

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE STONEBRIDGE SCHOOL**

Harlesden, London

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101521

Headteacher: Mr Randolph Henry

(Acting headteacher: Ms Sue Malcolm)

Reporting inspector: Rob Crompton  
7230

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225386  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Community                                     |
| School category:             | Infant and junior                             |
| Age range of pupils:         | 3 -11   |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| School address:              | Shakespeare Avenue<br>Harlesden<br>London     |
| Postcode:                    | NW10 8NG                                      |
| Telephone number:            | 0208 965 6965                                 |
| Fax number:                  | 0208 838 0784                                 |
| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body                            |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr Blase Lambert                              |
| Date of previous inspection: | 24 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> June 1996 |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members                |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities   |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| Rob Crompton<br>7230        | Registered inspector | Art<br>Music<br>Physical education  | What sort of school is it?<br>How high are standards?<br><i>The school's results and achievements</i><br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?                     |
| Tina Bradley<br>1234        | Lay inspector        |   | How high are standards?<br><i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i><br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Mohindar Galowalia<br>20832 | Team inspector       | Mathematics<br>Geography<br>English as an additional language<br>Equal opportunities                      | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?  |
| Philip Mann<br>14509        | Team inspector       | Science<br>Design and technology<br>Information and communication technology<br>Special educational needs |   |
| Hilma Rask<br>30266         | Team inspector       | English<br>Religious education<br>History<br>Foundation Stage   |   |

The inspection contractor was:

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

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

|   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>  | <b>6</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  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>   |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| The school's results and achievements   |           |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>14</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>17</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>   | <b>20</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>24</b> |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a community school for boys and girls, from three to eleven years old. It has 234 full-time pupils; 23 children attend the nursery, at first on a part-time basis. Most pupils live in the immediate neighbourhood. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. About half are from African and Caribbean backgrounds. Asian and white European families make up about a tenth of the school's roll; a similar proportion is from other ethnic groups and twelve pupils are white with a United Kingdom heritage. Eight pupils are from traveller families. About half the pupils are from families who have sought refuge in this country. As they start school, pupils' attainment is well below that typical of the age group, mainly because very many are speakers of other languages; some speak no English when they enter the nursery or when they are admitted in later years. Currently around two-thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language. Thirty per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs with 27 pupils receiving support from outside agencies. This is above the national average. Pupils' special needs include learning difficulties, and physical and behavioural problems. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and nine pupils are currently being assessed for statements. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.

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

This effective school provides a secure and purposeful learning environment for pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. It is successful in promoting pupils' personal development; they get on well together in the school community. From a very low position four years ago, academic performance has risen considerably, despite some staffing shortages. This is the result of hard work by the management and staff. Monitoring of teaching and further training have led to improvements, so that the overall quality is now good. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- There is an underlying commitment to equipping pupils to meet their potential through developing self-esteem and instilling high personal expectations
- Relationships throughout the school are good; they help to develop pupils' positive attitudes and a respect for values and beliefs
- Good teaching enables most pupils to make good progress.
- Every effort is made to develop a strong partnership with parents; communications with parents are helpful and informative
- Attendance patterns are carefully tracked to try to reduce unauthorised absence
- Pupils' behaviour is monitored effectively; teachers know their pupils well and, when necessary, are successful in improving behaviour

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

- The curriculum lacks breadth and balance; guidelines in some subjects are inadequate
- Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory
- The allocation of subject management responsibilities needs to be improved
- The outdoor area for children at the Foundation Stage needs further development and improved maintenance
- Pupils' need more opportunities to develop independent study skills

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall. Achievement is more consistent and is now generally good, and standards are rising. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has led to better teaching in these subjects. More computers have been acquired but pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below that expected. Improvements have been made in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. Pupils now have more opportunities to express opinions, but do not have sufficient chances to develop their independent study skills. Guidelines for some subjects are out of date. Monitoring of teaching has improved, particularly in English and mathematics, but the governing body has not moved far enough in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 1997          | 1998 | 1999 | 1999            |
| English         | E             | E*   | D    | A               |
| mathematics     | E             | E*   | B    | A               |
| science         | E             | E*   | D    | B               |

| Key                         |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| well above average          | A  |
| above average               | B  |
| average                     | C  |
| below average               | D  |
| well below average          | E  |
| in the lowest 5% nationally | E* |

Although pupils' attainment rarely matches national averages, it compares well with similar schools. Given that most pupils who enter the school in the nursery and the many who join in subsequent years are speakers of other languages and are new to English, this represents good achievement. As most children have limited skills in English when they start school, the majority are still working towards the early learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>, but have made at least satisfactory progress towards them.

The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics for seven-year-olds were well below the national average, although in writing they were above the average for similar schools. In science, current standards at age seven are below average. Pupils' performance in these subjects is hindered by their lack of fluency in English.

Results attained by eleven-year-olds over the last four years have varied considerably but, from a very low level in 1996, they indicate a considerable rise in attainment. The school met its targets for seven-year-olds this year but not for eleven-year-olds, due to the high number of pupils who joined the school with limited experience of English, and the significant number of pupils with special educational needs within this group. The school is well aware that girls typically do better than boys and is working hard to improve boys' attainment.

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage is from the child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

Higher attaining pupils generally fulfil their potential, as indicated by the well above average proportion – compared with similar schools<sup>2</sup> – who achieved the higher levels in English and mathematics.

Standards are good in music and satisfactory in religious education, art, history and physical education. Attainment in ICT is unsatisfactory at both key stages and, although there are some strengths in design and technology, geography and history, standards are unsatisfactory because not enough time is spent on them.

Overall, there has been an improvement in the rate of progress and achievement since the previous inspection, where progress was described as patchy. Although attainment is still variable, progress in each key stage is more consistent due to a general improvement in the quality of teaching.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils appear to be happy in school where they give their full attention to lessons and take part with enthusiasm in extra-curricular activities.                         |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Good. Pupils understand the school's high expectations of them; they work and play well together.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils' personal development has a positive impact on behaviour and relationships throughout the school. Pupils from a variety of nations and cultures form close friendships. |
| Attendance                             | Below average. Pupils are occasionally absent from school, with parental consent, when they are not ill.   |

The school is successful in developing positive attitudes and values and this contributes to pupils' academic achievements. There are no signs of racism. The 'red hat' scheme where older pupils help to resolve playground problems is particularly effective. Pupils' absence has a negative effect on their attainment.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:        | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall<br>56 | satisfactory       | good           | good            |

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

Effective teaching across the school is the main reason that pupils overcome the disadvantages with which many start. The hard-working staff make every effort to develop pupils' fluency in English as this is seen as the key to progress in most subjects. They are very successful in raising pupils' horizons and self-esteem.

<sup>2</sup> Comparisons are based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals



In 13 per cent of the lessons observed, the teaching was very good or better; 46 per cent were good and the remainder (41 per cent) were satisfactory. No lessons were less than satisfactory.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective, especially at the end of each key stage. Teachers generate a sense of purpose in lessons and pupils become fully involved in discussions. Pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive appropriate support and most progress well. Teaching is particularly effective when there is a clear focus on the identified pupils rather than general support for the whole class. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and good for those with a statement of special educational need.

Temporary teachers are well supported so they can cope with the challenges of teaching classes at short notice. Music teaching is consistently of very good quality. The teaching of science and physical education is generally good; teaching is satisfactory in religious education. Although good lessons were seen in art, design and technology, geography and history, the overall impact of these lessons on attainment is much reduced because of the lack of direction and the insufficient time given to each of these subjects. Similarly, although lessons in the computer suite are successful, across the school and taken over time, the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum  | Unsatisfactory. Provision for literacy and numeracy is a strength, but ICT does not meet statutory requirements and there are weaknesses in some subjects.   |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs  | Satisfactory. There is an effective balance between in-class support and work in withdrawal groups.  |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                  | Satisfactory. Most day-to-day activities take account of the needs of these pupils, but the organisation of specific support has some inefficiencies.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | Good. Daily routines help pupils to develop harmonious relationships and to care for each other. Pupils gain insights into music and drama, and extend their literary horizons. There is a satisfactory focus on promoting spiritual development |
| How well the school cares for its pupils   | Good. Teachers are excellent role models and work hard to encourage pupils to succeed in all they do. Very good medical facilities are available. Pupils' personal and academic development is monitored effectively.                            |

The school works hard to establish a partnership with parents. Strong features are the appointment of an assistant specifically to support the partnership, the home visits before children start school, and the quality of information made available to parents. Most parents appear to have positive views about the school.

In a legitimate attempt to meet the needs of the many pupils who have English as an additional language and to cope with the social and emotional needs of the many pupils whose families have sought refuge in the United Kingdom, some subjects have been given too little attention. Mainly because of staffing difficulties, the school is not as far ahead as others in implementing the revised National Curriculum, which came into effect in September. In the case of ICT, it does not meet statutory requirements.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher inspires staff and pupils with his unstinting determination to widen pupils' horizons, to lift their self-esteem and to drive up standards. During his recent absence, the deputy head has successfully maintained this positive approach. Senior staff support the head and deputy well. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Satisfactory. Governors are appropriately involved in setting policy, allocating funds and monitoring developments. They have been less successful in keeping track of the curriculum as a whole.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Good. Using national information and the school's own data, governors have a good idea of strengths and weaknesses and regularly compare the school's performance with other similar schools and with the national picture.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Satisfactory. Governors generally take care to ensure best use is made of the available resources. However, greater consideration should be given to the strategic deployment of key staff to ensure best value is achieved within available funding.   |

The shortage of qualified and experienced permanent staff is a constant hindrance to development. The main school building is spacious and good use is made of much of it but some areas remain under-used and do not contribute fully to the learning environment in the school. Access to the library is restricted and children in the reception classes have limited outdoor learning opportunities. Resources are generally adequate but there are not enough to provide good support in teaching some subjects such as geography. There is a sufficient number of computers but not enough software to support pupils' learning in all aspects of the ICT curriculum.

The aims of the school are reflected in its daily life. Despite frequent staff shortages, the school runs smoothly and senior staff monitor teaching effectively, providing feedback, encouragement and support. English, mathematics, science and music are managed effectively, but other subjects lack appropriate direction, either because the leadership posts are vacant or key staff have too many responsibilities.

Governors try to ensure that all money is well spent, but the use of specific grants is somewhat inefficient and more consideration could have been given to the use of available funds to create a more effective management structure.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only a small number of parents attended the pre-inspection meeting or returned the questionnaires. Most of the twenty parents at the meeting were speakers of other languages and, although the school had arranged for translation, communication was difficult. There were insufficient questionnaire returns to enable inspectors to identify common views but individual parents wrote comments and raised issues at the meeting about behaviour, homework, management and extra-curricular activities. The inspection found that behaviour is generally good and is closely monitored by the school; homework is often effective but lacks consistency. Management is good and extra-curricular provision is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Standards vary considerably from year to year because the characteristics of each year group are frequently different. The overall picture is that, although pupils' attainment rarely matches national averages, it compares well with similar schools. Given that most pupils who enter the school in the nursery and the many who join in subsequent years are speakers of other languages and are new to English, this represents good achievement.

2 When they start school, most children have only very limited experience in speaking and listening skills in English and have very poorly developed skills in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal independence. By the time children move into Year 1 the majority of children are still working towards the early learning goals in all areas, but have made at least satisfactory progress towards them.

3 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics for seven-year-olds were well below the national average, although in writing they were above the average for similar schools. The results of the National Curriculum assessment tests in English at eleven were below the national average but well above the average for similar schools. In mathematics, results were above those found nationally and well above those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was close to the national picture in mathematics but below this in English.

4 Results of 1999 teachers' assessments of seven-year-olds in science were well below average in relation to the national picture but were just below average when compared to similar schools. Current standards at this age are below average, but limited literacy skills restrict pupils' ability to record and talk about their findings from investigations. The results of eleven-year-olds were close to the national average and very high compared with similar schools, except for the proportion who achieved the higher level 5, which was well below average.

5 Results attained by eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science over the last four years have varied considerably but, from a very low level in 1996, they indicate a considerable rise in attainment. There was a dip in 1998, a dramatic rise in 1999 and, although a full analysis is not yet possible<sup>3</sup>, 2000 results are relatively low. The school met its targets for seven-year-olds this year but not eleven-year-olds, due to the high number of pupils who joined the school with limited experience of English, and the significant number of pupils with special educational needs within this group. Careful analysis of the level of work currently being achieved by Year 6 pupils has enabled the school to set suitably challenging but realistic targets for next year. Four-year trends also reveal a marked difference in the performance of boys and girls, with girls doing better than boys in all subjects. The school is well aware of this issue and is working hard to improve boys' attainment. Recent improvements in boys' achievements indicate that the strategies are successful.

---

<sup>3</sup> Comparisons between average points scores are not available at the time of writing

6 The standards of work seen during the inspection, particularly those in Years 2 and 6, indicate a general improvement. Attainment in English, especially speaking and listening, is increasing and standards in numeracy are approaching expectations for these age groups. Pupils at both key stages are increasingly able to consolidate and improve their speaking and listening skills in other subjects, but limited opportunities for reading, writing and numeracy across the curriculum means these are less well developed outside English and mathematics lessons. Progress in ICT is increasing, but standards are below national expectations. Good standards are evident in music and attainment is satisfactory in physical education and religious education. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history do not meet the national expectations because too little time is spent on them.

7 Overall, there has been an improvement in the rate of progress and achievement since the previous inspection, where progress was described as patchy. Although attainment is still variable, progress in each key stage is more consistent due to a general improvement in the quality of teaching. The progress made by pupils with English as an additional language is good. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress towards their individual targets, but are not making the same kind of headway achieved by the majority of pupils.

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

8 Pupils' attitudes to school life are very good. They appear to be happy in school where they give their full attention to lessons and take part with enthusiasm in extra-curricular activities. Children in the Foundation Stage work with enthusiasm and are keen to please. In the nursery class, pupils are encouraged to develop independence in selecting activities and are helped to understand the rules of sharing toys and resources.

9 Since the last inspection, pupils have sustained the good levels of behaviour. Even the behaviour of the most energetic and challenging pupils is generally good with pupils understanding the school's high expectations of them. The behaviour of older pupils is good. They work well together during lessons, and support each other in team or paired activities.

10 Pupils, of all ages, including the very young, are willing hosts to visitors. They introduce each other to guests in a friendly manner and are able to enter into sensible and interesting conversation. Lunchtime procedures are good and although it is a very busy period, the mid-day supervisors and children have good relationships that contribute to a pleasant atmosphere during meal times. Comments from parents before the inspection indicated some concern about behaviour. From time to time good behaviour does lapse but pupils accept the fair and firm sanctions imposed by their teachers, to restore an orderly atmosphere in school.

11 The personal development of pupils is good and has a positive impact on behaviour and relationships throughout the school. Pupils from a variety of nations and cultures attend this school yet they are able to form close friendships. Some pupils act as interpreters for other non-English speaking pupils thereby supporting learning and promoting respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. There are no obviously lonely or isolated pupils in the classroom or out on the playground and there are no signs of racism. Very occasionally, sexism or bullying does occur but problems are solved fairly by the adults in school. Even the very young children understand the rules of right and wrong behaviour and are praised by their teachers when they are sensible. Pupils from Year 5 who were interviewed during the inspection demonstrated respect for those pupils in Year 6 who are trusted to take the responsibility of monitors. Monitors wear red baseball caps as a means of identification.

The pupils interviewed openly discussed their admiration for the 'red hats'. They believe the qualities of kindness, trustworthiness and the ability to settle arguments peacefully need to be developed if they are to reach 'red hat' status when they are in Year 6.

12 When behaviour becomes seriously unacceptable, pupils are excluded from school. Parents are advised of the governing body's decision and are invited into school to discuss the problem and to ensure their child's successful return. In the last year there have been five fixed term, and one permanent, exclusions.

13 Despite the school's efforts to promote attendance, absence figures are above national levels and some pupils arrive late for school. Pupils are occasionally absent from school, with parental consent, when they are not ill.

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

14 Teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2, and satisfactory or better in the Foundation Stage. Effective teaching across the school is the main reason that pupils overcome the disadvantages with which many start. The hard-working staff make every effort to develop pupils' fluency in English as this is seen as the key to progress in most subjects. They are very successful in widening pupils' horizons and raising their self-esteem. This is evident in the dramatic contrast between the children in the nursery and in the oldest class. As most of the young entrants are speakers of other languages and have little experience outside their own immediate families, teachers in the Foundation Stage place great emphasis on developing the pupils' confidence and establishing routines, which provide the security that they need to become active learners. This is built on successfully in later years. For example, pupils in Year 2 often make reference to what they are going to 'study at university' – a result of regular prompting by the teacher and the high expectations she consistently promotes. Many pupils join the school during Key Stage 2, some of whom have had negative experiences of schooling elsewhere, and teachers have to work very hard to maintain positive attitudes. Clear evidence of the school's success promoting pupil's personal development is evident from the purposeful atmosphere in the Year 6 class, where pupils behave well, work hard and are keen to discuss their activities.

15 The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective, especially at the end of each key stage. Teachers generate a sense of purpose in lessons. They frequently make the objectives clear and maintain a brisk pace, using questions skilfully to build up pupils' confidence in what they already know. This approach draws an enthusiastic response and leads to good progress. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class were bursting to answer questions about the plot and the characters in a story. Year 6 pupils made good progress when the teacher concentrated on one reading group and the rest of the class worked well independently. Skilful questioning is also effective in numeracy. Pupils become fully involved in discussions, which develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of number work. The routine focus on mathematical vocabulary caters for the diverse pupil intake of the school. Occasionally, there is over-reliance on English textbooks, which offer insufficient challenge, and pupils need more opportunities to work independently in both literacy and numeracy.

16 Pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive appropriate support. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and is particularly effective when there is a clear focus on the identified pupils rather than general support for the whole class. The school's safe environment and class teachers' experience of literacy and numeracy strategies have made a significant contribution to meeting the needs of these pupils. As a result, most make good progress, including higher attaining pupils.

17 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and good for those with a statement of special educational need. Most teachers refer to pupils' individual education plans so they can provide appropriate work towards their targets in lessons.

Pupils also benefit from working quietly outside the classroom with a support assistant, either in small groups or individually. Care is taken not to withdraw pupils from literacy and numeracy sessions too often, so they can take part in follow-up activities with the rest of the class.

18 Temporary teachers are well supported so they can cope with the challenges of teaching classes at short notice. In addition to effective teaching in English and mathematics, the teaching of science, religious education and physical education is generally good; music teaching is consistently of very good quality. Lessons in religious education are more effective when the knowledge and ideas relating to the subject are given prominence, rather than being somewhat hidden in lessons in personal and social education. In science, most teachers have a good understanding of the subject and explain things clearly, but sometimes all pupils work at the same level, which means the higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. Teachers' enthusiasm for physical education is picked up by the pupils; they often demonstrate practically, which helps pupils to learn and refine gymnastic and games skills.

19 Good teaching was seen in art, design and technology, geography and history, but the overall impact of this teaching on attainment is much reduced because of the lack of direction and the insufficient time given to each of these subjects. Similarly, although lessons in the computer suite are successful, across the school and taken over time, the teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory. There is a great variation in teachers' skills and confidence in using ICT within other subjects and in assessing pupils' progress.

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

20 The previous inspection found the curriculum to be broad and balanced. As a result of the strong emphasis given to English and mathematics, particularly literacy, this balance has suffered and is currently unsatisfactory. In a legitimate attempt to meet the needs of the many pupils who have English as an additional language and to cope with the social and emotional needs of the many pupils whose families have sought refuge in the United Kingdom, some subjects have been given too little attention and standards have dropped. Mainly because of staffing difficulties, the school is not as far ahead as others in implementing the revised National Curriculum, which came into effect in September. In the case of ICT, it does not meet statutory requirements.

21 There is no nominated person responsible for the curriculum and a unified approach is largely missing. The school is not benefiting from the national guidelines, which provide model schemes of work across all subjects. Suitable arrangements are made for sex education but provision for education in drug misuse is not in place. The school provides for some 'circle time' but its application is patchy and too inconsistent to meet the new requirements for personal, social, citizenship and health education.

22 Provision for English and mathematics is good. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are well established. Teachers are planning the curriculum for English and mathematics in the light of their positive experiences of the national strategies. Planning of lessons in other subjects has benefited significantly; they are better structured, questions are more sharply focused and specific vocabulary is emphasised.

23 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is an effective balance between in-class support and work in withdrawal groups. Classroom assistants are helpfully engaged in making the curriculum accessible to the identified pupils. Curricular provision and access for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory overall. Group work is very effective, particularly for the higher attaining pupils but support linked to other areas of the curriculum, for example, ICT, is only partially successful in meeting pupils' needs.

24 Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory overall and good in some respects – for example, all Year 6 pupils are offered extra classes during lunchtime, after school and during Easter holidays. The ‘Boys’ Project’ is an effective way of extending learning opportunities and raising standards. Pupils benefit from a good range of visits, for example to the British Museum for enriching learning about Greek art, Anglo-Saxons and Ancient Egyptians. They also visit the Gordon Brown Centre, the Royal Air Force Museum and the Maritime Museum. The school regularly invites performers from the Tricycle and Mahogany theatre groups. Links with the community are satisfactory. The school is made available for community activities such as the homework club for secondary pupils and family literacy sessions for parents. There are effective links with local nurseries, secondary schools and training colleges.

25 Overall provision for pupils’ personal development is good. Although satisfactory, there could be more opportunities for spiritual development. There is an appropriate focus on promoting spiritual development in assemblies and during some English, art and religious education lessons, when time is set aside for personal reflection. Stories engage pupils in thinking about the wonder of life and nature as do some lessons in mathematics when pupils learn about the special relationships between angles and the properties of circles, and create their own geometric shapes using a nail board.

26 The school’s provision for moral and social development is good. Teachers are good role models and the daily routines of school life help pupils to develop harmonious relationships and to care for each other. Despite the diversity and life experiences of pupils, they find the school a secure environment in which to learn and play. Assemblies often focus on moral dilemmas and the need to overcome prejudice and unhealthy feelings about each other. Pupils think of the needy, and occasions of human endeavour and suffering; they contribute to charities such as the NSPCC, Help the Aged and the Poppy Appeal.

27 In conflict situations, pupils are asked to reflect upon how they could have dealt with the situation differently. Pupils of all ages are involved in working out lunchtime rules. Visits and residential courses enrich pupils’ experiences and contribute to their personal development. Teachers expect pupils to work together in pairs or small groups in lessons. Pupils learn to applaud effort and the success of their classmates. Older pupils are given formal responsibility, through the red hat scheme for helping, showing understanding and caring for other pupils in the playground. Pupils collect registers from classes and are given responsibility for tidying classrooms after lessons. They are given guidance on issues such as fire danger, safety at home and stranger danger. Provision for developing independence, such as making decisions about what aspects of a topic to study, or how to conduct individual research in the library, is less evident.

28 The school’s provision for cultural development is good. Pupils gain insights into music and drama from visiting performers, and extend their literary horizons in English lessons. An awareness of different cultures is developed through the schools’ day-to-day life. More formally, pupils are given opportunities to witness celebrations of major festivals of the major religions, most of which are represented in the school, for example, Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year and Jewish festivals.

29 Aspects of personal development are successfully promoted by the involvement of many pupils in the popular annual productions. In addition to the moral values promoted in the storylines, pupils have to make a commitment to taking part when other activities beckon and they learn to work co-operatively together towards a common goal.

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

30 Teachers care about their pupils. They are excellent role models and work hard to encourage pupils to succeed in all they do. By way of response, pupils form positive relationships with their teachers and work well to succeed. For many, their personal achievement is remarkable.

31 The school monitors the health and safety of pupils by focusing on the individual. Procedures for dealing with child protection issues are in place and follow local authority guidelines. There are very good medical facilities available for caring for sick or injured pupils. The welfare assistant is well trained in first aid methods and keeps a close check on pupils with specific illnesses such as asthma. The efficiently organised medical room provides comfort for sick pupils as they wait to be collected from school. A sex education policy is now in place, but the teaching of drug awareness remains underdeveloped.

32 New pupils who are quiet or shy are closely monitored in school and are encouraged to grow in confidence through established systems specifically designed to promote the development of all pupils. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are supported and monitored in order to promote effective learning and high levels of self-esteem as they progress through the school. Pupils who belong to the traveller community are increasingly attending school regularly and their families receive support from school and the local authority's agencies.

33 Good security measures are in place, regular fire drills are carried out and regular audits contribute to the monitoring of health and safety. However, the inspection identified, and the school was advised of, a number of safety hazards, which are in need of urgent attention.

34 The school's monitoring of academic and personal development of pupils is good and conducted through its effective marking policy and achievement records. Teachers support and encourage their pupils through very good marking strategies. Pupils' books contain positive comments from teachers and often a happy reply from the pupil. This dialogue continues in homework books, which focus closely on individual targets. Targets to improve pupils' learning and personal development are identified, discussed and noted in pupils' workbooks. These targets are specific and form the basis of discussion with pupils and their parents; they are kept in the front of pupils' books and are monitored regularly to maintain a continuous focus on achievement. The school's project to monitor the progress of boys throughout the school has made a significant impact on their learning and attainment.

35 Occasionally, learning targets are non-academic; they carry equal status with academic targets and have a positive effect on pupils' personal development. This type of support is central to the school's ethos to encourage the individual to succeed. For example, circle time for pupils in Year 2 promotes excellent relationships and encourages high expectations and self-esteem for all.

36 Pupils' attendance in school is closely monitored. Class teachers know why their pupils are absent and the reasons are closely followed. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to nursery and school early in order to promote regular attendance and punctuality.

37 Very good systems are in place to support the behaviour policy. The expectation of appropriate behaviour is high and pupils respond to the firm and respectful discipline imposed by the school.

38 Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school employs a play assistant whose role is to promote good behaviour in the older pupils through teamwork. Early morning and lunchtime sessions of football, skipping, basketball and individual ball games have a positive impact on the attitudes of many older pupils, particularly the boys. The work of the play assistant has influenced calm concentration and respect for other team members and adults, in the most difficult of pupils, thus having a positive impact on their behaviour, relationships and development.



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

39 Parents' views of the school are generally positive. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to work well with parents, and their perceptions of the school appear to be mainly positive. The school's partnership with parents begins with home visits from the nursery staff who encourage new parents to take an active role in their child's learning. The school invites parents to discuss their children's progress each term but it also provides alternative arrangements at mutually convenient times. The headteacher and deputy encourage parents to communicate with them by being available at the end of the school day, engaging parents in informal conversation and through personal invitations to school.

40 The quality of information to parents about their children's education and progress is good. Very good annual reports fully inform parents about attainment and identify areas for development. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted and involved in providing extra support for their children. Literacy and numeracy workshops were established to involve parents in their children's learning. The workshops were well attended and have made a positive contribution to the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Reading records also contribute to the positive dialogue with parents about progress and play an important role in enabling them to make an effective contribution to children's learning at school and at home. Parents are offered translations of documents into home languages and the school uses interpreters whenever possible. This is a further indication of the school's commitment to establishing a partnership with all parents.

41 The school employs a parents' assistant for the specific purpose of promoting its partnership with parents. She holds coffee mornings, runs sewing classes and is willing to help mothers to make their own clothes or curtains. This initiative extends the school's invitation to parents to join it in partnership and to support their children by playing an increasing role in their education.

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

42 The school management team continues to provide the steadfast leadership, which is essential if the school is to consolidate its success and move further forward. The school's aims and values are clearly evident in its day-to-day life. The headteacher inspires staff and pupils with his unstinting determination to widen pupils' horizons, to lift their self-esteem and to drive up standards. During his recent absence, the deputy head has successfully maintained this positive approach, despite severe staffing difficulties, which meant a reorganisation had to be implemented at very short notice.

43 Senior staff support the head and deputy well but a weakness in the management structure is the lack of status and reward for the co-ordination of some subjects and the co-ordination of provision for pupils with English as an additional language. This has a negative affect on standards in subjects such as ICT, art, and design and technology. The absence of this middle level of management means that existing staff have to move elsewhere for promotion and the school cannot offer incentives to teachers in other schools who might be attracted to such a post.

Some existing staff are expected to take on too many responsibilities, so their expertise and time is spread too thinly. For example, the deputy head is also the co-ordinator for special needs and one person manages religious education, history and geography.

44 Governors are appropriately involved in setting policy and monitoring developments. They have maintained an involvement in the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy by attending training alongside staff and observing lessons. They have been less able to keep track of the curriculum as a whole because of the lack of co-ordination in some subjects.

45 Whole-school planning is firmly based on priorities; resources are allocated, measurable criteria are established and time scales for implementation are devised. Progress towards targets is a regular feature of the headteacher's report to the governing body. Governors have a good idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and generally take care to ensure best use is made of the available resources. However, greater consideration should be given to the strategic deployment of key staff to ensure good value is achieved within available funding.

46 Following the previous inspection, a detailed action plan was devised. Progress has been satisfactory but variable. Some targets have been fully met, others only partially and some have not been addressed with enough rigour or consistency. Staffing difficulties have greatly hindered progress because an inordinate amount of time is spent on securing temporary teachers.

47 Improvements have been made since the previous inspection in the management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. However, the strategy of providing support for such pupils in ICT lessons is only partially successful and means the specified funding is not fully used for its intended purpose,

48 The school considers its staff to be its greatest resource but when staffing is temporary and unstable it does have a detrimental effect on pupils' learning. The shortage of qualified and experienced permanent staff is a constant hindrance to development. It means that some classes are taught by several different teachers during the year. When teachers leave, they are often hard to replace because attracting staff from outside the school is very difficult.

49 New staff receive good support from the teaching team. Specific guidance from co-ordinators in relation to ICT, literacy and numeracy made a valuable contribution to the induction of two recently appointed newly qualified teachers and a learning assistant. The professional development of teaching staff has recently improved with many members of the permanent staff attending specialist training courses whilst whole-staff training covered the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy.

50 The school is a large Victorian building of character. It is spacious and good use is made of much of it but some areas remain under-used and do not contribute fully to the learning environment in the school. Given the availability of space near the older classes, the school should consider how this might be adapted to provide reference facilities that are easier to access than the present library, which is three floors below and in a separate building. The outdoor play area within the nursery is secure and includes a secure covered area for use in wet weather. However, the grass is too long, weeds and brambles in corners need cutting back and hidden litter is potentially dangerous.

51 There is a sufficient number and quantity of educational resources to enable the school to teach the National Curriculum. However, there are not enough resources to provide good support in teaching some subjects such as geography and to enable pupils to cover fieldwork fully.

52 Although there is a sufficient number of computers in school, there is insufficient software to support pupils' learning in all aspects of the ICT curriculum. Programs and additional equipment are needed to enable independent learning through research in subjects as history, religious education, and geography, and to facilitate creative approaches using ICT in art and music.

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

53 In order to improve standards, the school should:

- 1) Improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum (paragraphs 19 and 20) by:

- maintaining an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy by providing opportunities for pupils to develop these skills within other subjects, such as geography and history
  - allocating more time to subjects such as art, and design and technology to enable pupils' learning to progress more systematically through the school
  - improving current guidelines to ensure they meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum
  - improving the management of subjects.
- 2) Improve standards in ICT (paragraph 103) by:
- providing further staff training to improve their knowledge of the subject and of appropriate teaching methods, including the integration of ICT with other subjects
  - developing a manageable assessment system in order to track pupils' progress through the school
  - acquiring more software to cover curriculum requirements.
- 3) Review the management structure (paragraph 43) to:
- improve the delegation of responsibilities among key staff
  - improve the recruitment and retention of staff
  - ensure that central grants are used effectively for their specific purpose.
- 4) Provide more opportunities for developing pupils' independence (paragraphs 15, 76 and 89) by:
- providing more access to reference material in the library and via ICT
  - increasing the amount of work pupils are asked to tackle independently or in small groups
  - continuing to involve pupils in agreeing their individual learning targets.
- 5) Improve the outdoor learning area for children in the Foundation Stage (paragraphs 68 and 69) to:
- provide better facilities for children in the reception classes
  - ensure that the existing outdoor area in the nursery is properly maintained.

#### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Improving the resources for design and technology, and geography (paragraph 102).
- Ensuring that girls have equal access to swimming lessons (paragraph 116)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 53 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2         | 9         | 49   | 40           | 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 – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 25      | 234     |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | NA      | 180     |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 2       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0       | 75      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 154          |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 92           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 62           |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 5.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 2.4 |
| 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 | 16   | 21    | 37    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 12      | 14      | 13          |
|   | Girls    | 14      | 16      | 16          |
|   | Total    | 26      | 30      | 29          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 70 (87) | 81(84 ) | 78 (94)     |
|   | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 11      | 13          | 11      |
|   | Girls    | 14      | 12          | 14      |
|   | Total    | 25      | 25          | 25      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 68 (84) | 68 (78)     | 68 (78) |
|   | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85)     | 87 (86) |

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

|  |      |      |       |       |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|  | 1999 | 9    | 15    | 24    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 6       | 8           | 7       |
|   | Girls    | 11      | 12          | 13      |
|   | Total    | 17      | 20          | 20      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 71 (44) | 83 (33)     | 83 (23) |
|   | National | 70 (65) | 69 (59)     | 78 (69) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 6       | 7           | 6       |
|   | Girls    | 12      | 11          | 12      |
|   | Total    | 18      | 17          | 18      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 75 (17) | 75 (17)     | 75 (20) |
|   | National | 68 (62) | 69 (63)     | 75 (69) |

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 46           |
| Black – African heritage        | 86           |
| Black – other                   | 3            |
| Indian                          | 3            |
| Pakistani                       | 4            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 1            |
| Chinese                         | 3            |
| White                           | 36           |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 22           |

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

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

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 1            | 1         |
| Black – African heritage     | 4            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 13.9 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 16.8 |
| Average class size                       | 23   |

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

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 4     |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 103.5 |

#### **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   | 32.5 |

|                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 12.5 |
|--------------------------------|------|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Financial year | 1999 |
|----------------|------|

|  | £      |
|--|--------|
| Total income                               | 729968 |
| Total expenditure                          | 737018 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2846   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 72400  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 65350  |

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 259 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 9   |

### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

There were insufficient questionnaire returns to enable inspectors to identify common views. Those parents who did respond were mostly positive about all aspects of the school, but individual parents were unhappy about behaviour, homework, management and extra-curricular activities.

## **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**

54 Since the last inspection, there have been considerable staffing and organisational changes which have had an impact on the very good provision noted in the previous report. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is provided in the nursery, which is housed in a separate purpose-built building, and in two adjoining reception classes in the main school building.

55 Current provision is satisfactory. Some of the staff are new to their roles and all are working hard to establish teamwork and daily routines. The experienced nursery nurses make an invaluable contribution to the learning provided in both settings. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory across all areas of learning. There are particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development, and in literacy and numeracy.

56 The majority of children who enter the nursery or reception classes are speakers of other languages and are new to English. Most children have only very limited experience in speaking and listening skills in English and have very poorly developed skills in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal independence. By the time children move into Year 1 the majority of children are still working towards the early learning goals in all areas, but have made at least satisfactory progress towards these.

57 Children attend either a morning or afternoon session in the nursery; they become full-time as they settle in during the autumn term. During the year in which they become five, children transfer to the reception classes. At the time of the inspection, the children had only been in school for a few days or weeks because of the gradual build up at the beginning of the school year. Twenty-three children were in attendance in the nursery on a part-time basis and 33 in the reception classes. Some children enter the reception classes directly without the benefit of nursery education.

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

58 The majority of children enter the nursery with very limited skills in personal and social development, and during their time in both the nursery and reception classes they develop considerable skills in learning how to share and co-operate together through their work and play. All staff help children to distinguish between right and wrong and encourage them to consider the impact of their actions on the feelings of others. Adults provide positive role models and children make good progress as a result. For example, one child in the reception class reminded others that, 'We don't fight at school and we don't hit'. Both the nursery and reception classes are attractively set up. Children's independence is promoted by allowing them to choose activities and getting them to tidy up after themselves.

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

59 Children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, although many are still likely to be working towards the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage, given their very limited entry levels.

60 Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy listening to large picture-book stories and are encouraged to listen with attention to the contributions of others during quiet group carpet activities. They enjoy participating in action songs and rhymes together, which provide a valuable foundation for learning about the sounds and structural patterns of spoken English. Good use is made of turn-taking games to consolidate new language learning. Some stories are shared in Arabic with the learning support assistant, which offers valuable additional language and literacy experience.

61 Children in the nursery delighted in making large gingerbread men biscuits with the nursery nurse and squealed with excitement when sharing the story of Sam's sandwich with their teacher, before making their own sandwiches. Children in the reception classes enjoyed sharing the story of



the *Rainbow Fish*, and talked about the colours and patterns found in the story. Small group activities with teachers in the reception classes provide effective support for early literacy development. Through guided handwriting, children record names on large pieces of paper, and good opportunities are taken to explore the names and sounds of individual letters.

62 In both the nursery and reception classes, there are many opportunities to extend language learning through play. For example, children in the reception classes act out daily shopping experiences in the fruit and vegetable shop and their language learning is enriched when teachers enter into the role-play.

### ***Mathematical development***

63 Children make satisfactory progress in early mathematics, although many are still likely to be working towards the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage.

64 Teachers offer good language and vocabulary for developing mathematical understanding in everyday situations. For example, during cooking in the nursery, children are invited to 'add one more spoonful' into the mixture. Good use is made of the home languages of pupils, for example, through the inclusion of Arabic numbers in the counting display. In the reception classes, children handle imitation coins in their shop and are encouraged to use their counting skills when paying and giving change. They explore the shape and size of a wide range of fruit and vegetables as they handle them in connection with painting and shopping. Using a paper octopus, children in the reception classes count out cubes with their teachers to match a given number up to eight. They count up to ten with adult help, but many are still developing the concepts of matching one-to-one.

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

65 Children enter the nursery, and in some instances, the reception classes, with only a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world outside their own homes. They have many opportunities to build up this area through well-planned and purposeful activities. This includes going shopping or posting a letter, and exploring, tasting and handling a wide range of fruits and vegetables.

66 All staff offer good support to the children in order to extend their knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. Children are taught how to handle tools safely and have good opportunities to use construction materials. For example, nursery children were excited by the tall brick towers which they constructed and dismayed when they fell down but were encouraged by the teacher to try again. Children in the reception classes explored a range of different textured materials such as flowing dry rice and corn flour paste with evident fascination.

67 Children have good opportunities to use the computer in both the nursery and reception classes and enjoy using the large red roller ball control in the nursery, moving on to develop their mouse control skills in the reception classes whilst using a painting program.

### ***Physical development***

68 The poorly maintained outdoor play area in the nursery results in restricted opportunities to extend and develop children's physical skills. Although the outdoor play area is secure, the grass is too long, and litter and weeds are potentially hazardous. Although some outdoor equipment is of a good quality, much of this is in need of updating. The large outdoor sand pit requires a purpose built lid, as it is unsuitable for use in its present condition. The security grills which cover the covered outdoor play area restrict the view of the outdoor area from staff inside the building, and there needs to be constant vigilance when taking turns in outdoor supervision. This detracts from the quality of adults' interactions with children.

69 The two adjoining reception classes do not have immediate access to an outdoor area, although twice a week each class makes good use of the secure nursery outdoor play area. The school is aware that provision is limited and there are plans to redevelop the site to accommodate a dedicated outdoor play area and to provide further suitable outdoor play equipment.

70 In both the nursery and reception classes, children have appropriate opportunities to extend their fine motor skills through cutting and sticking for example, but children in the reception classes need more opportunities to develop their physical skills such as pushing and pulling, balancing and climbing.

### **Creative development**

71 Children enter the nursery with very limited skills in this area of learning and they make good progress through the nursery, and later on in the reception classes, by handling a wide range of materials of different textures in well-planned and motivating activities. In the nursery, children are encouraged to experiment with the different sounds of the tambourine and the drum and children in the reception classes gain from the specialist music teacher's lively sessions. Nursery children handle paint and collage materials with growing interest, and in the reception classes they continue to explore paint and collage, self-selecting materials to make colourful fruit collages and paintings.

72 Children in the nursery start to join in with the repetitive aspects of well-known stories and, in the reception classes, children enjoy dressing up as different animal characters and taking on the movements of these during their play. When teachers and other adults enter into role-play, such as shopping, creative development is enhanced and language is extended.

## **ENGLISH**

73 The very good leadership and co-ordination of English contributes to the high expectations for the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. As a result of a concerted effort, most pupils make good progress towards their individual targets in both reading and writing. The standards which pupils achieve by the age of seven and eleven, although below the national averages, represent good progress, considering the very high number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, and the fact that some of these pupils have only been at school in Britain for a short period of time. Some have additional special educational needs.

74 The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced into the school and provides a consistent approach to the teaching of language and literacy. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator undertakes joint planning with new staff in order to ensure that there is continuity in pupils' learning, and has used release time in an effective way to monitor the development of teaching. New teachers have also had the opportunity to observe demonstration lessons given by an external literacy consultant.

75 Pupils develop their skills in speaking and listening through frequent opportunities to discuss and to answer questions in their lessons. Attainment is satisfactory and many pupils achieve good standards. For example, Year 2 pupils acted out the story of *The Enormous Watermelon*, with enthusiasm, using extended sentences as they took on the role of different characters. Pupils in Year 6 displayed much confidence when presenting a whole-school assembly based on *Britain in the Sixties* and later, in a history lesson, confidently recalled this factual knowledge to illustrate changes to life in Britain over time. Where teachers are still establishing overall classroom discipline and control, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to extend the range of their speaking and listening skills.

76 Progress in reading is good overall and most eleven-year-olds are achieving satisfactory standards. Parents make a valuable contribution when they share the reading books that their children take home on a regular basis.

From the start, pupils are encouraged to build up their knowledge of basic words which they can recognise by sight. They learn to recognise letters by both sound and name and to use this knowledge when tackling unknown words. Older pupils have a satisfactory range of reading books to use in the classroom, which include some simplified group texts of more sophisticated content, suitable for use by more advanced pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Most pupils know how to use a dictionary and a thesaurus by Year 6. All pupils have weekly opportunities to visit the well-stocked school library, but the siting of this in a separate building does not enable pupils to develop

independent research and enquiry skills, or encourage all pupils to develop good reading habits. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6, although able to discuss their interest in the stories of, for example, Ted Hughes, Jacqueline Wilson and Charles Dickens, did not demonstrate an extensive knowledge of authors or independent research strategies using ICT.

77 Pupils make good progress in writing, as a result of the frequent opportunities to undertake interesting tasks and the positive way in which writing is promoted in most classes. Although national test results are likely to be below average this year, due to the balance of abilities in the year group, many eleven-year-olds are achieving satisfactory or better standards. Handwriting is taught in a consistent approach throughout the school, and many pupils develop a mature well-formed script by the end of Year 6. Pupils generally take care with the presentation of written work, although some pupils find the mechanics of writing quite a challenge. Pupils throughout the school enjoy writing, and even those who are at the earliest stages in developing accuracy with spelling and structure, attempt more extended writing, as they are eager to communicate their ideas. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading the work of their classmates; they make positive comments on the content, and suggest ways it can be improved, for example, through the use of capital letters. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoy making their own fiction and non-fiction books which include contents pages and chapter headings. Year 6 pupils rise to the challenge of composing longer sentences, using connecting words to elaborate some well-known rhymes. They write from the point of view of one of the characters from their class reading text and explore ways in which words have changed over time, whilst writing about Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*. However, higher attaining pupils need more experience of drafting and editing their written work.

78 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans when these targets are broken down into small achievable steps and when support is provided by additional teachers and learning support staff. Additional help from a well-trained assistant provides good structured support in reading and writing for lower achieving pupils in Years 3 and 4.

79 Girls have achieved much better results than boys during the past four years. The school has worked hard to address this issue by analysing test results. It found that some boys were missing the expected levels by a small margin and set up the 'Boys' Project' to help redress the balance. This initiative is already proving successful; it is having a positive effect on boys' attitudes, behaviour and achievements.

80 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during literacy lessons are usually good and contribute to the good progress they make. They concentrate well during whole-class sessions and are keen to answer questions and take part in discussions. Boys and girls work together in collaboration and share resources in a sensible manner, usually demonstrating sustained concentration on written tasks as well. Pupils are aware of their personal learning targets, and refer to these when they are placed at the front of their writing books

81 The overall quality of teaching is good, especially at the end of each key stage. Year 2 pupils raised their hands and clicked their fingers with enthusiasm to indicate the use of capital letters and full stops, during the shared class reading of *The Enormous Watermelon*, and then acted out the story in small groups using simple props. This lively teaching enhanced both their understanding of the use of punctuation marks and overall understanding of the storyline. Year 6 pupils respond well to the high expectations of both behaviour and concentration which enables effective group teaching of reading to take place while other groups work on their independent tasks.

When teachers take opportunities to demonstrate reading and writing processes clearly to their pupils, this results in good learning. In a few lessons, there is over-reliance on textbook materials which offer insufficient challenge. Pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive appropriate support from additionally funded staff, but this support is spread too thinly across the classes, which hinders progress.

82 The use of literacy in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Although good opportunities occur for speaking and listening, the range and breadth of reading and writing need to be extended in other subjects and pupils need more opportunities to develop independent research and referencing skills.

83 Resources for the teaching of English have been well chosen. Teachers make good use of enlarged 'big book' texts, sets of group readers and small whiteboards during lessons. Fuller regular access to the library and use of ICT resources is needed in order to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop research skills.

84 Assessment and record-keeping procedures are good. The school has a systematic approach to assessment and makes good use of tests to monitor and track pupils' progress in English over time. This contributes significantly to the good progress which pupils make towards their personal targets. Marking is inconsistent across the school. Although good marking in some classes offers clear advice on what to do in order to improve both skills and content, in others, marking has little impact on learning.

85 The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and areas in need of further development, and the school has an appropriate action plan to raise standards of English. The recently revised scheme of work celebrates the diversity of languages within the school and includes all aspects of English teaching. The co-ordinator and senior management team show an impressive commitment to raising standards in English, as demonstrated, for example, by the booster classes for Year 6 pupils during school holidays and the detailed tracking of pupils' progress over time.

## **MATHEMATICS**

86 Results of national tests in 1999 were above those found nationally and well above those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was close to the national picture. Standards vary significantly from year to year. Results in 2000 were much lower and pupils' current work indicates that overall standards are below average. However, most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. From a very low starting point, many pupils do well; they may not reach national averages but the standards achieved represent a considerable achievement for many pupils. Girls have done much better than boys during recent years. The school is making good headway in narrowing this gap through the 'Boys' Project', which is doing much to raise boys' self-esteem and confidence in the own abilities.

87 Year 2 pupils develop good addition strategies. Teachers' effective questioning involves all pupils and ensures that all pupils, including those with special needs and those at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language, improve their mental calculation skills. Most pupils can explain how they arrive at answers; 'I put 5 in my head and 4 on my fingers and start counting, 6, 7, 8 and 9'. Higher attainers explain how they add bigger numbers, such as 20 and 6. The majority of pupils know the place values of two-digit numbers. They say, '10 plus 5 is written 15 and writing it 51 is wrong'. They also use this knowledge and understanding to sequence assorted numbers. The more able sequence two and three-digit numbers such as 83, 70, 90, 105, 15 and 80. Year 1 pupils learn addition facts to 10 but subtraction facts up to 10 are less well developed. Teachers provide good mental practice for pupils to develop addition and subtraction skills. Their insistence on listening makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Greater effort, however, is needed for pupils to develop independent and productive working skills. Pupils show interest but do not always engage in activities with sustained concentration.

88 The lower juniors learn number facts and multiplication tables appropriate for their age. Teachers challenge pupils to think of inverse relationships which help them to tackle questions involving multiplication and division, for example, using their knowledge of 7 times 8 to solve 56 divided by 7. Work at different levels on measuring and identifying right angles in two-dimensional shapes in Year 3 increases the confidence of all pupils and contributes to good progress. This is taken further in Year 4 when pupils learn about the points of the compass and degrees of turning, giving different directions. Data handling, however, is weakly developed. Sometimes, pupils' lack of understanding is not picked up quickly enough and this does not help in promoting good learning, for example when representing data in pictograms. The overall quality of learning, however, is good, as is the rate of progress that they make.

89 The upper juniors develop good knowledge, skills and understanding of calculations, fractions, decimals and ratio and proportion, and make good progress in number work. Pupils convert fractions, decimals and percentages, sequencing assorted fractions such as  $\frac{4}{8}$ ,  $\frac{5}{9}$ ,  $\frac{4}{6}$ ,  $\frac{8}{10}$  from the smallest to the largest value. Higher attaining pupils know the multiplication facts for tables up to 12X12 and confidently add to two decimal places, such as when adding amounts of money. They use calculators to convert various European currencies, for example pounds, francs and pesetas. Pupils' understanding of probability is developing steadily. Overall, their knowledge, skills and understanding of number and algebra are stronger than other areas of mathematics curriculum. There are weaknesses in data handling, measures, shape and space and in checking the reasonableness of answers.

90 The quality of teaching across the school is at least satisfactory and often good. This leads to sound or better progress by most pupils. All boys and girls display a keen interest and good attitude to mathematics. The main strength of teaching is the quality and range of questioning. Skilful questioning involves pupils in discussions, which develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of number work. The routine focus on mathematical vocabulary caters for the diverse pupil intake of the school. Good questioning also helps teachers to assess how well pupils are learning and address difficulties. Effective sharing of learning objectives – frequently written on the board at the start of each lesson – and regular use of mental mathematics enhances pupils' participation in learning. Explanations are clear and often repeated, which helps pupils' understanding, for example, the relationships between multiplication and division, and between addition and subtraction. Often the lesson structure and pace are good which promote good learning, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to work independently. A lack of focus on written strategies, for example when learning how to subtract, and the omission of a summary session at the end of lessons, are occasional less productive features of teaching.

91 The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is clear commitment and direction for raising standards, for example, target setting. Analysis of test results is helping the subject managers to assess standards and areas of weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work followed by written feedback, staff discussions and provision for in-service training, improve teachers' subject expertise and consequently the quality of teaching. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy provides a good guide for planning and developing teaching methods. The school is aware that the use of ICT in mathematics and the contribution of other subjects to pupils' numeracy are unsatisfactory.

## SCIENCE

92 The variation in results over the past four years is in part due to the high mobility of pupils and especially the varied language skills the pupils arrive with in school. From very low results in 1998, results of the eleven-year-olds were considerably better in 1999, being well above those achieved by similar schools. Currently, most pupils are making good progress but higher attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged as the whole class frequently carries out similar work. Work of the older pupils shows an increased confidence in presentation, increased use of scientific vocabulary and increased understanding of the processes of science investigations.

93 Pupils are enthusiastic and are eager to learn. Teachers organise their lessons well so that the quality of learning is good. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were carrying out an investigation by planting bean seeds. They were asked to make predictions about what would happen if the conditions for growing the seeds were changed. Most of them knew what seeds needed in order to grow successfully. The majority were able to complete a prepared sheet describing their investigation but, in general, pupils were not familiar with the notion of fair testing. Pupils in Year 1 sort different materials into groups such as wood, plastic, metal and paper and most of them remember which materials are magnetic. Pupils work well together and set about their activities with determination. Teachers ensure their pupils understand important words such as *germinate* and *predict*, often asking pupils to repeat the word within a sentence to ensure they fully understand its meaning.

94 Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. Year 3/4 pupils learn about the digestive system and become familiar with the appropriate vocabulary such as *oesophagus* and *intestine*. Pupils in Year 5/6 learn about the suitability of materials for specific purposes and can suggest why rubber is a good material for making wellington boots. However, the progress of pupils with English as an additional language is often hindered because of difficulties with language, especially when the activity is based on a worksheet. Additional help provided by the support teacher is effective and leads to appropriate progress by pupils with special educational needs.

95 Year 6 pupils were learning about the adaptation of animals and plants to their habitat. Information was given to them from a CD ROM and pupils chose a particular creature and listed the features which made them specifically adapted for their environment. The majority of pupils made satisfactory progress with this task and were able to make links between the features of the creature and its habitat. The majority of pupils enjoy science lessons; they behave well, concentrate and work co-operatively with one another. The workbooks of the older pupils show a general increase in the use of scientific language and more mature illustrations that are beginning to be neatly labelled. There is little evidence of systematic approaches to scientific investigations however, and there is an over-emphasis on photocopied worksheets. Pupils' writing in science helps them to develop further literacy skills within the subject but this opportunity is not extended to longer descriptive written work. There are too few opportunities to use numeracy or ICT skills in science, such as the creation of tables for numerical information and the use of graphs to display results.

96 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and take extra care in their use of scientific language, especially in the introductory stage of the lesson, so helping pupils to develop understanding. Careful questioning by teachers also raises pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary. Lessons have a good pace and teachers ensure they can interact with pupils, keeping them both challenged and motivated. Where pupils are involved with equipment or science resources, their motivation and interest are higher and their learning improved. Teachers provide satisfactory resources and each classroom has a science area where appropriate material is displayed to support learning and to illustrate the current science theme. Some classrooms have good displays of pupils' work which help to value pupils' efforts. Classroom science areas could be further enhanced with additional material such as large posters and by the addition of collections of interesting things that pupils could handle. Curriculum coverage is appropriate but the proportion of investigational work is low and this affects the development of pupils' investigative skills.

97 The co-ordination of science is good and there has been improvement in the subject since the previous inspection, especially in the areas of assessment and monitoring. The co-ordinator has observed lessons and this has raised the quality of teaching, but recent staffing shortages have meant this effective monitoring has been curtailed. Information from testing, apart from giving a level of attainment, is not currently analysed to provide teachers with more diagnostic information so that pupils' particular weaknesses can be tracked and supported more efficiently. The school makes good use of the local environment and trips to museums; the residential trip to the Gordon Brown Centre also supports learning successfully.

## **ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, AND HISTORY**

98 These subjects are grouped together because judgements are similar in each case. Weaknesses in leadership and management, together with the school's focus on literacy and numeracy have led to a reduction in curriculum time. Consequently, standards are not as secure as at the time of the last inspection. Examples of good work were seen in each subject, but the paucity of evidence suggests that attainment is not good enough. Similarly, good lessons were observed but overall the teaching lacks direction.

99 Three lessons were seen in **art and design**. The teaching was good overall and pupils progressed well. Year 1 pupils made good attempts at reproducing photographs of themselves; many lacked skills in observation but some captured features such as the colour of hair or clothes. In the Year 3 class, pupils used black and red media effectively to replicate patterns from Grecian pots while pupils in the Year 3/4 class were making good attempts in designing Greek temples. Pupils in years 4

and 5 had reasonable success when trying to continue patterns on fabric onto paper using painting crayons. Year 6 pupils demonstrated satisfactory drawing skills as they drew pictures from memory. In all these lessons, pupils tried hard but there was little evidence of previous systematic teaching of the skills and techniques necessary for them to gain confidence and to approach tasks more creatively. Standards are satisfactory overall, but pupils have too few opportunities to work in three dimensions and opportunities to inspire pupils with art from different cultures are missed.

100 **Design and technology** activities occur in an *ad hoc* fashion, often linked to festivals, such as the construction of dragon masks for Chinese New Year. School performances and a visit from a theatre company also offer opportunities for designing and constructing sets and props but there is no systematic development of skills across the school, which means standards are below expectations. Some efforts are made to link work to other subjects, such as the houses and homes topic in Year 2 and the study of the Greeks in Years 3 and 4. However, much clearer guidance for teachers is needed to enable them to build on pupils' previous knowledge, understanding and skills.

101 Little evidence of pupils' work in **geography** was provided to judge standards and the quality of provision. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Year 3 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of typical farming activities, such as rearing animals and growing crops. They know that a variety of foods come from farms, for example wheat, milk, cheese and meat. Year 5 pupils have a sound understanding of the main climates and seasons in various parts of the world and growing understanding of the need for different clothing for these parts. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject. They share the vocabulary well although at times the use of certain key words, such as *silage* is rather indiscriminate. This hinders progress, especially in classrooms where some pupils are not yet fully fluent in English. Questioning is often used effectively to enhance understanding and clarifying ideas, for example, *produce*. Educational visits extend pupils' geographical knowledge, and resources such as videos and atlases are well used to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, the provision offers limited geography experience. The scheme of work is out-dated and timetabled provision for the subject is insufficient. As a result, standards are unsatisfactory.

102 The picture is similar in **history** where, due to timetable arrangements, the only two lessons observed were in Key Stage 2. In both cases, the teaching was good. Pupils progressed well in their understanding of the Ancient Greeks in Year 3/4 where they were learning about beliefs and customs. They gained much information from a video and recalled several facts about the Greek way of life and were able to describe the difference between myth and legend. All could identify Medusa from a video image. Pupils were keen and attentive. Pupils in Year 6 who were studying the history of Britain since World War 2 showed a similar level of enthusiasm. This was evident in a special assembly, when the class presented their work to the rest of the school. They demonstrated a good understanding of changes in fashion, work, popular music and in attitudes to young people. The teacher's collection of artefacts from the period had been added to by the pupils and contributed well to their learning. Although evidence was limited, standards were judged to be satisfactory.

103 Evidence of some strengths in these subjects is encouraging. Weaknesses are not due to a lack of commitment by teachers, but to the seemingly overwhelming task of covering the whole of National Curriculum while at the same time helping pupils to acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The lack of monitoring means that elements of successful practice, such as developing literacy through history, which was seen in both the lessons observed, are not picked up and shared. A curriculum plan, identifying opportunities to teach literacy and numeracy through other subjects would help teachers to overcome some of the difficulties in ensuring each subject is given appropriate teaching time. Resources in design and technology, and geography are not adequate. ICT is under-used as a resource and is a specific requirement of the revised National Curriculum. A manageable assessment scheme is needed, which clearly sets out what pupils are expected to learn each year, so that teachers can more confidently continue from a secure base. These developments are unlikely to occur unless the school can find ways of ensuring that all subjects are properly co-ordinated.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

104 At the time of the previous inspection, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) were judged to be in line with national expectations. However, current standards of attainment in both key stages were found to be below those expected nationally. There has been an improvement in resources since the previous inspection through the provision of a computer suite and additional software. In general, however, ICT is not being used effectively to support pupils' learning in all subjects nor do they make satisfactory progress in the development of ICT skills. The computer suite serves as an excellent facility to support pupils' learning. Classes are timetabled to have a weekly session in the suite where the ICT co-ordinator can involve both teachers and pupils in a variety of ICT activities. The school development plan has highlighted ICT as an area for improvement as a result of national developments and the school realises that it has to work more rigorously in order to raise standards to expected levels.

105 The good access within the computer suite enables pupils to gain in skills and understanding efficiently and often is linked to other subjects, such as literacy and history. Class teachers also gain in skills and understanding through this arrangement. Groups of under-achieving boys are also offered further ICT activities with a support assistant to extend their skills further and these pupils make good progress. For the remainder of the week, computers in classrooms are not sufficiently used to support learning in subjects or to help develop pupils' skills. Although there is a reasonable range of software on these machines, not all teachers use this to support literacy and numeracy or to support pupils with special educational needs. When the suite is utilised for class or group teaching, learning is usually good and pupils concentrate well and collaborate with each other to support each other's learning. For example, Year 6 pupils were using a word processor to write a short account of a novel from the different characters' points of view. Links to history were also evident when pupils in Year 3/4 were learning to add their own text to information about Greek gods, obtained from a CD ROM.

106 In the lessons observed in the computer suite, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. However, across the school and taken over time, the teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory. There is a great variation in teachers' skills and confidence. The co-ordinator has worked hard to organise specific training and this has raised teachers' skills within certain areas. Planning for the integration of ICT activities to support learning is not linked to the adopted scheme of work and this results in an unsatisfactory progression in the development of pupils' skills. In order to help improve attainment, teachers need to plan from the scheme of work. Additional software to support learning in history and geography is required, and more advanced information handling activities are needed to support mathematics and science. *Logo* software and a programmable robot are necessary to make links with mathematics and geography. Internet access needs to be improved and data-logging equipment is needed for science activities in Key Stage 2.

107 The school has given much thought to the long-term strategy of ICT and a good development plan exists for the subject with a shared commitment to raise standards. The co-ordination of the subject is strong and the co-ordinator has been instrumental in many of the recent initiatives for improvement. In order to raise standards, all teachers are due to join a national training programme to extend their understanding of the place of ICT within the curriculum and to develop their skills and confidence.

## **MUSIC**

108 Very good progress has been made since the previous inspection, which identified several weaknesses in music. Although attainment was satisfactory, the subject lacked leadership and progress was inconsistent. All these issues have been successfully addressed.

109 Highly effective teaching by the part-time music specialist leads to good standards across the school. Pupils sing well and with great enthusiasm. They enjoy opportunities for singing in music lessons and in assemblies, where they join in energetically. Year 2 pupils sang alternate phrases from the song *Diddle, Diddle, Dumpling*, joining in at the right times and then progressing to playing the two contrasting rhythms within the song using percussion instruments. They listened intently while the teacher played an extract from *Carmen* on the piano, prompted imaginatively by the teacher who



described music as ‘...like food, with various flavours and tastes...we can learn to recognise where it comes from...’. This is typical of the skilful way the specialist teacher brings music lessons to life, creating opportunities for pupils to listen and comment on a variety of music, to sing and play, and to compose their own rhythmic accompaniments and simple tunes. Class teachers provide good support throughout all lessons.

110 Pupils willingly join in and co-operate. They are eager to take turns in playing pitched instruments, often providing an effective *ostinato* accompaniment while the rest of the class sing and play percussion instruments. This occurred during an excellent lesson in Year 3. All pupils made very good progress because of the teachers’ high expectations and the brisk pace of the lesson. They sang tunefully and with expression and maintained the rhythm throughout. Similarly, in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, pupils sustained their interest throughout. Most had a good understanding of *tonic sol-fa* notation and accurately sang scales in various keys. Pairs of pupils played from standard musical notation to provide accompaniment on xylophones. Their overall level of musicality was above that expected at this age.

111 Older pupils build on this good foundation to develop further insights into notation. Carefully prepared manuscripts help pupils make the connection between *sol-fa* and standard notation, and their understanding of musical intervals is further enhanced by the introduction of the pentatonic (five-note) scale. Pupils in Year 5 were helped to understand by reference to a musical ladder, and followed the teacher’s direction well when singing ascending and descending scales. References to the correct musical vocabulary were interspersed with all the activities and pupils were encouraged to listen with care. They listened intently to the theme from *The Deerhunter*; all were absorbed by the music and many offered images that it had conjured in their minds.

112 By Year 6, most pupils sing well, with good diction, and use dynamics effectively to interpret the mood of songs. They sing in two-part harmony, such as in *Island in the Sun*, enjoying the challenge and coping well with the off-beat calypso rhythm. Pupils’ understanding of musical structure is evident when they sing *arpeggio* patterns in *sol-fa*.

113 Music plays an important part in the life of the school. It makes a good contribution to pupils’ personal development. Spiritual development is enhanced when pupils are asked to reflect on the beauty of musical pieces and to think how it makes them feel. Moral and social development are encouraged when pupils are trusted to take care of instruments; some have to make decisions about practising instruments or attending rehearsals when other interests compete. Pupils respond extremely well to being taught by a blind teacher, responding positively to the trust the school has in them to behave and co-operate when the class teachers are not present.

114 Although only part-time, the specialist co-ordinates music very effectively. He has devised a scheme which systematically covers all areas of the curriculum in a varied and interesting way. He provides an excellent role model for all pupils, but especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds. The co-ordinator needs the support of colleagues to introduce ICT into the subject.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115 As a result of effective teaching, pupils throughout the school are meeting the standards expected of them. During a gymnastics lesson, pupils in Year 2 showed how well they had progressed since starting school. Although most enter school lacking in confidence, these pupils moved with assurance when practising forward rolls. Many were delighted that they succeeded for the first time. Encouraged by the teacher who made frequent references to the concurrent Olympics, they tried hard to refine their movements, emulating the starting and finishing positions of gymnasts. In this very good lesson, the teacher’s knowledge of the subject enabled her to emphasise specific points for improvement and led to very good progress.

116 Year 4 and 5 pupils also progressed well when learning to create sequences involving balanced movements across low-level apparatus. Although some were a little excited and noisy, the teacher ensured the lesson moved at a good pace, which kept everyone involved. All pupils tried hard

and remained focused on the activities because the task was made very clear and was reinforced from time to time during the lesson. They were reminded about moving safely, particularly when setting up benches and when rolling across mats. The learning assistant provided both physical support and verbal encouragement. All pupils were actively involved in an indoor games lesson for Years 5 and 6. The teacher reminded them about throwing and catching techniques, gradually building up the size of teams from one-on-one to six-a-side. Pupils were very enthusiastic. Following a demonstration by the teacher, they increasingly varied passes from high to low and dodged into spaces effectively. Some pupils were particularly accurate when passing over long distances.

117 The school is sensitive to some parents' views about swimming. Only mixed lessons at a local pool are organised. The school is keen to provide equal opportunities for girls and boys but local provision for single sex lessons is not available. Parents who prefer their children not to attend mixed sessions are encouraged to make their own arrangement out of school. Those pupils who do attend school sessions regularly make at least satisfactory progress in swimming.

118 Extra-curricular opportunities exist for pupils to become involved in sport and the play leader who works before school and during lunchtimes provides valuable support in helping pupils to play fairly together in teams.

119 It was not possible to observe other physical education activities during the inspection but the scheme of work, although out of date, covers the main elements of the subject. The teaching programme will need to be reviewed to ensure that it meets the new requirements. Currently there is no co-ordinator, which means the subject lacks cohesion and there is no one with overall responsibility for driving the subject forward. The previous report judged standards good as opposed to satisfactory. It will be difficult for the school to rectify this apparent drop in attainment without a subject manager.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

120 Only two lessons in religious education were observed during the inspection; judgements are also based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion and displays around the school. Standards are broadly satisfactory. The school follows the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This is about to be reviewed, and the school plans to use this opportunity to review and restructure its approaches.

121 There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths, and to explore the significance of, for example, symbols, artefacts and holy books. Pupils think carefully about religious matters, which contributes to their sound learning. In Years 3 and 4, they made thoughtful responses to the question, 'What is religion?' and were able to share their own diverse knowledge and understanding of different faiths. They considered the ways in which characters in the Greek myths and legends behave, and the consequences of their actions and beliefs on the lives of others. In a good lesson in Year 4/5, pupils considered the use of the word 'Christ' as the root of other words, and explore the meaning of these to Christians. Pupils in Year 6 find out about Judaism and record this through both art and written work.

122 Pupils show a good understanding and respect for the beliefs of others. With so many world faiths represented within the school community, teachers are able to draw on the expert knowledge of particular groups to enhance learning for all pupils.

123 The school has established good links with local places of worship. Visits are made to the Neasden Temple, the London Mosque and to local churches. In addition, members of the local clergy make visits into school from time to time. These visits and visitors enhance the curriculum provided within the school.

