart Country Park is planned for Year 6 pupils. The school also seeks to use the knowledge and expertise of visitors whenever possible. These have included the police, a nurse, a dentist and the Wycombe Rangers.
26. There are satisfactory relationships with the upper school to which most of the Year 6 pupils transfer. The headteacher meets colleagues from the upper school and from other primary schools each term. There is good liaison with regard to pupils with special educational needs. Academic records of all the pupils are passed on.
27. The school makes good use of the local community to enhance the pupils' learning. Staff from Wycombe Wanderers Football Club have held coaching sessions in school time for all the pupils and the school encourages the involvement of other visitors, such as local clergy. Visits and work within the locality enhance learning in subjects such as religious education, science and geography. The headteacher works closely with the Lane End Community Development Fieldworker and their efforts are succeeding in making the school a focus for a large part of the community living in the estate. There is great potential for development, including community access to ICT facilities. The school has just been chosen to participate in a two-year community music project.
28. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. There is a planned programme of work in fortnightly 'circle times' and relevant issues are also discussed at other times, such as assemblies. There is a clear sex education policy.

Formal sex education is taught in Years 5 and 6 with help from the school nurse. The pupils are taught about the dangers of drug misuse and the local police have spoken to the pupils about this.

29. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. They participate in festivals of the Christian calendar at local churches. The teachers often provide moments in lessons when the pupils can stop and think. In a Year 2 dance lesson, the pupils were encouraged to reflect on feelings and in a Year 6 religious education lesson, the teacher lit a candle and the pupils paused to reflect on what ideas this brought to them. The teachers encourage the younger pupils to think about people and places that are special to them and why they themselves are special. Acts of collective worship make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
30. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development. A key issue of the previous inspection was to draw up a policy for the successful management of behaviour. A good policy has been designed and implemented, with the full involvement of staff, pupils, parents and governors. The pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong. Individual education plans for some pupils with special educational needs include targets for improving behaviour and the school receives good support from visiting behaviour support staff.
31. Provision for the pupils' social development is very good. Older pupils develop responsibility through carrying out a range of worthwhile tasks around the school. The pupils have the opportunity to vote for house captains, who have additional responsibilities. Older pupils benefit from a residential visit to Dart Country Park and they develop skills of citizenship, through participating in a local initiative to revitalise a local natural pond area. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes, where they learn how to look after themselves at times of crisis. The pupils have supported a number of charities, including The Royal British Legion, The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Help the Aged. In many lessons, the teachers encourage the pupils to work collaboratively in investigations and research.
32. There is good provision for the pupils' cultural development, particularly in the field of music. They participated in the Marlow Millennium Festival and they have worked with visiting musicians from the City of London Sinfonia. This has developed from the school's successful involvement in a national initiative with The Association of British Orchestras. Year 5 pupils recently saw part of Haydn's Creation at the Wycombe Swan. The school recently held a 'book week', to mark World Book Day. The teachers also develop cultural awareness through art. The pupils are made well aware of the cultural diversity of modern society both in Britain and worldwide. The school makes good use of the local multicultural resource centre to enhance learning in subjects such as religious education. The teachers encourage tolerance and respect for peoples of different faiths.

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

33. The school has a caring ethos where the safety and welfare of pupils is given priority and they receive good support or guidance on both pastoral and academic issues. Appropriate policies and procedures deal effectively with child protection.
34. Sound arrangements have been made to comply with the requirements of health and safety legislation. Termly safety audits are carried out by a group of staff and governors

and risk assessments are up-to-date.

35. Accurate attendance registers are kept and unexplained absences are followed up quickly by telephone calls and letters.
36. Behaviour is well monitored and duly logged. There are strong links with the local authority's behaviour support unit and the pastoral support for pupils is enhanced by visiting professionals, including the school nurse, who contributes to the health and sex education programmes and a teacher from the Minority Ethnic and Traveller Achievement Service. There is also an effective informal network for the exchange of information by staff who know and care for the pupils in their charge.
37. There are detailed and thorough systems for the monitoring and recording of academic progress in the core subjects, English, mathematics and science. Pupils are tested at the end of each year and this is supplemented by half termly assessments in reading, writing and numeracy. Teachers liaise to identify any weakness and target groups who need additional help. Individual targets for pupils are part of this integrated process and are clearly visible in each classroom. Work in developing assessment procedures has now begun in other subjects, particularly information and communication technology. A very solid foundation has been laid which will enable additional academic support for pupils to be most effectively directed.

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

38. The links with parents are good. Parents are happy about the way the school works with them and believe that the school is approachable. The headteacher and other staff are readily available in the playground before and after school to discuss parental concerns on an informal basis.
39. Good quality information is sent out to parents, including a fortnightly newsletter. Parents' evenings are held three times a year and the school has organised special sessions for parents on reading, numeracy and information technology, although parental support for these has been variable. The format of the annual report on pupils' progress has recently been revised and these give parents a detailed and informative picture, commenting on pupils' performance against expectations as well as setting targets.
40. The school is conscious of the need to involve parents in their children's learning. It actively supports a local initiative, 'Parents as First Teachers', which works with individual parents on their children's development. The school also involved parents in the development of the homework arrangements and consulted widely with them on the new behaviour policies. Parents help on school trips and a small number help in school with reading and other tasks. However, the number of parents responding to the school's initiatives, such as a recent Reading Workshop is limited, reducing the effectiveness of the project. Nevertheless, those parents who are active in their support for the school and the curriculum are adding real value to the children's education and the school is right to persist in allowing them the opportunity.

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

41. The Headteacher provides very good, strong leadership and has brought about the improvements in the school performance since her appointment. She is supported well by the acting deputy headteacher and their shared commitment to raising standards is beginning to promote effective teaching and learning throughout the school.



42. The school undertakes substantial analysis of the national test and assessment data. The outcomes from this are used well to identify groups of pupils for extra support through, for example, booster classes and target setting for learning purposes.
43. Some curriculum policies are still being written but the school has a clear long-term curriculum map. Assessment systems are sound in the core subjects. However work is still required to refine assessment so that day-to-day lesson planning and delivery more accurately meets the learning requirements of the pupils. The quality of marking is variable; where it is good, constructive guidance is given to pupils on how to improve standards. The school's system for evaluating half-termly progress in core subjects is working satisfactorily. As soon as staffing permits, the coordinators should be encouraged to play a full part in the monitoring of standards and teaching in their subjects.
44. The Governing Body effectively fulfils its main responsibilities and individual governors are committed to the school and the community. They support the aims and values of the school through, for example, the emphasis on providing sufficient teachers and their assistants to support pupils with special needs. The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are suitably involved in shaping its direction. For example, staff and governors have spent a day discussing the school aims. The Governing Body receives regular information about the performance of pupils so they know how they are progressing.
45. The process for school development planning is sound, involving senior management, staff and governors. The plan covers the main priorities of the school; raising standards of pupil achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. There are few detailed subject plans excepting science, information and communication technology and history. The plan is monitored on a half termly basis.
46. The school supports two teachers through the graduate training scheme and an induction and liaison programme is operating successfully. A performance management system is in place, based on monitoring by the headteacher and teachers using peer-monitoring to appraise each other's work. Subject coordinators monitor the standards of teaching and oversee pupils' work throughout the school to a limited extent and it would be worth developing this function further when possible.
47. The school was given permission to plan for a deficit budget last year and resources are tight. The school's budget is soundly managed, with expenditure linked to the school development plan. The school is aware of the principles of best value and directs its resources to support raising standards in the school. External financial auditing of the school finances has not taken place since well before the last inspection.
48. The school is well staffed and the classroom support staff make a good contribution to the school. The school makes good use of grants designated for specific purposes and is resourceful in bidding for additional funding. However, learning resources are barely adequate in some subjects. The quality and quantity of resources varies a great deal from subject to subject. The accommodation is spacious with rooms adapted for information and communication technology, music and design and food technology. The room space between classes is not always well organised however. Given that the school works in a relatively disadvantaged context and that pupils are making reasonable progress overall, it is giving sound value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The school should now:

- **Raise attainment in science by the end of both key stages (paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 76, 77 and 78) by:**

- \*developing sufficient learning skills so that pupils are more confident in undertaking practical investigations;

- \*improving pupils' recording and research skills;

- \*planning more challenging work for able pupils, so that more pupils reach the higher national curriculum levels by the end of both key stages;

- **Raise attainment in mathematics (paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 20, 70, 71, 72 and 73) by:**

- \*giving greater emphasis to the development of pupils' basic number knowledge;

- \*producing more work in the main activity part of the lesson and providing more opportunities for mathematical investigations;

- **Improve boys' attainment in English (paragraphs 3, 18, 24, 62, 63 and 67) by:**

- \*increasing the awareness of teachers about the different learning styles and needs of boys;

- \*planning work and teaching strategies to focus more on the needs and interests of boys;

- \*analysing more carefully the Standard Assessment Test results of boys in both stages in English to identify what skills need developing or improving.

**Other less important weaknesses, which should be included in the action plan:**

- \*improve the presentation of pupils' work (paragraphs 65, 73, 82 and 87);

- \*adjusting the curriculum so that the teaching of each subject is more continuous throughout the year (paragraphs 23, 84 and 85).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	41	47	8	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	R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	197
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	71

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	20	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	17	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61(56)	61(72)	68(66)
	National	84(82)	85(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	13
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	16	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	57(69)	68(75)	71(81)
	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	9	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	6
	Girls	12	8	9
	Total	15	11	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65(30)	47(26)	65(41)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	6
	Girls	12	8	9
	Total	15	11	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48(26)	52(15)	57(19)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	150
Any other minority ethnic group	5

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	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)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31 : 1
Average class size	26

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	144

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22 : 1

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3 : 1
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	400,822.00
Total expenditure	410,538.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,919
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 940
Balance carried forward to next year	-9,716

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	197
Number of questionnaires 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.	69	25	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	38	13	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	38	13	0	6
The teaching is good.	56	31	13	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	19	19	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	19	6	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	25	6	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	69	25	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	25	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	25	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	31	38	0	19

## **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**

49. The quality of provision for children at the foundation stage gives pupils a sound basis to their education. They enjoy coming to school, developing good relationships with each other and their teachers and adjusting easily to the routine of school life. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below the national average, particularly in the key areas of early reading and mathematical development. Thorough planning and monitoring of children's experiences is having a positive impact on the quality of learning, as children follow the 'stepping stones' detailed in the national guidance on early learning goals. Most children will achieve these goals by the time they move to Year 1. Children with special educational needs make good progress, and procedures for identifying and supporting them appropriately are effective. For some children in both classes, however, teaching methods and organisation provide too little stimulation, limiting progress. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, but half the lessons observed during the inspection in reception were unsatisfactory, due mainly to the lack of sufficient pace to drive forward the pupils' learning.
50. Children attend the nursery for morning sessions only and are admitted in the term after their third birthday. This staggered admissions practice provides an appropriate system for ensuring that there is always a group of children in the nursery with experience of routines and organisation.
51. A new admissions system has been introduced for reception age children this September, enabling all nursery children of an appropriate age to move to full-time schooling in the reception class at the start of the school year. There are shared sessions during each week, when nursery and reception children may choose to go in either classroom for their learning.
52. Baseline assessment profiles of attainment are undertaken for all foundation stage children soon after admission to either class. Information from these assessments is used effectively to identify key learning requirements for each child

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

53. Children's development in this area is good overall. The majority of children in the foundation stage will achieve the early learning goals by the age of five. Effective social training in both classes ensures that children know the importance of classroom routines. They take turns easily, sometimes without direct guidance, and help each other over simple tasks such as inserting straws into cartons. They show real care and concern for each other. In structured activities they show good concentration and perseverance. Although children are well behaved, the pace of learning is generally too slow in both classes. There is rarely an air of excitement, and children spend too long sitting on the carpet together. The newly implemented 'plan, do and review' system is not yet achieving its purpose effectively in either class. There are good opportunities within the system, but at present there is too little adult intervention in activities, and children's learning is not sufficiently extended.



## **Communication, language and literacy**

54. In both the nursery and reception class children have good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. The daily 'circle times' enable children to talk about the planned activity. The teachers and support staff encourage children to talk purposefully about their chosen task, and to report back to the class about their success. Adults show that they value children's efforts in communicating, but at times, particularly in the nursery, they dominate the conversation too much and answer questions for the children.
55. Children in both classes enjoy books, handling them well and sharing them eagerly with adults and each other. They know that print tells a story and use pictures for information. Many reception class children are able to recognise some letters by sound and name, and to identify several characters from the reading scheme. They are beginning to learn key words. Higher attaining children are able to read from an appropriate book, and are beginning to build words. They know the meaning of 'author' and 'title'. All nursery children can identify their own names
56. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to explore writing and drawing. Supplies of paper, pens, crayons and pencils are readily available, and children use them purposefully when writing their names. They enjoy drawing and painting, but much of their development is left to chance in free-choice sessions. Most children show good control, however, and a mature pencil grip.

## **Mathematical development**

57. The effective focus on mathematics in the nursery enables children to make satisfactory progress when they enter school. A personal tally chart of 'well-done' badges encourages accurate counting skills by nursery children, and matching of some numerals is encouraged in outdoor play. Reception children are able to extend this learning when recognising and matching numbers up to ten, but only the more able children are yet able to record the numbers by themselves. The understanding of number value is still at an early stage for most children. Although there is good use of mathematical language in both classes "Shall we cut this in half?" "Line up behind each other" too few opportunities are taken to encourage children to develop their mathematical thinking further. In reception, adults spend time monitoring where children are working, or sitting with one group only not giving specific attention to the learning needs of others in the room. Nursery children practise pattern making with bead threading activities, and in both classes children develop their understanding through a range of activities such as sand and water play, sorting big and little objects and sequencing familiar events. These experiences will enable most children to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave reception, but at present not all the learning achieved in the nursery, such as number value concepts, is built on early enough in the reception class.

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

58. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Topics such as 'Special Occasions' encourage children to talk about their families and their experiences at home, and the growing of hyacinth bulbs enables children to observe the changes that take place as plants begin to flower. Some children were able to identify roots and leaves from pictures in books, and to talk about the plants' need for water to grow properly. A floating and sinking activity with inflated balloons created interest in both classes, but opportunities were often lost during this activity for children's curiosity to be

developed further. In both classrooms there is an 'investigations' table for children to observe striking features of the world, guiding them to use magnifying glasses and coloured viewers. However, these areas lack imagination and equipment and are rarely used by the children. Both classrooms have too little space in which children might get out and use large building bricks, limiting opportunities for the children to learn about structure and balance. They are developing an awareness of computers by using the mouse to 'draw' line pictures

### **Physical Development**

59. The children all make satisfactory progress in this area of learning, and most will achieve expected standards by the time they are five. There is a satisfactory range of equipment such as pegboards, play-dough and paintbrushes, to help children develop hand co-ordination. Nursery children have daily opportunities to play outside with an adequate range of toys and equipment. They can run, jump, hop and pedal, and are developing good throwing skills. The children use space well, are aware of each other and show well-developed body control. These skills are not built on in the reception class, however. Children perform at their own level, without guidance on how to improve.

### **Creative activities**

60. Attainment in this area is average by the time children move to Year 1. In the nursery, children create collage numerals, using materials and shiny paper, and develop sound cutting and sticking skills as they move to reception. They use modelling materials to roll, stretch, squeeze and shape, showing independence in their selection of tools. There is satisfactory provision for children to develop a sound sense of colour, and opportunities are made for children to learn the effects of mixing colours. Both classes have a range of musical instruments, easily accessible to the children, and these are used effectively in daily routines.

### **ENGLISH**

61. The Key Stage 2 results in English rose dramatically under the leadership of the new headteacher in 2000. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard more than doubled so that the total was only marginally below the average for similar schools. One major factor in this improvement is a careful targeting process and small 'booster' classes to enhance pupils' attainment.
62. Boys' attainment in the tests was significantly worse than the girls, whose attainment in both reading and writing was better than the national average. No boys attained the required standard in writing and the percentage who attained the standard in reading was 24 per cent below the national average. Although cohorts are not large, the results in both key stages highlight boys' underachievement as the key issue in raising standards in English.
63. Standards in English are below average overall. Girls attain standards that are in line with what is found nationally but the performance of boys is well below average. The overall judgement broadly reflects the findings of the last inspection report, which reported test results well below average at the end of both key stages and judged standards to be unsatisfactory by the time the pupils leave the school.
64. Pupils' achievement otherwise is broadly in line with what would be expected. Fewer

pupils attain the higher levels in tests at the end of both key stages than would be found nationally but the number of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average. As an illustration, over two-fifths of the current final year pupils are on the higher stages three to five of the register of special educational needs and three pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make appropriate progress.

65. Pupils' writing is better than the reading. There are good examples of descriptive writing in Year 6 and pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with sufficient opportunities for extended writing. Imaginative poetry was on display in a number of classrooms and older pupils are able to use metaphors and similes effectively. Pupils in Year 2 are also developing sound writing skills, reflecting the progress made in the last two years when more pupils attained the higher level in the Key Stage 1 national tests than is generally found. The standards of presentation are sound in Year 6 but variable in other years. Standards of spelling are unsatisfactory and the school has not yet fully implemented a central strategy to ensure improvement although time is spent profitably in short basic skills sessions each morning.
66. The teaching is sound overall. Pupils are managed consistently well both as a whole class and in group work. Lessons are planned effectively in line with the National Literacy Strategy and have clear educational objectives. Clear guidance is given to pupils. For instance, in Key Stage 2 they learn effectively how to write instructions to help different people in varying situations. The teaching of phonics is effective in Year 2. In Year 6 the teaching has such pace pupils rarely lose concentration. Within each class groups are given specific targets for both reading and writing. When the teaching is least effective, teachers' expectations are insufficiently high. The teachers' objectives are not always sufficiently sharply focussed on the standard they wish the pupils to achieve.
67. Standards in reading remain below average. There is a good supply of National Curriculum graded reading material by the entrance for parents and children to choose, but the English coordinator has wisely recognised the need to audit the range of reading materials. Reading record books, which are taken home, are completed inconsistently. Significant numbers of pupils are reading insufficiently to make the necessary progress. They have too few strategies for tackling unknown words and too many read without expression. It is clear that the boys' standards in reading are below those of the girls.
68. Standards in speaking and listening are sound. Pupils participate confidently in the introductions to the Literacy Hour and respond clearly to questions posed. They express lucidly what they have learnt in the plenary part of the lessons. They generally listen attentively to each other in whole class and group activities
69. There is still much to be done in English but there are clear signs of improvement, both in last year's Key Stage 2 tests and the work pupils are now producing. The coordinator has an effective grasp of the priorities and understands the issues and is leading by example. Last year the school exceeded its targets by a considerable amount and has set itself ambitious targets this year. These are realistic if the recommendations identified here are adopted.

## **MATHEMATICS**

70. Standards of attainment are below the national average by the end of Year 6. By the

end of Key Stage 2 pupils have made progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics, although overall standards are low. Most pupils add and subtract larger numbers accurately and more able pupils can find complementary numbers using two decimal places in the oral part of the numeracy lesson. Pupils in Year 5 understand the difference between the area and perimeter of a shape and can calculate measurement using different units of metric measure; the most perceptive were beginning to use the formula to calculate the circumference of a circle. Year 6 pupils were able to solve simple time problems using the 24 hour clock. Pupils benefit from clear planning and strong teaching in the later years of Key Stage 2 and mathematical performance is beginning to improve.

71. The pace of the main part of lessons in Key Stage 1 is not challenging enough for middle and high achieving pupils and subsequently the quantity of work done by the pupils is not enough to ensure skills are thoroughly learnt and practised. This is reflected in the current Key Stage 1 test results and those from previous years, with standards well below average.
72. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory or better. Teaching at Key Stage 2 has improved on the standards reported in the previous inspection but there has been no improvement at Key Stage 1. The effective part of most lessons is the oral introduction where teaching is conducted at a brisk pace. This challenges the alertness and mental agility of the pupils and helps to sustain their interest. In a year 4 class pupils were rounding numbers to tens and hundreds using place value cards. The pace was sustained by differentiated questioning, targeting pupils and encouraging pupils to try and answer questions posed. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. In lessons there is insufficient use of questioning in the main part of the numeracy lessons to ensure pupils draw on their knowledge and understanding of mathematics; tasks set to time limits would also sharpen pupil performance towards the end of the key stage.
73. The teachers generally manage pupils well because of the good rapport between them. However, in the class containing Year 3 pupils, their learning and achievement is not as good as it should be because they do not listen or behave as well as the older pupils. In a few classes the quality of presentation and quantity of mathematical written work is not consistent enough for pupils of this age to allow them to consolidate their learning.
74. Implementation of the National Numeracy Guidelines throughout the school is satisfactory. There is evidence of mathematics influencing other subjects. For example, pupils have used a computer graphics programme to create symmetrical patterns. Pupils with special educational needs are supported satisfactorily. They make sound progress.
75. The subject has an Action Plan and generally is well managed by the coordinator who has good subject knowledge and appropriate training. The coordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject but has insufficient opportunities at present to influence teaching and learning. An assessment system is in place and being used: this requires refining to focus more sharply on learning objectives.

## **SCIENCE**

76. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards in science are below average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, standards were well below average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. However, these results were considerably better than those of 1999.

Although standards have been well below the national average since 1996, there has been a steady improvement since 1998 and the gap between the school's results and national results has narrowed. Boys and girls have attained equally. The teachers are paying much more attention to scientific enquiry than was found in the previous inspection and this is helping to raise standards. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.

77. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The previous inspection found it was often unsatisfactory. A good emphasis on scientific enquiry means that the pupils investigate, through practical experiments, the conditions necessary for yeast to grow, rates of evaporation, and differences between rocks. However, many pupils lack confidence and independence in carrying out these investigations. They rely too much on the teachers and they find it difficult to think of questions that would form a basis for the enquiry. Most of the pupils understand the concept of a fair scientific test, but they lack the basic scientific knowledge on which to make reasonable predictions as to the outcomes of their experiments. Some pupils in Year 5, when investigating evaporation confused steam with smoke. Many pupils' recording skills are weak and are often hampered by poor literacy skills. There is little evidence of information and communication technology (ICT) being used widely to enhance learning and recording, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Although a previous whole term's work in Year 6 was completely unmarked, current marking is good and often helpful: "You must use your scientific knowledge to support your prediction". An analysis of pupils' work indicates that they have previously investigated healthy diets and sound travelling through different materials. They have researched information about the sun, earth and moon and they have a sound understanding of the ways in which their bodies change during puberty.
78. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in science are below average, which is a decline from the findings of the previous inspection. In the end of Key Stage 1 Teacher Assessment for the year 2000 no pupils reached the higher National Curriculum Level 3. Girls significantly outperformed boys. Teaching here is satisfactory. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that they have investigated simple electrical circuits, the conditions necessary for the growth of seeds, magnetism and animal habitats.
79. The recently appointed coordinator has made a sound start to managing the subject. She recognises that standards in science need to improve and, to that effect, she has developed a good action plan. Resources to support learning are just adequate, but their storage and accessibility is unsatisfactory.

#### **ART AND DESIGN.**

80. The satisfactory standards seen during the last inspection have been maintained. Only two art lessons were seen during this inspection, both in key stage 2, but evidence of attainment was also gained from discussions with pupils and scrutiny of work around the school. The art curriculum is now planned from a coherent set of study units, and there is evidence that this development is beginning to enable pupils to build a satisfactory range of skills and knowledge as they move through the school. This indicates some improvement in provision since the last inspection report, but the very limited resources and the lack of appropriate methods for recording pupils' progress remain issues to be addressed. The quality of displays is variable. Only a few areas provide a stimulating learning environment which value and promote pupils' good work.
81. By the age of eleven, pupils show satisfactory progress. They demonstrate appropriate development in the use of tone, shape and texture. They are able to record their

observations effectively, and to enlarge the scale of their drawings accurately. There were good examples of this in the work of Year 6 pupils, who had produced detailed drawings of local buildings and were able to use acetate grids to transfer favourite pictures from their sketch books onto squared paper, paying appropriate attention to detail. Sketching and shading skills were encouraged by the good teaching strategies that were used, and pupils were given guidance throughout the lesson on how to improve their work. Pupils were comparing their work with that of Monet and Lowry, although they were unable to identify any significant features from either artist. Year 4 pupils showed great pride in their paintings of 'dreamy landscapes', as they learned about perspective and focus, and developed satisfactory control of their brushes or crayons. Again, good teaching ensured that pupils understood the purpose and nature of their work, and helped them to attempt comparisons with a sketch by Raoul Duffy that was used in the teacher's introduction to the lesson.

82. Younger children in the school have opportunities to use computers to produce pictures in the style of Pollock and Piet Mondrian. Art workbooks contain examples of the different media pupils use to convey and communicate ideas – chalk, paint, pencil drawings and various materials for collage work. Presentation is often unsatisfactory, and there are few examples of teachers offering guidance on improvement when marking this work. However, pupils enjoy art, and talk with enthusiasm about their drawing skills.
83. Art has not been a major focus in the school's recent development, but the co-ordinator has maintained standards by monitoring teachers' planning and offering suitable advice and guidance to her colleagues.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

84. Standards are average in design and technology. There is improvement overall since the last inspection, which found that early progress was not maintained in pupils' learning as they moved through Key Stage 2. Some design skills were highlighted as unsatisfactory, such as the use of drawing plans, and pupils' ability to evaluate their work effectively. These areas for development are being addressed through newly implemented study units. There is still some way to go, however, before the school has a robust system for ensuring that pupils build up their learning progressively in this subject from the nursery to Year 6. Improvement is hampered by the inadequate quality and supply of resources and by some inappropriate expectations of pupils' work in their books. But standards are now average across both key stages, following the introduction of a coherent framework, which is used to guide teachers' planning.
85. A suitable amount of time is allocated to the teaching of design and technology throughout each year group. Teachers' planning generally follows the published study units, and this is beginning to engender an enthusiasm across the school as the teachers' knowledge of the subject develops, raising the staff's expectations of pupils' capability. At present, however, some of the activities offered to younger pupils are not appropriate for the age of the children. Lessons involve over-long sessions using literacy skills such as listening and writing, rather than focusing on the more creative elements. Although the pupils try hard to complete the tasks, the atmosphere is not stimulating or inspiring, and work output is significantly reduced.
86. Teaching is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn the early skills of designing, using pictures and words to show what they want to do. Most pupils could explain what they wanted to make, and which tools and materials would be best suited to achieve the finished product. Some of the more able pupils could say why they made these choices.

However, there was no opportunity in these lessons for pupils to put their designs to the test, and this was frustrating for all the children. Despite this, pupils enjoy the subject, work well together, and are proud of their achievements. Talking with the pupils indicated that they had clear ideas about what they would use to join their components together when the time came, and what they would look for in their finished products, such as 'wheels that moved' on their vehicles. In Year 5, pupils learned that skills are needed to measure ingredients accurately as they followed instructions for bread making. This required significant teamwork, and pupils supported each other well. Their understanding of cooking was enhanced by an opportunity to taste all the finished products, and by the more urgent need to clear up.

87. Pupils' workbooks, containing examples of other projects such as designs for money containers or slippers, indicate that they make satisfactory progress through the school in developing appropriate skills and knowledge. The quality of presentation in books requires significant improvement, however.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

88. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards in geography are average, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. This judgement is based on observation of lessons in Year 5, on discussions with pupils and on an analysis of pupils' work. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.
89. The quality of teaching and learning observed in Year 5 was satisfactory. The teacher ensured that the pupils were clear about what it is that they were expected to have learnt by the end of lessons. She used questioning well to extend the pupils' understanding of how difficult it is for many people in Third World countries to obtain a regular, clean water supply. They understand how dirty water and a lack of sanitation in many countries leads to disease. The teacher made useful comparisons with the recent floods in England and Wales and this made learning more relevant for the pupils. An appropriate emphasis was placed on mapwork, as the pupils had to mark on an outline map of the school, ways in which water could be brought to their classroom from other sources in the school.
90. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that Key Stage 2 pupils have participated in local fieldwork to make learning more relevant. They have investigated whether or not the High Street in Lane End should be closed to traffic. They know how industry can be classified into primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and they classify local industries appropriately. The pupils know how settlements develop. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress in developing their early mapping skills. They have drawn simple pictorial maps of their route to school. They have talked about what they like and dislike in the school grounds and about how things might be improved. In an investigation into road safety locally, the pupils have carried out a traffic survey and they have observed where vehicles are parked. They have written letters about this.
91. The newly appointed coordinator has made a sound start to managing the subject, through organising resources more effectively. These are now adequate, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, Year 4 pupils have learnt about Vision Aid for the Third World and the need for environmental conservation and recycling and Year 6 pupils are involved in a local initiative to revitalise a local pond area.

## **HISTORY**

92. Standards are better than they were at the last inspection and are now similar to what is found in other schools. Pupils are able to give convincing reasons why historical events happened as they did and can recognise clear contrasts between people's experiences, in for example, schooling and family life in different historical periods.
93. The teaching is always at least sound and occasionally good or very good. In a well taught lesson in Year 4 about the Blitz in World War 2 there was a hive of activity and industry. Pupils were able to empathise with their predecessors as an imaginative range of activities effectively recreated the period. The teaching of the oldest pupils is more searching, developing enquiry skills and the ability to scan original resources for key facts as they compare Victorian schooling with that of today.
94. The school makes carefully considered use of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority Schemes of Work. The coordinator has a clear grasp of priorities.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

95. The standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average when compared to schools nationally. Since the opening of the new computer suite pupils receive regular weekly lessons in information technology and their skills are improving in most aspects of the subject.
96. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident enough to explore the use of keys on the keyboard to enhance their writing and use a graphics package to draw pictures. They are beginning to understand how to program a simple robot's movement.
97. In Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of how computers and computer devices work. Pupils in Year 3 can receive and send e-mails and they are able to develop and refine text messages. Pupils in Year 6 have produced a school information booklet using a presentation package. They have shown skills in importing pictures and sounds to their document, as well as being able to be creative in the use of colour, font size and style.
98. However, pupils have no significant experiences of control technology or Internet use. The school is not yet in a position to offer pupils' experiences in using a scanner, digital camera or other programmable devices.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Planning for work in the computer suite is sound and pupils show interest and enthusiasm. The use of information technology throughout the curriculum is beginning to be encouraged and work was seen in art, English, science and mathematics. The cross curricular work in information and communication technology needs to be developed further and a more challenging mathematical computer programme is required for the higher achievers in Years 5 and 6 than the one presently used.
100. Teachers' knowledge is satisfactory. In-service training has been a recent feature both for teaching staff and classroom support assistants and the subject is being taught with confidence. Planning in information technology is thorough; an assessment system for assessing pupils' performance is in place and being used effectively in some classes. An action plan for current development is detailed and the subject coordinator has a clear idea of what is needed to further raise standards.



## **MUSIC**

101. Standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their music making activities.
102. Pupils in a Year 4 class were able to compose and perform simple tunes using the pentatonic scale. The lesson was effectively linked to a previous history lesson by the use of descriptive phrases from the Blitz in World War 2 to which music was added. Pupils are able to listen to music and respond to it in a variety of ways. They use technical vocabulary accurately.
103. Pupils in Year 6 worked in groups on cyclical rhythm patterns using both percussion and the human voice. They used Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' as a source for chants and the Kaherva cyclic patterns from Africa for their rhythms. The majority of pupils in both age groups used the instruments sensibly and worked collaboratively.
104. Pupils have the opportunity to listen and experience music of different composers when entering the hall for collective worship.
105. The school has made very good external links with the City of London Sinfonia Orchestra and is a partner in a two-year project that involves pupils in workshops, public concert performing and an original composition piece.
106. Teachers follow a scheme of work that gives them some confidence to teach the subject and ensures that skills are taught in a systematic way. The profile of music in the school is sound and there are extra instrumental music lessons and extra-curricular activities in the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

107. Standards in physical education are average. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, which was critical of attainment, teaching and behaviour in Key Stage 2.
108. Key Stage 1 remains better overall but Key Stage 2 has improved. Older pupils now harness their liveliness into enthusiastic participation in activities. These activities are no longer noisy and characterised by argument and a refusal to accept decisions. Good relationships and effective pupil management by teachers ensure that an orderly atmosphere is maintained for learning. Teaching is always sound in Key Stage 2 and generally sound, but occasionally very good in Key Stage 1. A dance lesson in Year 2 was very well taught by the teacher. Her excellent subject knowledge motivated the pupils to perform particularly well in movement and shape formation. Both the teacher and pupils effectively demonstrated teaching points. Full opportunities were also given for pupils to observe and evaluate the performance of others.
109. Pupils' games skills are now better developed. In Year 4 they can understand the key skills of tag rugby, while in Year 5 they play netball effectively, appreciating, for example, the need to pass in different ways according to their position and closeness to a teammate.
110. The coordinator has been absent for an extended period of time but the school has taken advantage of external support from the Top Sport Programme and Wycombe Wanderers Football Club to enhance the pupils' learning in lesson time. However, there are no extra-curricular opportunities that would allow the pupils to pursue their interests

further.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

111. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. This judgement is based on observation of one lesson in Year 6, on discussions with pupils and on an analysis of their work. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.
112. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson observed was good. The teacher used questioning well to consolidate the knowledge that the pupils had gained from visiting two local churches. The pupils understand the significance to Christians of some of the features and symbols within these churches. The teacher lit a candle and gave the pupils a good opportunity to pause and reflect on what ideas this brought to mind.
113. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that those in Key Stage 2 have reflected on some important events in the lives of their families and on possessions that are special to them. In this way, the subject is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, an aspect that was criticised in the last inspection. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of aspects of some major religions other than Christianity, including Judaism, Buddhism and Islam. They have written interesting letters describing the angel's appearance to Mohammed.
114. Key Stage 1 pupils know about some Bible stories, such as Joseph, Noah and the Good Samaritan. They know about Christian baptisms and they have designed some effective christening cards. They know why Hindus recently celebrated Diwali. Year 1 pupils have participated in role-play about giving and receiving gifts and they have related this to the story of the three wise men and the gifts they brought for Jesus.
115. The headteacher is temporarily responsible for managing the subject. She recognises that the subject policy needs updating. Resources for learning are just adequate, as religious artefacts can be readily loaned from the local multicultural resource centre. There is a reasonable range of books on major world religions in the school library. Learning is enhanced by visits to the Elim centre and other local churches and by visiting clergy.