

# INSPECTION REPORT

**TORRIDON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**INFANT DEPARTMENT**

Catford, London

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100708

Headteacher: Mrs J Braisted

Reporting inspector: Anne Currie  
25429

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 225385

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Torridon Road Catford London
Postcode:	SE6 1TG
Telephone number:	0208 698 5822
Fax number:	0208 698 5822
Appropriate authority:	Lewisham Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Paul Jeffery
Date of previous inspection:	January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Anne Currie 25429	Registered inspector	Mathematics. Geography. Physical education. Equal opportunities. Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.	School's results and pupils' achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
Deborah Paquette 19660	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?
Robert Allen 23413	Team inspector	English. Religious education. Art. History. Music.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Sally Handford 21171	Team inspector	Science. Design and technology. Information and communication technology. English as an additional language. Special educational needs.	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

WES World-wide Education Service Ltd  
Canada House  
272 Field End Road  
Eastcote  
Middlesex  
HA4 9NA

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>27</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is the Infant department of Torridon Primary School. It is run as a separate school, with its own headteacher but with a joint governing body. The department is larger than the average infant school and it caters for pupils, both boys and girls, from three to seven years old. The school is oversubscribed and has a waiting list. It currently has 226 full-time pupils on roll and this number will rise to 270 in January 2001. Fifty-two pupils attend the nursery part-time.

The school is situated in the London Borough of Lewisham and has been part of an Education Action Zone since April 2000. Pupils come from a wide variety of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Fourteen per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals: this is broadly in line with the national average. Twenty-one pupils have English as an additional language, and eight are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The main languages other than English are Turkish, Greek, Tamil and Urdu. Only about half of the children in the reception classes come from the nursery. Children's attainment on entry to the school is very varied, although overall it is average. A significant minority of pupils new to the school have behavioural difficulties and personal and social skills which are below those normally found. Approximately 21 per cent of pupils are considered by the school as having special educational needs. This is broadly in line with the national average, with pupils needing support with specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems or speech and communication difficulties. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average.

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

This is a very good school. There is a purposeful, happy atmosphere and relationships are very good. Standards are high. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and the majority is good and often very good. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and she is extremely well supported by the deputy head. The school gives very good value for money.

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

- Standards achieved, particularly in reading, mathematics and science, are high.
- There is outstanding leadership by the headteacher.
- All adults are very committed to the school's work. They offer positive role models for pupils and relationships within the school are extremely good.
- There is a very broad and rich variety of experiences for pupils.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and for cultural development it is excellent.
- Communication with parents is very good.

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

- The setting of detailed targets for individual pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs.
- The assessment of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language leading to well targeted support.
- The extension of thorough, consistent assessment procedures to all 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 was last inspected in January 1996, when it was found to be a very good school. Since then the school has made good progress towards addressing the areas for action identified in the report. It has also identified its own priorities and worked hard to raise standards still further. The middle management team has been strengthened and now ensures that teaching and planning are consistent across the school. Weaknesses in teaching have been addressed and the overall standard of teaching has improved. The school has also raised the standards achieved, especially in mathematics, in which

pupils now achieve standards similar to those in English and science. Money has been used to provide six new classrooms which have greatly improved the learning environment. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			#similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	D	B	A	A
Writing	E	D	C	C
Mathematics	D	A	A*	A*

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

#Similar schools are selected on the basis of the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The table shows that in the 1999 national tests at the end of Year 2, the school's results were well above the national average in reading and mathematics. In mathematics they were in the highest five per cent nationally. Results were average in writing. When compared to schools that have pupils from similar backgrounds, performance in reading and mathematics was well above average and it was average in writing. The table also shows the marked improvement in the results over the last four years. Inspection evidence confirms pupils' high standards in English, mathematics, science, history, art and religious education. Most pupils make good gains in learning. In other subjects standards are at least in line with those found nationally for pupils of this age. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make steady gains in learning. The results in 2000 (for which the comparative figures are not yet available) show an improvement in writing which reflects the school's increased emphasis on that aspect of English.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes. They generally gain considerable enjoyment from coming to school and taking part in all the activities organised for them. Pupils work hard and they are keen to please.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Standards of behaviour are good in lessons and at break and lunch times. There are occasional examples of unacceptable conduct from a very small number of pupils, but pupils understand what is expected of them very well.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show very good personal development. They have very good relationships with their peers and adults. Pupils are kind and caring. They respond enthusiastically to the responsibilities they are given.
Attendance	Attendance is good and better than the national average.





## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

Teaching is good across the whole curriculum. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in 81 per cent of lessons, with 26 per cent very good and five per cent excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The use of specialist teachers in dance, games and music has a positive impact on standards in those subjects. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage them well. They create a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms which help pupils to concentrate and learn well.

Pupils make good gains in learning as a result of the good teaching they receive. The school promotes the progress of all pupils well, with work in class well matched to individual pupils' needs. The provision for pupils with special needs and English as an additional language is good. They receive good additional support.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good for all pupils. It is broad, relevant and well balanced, with considerable enrichment provided through after-school activities and special occasions.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. However, targets set for individual pupils are insufficiently specific and detailed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good but assessment is not sufficiently rigorous to give detailed targets and to guide additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are very good. The provision for their cultural (especially multi-cultural) development is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. It consistently promotes their welfare. Everyone follows the good, clear guidelines and agreed strategies to encourage good behaviour. Arrangements for assessing what pupils know and understand in each subject have some weaknesses, but they are under review.

The school works well in partnership with parents. There is a very good range of information available to parents, including details of their child's progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. The contribution by the middle management team, especially the deputy head, is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are supportive of the work of the school and make a clear contribution towards its development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a clear and accurate view of its current performance and of its future development needs. Educational priorities are clearly identified.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management and control are very good. The school uses its financial resources very effectively. Additional funding is well targeted to improve the standards achieved by all pupils. The school appropriately applies the principles of best value to its spending and provides very good value for money.

Staffing levels are very good and the school benefits from experienced support staff. Resources are good. The new building has substantially enhanced the learning environment for pupils in Years 1 and 2. It has also enabled the provision of a library and computer suite.

## 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>• They are confident about approaching the school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work their children are expected to do at home.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Parents have a very positive view of the school. This was shown in the response to the questionnaires and by comments at the parents' meeting.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. It cannot find evidence to support the second of their criticisms. There is in fact a very good range of information for parents, including details of how their child is progressing. The school also adopts an open-door policy so that parents can come into school and discuss their child's work with the teachers. The inspection team agrees with parents that the approach to homework is not always consistent. The school is working to improve this, for example through the introduction of regular homework in mathematics.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the nursery in September or January and usually attend part-time for three terms before transferring to reception classes. Children enter the reception classes in September or January of the academic year in which they are five. Only about half the children in the reception classes have had the benefit of attending the nursery. The others come from a variety of playgroups and nurseries. The attainment on entry to the nursery is very variable, with about 30 per cent of children achieving standards in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy that are below those found nationally. Children often find it very difficult to share, take turns and follow instructions. They have limited vocabularies and use gestures or single words to communicate. Of the children coming directly into the reception classes, attainment is similarly variable. This year at least four children have significant behavioural difficulties. Overall, attainment on entry to the school is judged to be similar to that found nationally and this is confirmed by the baseline assessments.
2. Children in the nursery and reception classes benefit from the good range of activities on offer and good teaching. There is very good emphasis on children's personal and social development. As a result, all children make at least steady gains in learning and most are expected to reach the standards expected nationally by the end of their year in reception.
3. Over the three years 1997 to 1999 there has been a steady improvement in the school's results in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in mathematics show the biggest improvement over the three years. They have risen from below the national average in 1997 to very high in comparison with the results for similar schools selected on the basis of the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The results reflect the good leadership for the subject and the good training for teachers, which resulted from the school's inclusion in the pilot scheme for the National Numeracy Strategy. Both lead to well-focused teaching that meets the needs of all pupils. There is no marked difference in the attainment of boys and girls over the same period. In 1999, pupils' attainment in reading was well above the national average for similar schools. For the same year attainment in writing was similar to the national average. In 2000, the results in national tests were broadly similar to those in the previous year. In reading they fell back slightly, but in mathematics all pupils achieved the standard expected. In both subjects and in the results of teachers' assessments in science, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) fell back. This was predicted in the assessment made of these children when they first entered the school, as this showed that the proportion of children exceeding the standards expected was lower than in the previous year. In writing, the results improved and this reflects the additional teaching allocated to this subject. The scrutiny of the work of last year's Year 2 pupils confirms the results attained in the tests.
4. The results achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 show that they make good gains in learning as they progress through the school. This is supported by evidence from lesson observations. It results from well-planned lessons which are well focused on pupils' needs and from skilled teaching. This is especially noticeable in Year 2 where a high proportion of teaching is very good. Standards have been generally maintained across the curriculum since the last inspection with a marked improvement in the

standards attained in mathematics, bringing it in line with standards in reading, writing and science.

5. Standards in English are good. Pupils learn to listen carefully and they develop good speaking and listening skills. This is encouraged well through the use of whole-class sessions that give pupils the opportunity to talk about what they are doing and explain their ideas. In reading, pupils use a range of strategies to read unknown words and they begin to express their ideas about the text that they are reading. Pupils learn to punctuate correctly using capital letters and full stops. Story times are used well to provide stimulus for writing activities. The school implements the National Literacy Strategy well. Additional support is well focused to enable pupils across the ability range to improve. For example, there are extension groups for writing and additional support for reading. There is a weakness in handwriting with poorly formed letters. There are good opportunities to use and extend literacy across the curriculum. The wide variety of activities provided, especially the visits and visitors to the school, give good stimulus for writing, for example in history and geography. In the reception classes and nursery there is good emphasis on extending children's language skills, especially in vocabulary and sentence structure.
6. In mathematics, standards in numeracy are good. The National Numeracy Strategy is clearly understood and staff generally feel very confident in using it. Pupils develop good skills in mental mathematics. The emphasis on investigations is successful and gives pupils the opportunity to talk about what they are doing and to learn to express clearly how they arrive at their answers. Many pupils do not take enough care in forming numbers correctly or presenting their work neatly. Numeracy skills are incorporated in other subjects appropriately. For example, data handling is used in geography to display the results of various surveys, and timelines are used in history. In the nursery, good emphasis is placed on the use of counting in games sessions.
7. In science standards are good. Pupils make good gains in knowledge and learn skills to help them carry out investigations. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory and improving as staff confidence grows, and pupils have regular opportunities to extend their skills. The new computer suite has only been in full operation for just over a term but it is already having a beneficial effect. In history, art and religious education standards are good. In all other subjects standards are at least in line with those found nationally for pupils of this age. Overall pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress in their learning. This is because of the good levels of support provided to help them achieve in lessons. This is a tribute to the skills of the adults involved, as the individual education plans often lack specific targets and they do not contain clear details of the strategies to be used. There is particularly good support in literacy and numeracy lessons to enable pupils to do as well as their peers. There is some evidence that in other lessons, such as science, when these pupils are unsupported in recording their work, they do not achieve as well as their peers.
9. Pupils of above average ability are identified and provided with appropriate challenge. There are arrangements in place for groups to receive regular extended reading and writing sessions. This additional support contributes to the high proportion of pupils achieving above the level expected for their age in national tests. Many of the pupils for whom English is an additional language reach standards in line with those expected for children of their age. A small minority in Years 1 and 2, who are still in the early stages

of acquiring competence in English, need additional support to understand and complete the tasks set.

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

10. Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They are motivated, keen to learn and enthusiastic about school life. This was very evident from the large number of pupils who actively participated in the well-structured extra-curricular activities and the School Council meeting held during the week of the inspection.
11. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, and when moving around the school, is good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils are courteous, friendly and helpful, and respond well to the high expectations of staff. There are about five pupils who display challenging behaviour in the school. However, their needs are well identified and the school has clear and positive strategies for managing their behaviour. The style of teaching is enabling pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school is working very hard to ensure that the level of exclusion is minimal. There has only been one exclusion in the last year. Parents attending the Parents' Meeting before the inspection supported the view that the school works hard to promote good behaviour. No litter or graffiti are present in the school. Most pupils respect and care for the school's property and environment.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good. This is encouraged through personal and social education lessons, circle time, the School Council, pupil monitors, achievement assemblies and the 'Healthy School' project. Pupils' personal development has a very beneficial impact on their attainment and progress.
13. Relationships overall are a strength of the school. Very good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and adults. The relationships in school between parents and staff are also very good. All staff know the pupils well. Most pupils work well collaboratively and support each other in their learning. Most pupils show respect to staff, to each other and to visitors. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and show initiative when fulfilling a number of tasks around the school. They respond well to doing basic tasks in the classroom, at assemblies and in the playground.
14. All classes contain a few pupils whose behaviour is unsatisfactory. Teachers work very closely with support staff to control and modify the behaviour of these pupils and to ensure that the disruption to the rest of the class is kept to a minimum. In many cases the strategies used to help pupils' improve their behaviour make a good contribution to the personal development of these pupils. The considerable and consistent support is a key factor in improving the attitudes of these pupils towards their learning.
15. Attendance is good and above the national average. The school has a very comprehensive policy on attendance and has implemented a number of good strategies to improve attendance. The good attendance record of the pupils makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school.
16. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to those who support them, and they try hard to improve. They work well in groups with adults and their peers. Pupils with English as an additional language are confident and enjoy school. They are well integrated in classes and relationships between all pupils are good. The school secures these good attitudes by the very good strategies in place to maintain their self-esteem, for example having a weekly focus on one of the community languages. During the

week of the inspection, pupils were learning to greet each other in Turkish. There was also the opportunity in Year 2 to share a story told in Turkish and English.

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

17. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Teaching is good overall with some very good aspects and this contributes to pupils' good learning. All teaching is at least satisfactory and 81 per cent is good or better. Thirty-one per cent is very good or excellent. Teaching is now more consistent across all year groups, but there is a higher proportion of very good teaching by the Year 2 teachers.
18. The learning of children in the nursery and reception classes is good as a result of predominantly good teaching. The teachers create a warm, secure and well-structured environment that provides a good atmosphere in which the young children who have very recently entered the school are already learning well. There is good understanding of how young children learn. The nursery nurse makes an especially valuable contribution to the provision made for children in the nursery. All staff ensure that children settle quickly and happily, and soon learn the daily routines and what is expected of them. There is a strong commitment to the development of the required elements of their early learning. Their personal, social and emotional development is fostered through the good teamwork between the adults, a consistent approach to pupil management and the positive role models they present. Communication, language and literacy and mathematical knowledge are developed through planned opportunities for children to experience an adapted literacy and numeracy framework. Teachers' planning includes a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, and to experience a full range of creative opportunities. There are well planned and organised sessions in which children can develop physically. Relationships are good with parents. On occasions the behaviour of a small minority of children slows down the pace for the rest of the class.
19. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is generally good or better and this leads to good learning. Teachers provide well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop language and literacy skills and to develop their mathematical and scientific knowledge. Pupils learn well as a result of teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the requirements for other subjects: art, ICT, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education. Planning is good and lessons are well prepared, with resources used well to help pupils to achieve. There is a steady build-up of knowledge and skills with sessions starting from what pupils have learnt in previous lessons. Teaching is frequently engaging and purposeful, so that pupils' desire to learn is stimulated. Lesson objectives are always clearly stated and shared with the class. The expected outcomes are shared in 'What teachers are looking for'. For example, in a mathematics lesson: 'children using unifix to count back'. This enables the teacher and pupils to assess progress.
20. Teachers manage their pupils very well and have consistent expectations of their behaviour. Relationships are good, so that there is always a positive learning environment. All adults who are involved with the pupils maintain this consistency in approach. During the inspection there was a significant improvement in behaviour as pupils settled to the routine and structure of lessons at this very early stage in the school year. Teachers also have high expectations of what pupils can learn. Additional staff are well deployed and given training so that they give good support to identified groups of pupils, those of below average ability and those with special educational needs, to

enable them to make steady progress in their learning. The pace of lessons is generally good, but on occasions in Year 1 it slows and as a result pupils' attention wanders.

21. While teaching is always at least satisfactory there are some areas for improvement, which are linked to assessment. There is a need for more awareness of the particular and individual requirements of pupils with special educational needs, with more detailed targets set in their individual education plans. The match of extra support to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language could be improved through accurate assessment and a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs. The absence of consistent, thorough assessment procedures in all subjects means that planning of future work is not always clearly based on what pupils already know.
22. Teachers provide pupils who have special educational needs with good support in literacy and numeracy lessons, with activities adapted to their needs so that they learn well. Where the special needs teacher or learning support assistants give direct support, this is of high quality, and it makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. There are effective systems for support staff to evaluate pupils' progress in lessons and to identify achievement and aspects that need consolidating. In situations where there is no additional adult support, tasks and material are not always satisfactorily modified to enable pupils to attain at the same level as their peers.
23. Teaching assistants have received training in techniques for supporting pupils with special educational needs. There is unsatisfactory detail in pupils' individual education plans to enable teachers and support staff to target their individual learning needs, so that they are not always able to make satisfactory progress. Pupils with statements receive good quality support from their own trained support assistants and they make satisfactory progress as a result. In addition, teachers identify those pupils capable of higher attainment who can benefit from greater challenge, and they are provided with suitable extension activities.
24. Pupils with English as an additional language, and those for whom English is the first language who come from minority ethnic backgrounds, are given specific support by a teacher provided from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. There is a good and appropriate emphasis on developing their speaking and listening, literacy skills and mathematical understanding. Where appropriate, the teacher works with these pupils out of the classroom, following the same curriculum and group activities as their peers. This is mainly effective in helping them to develop their understanding and use of English.
25. The teaching of English is mainly good and frequently very good with some excellent teaching, so that learning is almost always good. The planning and organisation of lessons are areas of strength and these ensure that time is used effectively. Questioning is effective and open-ended so that pupils are encouraged to develop their responses. Teachers are confident in implementing the National Literacy Strategy, and the timing of the different activities is appropriate. Word and sentence level work is very effective and there is a positive and lively introduction to phonics so that children learn their letter sounds quickly and thoroughly. Teachers and support staff ensure good support for group activities. More emphasis is needed on the improvement of pupils' handwriting. Work is often untidy and letters and numbers are poorly formed.
26. The numeracy strategy is implemented well. Teaching is well organised, with good resources used to support pupils' learning and to stimulate their interest. Teachers use the summary of the lesson effectively to check pupils' understanding and to reinforce



new learning. The teaching of science is good with very secure subject expertise and effective use of first-hand experiences.

27. Teaching in all other areas of the curriculum is never less than satisfactory, and it is frequently good or very good. There are strengths in the teaching of ICT, religious education, history and art. Subject specialist instructors greatly enhance pupils' learning in games, dance and music. They provide skilled teaching and inspire pupils to work hard and achieve well. Well-targeted and regular additional support is provided by an experienced reading support teacher to those pupils who have the potential to achieve at a higher level.
28. Overall, the improved quality of teaching throughout the school is making a positive impact on standards. A particular strength is the consistency with which teachers and other adults reinforce positive behaviour through the use of praise and rewards. Pupils respond with pride to these expectations, and most quickly learn what is acceptable. This enables pupils to develop good, positive attitudes so that they respond well in lessons and make good, and often very good, gains in learning. In the majority of lessons seen pupils were acquiring new knowledge and skills, developing their ideas, and increasing their understanding. Teachers and other adults ensure that the pupils are taught within a secure environment in which there is mutual respect. They provide pupils with positive role models in which pupils can successfully develop personally and socially.

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

29. Planning remains very good, and management through the year group structure has been strengthened since the last inspection. The breadth and richness of the curriculum are strengths of the school. It is balanced and relevant to all pupils' needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but with some weakness in organisation and in the direction of support.
30. All elements of the curriculum are in place according to national requirements. The school has made good progress in modifying its planning to meet the demands of the new curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are in successful operation, and the school has gone to considerable trouble to ensure that the rest of the curriculum has in no way suffered as a result of the priority given to these two core subjects. The length of the taught day is in line with national guidelines, and the time allocation across all subjects is well balanced. To see what the school offers to pupils in terms of timetabling alone would, however, be unjust. The opportunities for enrichment are many and varied, and they provide opportunities for pupils to learn in a vivid and memorable way through frequent visits - to the Natural History Museum, to London Zoo, to the theatre, and to a farm, among many others. There are many visitors to the school who expand pupils' horizons. They include a storyteller at Diwali, a farmer with his animals, a policeman in Victorian costume, various acting groups, the Astrodrome Light Show, and, during the inspection and Olympics week, a close relative of a senior member of staff as a Greek athlete. Further curricular enrichment is provided through the unusually large number of clubs and activities which take place outside lesson hours, and which are very popular among pupils. Overall, this provision is judged as outstanding. The school makes full, thorough and effective use of the resources available in the local and wider community.
31. The curriculum is supported by a clear set of subject policies, and schemes of work which have been or are being developed from the new National Curriculum and the

guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). As a result of the recent publication of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, the programme for this subject is in need of review and development. Good policies for personal and health are also in place, covering health, sex and drugs education, and equal opportunities.

32. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage, so that they can receive appropriate support within lessons. On occasion they are withdrawn for specific targeted support, such as during the group activity sessions of the literacy hour. There are additional sessions to support reading development. However, targets in individual education plans lack sufficient detail of pupils' individual needs for them to guide the planning of tasks and activities.
33. The teacher provided through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant gives additional effective support to pupils with English as an additional language in the early stages of competence. He shares his expertise with the other teachers to provide advice on how to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. There are effective, targeted sessions in which pupils are helped to develop their understanding and extend their vocabulary. The teacher provides good support for newly entered children in the foundation stage to help them to settle into the routine of the class.
34. The school makes good use of the community to extend its curriculum and to enhance pupils' learning. The school is now part of a local Education Action Zone and finances from this are helping the school to extend its provision, for example through more after-school clubs and the employment of a writer-in-residence next term. There are good links with other local schools within the local education authority, and a particularly good relationship with Torricon Junior School, to which all infant pupils progress at the end of Key Stage 1. These good links between the two departments ensure that the transition between the two schools takes place smoothly. Staff have also held joint meetings and this helps to ensure continuity in pupils' learning.
35. The school meets the statutory requirements for the daily act of collective worship in full. There is always a moment for thought, reflection or prayer (according to pupils' own faiths), marked by the lighting of a candle. Assemblies are given a sense of occasion by the use of music and role-play, and by their use as a chance to celebrate what the school values. The very good provision for spiritual development is supported by the thorough programme of religious education, which focuses upon Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism, as well as upon pupils' own spirituality – their thoughts and feelings, and those of other people.
36. Provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. Teachers have high expectations, which are clearly expressed. The school's Code of Conduct is on display – and there is also a Code for the Playground. Pupils are reminded of what is acceptable and what is not, and asked to stop and think about anything they have done which they should take steps to put right. This reinforces their developing sense of right and wrong, in association with the school's very good provision for social development. There is a continuous emphasis upon consideration for others, and the effect of pupils' actions upon other people: "Was that a kind thing to do?" "How do you think it makes him/her/me feel?". The efficient way in which pupils clear up after lessons demonstrates some of the success of the social provision, as does the confident way in which pupils speak without forgetting to think first and provide a sensible answer. Pupils are chosen to represent their peers on the School Council, which meets regularly and reports back to full assemblies. Their discussions and recommendations are taken seriously, and

responses are provided as well as – wherever possible – appropriate action. The effect of both moral and social elements of the curriculum is to demonstrate value for each individual pupil and to celebrate his or her success. The 'Shiny Book' records all kinds of achievement – in behaviour, in school work – and the aim is to ensure that every child appears in it. This positive encouragement confers confidence upon each pupil and empowers and motivates him or her to gain the most from the school experience.

37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. The multicultural dimension of the world and its richness is a constant feature of the curriculum offered to pupils. There are pictures and displays from a variety of cultures throughout the school. Daily greetings are exchanged in various languages (Turkish during the inspection), the books read in the school come from many traditions, and during the inspection a story was told to a class in both English and Turkish. Great European art is not forgotten, as shown by the work on Van Gogh and Matisse, or by some of the music to which pupils listen. The particular quality of the multicultural element is very well demonstrated by an exercise called 'All the colours of class 2M', in which pupils were photographed, and wrote some moving and lively poems about the colours of their own skin. This is a very positive assertion of the richness of difference, a theme that runs through the whole of the school's life.

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

38. The school has improved its procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare and they are now very good. It takes child protection issues very seriously and, as well as the named member of staff with overall responsibility, all staff are aware of lines of accountability. Procedures are well established and clear guidelines are made available to all staff. Pupils are well supervised and cared for by staff during the entire school day. Most pupils respond very well to the support and care given by staff. The provision for medical care and first aid is good. The school undertakes regular routine checks of the premises to identify any potential hazards.
39. Overall the school monitors pupils' academic performance and personal development well. It has good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance in English and mathematics. This is done through assessment procedures that include very careful planning, target setting, and a range of tests. Informal initial assessments in the nursery and formal baseline assessments in reception classes are used to identify pupils' specific strengths and weaknesses and work is planned accordingly. Targets in English and mathematics for individual pupils in Years 1 and 2 are set in consultation with parents and they are shared with pupils. They are written in the front of exercise books so that teachers and pupils can refer to them in lessons. Many targets include the need to improve number and letter formation. Teachers are also beginning to give additional targets when marking pupils' work. These are shown by the use of footprints or paw prints marked in pupils' books. Pupils of higher ability are well identified and work is set to meet their needs. In subjects other than English, mathematics, ICT and physical education, consistent, formal assessment procedures are lacking. The school recognises this and is working on refining its systems.
40. The school works hard to meet the range of special needs within the school, and all staff are aware of their needs. There are good relationships with external agencies, to provide advice on how to help individual pupils. Teaching assistants who support pupils are provided with training. Where necessary, specific training is given for teaching assistants working with pupils with particular needs. However, individual education

plans are not sufficiently helpful in identifying individual needs and ensuring these are achievable, measurable and regularly reviewed.

41. Pupils with English as an additional language who need continued support to develop their English competence are well supported by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant teacher. However, it was observed that a number of children who would benefit from support were not identified, and closer assessment of needs would enable the school to make appropriate provision for these pupils.
42. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. This is not only provided in class lessons for personal and social education but also through involvement in activities such as the School Council. The school is committed to equal opportunity and has very good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school works closely with parents and external agencies to encourage and monitor good behaviour. Good behaviour and self-discipline are also encouraged through positive strategies, such as the use of stickers, regular praise, time out on the 'thinking bench' and clear boundaries. Personal support and guidance are very good. They are consistently of a high standard and take account of pupils' views. Inspectors agree with parents' views that the school cares very effectively for their children. The school offers good pastoral care for pupils with emotional difficulties, where their views are taken into account. Good use is made of outside agencies to give additional support and advice. For example, a counsellor regularly works in the school with pupils and their families, and speech therapists assess pupils and give guidance to the school about how they can help individual children.
43. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school attendance procedures are clear and well implemented. Parents are kept informed about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school maintains close links with an educational welfare officer who also monitors attendance.

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

44. The school has continued its good partnership with parents since the last inspection. Parental views of the way the school helps their children to learn and make progress are good. The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire, and in discussion with inspectors, have positive views of the school. They feel that the school works closely with them and they are kept well informed about their children's academic progress and behaviour. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is good. Many parents participate in activities in the school. Parents are held accountable for ensuring that homework is completed on time. Some parents felt that there were inconsistencies in the amount and quality of homework set. The inspection team agrees with this view, although procedures for supporting pupils' reading, especially by involving parents, are good. The provision of literacy packs for the younger children is especially valuable. A Family Literacy project has also been set up. This supports individual families well and provides additional resources for other children to take home and use with their parents or carers.
45. Home and school links that will help pupils' academic needs are well developed. The school has very good and effective communication links with parents. Parents receive very comprehensive information about the school and their children's progress. They are increasingly involved in the setting of targets for their children in English and mathematics. Parents receive regular reports and newsletters and they are invited to assemblies, curriculum and other consultative meetings. They find these very

informative. The 'Welcome Assembly' and the refreshments provided afterwards, provide an effective way of involving parents soon after their children start school.

46. The school encourages parental involvement in the school and parents are happy with the many activities of the school and the 'open door' principle that is in operation. The procedures for settling new children into the nursery and reception classes are good. In the nursery especially, there are very clear arrangements to ensure that children feel secure and well cared for. Parents are kept well informed of how their child is settling. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. The school regularly consults parents and promotes active participation. The school has a successful Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) that organises very effective social and fundraising events. The PTA has raised substantial sums of money that have been used to enhance the school environment and pupils' learning.
47. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are made aware of the targets set in the individual education plans and are invited to help their children to meet them. Parents are involved in the regular review procedure. There are appropriate procedures in place to involve parents of children with statements of educational needs. Where necessary, the school can provide interpreters for parents who are not confident in English.

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

48. The headteacher gives very strong leadership for all the work of the school. She is extremely well supported by the deputy head who takes responsibility for the curriculum. Both are very good role models for teachers. The school is very successful at fully meeting the school's aims of helping each child feel happy and secure and creating an environment where everyone is respected and differences are celebrated.
49. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. The middle management team is now very effective. The team, which includes the year group leaders, has a very clear role and it undertakes monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching. As a result, teaching has improved and there is equality of opportunity with very consistent planning within the year groups. Money from the Department for Education and Employment and the local authority has been used very well to build six new classrooms. There is also a clear focus on the continuing need to raise academic standards, with the implementation of initiatives such as target setting for individual pupils in literacy and numeracy. The school is well placed to continue to improve.
50. The school directs its resources very effectively to raise attainment. It focuses attention on pupils who need extra support to reach the standards expected for their age. The results of assessments are used well to identify areas for improvement. The school uses its own funds and obtains funding from other sources to provide relevant, well-focused additional support, such as the provision of Family Literacy sessions. The school has just become part of an Education Action Zone: funding from this is being used very effectively to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and there will be a writer-in-residence later this year.
51. There is a joint governing body for both the Infant and Junior departments. Since the Junior department was inspected, the governors have looked at the composition of their committees to make more time to increase their involvement in the work of the school. The two departments together make a large school and, as a result, the demands on governors' time are great. There are secure procedures in place for monitoring the work of the Infant school and a small core of governors is actively involved. The headteacher

gives a very full report to the governors every term, which ensures that they are very well informed about the school's work.

52. The school management plan sets out clearly the school's aims over a three year period and the actions which are going to be taken. There are specific success criteria against which to judge the results as well as clear allocations of responsibility in each area. A questionnaire is sent out to parents before each new plan is drawn up to find out their opinions about the school. The last one indicated that parents wanted more information about the work of the governing body and governors' activities have now been included in newsletters.
53. The school is well staffed. All staff work together extremely well as a team and create a purposeful and happy atmosphere. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported and training is provided to meet their individual needs. Funding for staff development is used well. Members of the teaching staff have regular interviews and their training needs are identified to support their individual requirements and to meet the targets outlined in the school improvement plan. The school is well placed to implement the new performance management procedures. There are well-qualified support staff who work mainly in classes with particular groups of pupils. All support staff make a valuable contribution to the running of the school. Some have additional responsibilities such as for resources, the computer suite and the library. As a result, these areas are well organised and this provides very valuable support for teachers. The school is well resourced, with spending decisions carefully matched to the needs of the curriculum.
54. Financial management is very good and clearly linked to the school's management plan. The school makes extremely good use of its financial resources to support pupils' needs and to promote its aims. The local authority gives the school clear guidance on procedures for securing the best value for money through competitive tendering for goods and services. The office is run very efficiently, with day-to-day procedures for budget management well administered and good use made of modern technology. Office staff provide a very good first point of contact for parents, although the office is not well placed as it is off the hall and up a steep flight of stairs. The Premises Officer and his assistant keep the site very clean and tidy. Considerable effort is made to make the surrounding areas attractive with the use of tubs containing flowering plants. The new buildings have greatly enhanced the learning environment by replacing old classrooms, which were not attached to the main building. They are well designed to meet teachers' needs and release space in the old building for a computer suite and library. All available space is put to good use. There are shortcomings in the hall area, which doubles as a thoroughfare and this can be noisy and distracting for pupils working there. The school is well resourced with carefully chosen equipment, which is readily accessible and clearly organised.
55. The school makes good use of the additional funding it receives to provide extra support, for example for pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils. Good and relevant training is provided for the learning support assistants. Support staff maintain records that provide a satisfactory picture of the needs of the different pupils, how these needs are met, and the achievements of pupils. There is a good awareness of the changing demands of the curriculum, for example to provide support for the development of mathematical skills as well as literacy skills. Currently the special educational needs co-ordinator is absent. The school has made good arrangements to cover for this period of absence, employing a teacher to fill the support role and allocating a member of staff to take responsibility for administration.

56. Pupils enter school with standards of attainment that are broadly in line with those found nationally and they achieve results at the end of Year 2 which are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. They make good gains in learning as they move through the school, both academically and personally. Taking this, the high standard of teaching, the very strong leadership of the headteacher and the clear focus on using funds to improve standards further into account, the school is judged to give very good value for money.

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

57. The planning of teaching and the provision of detailed targets for individual pupils should be further enhanced by:
- (1) providing clear and detailed individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs (paragraphs 8, 21, 32, 40, 78 );
  - (2) ensuring that the needs of pupils with English as an additional language are accurately assessed, and are met through detailed target setting (paragraphs 9, 21, 41);
  - (3) extending the good practice already in place for some subjects by developing consistent assessment procedures for all subjects (paragraphs 39, 91, 96, 99, 103, 112, 122 ).

These plans and procedures should be subject to regular and scheduled reviews.

In addition, the school should focus upon handwriting and presentation skills. Strategies should include an increased focus on letter and number formation, so that pupils can read what they have written and their work provides an effective record of what has been achieved (paragraphs 5, 25, 71, 80).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	26	50	19	0	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 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	226
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	33

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.4	School data	0.2
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	46	44	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	39	44
	Girls	43	40	40
	Total	86	79	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (84)	88 (84)	93 (95)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	44	45
	Girls	40	39	42
	Total	80	83	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	92 (96)	97 (92)
	National	82	86	87

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	53
Black – African heritage	12
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	143
Any other minority ethnic group	11

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

*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 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	214

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	700,143
Total expenditure	682,562
Expenditure per pupil	2,120
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,035
Balance carried forward to next year	20,616

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	322
Number of questionnaires returned	80

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	28	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	51	4	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	57	19	1	0
The teaching is good.	50	49	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	46	12	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	21	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	31	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	49	42	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	41	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	34	1	0	8

The parents' meeting reiterated the positive opinions expressed in the questionnaires. Some parents felt that their child received too much homework, whilst others felt that homework was inappropriate for children of this age. Parents gave some examples of inconsistencies in the way homework was set for different classes.

## **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**

58. The standards reported for children in the nursery and reception classes have been maintained since the last inspection. Children usually spend three terms in the nursery and they attend either the morning or afternoon sessions. When they start in the nursery they have very varied levels of attainment with about 30 per cent having personal, social and language development which is below that expected nationally. The overall good teaching and the well-focused range of activities ensure that all children make at least steady gains in learning. The nursery nurse provides very good support. In the reception classes only about half of the children have been to the nursery, although most have had some pre-school experience. The attainment of this group is again varied with a significant minority having behaviour and communication skills that are below those expected for children of their age. The inspection took place very early in the term. When it started children were spending their second full day in school. As the week progressed the good teaching had a noticeable impact on children's learning. The specially devised settling-in curriculum, and the consistent support and guidance given by all adults, were helping most children become accustomed to new routines quickly and to have very positive attitudes to school. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority are expected to achieve the early learning goals, the standards expected nationally, in all the recommended areas of learning.
59. Children are assessed when they enter the nursery and there are also frequent adult-planned activities, which build up a clear picture of what children can do. As a result, children who may have special educational needs are recognised early and work is planned to focus on their needs. In reception, the formal baseline assessments are used as an indicator of individual children's needs and the results are discussed with parents. Those children who may have special needs are referred to the special educational needs co-ordinator for further assessment and, if necessary, additional support is provided. The teacher with responsibility for children with English as an additional language initially spends time in both the nursery and reception classes assessing individual children's language needs and providing suitable activities and good adult support to meet their needs.

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

60. There is good liaison with parents so that children are prepared for starting school. Considerable emphasis is placed on this area of learning to meet children's needs, especially at the start of the school year and when many children are new. Provision is good. The classrooms are bright and attractive and resources are inviting and well organised with easy access. Children are encouraged to be independent, for example by putting on aprons for painting and water play and tidying up when they have finished. In the nursery, children have the opportunity to plan what they are going to do each session, giving them control over what they do and the experience of making choices. The sessions are well organised and routines are explained. As a result, children know what is expected. Activities are carefully planned to give children the opportunity to co-operate with each other and they learn to share and take turns. Expectations of good behaviour are made very clear.
61. Adult support is well focused and gives children good role models. For example, teaching assistants work alongside children in the home corner in the reception classes and in the baby clinic in the nursery. Teachers and support staff build very good relationships with children and help them to gain confidence and self-esteem, as well as

learning to treat each other with respect. The story of 'Dogger' is used to explore the theme of sharing and being kind to each other. In the nursery, staff talk to children when they have an argument. They help children talk through their problems and to realise the effect of their actions on others. Most children are keen to take part in the activities and they become absorbed in what they are doing.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

62. A good range of activities is provided and this, together with good teaching, helps children learn well. Staff in the nursery are very aware of the need to develop children's language skills, both their vocabularies and their sentence structure. Many children initially attempt to communicate with gestures or with single words or phrases. Staff model good speech patterns and also encourage all children to express themselves verbally. They introduce vocabulary as they join children in their activities. The baby clinic is very well resourced and provides good opportunities for children to use their past experience and to talk about what they are doing. At the end of the session children talk about what they have been doing, which is another way of extending their speaking skills as they learn to talk in front of the rest of their group. There are good opportunities for children to share books and to listen to stories. The story packs, which children take home regularly, are a valuable resource. They provide games or story props, as well as books, for parents or carers to share with their children so that they are involved in their learning. Children begin to see themselves as writers through a variety of opportunities. For example, they are encouraged to make clinic records for their 'babies' and they add their names to the 'waiting list' when they want to take part in some adult-led activities.
63. The reception classes build on children's previous experiences. Staff are good story tellers. They use their skills well to develop children's love of books and to extend their listening skills. Staff talk with children in a variety of settings and they help to extend their vocabularies as well as modelling good speech patterns. Rhymes are used well to help children develop their awareness of sounds and some children are beginning to recognise correctly the rhyming words in 'Each, peach, pear, plum' and to join in as they become more familiar with the text. Some begin to recognise words. Children learn to write their names, and a few confidently write their own words with recognisable spellings. Good opportunities are provided for children to write in a variety of situations: for example, through the provision of paper beside the play phones for messages and for a shopping list in the home corner.

### **Mathematical development**

64. Teachers plan a good range of activities to help develop children's mathematical understanding and children make good gains in their learning. Staff take advantage of opportunities to encourage children to count. In the nursery, for example, children are asked to count how many letter 'b's' they can find in the sand, and they count to ten when playing hide and seek with the games coach. An assessment of children's understanding of number is included in the initial adult-focused activities, which are carried out when children first enter the nursery. The information obtained gives staff a clear indication of individual pupils' needs which are planned for in future activities. Staff are also aware of the need to develop children's knowledge of size and capacity and the related vocabulary, for example the correct use of the terms big, biggest and small, smallest and full and empty when exploring using differently sized containers in the water. In reception classes, children's skills are developed further using practical activities and number symbols. Number rhymes and songs are used well to reinforce adding and taking away.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

65. Children enter the nursery with a range of experiences and therefore considerable differences in their knowledge of the world around them. The planned activities build on what children know and these stimulate their curiosity and ideas. For example, children explore a range of fruits using their senses and they learn the associated vocabulary, such as the names of exotic fruits and adjectives to describe them, such as hard, soft, rough and smooth. The baby clinic gives good opportunities to talk about the changes that take place as children grow up. Children join wood using hammer and nails and they use sticky tape and string to join materials to make clothes for the dolls. In the reception classes children talk about the local area and past events in their lives and they continue to explore materials, such as wet and dry sand. They learn to mix powder paints to make a variety of colours and shades. Children learn to use the mouse confidently to control a variety of programs on the computers. These programs in the nursery also reinforce children's understanding in other areas of learning. One example is the meaning of prepositions such as over, under and behind, to describe the position of a dog on the screen.

### **Physical development**

66. The outside area of the nursery has been developed well with a good range of resources. The equipment used is varied each day and this provides a good level of challenge for the children. The area is well supervised and the encouragement of staff helps children gain confidence. Children become competent in running, jumping, balancing and climbing. They develop their eye/hand co-ordination well when they use bats to hit balls suspended on string. The reception children have access to an outside area that is equipped with sit-and-ride toys. These give opportunities to develop children's co-operative as well as physical skills. They also have access to the equipment in the hall during regular physical education lessons and they benefit from sessions with the specialist games and dance teachers. As a result, they all reach the standards expected by the end of the foundation stage and some exceed them.

### **Creative development**

67. Children have satisfactory skills when they enter the school, but many need help and guidance to include others in their activities and to use appropriate vocabulary. To meet these needs there is a good level of adult input in role-play activities, such as the home corner and the baby clinic, so that children's vocabulary and ideas are developed, as well as their ability to involve others in their play. Children learn to use a range of materials to make pictures and collages to communicate their ideas. They explore a range of shades of colour when they mix their own paints. All children benefit from the teaching of a music specialist. They learn a variety of songs and sing them with a sense of tune and rhythm, often accompanied by the guitar.

## **ENGLISH**

68. There has been a consistent improvement in English results since 1997. Pupils now reach high standards in reading and writing. The last inspection reported that pupils achieved standards in line with or better than average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, pupils' achievements at the end of Year 2 in reading were well above the national average, and in line in writing. In reading, the percentage of pupils reading the higher level, Level 3, was also well above the national average. In writing, the percentage gaining this level was above the national average. The school took account of the lower results in writing, and the unconfirmed scores (without, at the time of writing, national comparisons) for 2000 show writing improved in comparison with reading, with reading well above and writing above the national average. When the school's scores are compared with those from similar schools, the judgements are broadly the same.

69. In speaking and listening, pupils show that they are careful listeners to their teachers and their peers. They are thoughtful in preparing what they have to say, and they show very good confidence and a willingness to venture their own opinions. A strong influence upon this respectful listening and careful speaking is the confidence which the school confers upon its pupils, placing emphasis upon each individual's value, encouraging and praising positively. Progress is also reinforced by the fact that pupils feel able to 'have a go' without risk. Faced with the question "What is a play?" (which might daunt many older pupils and even adults) a pupil in Year 1 responded "It's where you dress up and say things": a perceptive and economical definition! Even at this very early stage in the school year, it is possible to conclude that standards of speaking and listening are generally good, and often very good.
70. In reading, standards are good. Among the highest attainers it is accurate and fluent, though it may be sometimes mechanical and lacking in expression. Pupils discuss their reading very readily, and with obvious signs of enjoyment. In Years 1 and 2, they talk confidently of author, title and illustrator, and older pupils have a good idea of what a publisher does, and what a blurb is and where to find it. Pupils of average attainment demonstrate good decoding skills, using a variety of strategies so that they read quite fluently. Those with attainment at a lower level are still able to exercise some of these strategies and to show that they understand what words mean and how they are arranged into sentences. Books are enjoyed and valued as sources of information and pleasure, and pupils have well-developed research and library skills.
71. In writing, pupils' performance by the end of Year 2 is slightly less strong than in the other elements of English, but standards at the end of the key stage remain good. Two significant factors influence standards in writing. The first is the time and emphasis devoted quite properly to reading as part of the National Literacy Strategy. The second is the whole matter of presentation – handwriting, its shape, size and positioning. Even in Year 2 only a minority of pupils produce handwriting which is well shaped, sized and placed. There is confusion between capitals and lower case letters. While pupils can read back what they have just written, some have problems in decoding their own writing after some time, resulting in a lack of fluency and a limitation of their ability to redraft and to improve. The school is aware of this problem, and is in the promising early stages of the introduction of a cursive writing style. This said, there are some very enjoyable features of pupils' writing, as, for example when they discuss and choose the most interesting words to describe scenes at sea ('splashing waves sparkling', 'old bashy boats'). In the same Year 2 lesson, all pupils were able to suggest interesting words, and the highest attainers could produce a continuous narrative of three or four sentences, appropriately marked with stops and capitals.
72. The quality of pupils' learning is almost always good, and sometimes very good. The strongest influence is their own confidence and the motivation which the school confers upon them. They enjoy English, and respond very readily to the demands their teachers make of them. They work well independently, in pairs and in groups. The National Literacy Hour also supports progress in reading and in speaking and listening, as children move out from the shared text experience to their own independent reading. This aspect of their learning is reinforced, by the use of the red contact books in which teachers and parents communicate about reading, in regular reading practice and frequent diagnostic testing of progress. In all elements of English, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in parallel with their peers. They receive good quality support from classroom assistants, particularly when they have been thoroughly briefed as to lesson content and learning objectives by the class teacher. This is important as individual education plans do not give clear guidance. Pupils with English

as an additional language quickly become functional, with appropriate support, and also make good progress. A very good strategy for promoting progress has recently been introduced: individual targets for all pupils are set out on a special sheet pasted into English exercise books, so that pupils may be clear about where they can improve.

73. Teaching is always at least satisfactory. Well over half is very good or excellent. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their questioning skills are well developed. Lesson planning and preparation are very good. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted and appropriately adapted to the school's needs. Teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour. Lesson objectives are always shared with pupils and displayed on the board: the extent to which these objectives have been achieved is not, however, always considered in the final plenary sessions. Teachers' personal styles are open, supportive and sympathetic, and they are well organised. Pupils' work in English is enhanced by the provision of additional time for language activities, and of extension work in one lesson a week for the higher attainers. Each class has one lesson a week for half a term on library skills: this is a very useful support for their independent learning. Marking is consistent, regular and clear. In writing, assessment is less formal than in reading, but it is set against targets agreed at meetings of teachers in each year group. There is no routine assessment in speaking and listening.
74. English is very well managed by the deputy headteacher, who is enthusiastic and experienced. She knows the school extremely well, and has a lively vision of its needs and those of the subject. This is well set out in her Action Plan. A very good practitioner herself, she leads by example. The subject scheme of work, separated under the headings of speaking and listening, writing, reading and spelling, is an effective series of documents. Resources are good, and are well used and cared for.
75. English makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral development through the collaboration necessary in the literacy hour, and through the discussions which take place. Its input to their spiritual development is also good, through discussions of values and feelings. Its contribution to pupils' cultural development is very good, through literature from a wide variety of cultures, and the world's great stories. The presentation of a story read in both English and Turkish is a very good example of this.
76. Teachers pay consistent attention to the development of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English. Technical errors are usually marked, and pupils are encouraged to write correctly. New words are introduced, and vocabularies are progressively extended. Careful speaking and respectful listening are encouraged throughout the school, and books are clearly valued by all.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. The school has improved its standards since the last inspection. Then, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was above the national average, but the percentage reaching the higher level (Level 3) was below that for English and science. The results of the 1999 national tests show that the percentage achieving Level 3 was very high in comparison both to the national average and to the results of similar schools. There are no national comparison figures for the year 2000 at the time this report is written, but in the national tests in that year all Year 2 pupils achieved the standards expected nationally for seven-year-olds and over half attained above this.



Although the percentage achieving the higher level dropped from the previous year, this was expected, as initial assessments, when that cohort entered the school, indicated that there were fewer higher attaining pupils in the group.

78. The inspection took place early in the school year, but some pupils in Year 2 are already working at a level higher than that expected for their age. Pupils are making at least sound and often good gains in learning during lessons. They gain a good understanding of number through their investigative work. In Year 2, for example, pupils investigate how they can use two digits to make different numbers depending on whether they put the numbers in the tens or units columns. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged when they progress to working with three digits to give numbers with hundreds, tens and units. Pupils identified as having special educational needs, and lower attaining pupils, receive appropriate additional support during lessons and this helps to ensure that they make steady gains in learning. However, the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs rarely contain specific mathematical targets. This is an area for improvement. Pupils with English as an additional language make appropriate progress.
79. The scrutiny of work from the last academic year showed that pupils consolidated their early understanding of the subject well in Year 1 and this good grounding was extended into Year 2. The significant gains in learning are linked to strengths in teaching, which is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a very secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. This enables them to plan clearly, focusing well on what pupils are to learn. The objectives for the lesson are shared with pupils at the start and revisited at the end, so that pupils have a clear understanding of their own learning. Teachers give clear explanations to help pupils understand. Support staff have additional information so that they can reinforce the explanations and they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Staff have good relationships with pupils and, as a result, pupils feel confident. Work proceeds at a steady pace, with no time wasted as pupils are keen to please and are interested in their work. Teachers introduce appropriate mathematical terminology and reinforce it throughout the session. An example is the use of the word 'digit' in Year 2 and the terms 'double', 'odd' and 'even' in Year 1. Teachers use questions effectively to encourage pupils to explain how they arrived at their answers. Lessons are generally conducted at a good pace, but occasionally the pace is too slow and pupils do not make as much progress as they could in the lesson.
80. Teachers get to know pupils' abilities well and the work is matched to their needs. Support staff are used well to make notes for each pupil in their group, so that the teacher can plan the next appropriate step in their learning. Teachers are now working with parents and pupils to set individual targets for all pupils, which are written inside the front cover of their exercise books. This gives parents clear involvement in their child's learning and it highlights areas where they can give additional support. It also means that pupils are well aware of what they have to do to improve. Scrutiny of last year's work showed the need to concentrate more on the way pupils presented their work. This is reflected in the new targets, which often concentrate on correct number formation.
81. There is a new co-ordinator who already has a clear understanding of the subject within the school. The previous co-ordinator was very effective and she ensured that staff were well trained and that the numeracy strategy was firmly embedded in the school's practice. There is good analysis of pupils' work to monitor standards and very good systems for assessment, which inform future planning. Mathematical skills are used well across the curriculum, for example in timelines in history and the use of tally and bar

graphs in geography. Although the computer suite has only been fully operational for two terms, there are growing links between the two subjects. The school is well resourced. Each class has a resource pack, which is well organised and supports the demands of the numeracy hour, for example with sets of numbers for each pupil to use.

## SCIENCE

82. There is a significant improvement in pupils' attainment since the last inspection, when results for pupils attaining the expected level were in line with the national average, although there were a substantial number achieving the higher level (Level 3). The results of the National Curriculum teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard was above the national average and very high for the higher level. The overall results were better than the national average, with attainment well above in experimental and investigative skills. When compared with similar schools, the results are above the average for pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and very high for those attaining Level 3.
83. Scrutiny of the work completed over the previous year in Years 1 and 2 shows that pupils have a good knowledge of science, and that teachers ensure good development of knowledge and skills, as well as ensuring that key vocabulary is taught. Particular strengths are that pupils record their experiments well in a variety of ways and use frameworks successfully to organise their accounts of experiments. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of their bodies and the importance of good health and healthy eating. They experiment to see what happens when water is heated and when ice melts. They learn about magnetism and classify materials that magnets attract and those that are not attracted. They know what needs electricity and how to construct simple circuits. Children understand what plants and animals need for healthy growth, and in Year 2 they record what cress seeds need to germinate. Pupils in Year 1 were observed exploring their senses through feeling different objects, including Braille, tasting and smelling food and herbs, and listening to taped sounds. They used magnifying glasses to observe the pattern and texture of natural objects. They successfully classified their results on a simple worksheet. The regular intervention of adults promoted discussion and the extension of pupils' descriptive vocabulary.
84. The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to work are mainly satisfactory. They enjoy their lessons. However, at this early stage in the school year, pupils in Year 1 need the support of adults to achieve the lesson objectives. Without this they lose concentration and motivation.
85. The quality of teaching seen is always satisfactory, and is good overall. Lessons are well planned with good use of resources. There is due attention given to providing pupils with good practical experiences, and teachers are careful to use and emphasise the correct scientific terminology. Initial discussion allows pupils to share their knowledge, and activities are well organised so that pupils are sure of what is expected of them. Teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to organise their accounts of what they have discovered, using drawings and written accounts. It also provides opportunities to develop literacy skills in the recording of work, and effective links are made with other subjects such as ICT and mathematics. For example, pupils record their data using bar graphs and Venn diagrams. However, there is some evidence that less able pupils and those with special educational needs are not provided with a satisfactory level of adult support to enable them to achieve well, and work in books is often incomplete.
86. The management of science is effective. Draft plans are in place based on the QCA guidance on producing a scheme of work, and provide the medium-term plans. This

ensures that there are clear learning objectives, that all the required elements are covered and that scientific knowledge and understanding are steadily built up. Assessment tests pupils' understanding of a completed block of work, and the co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work. Resources are very good, and there is a good programme of visits to enhance the curriculum, to the Natural History Museum, and to London Zoo. Parents are enlisted to assist in their children's learning through guidance in the school 'Fun with Science' booklet. They are encouraged to support topics through helping their children with research and appropriate visits are suggested. Last year a very effective and enjoyable three days were spent in which all children explored different science topics in a workshop environment, and there are plans to repeat this at the end of the current school year.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. The standards of work completed in the lessons observed, on display around the school, and presented in the art portfolio, are good, and above that which might be expected of pupils at that age. Pupils make good gains in learning.
88. In Year 1, pictures of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh (accompanied by analyses of the range of tone and colour used) effectively capture the style, spirit and some of the drama of that artist's approach. Work produced by the same age group, which explores ways of painting flowers with different emphases on shape, colour and structure, is of a high standard. In a Year 1 lesson, about half the class showed well above average skills (at this early stage in the school year) of pencil and brush handling. In Year 2, pupils produce well-observed pencil drawings of their own eyes, which they subsequently develop in paint. They make line self-portraits, and then (using the 'double primary' colour scheme) analyse their own skin colours before tackling the full colour version. Techniques are good: they shade in monochrome, and blend in paint and pastel effectively.
89. That pupils enjoy art is obvious. The good quality of their learning is evident from the trouble to which these comparatively young children go to achieve an effect. They take technique seriously, and understand that art is the more worthwhile the more you put into it. They discuss their approach (Year 1 pupil: "Maybe I need a bit more yellow" when discussing her version of her own skin colour). Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress, indistinguishable from that of their peers.
90. To produce these results, which are a pleasure to see, teaching is consistently good and often very good. It is based on recognition that pupils' progress depends upon a developmental approach – that success in art is not just a matter of inspiration. There is good emphasis on teaching techniques: pupils are taught how to use a soft pencil, and how to blend, match and contrast colours. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good classroom management skills, blending developmental advice with praise. One teacher was observed insisting that pupils sign their work: "You are artists, after all". However, while teachers evaluate pupils' work and celebrate their achievement, appraisal involving pupils' own judgements of their work is not a matter of routine.
91. The co-ordinator for art provides good leadership. The very good subject scheme of work has been developed as a combination of the advice offered by the QCA and by the local education authority handbook. It is very well structured and gives very detailed advice on lesson content and guidance on teaching approaches. The co-ordinator recognises that there is a need to include more three-dimensional work (very little was

seen). Teachers are starting to assess pupils' work, but this is not established as a routine.

92. Through their work on great artists and through the celebration of multicultural differences, art makes a strong contribution to the school's provision for pupils' cultural development. Particularly noteworthy is the 'All the Colours of the Earth' project, in which pupils discuss their own colour in detail, produce portraits which are set beside photographs and poems setting out very positive attitudes to the different versions of beauty.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. In the previous inspection standards of achievement in design and technology were found to be in line with national expectations. There were no lessons in design and technology timetabled during the course of this inspection and at this early stage in the school year there was only a small amount of evidence of work done. Evidence was taken from photographs and a scrutiny of pupils' accounts of work done over the previous year. Pupils are producing work that is similar to that found nationally for pupils of their age.
94. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is especially true in work seen for last year's Year 1 where there are many good examples of pupils developing their ability to plan and evaluate the models they produce. Pupils select and record the materials they will use to make a working buggy. They choose, for example, dowel wood, glue and plastic, and they evaluate the product: "It looks like this because I did not have a power tool – I thought about it and looked at it hard". Photographs show pupils using a vice to saw wooden dowels and using glue guns for joining. They finish their models with appropriate decoration. The models are well constructed. Design and technology in Year 2 is closely linked to science topics, so that pupils have the opportunity to cook to observe the changes in materials, and to make paper. There is less evidence of pupils planning and evaluating their work, as this is incorporated into recording their experimental work in science.
95. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use a good variety of construction material to make models. There are good opportunities to reinforce pupils' understanding of how to design and make items in other curriculum areas. For example, the book chosen for the literacy hour in Year 1 focuses on instructions, showing pupils how to make effective stick puppets and selecting from a variety of material to decorate the faces of the puppets.
96. The scheme of work provides for the steady build-up of knowledge and skills. There is a clear overview of topics for each term and for the two year groups, as well as clear links with other subjects. Leadership is good. The co-ordinator is currently producing a new scheme of work based on the QCA guidance, which reflects the revised programmes of study in Curriculum 2000. There is no formal assessment, but pupils are encouraged to assess their work and teachers to monitor their achievements. Resources are sufficient and well managed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97. Scrutiny of last year's work shows that pupils reach, and in some cases exceed, the standards expected for their ages. This achievement is similar to the findings of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 pupils gain a clear understanding of maps and plans,

and demonstrate sound knowledge of their locality and the contrasting rural area of Horton Kirby.

98. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use to plan interesting and appropriate activities to extend pupils' skills and understanding. In Year 1, pupils are introduced to the concept that a map is an aerial view. Resources, such as an aerial photo of the school and local maps, are used well to help pupils construct their own map of their journey to school. The teacher and support staff effectively support pupils and discuss features of the local area, raising pupils' awareness. In Year 2, good links are made with literacy when the story 'A Balloon for Grandad' is used to highlight the difference between natural and man-made features. The teacher also reminds pupils of the features of their local area and contrasts them with the rural area seen by the balloon. In both lessons pupils are keen to take part. They express their ideas confidently and the discussions make a valuable contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills.
99. The curriculum is well planned and includes valuable opportunities for links with other subjects, such as history when pupils compare their holidays with those taken 50 years ago. Throughout the school effective use is made of the local area, visits to other places and visitors to the school who extend pupils' knowledge through first-hand experiences. Valuable links exist between the school and another with the same name in Scotland. Good opportunities are provided for older pupils to record their work and these help pupils reinforce their writing skills. Links are made to mathematics when pupils collect data about the traffic and litter in the area studied and make tally charts and bar graphs to display their findings. Parents are involved in the work their children do. For example, they are encouraged to help pupils record their holiday activities by taking photographs or buying postcards to show what the various places visited are like. There are no consistent formal assessment procedures.

## **HISTORY**

100. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Attainment is good, and better than might be expected from pupils of this age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a clear sense of the past. In Year 1, pupils compare modes of transport (a horse and cart, a Victorian train and a modern train), and objects from the past, to show that they have a good perception of how things change. This sense of development is further demonstrated by their work on the stages of their own life ("When I was a baby I ...."; "When I was two I ...."). When they put together a time capsule, their understanding of what makes things typical of an age is good. In Year 2, some good work on early memories was seen. The best work, from pupils of all levels of attainment, was on the Victorians, with drawings of the life of a child in the nineteenth century, and accounts of famous people, like Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. Pupils have a well-developed sensitivity to historical differences and good subject knowledge.
101. The quality of learning is good. It is enhanced by visitors, like the actors from the Millennium Experience, the Victorian policeman (a real policeman in costume), and the ancient Greek athlete (a close relative to one of the teachers, in costume - actually speaking Greek). Lively response is evident in pupils' work: they enjoy their history and learn a lot from it. All of them, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress.
102. The teaching follows a scheme of work which has recently been revised to follow the new National Curriculum and guidelines from the QCA. Teaching is good and often very good. Great efforts are made to make history real, through the occasions already

mentioned, through the use of a good collection of artefacts, and through studies of the personally or locally relevant past. These are connected with the rebuilding of the school and the opening of new buildings. They also include individuals who share their own memories with pupils, like former pupils, and the headteacher, who in the good quality lesson seen showed Year 2 pupils pictures of her own childhood holidays, inviting pupils to compare then and now.

103. Resources, in the form of books, artefacts and costumes, are good. They are well stored and easily accessible. There are no formal arrangements for assessment, although there is a developing focus upon measurable skills.
104. History makes a particularly good contribution to pupils' social and moral education in its consideration of why things were as they were, and how they ought to be better. The contribution to cultural education is very good, as a variety of past cultures is examined, featuring great art (William Morris patterns) and great cultural innovators (Mary Seacole).

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

105. The attainment for the majority of pupils in the lessons seen is in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. A new computer suite opened for the spring term and the school now has very good computer resources. There are enough machines, connected to CD ROMs and Internet facilities, for a whole class to be taught at once. The equipment is up to date, in good condition and backed up with a good range of software. There has been an improvement, not only in provision, but also in teaching, since the last report, so pupils' computer skills are developing well. The two teachers who share co-ordination of the subject have worked very well to improve teachers' confidence and competence in the subject.
106. All pupils are keen, confident and enthusiastic to use the machines. The good teaching of the skills they will need to use the selected programs prepares them well. All pupils use the mouse accurately to click onto areas of the screen. Pupils learn to log on to the system and open and operate the programmes effectively, following initial instruction. They follow instructions and select from icons and produce and print information. Pupils in Year 2 were observed successfully producing labels, varying the style and size of fonts. As one pupil explains, "You go to a special place and click on it and make it all fancy". They show a good understanding of the advantages of using word processing to produce their work, because, for example, it is easier to 'rub out' and clearer to read. In Year 1, pupils use information to produce graphs. They follow instructions accurately to select from the menus, and many experiment independently with the tools menu to produce a variety of different bar and pie graphs.
107. Pupils enjoy the subject. They are enthusiastic and keen to practise the skills they have been taught. They co-operate well when sharing the computer, and display good relationships when offering suggestions and taking turns. There are some variations in competence, depending on whether pupils have computers at home. However, those who are less confident listen carefully to the help given them by adults, and know when to seek help. These good attitudes contribute strongly to the quality of learning. Pupils treat computers with care, using them sensibly.
108. Teaching is good and often very good. Teachers are well prepared for lessons, so that there is a very good initial teaching session in which teachers demonstrate the skills to be practised. This introduction is well supported by the teaching assistant who works in collaboration with teachers to demonstrate, using the projector which magnifies the screen. Pupils observe the moves they need to make in order to achieve their

objectives. The introductory session effectively explores the task and allows pupils to contribute their knowledge so that they are enabled to make progress and to extend the range of skills they are acquiring. A typical Year 1 lesson illustrates many of the good qualities. The graphs to be produced were linked to the geography topic in which pupils had discussed their route to school. The teacher collected evidence of the different means of transport pupils used to come to school, and produced a numerical chart. In collaboration with the teaching assistant, the task (to produce graphs) was clearly explained and demonstrated. This enabled pupils to work successfully and independently at the machines. Additionally they could see the purpose of this way of presenting data as an effective way of comparing information based on the real situation of their personal experiences. In all cases, well prepared lessons and teachers' knowledge of the subject and management of pupils encourage pupils' confidence and independence, leading to good learning.

109. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The joint co-ordinators have worked hard to ensure that the computer suite provides an effective learning environment and that the scheme of work and lesson plans provide good support to teachers. They have recently amended the scheme of work to ensure that all the requirements of Curriculum 2000 are covered, and that tasks are relevant to the wider school curriculum. Effective assessment activities have been recently devised for each unit of study. Additional technical equipment is satisfactory. There are programmable robots, digital cameras and tape recorders which are used to extend pupils' skills.

## **MUSIC**

110. In this inspection, only one lesson was seen in each year group, together with each assembly – all of which included singing. As the emphasis on each of these occasions was upon performance – singing, marking a beat or carrying out actions – no judgement can be offered on other aspects of music – composing and appraising. Nevertheless, judged upon the singing alone, pupils attain at least satisfactory standards, and sometimes better when compared to pupils of similar age. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
111. Pupils have a good reserve of assembly songs, which they know by heart. Their singing is lively, spirited and tuneful. They clap a rhythm accurately, and improvise appropriate actions to go with a tune. They approach music very positively, and enjoy their singing. They work together well, understanding the need for all to participate in ensemble work. Behaviour is usually good, though excitement – particularly in action songs – sometimes leads to moments of silliness.
112. Teaching of music is judged as good because a qualified music specialist is employed by the school to provide half a term of teaching for each year group. In the remainder of each term, music is taught by class teachers using a well structured and up-to-date commercial music scheme. While there is no choir, each year group has weekly singing practice, led by the subject co-ordinator, and the music specialist runs a music club once a week after school. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory, with no regular recording of achievement against agreed standards.
113. The range and number of resources for music are good and they are in good condition. Instruments are mostly untuned, and represent a wide range of cultural traditions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The lessons observed took place at the beginning of the term and teachers concentrated on establishing a good relationship with their pupils and consolidating pupils' skills and knowledge from the previous year. The school gives a generous amount of time to the subject and employs specialist teachers in dance and games coaching. As a result, all pupils make good gains in learning.
115. Pupils in all year groups show good control of their movement and they have good awareness of each other's space. This is especially noticeable when Year 1 pupils have a games lesson in the confined space of a classroom because it is too wet outside and the hall is being used by another class. They move around without collisions and sensibly pass a ball to one another as they move round. In dance, Year 2 pupils respond well to the variety of instructions they are given to form a variety of shapes at different levels and they successfully join three movements into a sequence. They respond well to the music which is played. The teacher has high expectations, demonstrates what is expected and also offers guidance to individual pupils. This effectively encourages pupils to improve their performance.
116. Teaching is good. The specialist teachers for games and dance have good subject knowledge, which they share with pupils. Teachers plan work effectively, which ensures that skills are steadily developed. Good emphasis is placed on the need to warm up and cool down before and after exercise, and the effect of exercise on our bodies. Teachers give clear instructions so that pupils know what to do and the control and organisation of pupils during lessons is good. Teachers have high expectations, which they convey to pupils and, because they have good relationships with pupils, the pupils respond well. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their work, although some need firm handling after a wet lunchtime to ensure that they follow instructions and work hard. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and this ensures they are productive and enjoyable.
117. The subject is well led. Staff share their expertise with colleagues, for example through peer coaching, so that all teachers extend their skills. There is a well-devised system for observations by classroom assistants and class teachers, so that a good profile is built up for individual pupils showing their attitudes and skills. The curriculum is well organised and makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. For example, in Year 1, the emphasis on moving around and passing the balls to each other is very effective in developing sharing and team spirit. In Year 2, the use of a parachute in a whole-class activity helped pupils learn to work as a team to get a ball through the hole in the middle. There is a variety of small apparatus available at play and lunch time to reinforce skill development and adults join in with pupils. There are well-attended dance, games and gymnastics clubs after school to enhance skills. There are some shortcomings in the accommodation which staff overcome well through good organisation and pupil management. There is no grassed area and games take place on a hard surface near the junior department. The hall is equipped with appropriate apparatus, but it is cramped and it is also a thoroughfare between different parts of the school. As a result, there are often distractions, which pupils generally ignore well, mainly because they are absorbed in the lesson.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

118. Attainment is good and pupils' religious awareness and knowledge are above those which might be expected at their ages. Standards have improved since the last inspection.



119. In their written work and illustrations, pupils show a sensitive awareness of the meanings of religious practices and occasions across the three religions studied in Years 1 and 2: Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity. They also focus upon other concerns when, for example, they write about the important occasions or people in their lives, or set out their own rules for an ideal world. They also demonstrate good factual knowledge – of the key events in the Christian story, and of festivals like Diwali and Hanukkah. In a preparatory lesson before a visit to a synagogue, pupils in Year 2 showed they knew about the way in which the building would be laid out. They also prepared questions for the visit, which showed established understanding: "What day do you pray on?" "Why do boys and men wear the kippah?" "What is on the scrolls in the Ark?"
120. The quality of pupils' learning is good. It is significantly supported by such visits as to the synagogue and others to local Anglican and Baptist churches. During the inspection a priest conducted a mock baptism before all three classes in Year 1, with mimed participation of several pupils – as parents and godparents. A Hindu welcome ceremony was planned for the following week. These very successful occasions are received with excitement by pupils, and the fact that they incorporate authentic religious objects – like the covered and polished shell used in baptism and the priest's vestments – contributes to a sense of wonder at the special nature of religion. Part of this wonder arises from the respect which pupils show for all religious cultures. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, contribute to and draw from religious education in the same way as their peers, and make similar progress.
121. Teaching in religious education is good. Teachers are sensitive in their approach, and do a great deal – through the occasions already mentioned, and through the use of illustrations and artefacts – to make the subject come alive. Religious themes and approaches are reinforced in assemblies, and the subject has been made part of the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to record their religious awareness and knowledge in picture form, in writing, or in both, and this work is thoroughly and regularly marked.
122. The co-ordinator for religious education has recently been given this responsibility, and is aware of the need to develop the school's own scheme of work. The Locally Agreed Syllabus has recently been revised, and elements of the new version need to be formally incorporated into the school's programme, in the absence of which a good teaching structure is at present well maintained through the year group joint planning procedure. There are no formal assessment arrangements, which will need to be included in the new subject scheme of work.