

INSPECTION REPORT

VIKING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Northolt, Middlesex

LEA area: Ealing

Unique reference number: 101908

Headteacher: Ms Sue Townson

Reporting inspector: Mr Martin Beale
19385

Dates of inspection: 3 - 6 December 2001

Inspection number: 230171

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Radcliffe Way
Northolt
Middlesex

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mark Bevan

Date of previous inspection: 6 December 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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19385	Martin Beale	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9275	Kandy Calms	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27635	Diana Cinamon	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art Design and technology Music	
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language Science Geography History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Viking Primary is an average sized school for boys and girls from 3 to 11 years of age. There are 245 pupils, a substantial reduction since the last inspection because the school has been re-designated to admit 30 pupils each year; 41 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school is situated in an area of local authority housing where many families are located on a temporary basis. As a consequence, a significant proportion of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than the start of the year. Many pupils are from economically disadvantaged families, and about half are entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry is low and is reduced further because many pupils entering during the year have limited previous school experience. A high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including 13 refugees, and almost a quarter are of black-African heritage. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is very high and 48 are at an early stage of learning English. The main languages spoken are Somali, Arabic and Urdu. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average, although the number with statements is broadly average. The needs identified are moderate or severe learning difficulties and several pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is doing a satisfactory job in meeting the diverse and complex needs of its pupils, although the support for the progress of pupils with English as an additional language is not effective. Standards are low but improving, particularly in mathematics. Teaching is satisfactory overall and a considerable proportion is of a high quality. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide the school with satisfactory leadership. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in the significant proportion of lessons where the teaching is high quality.
- The good organisation and very good teaching of the youngest children in the nursery and reception result in them making good progress.
- Mathematics is taught well and as a result pupils are making good progress.
- Good teaching is leading to above average standards in physical education.
- Staff foster the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

What could be improved

- Insufficient attention is paid to eliminating weaknesses in pupils' literacy.
- The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not being consistently met.
- Not all teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the less and more able.
- Staff are not sufficiently confident in teaching science through investigations and experiments.
- The low attendance and poor punctuality of several pupils severely inhibit their progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection in 1999. The steps taken to raise standards in English were those required of the school, but these have yet to have a significant impact. In contrast, action taken has been successful in raising standards in science throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Standards in art and music have also improved. Test results in 2001 were lower than at the last inspection; however, standards in the current Year 6 are higher than in the most recent tests and are rising because of some good teaching. Teaching in the nursery and in Years 3 and 4, both areas of weakness at the last inspection, has improved. Suitable structures have been introduced to monitor the work of the school; remaining weaknesses have largely been identified and plans prepared to tackle them. The school is in a satisfactory position to secure further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E*	E
mathematics	D	E	E	D
science	D	E	D	C

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

Test results at Year 2 and Year 6 have regularly been well below average, and the English results in 2001 were in the bottom five per cent of schools. However, they are adversely affected by several factors such as the low attainment of pupils on entry to the school, the high proportion who are at an early stage of learning English, the high pupil mobility (45 per cent of the last Year 6 joined the school after Year 2), the poor attendance of some pupils and the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups. Results in reading, writing and mathematics for Year 2 pupils in 2001 were well below the national average, but were more favourable when compared with similar schools and improved from results in 2000. On the other hand, results for Year 6 pupils fell in 2001 and the targets for English and mathematics were not achieved by a considerable margin. These have been retained at broadly the same level for 2002; inspection evidence indicates that the targets for mathematics are more realistic than for English. A recent pattern is that girls have been achieving worse results than boys, particularly at Year 6, in sharp contrast to the national pattern. This is no longer the case from observations during the inspection. The school's analysis shows pupils of black African heritage achieving comparable, and often better, results overall than other pupils, but with pupils from Somalia achieving lower results. This picture was still in evidence during the inspection.

The factors that affect test results also impacted adversely on the work seen during the inspection. Pupil mobility remains a significant factor and only 37 per cent of the current Year 6 have attended the school since the nursery. In spite of this, pupils are now achieving well in many classes but not consistently so across the school. Attainment is rising, particularly in the nursery, an area of weakness at the last inspection. Standards in mathematics at Year 6, for example, are higher than in recent tests, although standards of literacy remain well below average and lower standards in geography and history. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is not being effectively supported by current arrangements and they do not achieve as well as they should.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils respond well by concentrating on their work and trying hard when the teaching is interesting and challenging; however, some older pupils have unsatisfactory attitudes to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils mostly behave well in lessons and at other times; however, a significant number, mostly boys with special educational needs, present challenging and unpredictable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Relationships are harmonious and most pupils work and play well together.

Attendance	Attendance has been very low in recent years. There has been an improvement this term, although it remains well below average. Unauthorised absence is high and punctuality to school is poor.
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Steps taken to manage and improve pupils' behaviour have been largely successful in most cases but have limited impact on pupils with identified behavioural difficulties. The school has wisely appointed an attendance officer as part of its strategy for improving attendance and punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

Teaching has improved considerably, but although satisfactory, overall, is uneven across the school and does not ensure that pupils can progress at the rate needed to raise standards. There is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching spread across the school. The particular features of these lessons are very good planning coupled with high expectations of work and behaviour to which most pupils respond well by working hard. These teachers have a high level of subject expertise, which they use to make lessons interesting, enabling pupils to learn new skills and ideas rapidly. Shortcomings in lessons generally stem from weaknesses in lesson planning, where the purpose of the lesson is unclear, and teaching and activities are not adapted or pitched at a variety of levels to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. For example, the support for pupils with English as an additional language is not targeted to meet their specific needs, and the role of the bilingual classroom assistants has not been clearly defined. As a result, these pupils make slower progress than others in their class. In these lessons, pupils are unsure what they are learning and more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The teaching of mathematics throughout the school is good. Teachers also promote the development of numeracy in other subjects effectively. English teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory in Years 3 - 6, but teachers do not pay sufficient attention to developing literacy in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and has improved considerably in the nursery where the provision is now good. Good provision is made for the promotion of numeracy but insufficient time is devoted to developing literacy
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The curriculum arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory and support the targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not identified with sufficient care, their language development is not tackled systematically and their progress not rigorously monitored.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Assemblies play a significant part in the good provision made for the pupils' personal development and for the promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The features of the many

development	cultures represented in the school are recognised and celebrated.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure and caring atmosphere, although some procedures, such as for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare, have not been fully established.
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All National Curriculum requirements are met, although arrangements for personal, social and health education are not formalised to ensure that all pupils receive a coherent programme. Procedures for evaluating the progress made by pupils are secure in English and mathematics but under-developed in other subjects. Child protection is taken seriously but formal arrangements are not in place to ensure that all staff are clear about procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. The school has established a satisfactory partnership with parents from the diverse community that it serves.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory leadership and management by the headteacher and senior staff have secured improvements since the last inspection; however, greater commitment is needed from staff for the promotion of literacy and for meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body supports the school well; individual governors have worked hard to secure improvements. They are committed to raising standards and fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Systematic procedures have been introduced to evaluate test results and to monitor the work of teachers.
The strategic use of resources	Funding has been used well to re-furbish the computer suite and to provide a high level of teaching and support staff, although they are not efficiently deployed to raise standards.

The co-ordination of mathematics and physical education has been instrumental in the success of these subjects. However, other co-ordinators are new in post and shortcomings in the past in the management of English have limited the progress made. Staffing levels are very good, the accommodation is currently very spacious and learning resources are good. Governors make satisfactory use of the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good and their children make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. • Behaviour is good. • The staff help their children to grow up and take responsibility. • They find staff approachable and are kept well-informed about their children's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistency and expectations for homework. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team supports the favourable views of the school expressed by parents. Homework set is generally suitable but is not supported by a clear statement of school policy, and the range and variety of extra-curricular activities is similar to other schools of this size and type.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. National Curriculum test results have regularly been well below average, but are adversely affected by several significant factors. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is low, particularly in the crucial areas of literacy and numeracy. This is further compounded by the high level of pupil mobility, where large numbers of pupils enter and leave during the school year and after starting in reception, to such an extent that less than half of the Year 6 pupils have had all of their education at the school. Several of the later arrivals are refugee children, who have had a disrupted schooling and have little English. A high proportion of the school population also has English as an additional language, with many, including older pupils, at an early stage of learning English. A further significant factor that affects results is the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups, as high as 50 per cent in the last Year 6.
2. Following a period of sustained improvement, National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds fell considerably after the last inspection, particularly in writing. Results improved in 2001 in reading, writing and mathematics but were still below those at the last inspection. Results were well below average in all three subjects but close to similar schools in reading and mathematics and below similar schools in writing. Science teacher assessments were also well below average for the proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 2, but close to the national average (and well above similar schools) at Level 3.
3. The trend in test results for eleven-year-olds has been close to the improving national picture in recent years, but with some significant variations. Having followed an improving trend to 2000, results in English fell in 2001. They were in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally and well below results in similar schools. Results in mathematics improved until 1999 but have fallen sharply subsequently and were well below average and below results in similar schools in 2001. Science results, by contrast, have improved steadily since 1997 and were below the national average in 2001 and close to the average of similar schools. The main reason for the difference between the subjects was that more pupils achieved the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in science than in mathematics and English. Results in English and mathematics were also below those at the last inspection.
4. There has been a slight variation in attainment by gender for seven and eleven-year-olds, with boys doing better than girls in contrast to the picture nationally. Pupils of black-African heritage have also done better overall than other pupils in the school, although pupils from Somalia have not, partly because many have had little education before arriving at the school.
5. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is low, particularly in literacy and numeracy. There have been significant improvements in teaching and in the organisation of the nursery and the children are now achieving well and making good progress. Baseline assessments of the children in the current reception class show that attainment is also low, but has improved in comparison to assessments of the previous reception children. Most children are also achieving well in reception, making good progress and are on course to achieve the standards expected in their creative, physical and social and emotional development by the time that they enter Year 1. Although most children are making good progress from low attainment on entry in literacy and numeracy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, few are likely to reach expected standards by the end of the year.
6. Standards in mathematics are improving throughout the school because teaching is good and the daily mathematics lesson has been successfully introduced. Furthermore, several teachers take the opportunity to develop the pupils' number skills, their accuracy and understanding of measure and their ability to record and handle data in subjects other than mathematics. Shortcomings in the pupils' ability to interpret more complex questions have been identified and steps taken to

focus on improving this aspect. There are indications that this is starting to bear fruit; however, pupils are not being given sufficient opportunity to apply and develop their skills through mathematical investigations. It was a key issue at the last inspection to raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1. Pupils are now achieving well, but in spite of this, their low attainment on entry holds pupils back at Key Stage 1 and standards are well below average. Standards are higher at Key Stage 2, and in particularly Year 6, where teaching is of a consistently high quality, and are below average overall.

7. Raising standards in science was also a key issue for the school at the last inspection. The work undertaken to improve teaching has borne fruit in some aspects of the subject and the pupils' scientific knowledge has improved. Shortcomings remain, however, in developing the pupils' scientific understanding through experiment and investigation in some parts of the school. Teaching of this aspect is inconsistent and as a consequence overall standards, although improved, are below average. Pupils are not consistently given the opportunity to learn how to undertake their own investigations, to select resources, to take measurements and record their findings.
8. The previous inspection identified significant weaknesses in standards in English, and in particular in writing. The action taken by the school has shown some success but there remain several shortcomings in the development of pupils' skills of literacy and the standard of their work in English. The low standards in literacy of the pupils on entry to the school and the language needs of the high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language are not being tackled with sufficient vigour. As a consequence, standards in English are well below average throughout the school.
9. Although most teachers introduce and explain the vocabulary pertinent to a particular subject being studied, it is only in the very best lessons that the pupils' speaking skills are systematically developed. Expectations of the responses required to questions are not sufficiently high and as a consequence few pupils develop the capacity to speak clearly at length, in grammatically correct sentences using a broad vocabulary. Insufficient support is provided for pupils with English as an additional language to develop their speaking skills either in classrooms or in withdrawal groups where the opportunity for intensive language development is missed. As a consequence, these pupils, particularly those at an early stage of learning English, make slow progress, are held back from accessing the full curriculum and do not achieve the expected standards by Year 6. The school also does not devote sufficient time and resources to the development of reading skills. Although there are some fluent readers in each class, many are hesitant and have limited skills to help them when faced with unfamiliar words. In many cases their sight vocabulary is also limited. The structure of the literacy hour has only recently been introduced and teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities in subjects other than English for the development of reading and writing. Standards of writing are adversely affected by the low attainment of pupils on entry but also because teachers have only recently recognised the link between the way pupils speak, their ability to read and the quality of their written work. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to write independently at length and the diet in many subjects is either the completion of worksheets or copying from the board.
10. The action to meet the targets identified for pupils with high levels of special educational needs is effective where the need is associated with their learning, and good progress is often made. Progress is less marked where the need is identified as an emotional or behavioural difficulty as the strategies to deal with the needs are not sufficiently rigorous. Small class sizes in Years 3 to 6 and the use of classroom assistants to support the work of pupils at lower stages of need are also effective, but their progress is held back because teachers do not adapt the materials or the teaching styles sufficiently. This also holds back more able pupils as teaching and work provided only challenges and extends them regularly in the best lessons.
11. One impressive feature of the school is physical education. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress because teaching is often of a high quality and most pupils are keen and interested in their lessons. Good contributions are made by participation in extra-curricular activities and from the expertise of outside coaches. The school has identified pupils with

particular talents and encourages them to join local gymnastic and football clubs. As a result, the overall standard of work seen during the inspection was above average.

12. Low standards of literacy and low attainment on entry have an adverse effect on what pupils achieve in history and geography. Standards are below average in both subjects. The impact is less marked in art, design and technology, music and religious education, where standards are close to those expected throughout the school. This represents an improvement in art and music since the last inspection. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in information and communication technology (ICT) because the refurbishment of the computer suite had not been completed by the time of the inspection. Some of the pupils' printed work was available and pupils were observed using the classroom computers, but most of their previous work was saved and not retrievable until the network is restored. One aspect that requires improvement, however, is to encourage pupils to become more independent in their use of ICT. Teachers very often set up the software to be used and when finished do not expect the pupils to save themselves what they have completed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Overall, the attitudes and behaviour of the majority of pupils in the school are satisfactory. Most pupils come to school with good attitudes to learning, although a small but significant number of pupils at both key stages, particularly boys, have both unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour. This is having an adverse effect on the quality of learning of the pupils themselves and of others in their classes. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers, are generally good, and pupils' personal development is good.
14. Many pupils have limited personal, social and speaking skills when they enter the nursery. They settle into the day-to-day routines of school life quickly because of the very good support that they receive. They learn to play and work happily with other children in the nursery, sharing toys and resources and generally becoming more confident. Children in the reception class continue to develop the good work attitudes that they have acquired in the nursery.
15. The majority of pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They are well motivated and interested in their work in most lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and respond well when the work is interesting and the teaching good, as seen in a Year 2 literacy lesson. Many are keen to answer questions and join in discussions. For example, pupils made good suggestions about the size and shapes of crystals in a Year 6 science lesson. In contrast, a significant minority of pupils throughout, but particularly in Year 5, fail to observe the usual classroom expectations. They are less attentive, becoming noisy and restless and unable to concentrate on their work. These unsatisfactory attitudes make it difficult for teachers to teach and slow the pace of some lessons, as the teacher has to frequently remind pupils to pay attention.
16. Behaviour in the school is variable but satisfactory, overall. Most pupils are clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them and behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils in Year 6 always behave well in lessons and sometimes their behaviour is excellent, although other pupils do not always achieve these high standards and do not behave appropriately in lessons. Most teachers cope well with these pupils so that the flow of lessons is not seriously disrupted; however, the way in which some teachers manage behaviour is not effective for all pupils and this affects their learning and the learning of others. Most pupils play well together on the playground although incidents of aggressive and boisterous behaviour do sometimes occur at lunchtimes. The school only uses exclusion when it is essential, but the number of exclusions has increased since the previous inspection. Harassment and bullying are rare and any incidents quickly dealt with. Pupils are friendly and polite around the school.
17. The majority of pupils get on well together. There are harmonious relationships between pupils from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Pupils mostly settle to work quickly and work well independently and in pairs, but there are occasions when they take time to settle. In many lessons pupils co-operate and work well together, sharing equipment and resources but at other times they are unable to collaborate and share sensibly. Pupils generally respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was illustrated in religious education where pupils in Year 6 listened respectfully when their teacher discussed psalms and parables in the Bible, understanding the relevance of the Old Testament to the Jewish people. Most pupils are aware of

the impact their actions can have on others, but a minority do not understand that their attitudes and behaviour affects the learning of others in the class.

18. Pupils gain an increasing sense of responsibility and maturity as they move through the school, as the consistently good attitudes and behaviour in Year 6 illustrate. Pupils' personal development is affected, however, by the limited opportunities to use their initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning. From an early age, pupils conscientiously carry out the duties given to them in their classrooms, such as returning registers to the office. Older pupils are responsible for running the office at lunchtime, help to arrange the hall for assemblies and act as door monitors at lunchtime. Pupil representatives on the school council appreciate the role that they play in decision-making, such as the contributions they have made to lunchtime activities.
19. Levels of attendance are poor and well below the national average. This has a considerable effect on the learning of many pupils. There are no significant differences between groups of pupils, for example boys and girls and those from different backgrounds. Levels of attendance had remained stable since the previous inspection but current data shows some improvement in the current term. There are several reasons for absences, but a considerable proportion is due to the relaxed attitude of parents to the importance of regular attendance. Patterns of attendance are not consistent and vary between year groups. In some classes attendance falls below 90 per cent. Current data shows that the school has many pupils with attendance of below 90 per cent. Unauthorised absences are well above the national average because, for many reasons, parents do not always provide reasons for absence. Poor punctuality was identified at the previous inspection and continues to be a problem. A significant number of pupils arrive late, including a number who are regularly late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection because of the measures taken by the school to eliminate unsatisfactory teaching. It is now satisfactory overall, but this masks a considerable variation between teachers and in some cases between subjects. While almost 30 per cent is very good or excellent, 9 per cent is unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently most effective for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in these classes and a high proportion that is good or better. This has begun to have an impact on the rate of progress, and standards are improving. There are several examples of high quality teaching in Years 3 to 6, and particularly in Year 6, but all of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in Years 3, 4 and 5. This unevenness to teaching leads to a considerable variation in learning and the progress made by pupils overall.
21. Teachers in the nursery and reception classes foster the development of language skills from the moment when the children enter at the start of the day. Children are questioned carefully, spoken language modelled well and children are encouraged patiently to speak at length when responding. This is particularly successful in developing the understanding of children with English as an additional language. Relationships between teachers, support staff and the children are warm and friendly; this contributes significantly to developing confidence in the children. Expectations are high and a good climate for learning has been established in both classes. Activities are well organised and are appropriate for the children's stages of learning. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching in the nursery was a source of particular weakness.
22. There is a considerable variation in the rest of the school between teaching in English, mathematics and science and also in the development of the skills of literacy and numeracy. Mathematics teaching is particularly effective in enabling the pupils to gain confidence and improve their accuracy when calculating, either mentally or when using written methods. The successful introduction of the daily mathematics lesson, coupled with some brisk teaching with clear explanations and well thought out activities, promotes learning well and retains the pupils' interest and attention. The high level of teacher subject expertise also contributed significantly to

particularly successful lessons in Years 2, 4 and 6. The pupils here learnt new skills rapidly and carefully planned review sessions helped them to consolidate an understanding of what they had learnt. Pupils are taught in ability groups in Year 6 but some of the impact of the otherwise excellent teaching is lost in this year, and others, when teachers do not adapt their teaching and the materials used to the range of abilities in their classes.

23. Science teaching has improved in many respects since the last inspection in response to weaknesses identified, but still has one significant shortcoming that directly affects learning and the rate at which pupils make progress in their understanding of scientific concepts. Some teachers, particularly at Key Stage 2, are not entirely confident when teaching science through investigation and experiment. They control the activities too tightly, restricting the opportunity for pupils to participate and undertake significant aspects of each investigation. In general, only one task is provided for all pupils, whatever their prior attainment. Pupils do not set-up their own investigations, take measurements or record findings. Opportunities for pupils to write their own experiments and for the more able pupils to gain independence are missed when they are allowed to copy from the board rather than writing in their own words.
24. The areas of most inconsistency are in the teaching of English and in the development of the pupils' skills of literacy. The structure of the recommended National Literacy Strategy has not been effectively implemented in all classrooms and teachers do not always plan for the development of literacy in subjects other than English. As a consequence progress in English is slower than in mathematics. The needs of pupils with low literacy levels on entry to the school, as well as those with English as an additional language, are not fully met by present arrangements. One factor limiting the progress made by the school in this area has been the lack of a literacy co-ordinator until recently. However, staff now need to embrace the National Literacy Strategy as its features are specifically designed for pupils with low literacy levels. The structure of the literacy hour is secure in Years 1 and 2 and is starting to have a beneficial effect on learning. It is also the case that teachers in the lower part of the school promote speaking well. The development of writing has not received consistent attention in some classes, where teachers expect too little of their pupils and provide a diet of too many worksheets or copying from the board.
25. The learning of pupils with English as an additional language is held back not only by weaknesses in teaching literacy but also because teaching does not consistently tackle their needs rigorously. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is not targeted or focused sufficiently, and support staff often do not participate fully in all aspects of each lesson. The role of the recently appointed bilingual classroom assistants has not been clearly defined. They are often put to support pupils with whom they do not share a first language, this severely limiting their effectiveness. Pupils with English as an additional language, particularly those new arrivals to the country who are at an early stage of learning English, make slower progress than others and are less likely to achieve the national expectation of Level 4 by the age of 11.
26. A particular feature of the best lessons is the quality of planning, but this is also a shortcoming that detracts from the pace of learning in weaker lessons. Many lessons are planned well with a good structure that begins with a revision of previous work, introduces new ideas, gives pupils the opportunity to undertake various tasks and finishes with a review and assessment of what has been learnt. In the best lessons, teachers identify clear learning intentions, which they discuss with the pupils and return to at the end so that pupils have a clear picture of how well they have done. This structure was particularly successful in a Year 1 science lesson in helping pupils to learn how to classify materials by their texture and appearance. An excellent pace to learning was also generated in a Year 3 literacy lesson through the good structure, the high technical competency of the teacher and the very high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour. By contrast, shortcomings in lesson planning directly affect the quality of teaching in some classes, resulting in a lack of focus and a slow rate of learning. In these lessons, learning intentions are vague and unclear. Against school policy, teachers do not share these or review them with pupils who are then unsure why they are undertaking particular activities and what it is that they are trying to learn. Too often, planning does not take into account the different abilities and ages of pupils. Teaching is then pitched at the middle of each class. Activities are not adapted and all

pupils complete the same task. This can result in boredom and frustration, with behaviour deteriorating as pupils lose concentration. Support staff are used effectively to help pupils, particularly with special educational needs during the completion of tasks. However, they are ineffectively used in many classes during whole-class teaching often sitting waiting for the teacher to finish, rarely interacting with pupils.

27. Several teachers have high levels of expertise, which they use to good effect to enthuse and interest the pupils in particular subjects. This was evident in an excellent Year 3 physical education lesson and also in a Year 4 art lesson where the pupils' drawing was promoted very effectively as well as their understanding of the work of famous artists. Clear explanations and the high expectations of the teacher, coupled with the high level of subject expertise, generated a fast pace to learning about parables and the Psalms in a Year 6 religious education lesson. High expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour also featured in many of the best lessons, such as a Year 3 and 4 music session which was enjoyed very much by the pupils. The very good subject expertise and skilled questioning re-enforced the main teaching points in a top set Year 6 mathematics lesson, helping to promote an understanding of how to classify quadrilaterals by properties such as the size of angles or the number of pairs of parallel lines.
28. Teaching has improved, but there is scope for further improvement, particularly in teaching literacy and investigative science. Lesson planning is an area that also needs improving as does the support and teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language. The pupils should start to make more consistent and sustained progress when these weaknesses are eliminated and good or better teaching becomes the norm in all classes.

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

29. At the time of the last inspection, the school's curriculum was satisfactory. Some areas of weakness which were identified, have, in the main, been tackled satisfactorily, there are some strengths; however, some shortcomings still remain. The school is effective in meeting its aims. It is a caring school in which all pupils are valued and made to feel welcome. The school has taken appropriate steps to focus on writing in response to the findings of the previous inspection and visits from inspectors and advisers. The headteacher and senior staff are aware of the need to focus on the teaching of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, but have not yet taken the necessary steps to deal with this issue. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is planned carefully to national guidelines for children of this age. The provision in the nursery, in particular, has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was a major weakness. Staff focus on the development of language at all times and have good strategies for supporting pupils at early stages of learning English.
30. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have worked well together to identify key skills in all subjects. They are planned well and effectively taught so that pupils build systematically on what they know as they move from Year 1 to Year 2. However, in Years 3 to 6, the quality of planning is variable and depends on the commitment and ability of individual teachers, and this is reflected in standards and progress. The recent priority given to literacy has resulted in a significant change of methods for many teachers. The literacy hour is now well established through the school and this reflects a significant improvement from the previous inspection where it was unsatisfactory. However, it has been too recently developed to either show or guarantee consistent and effective practice and provision. In addition, pupils have insufficient planned time for learning to read and using their skills in other subjects. There are also insufficient planned opportunities for them to develop their speaking, listening and writing skills in other subjects. There are elements of good and, in some cases, very good practice but these are too dependent on the knowledge and ability of individual teachers. The school's provision for numeracy is good. The aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced and there are also good opportunities for developing and using number skills, both in mathematics and other subjects. The unsatisfactory provision for

literacy is one of the main contributory factors to the curriculum being insufficiently balanced and relevant to all pupils.

31. A further shortcoming is that the school does not have an up-to-date scheme of work for religious education, in order to give teachers sufficient guidance in the incorporation of the new locally Agreed Syllabus and national guidance. At this stage, there is insufficient guidance on the progression of skills in religious education and its benefit to other areas of the curriculum. There is also no scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE) or citizenship, which results in insufficient guidance on the development of this important aspect of the school's work. However, the school provides satisfactorily for these aspects because of the range of activities in Years 5 and 6 and the contribution of physical education to pupils' personal, social and health development. There are satisfactory and, in some classes, good opportunities for pupils to consider important aspects of family life, health, friendship and the environment and to give their views and discuss their feelings on sensitive and personal issues. Drug awareness issues are covered in Year 6 and there has been a workshop for parents. Members of the local health authority or local police force supplement drug awareness lessons.
32. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound and supports the learning targets identified in their individual education plans. These targets are realistic, attainable and measurable but not always related to a time for their achievement, particularly those targets related to behaviour. There are good procedures in place for the identification of special needs. A comprehensive policy provides guidance for staff. Suitable training for teachers for writing individual education plans with targets that are specific and easily achievable is given on a regular basis. Class teachers and support staff work well together and provide satisfactory support, where it is well planned and organised by the teacher. The school is trying to balance support for pupils but withdrawal arrangements are currently not well planned.
33. The assessment systems for the pupils who are at the early stages of learning English in the main part of the school are neither sufficiently rigorous nor do they refer to their levels of understanding. The support that they then receive is not sufficiently targeted to support the progress of those with the greatest need. Because of these differences, opportunities for learning and making progress, especially in English are different according to the different classes and, therefore, pupils do not have equality of opportunity to a broad and balanced curriculum.
34. The school provides well for extra-curricular activities. Although parents feel that this is an unsatisfactory aspect, the inspection team finds that this is a strength. The range is varied; physical education is very well represented but there is also an appropriate range of other activities. The school provides breakfast clubs and also study clubs twice a week, having received funding as a member of an Education Action Zone. In addition to homework, pupils are encouraged to ask for help with different aspects of their studies. This is a positive way in which the curriculum contributes to the quality of learning. A small group of committed volunteers, including the literacy governor, supports pupils' reading. Physical education coaching sessions are provided for interested youngsters on a regular basis. The contribution made by the community to the school is good with a wide range of visits and visitors from which all pupils benefit. The strong links with parents made by their support for football and hearing their children read in Years 1 and 2 are not consistently developed throughout the school. The headteacher and staff make great efforts to maintain constructive relationships with the secondary schools to which their pupils transfer. This has proved more difficult as the majority of pupils now transfer to a nearby recently built secondary school in another borough.
35. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider the different and sometimes difficult lifestyles of children and people all over the world, including those in Britain and in the local community. As a result, parents and pupils contribute generously to the Harvest Festival where gifts are shared among some of the senior citizens in the community and other people who need help. The school is particularly active in raising funds for charities, such as the National Children's Home, and focuses on one major charity and other subsidiary charities during each year. Pupils are also given many opportunities to consider the triumph of good over evil, especially in celebrations of

Diwali and the good examples given by leaders and many people in the major world religions that they study.

36. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development, not only during many of the school-based acts of collective worship but also in the course of some of the lessons observed. For example, the Gardening Club gives pupils opportunities to share in the wonders of nature and the need to care for God's creatures. This is rewarded by their commendations from 'Ealing in Bloom'. Teachers regularly encourage pupils to reflect on the feelings of others, for example, in order to consider the affect of the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole and their different but valuable commitment to nursing. Acts of school-based collective worship are well organised and systematically planned so that the theme for each week is reinforced from different perspectives. These give many opportunities to reinforce expectations for social and moral behaviour and caring, and equally good opportunities for prayer, reflection and wonder. A particularly enriching experience was the first assembly of the week, which focused on Advent, and then developed into pupils considering the important gifts that they would give to the world. Many ideas were forthcoming; for example, kindness, sharing and tender loving care. The lighting of the Advent candle and saying a prayer in a shared atmosphere of caring and reflection made a considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. This was continued during the next two days in most assemblies. However, the class-based assemblies were very inconsistent in terms of reflection and development of spiritual awareness. There was an excellent example where pupils reflected on the responsibility of people who cared for others in terms of food preparation. However, in others, the atmosphere of reflection was missing, the time spent did little to improve pupils' spiritual development and the prayers, when said, were cursory and added-on rather than an intrinsic and important part. Fortunately, these occur only once a week, but the school has not monitored these sufficiently in terms of quality or impact on pupils, and the effective use of time.
37. The school makes good provision for the moral development of its pupils both through the school-based acts of worship and the many opportunities constantly taken by teachers to reinforce the message of making the right moral choices. The provision is generally well adapted to pupils' levels of understanding. For example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson, pupils learned that the people who they would initially expect to be good and caring did not always make good moral choices. This was well illustrated when they enacted the parable of the Good Samaritan and actively showed the responses of the many people involved, and how it was a person from another country who gave all the help and care. The majority of pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Throughout the school, pupils are made aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the school fosters values of honesty, fairness and truth. The school's sharing assembly enhances this where pupils' achievements and attitudes, including behaviour at lunchtimes, are shared and rewarded. Occasionally, insufficient value in tangible terms is given to the pupils who consistently try hard and behave very well.
38. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The school encourages pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English to work well together, both in class and also in after-school activities. Pupils are given many opportunities to work collaboratively, both in large and small groups. They also undertake their responsibilities conscientiously. Pupils in each class have a wide range of responsibilities, and those in Year 6 have a wider range of responsibilities, such as assisting in the school office at lunchtime. The school council gives pupils good opportunities to take part in the decision-making processes in the school. In addition, they have the opportunity to take to the meeting suggestions from their fellow pupils and to report back afterwards. The school performances give valuable opportunities for pupils across the school to work well together. The residential visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the wide range of physical education activities give ideal opportunities for pupils to develop team-building skills. The planned involvement of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to visit the Scout Park in Southall to participate in Junior Citizen activities is a very valuable contribution to social development. Social issues are also considered in PSHE lessons, and displays in the school and discussions with pupils showed clear understanding of the dangers of drug abuse, smoking and alcohol. The observation in physical education lessons is a continuous reminder of the pupils' developing awareness of the value of a healthy lifestyle.

Historical studies such as the topic on Egypt and the Egyptian workshop, and visits to Apsley House, further enhance pupils' understanding of social issues over the years. The lack of school-based planning for PSHE and guidance in the opportunities for class-based discussions, results in inconsistency in practice, but the quality of teaching is generally good.

39. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is promoted well during the visit to Southall Mosque, many assemblies, including the Ramadan assembly, and a governor's talk to pupils about Judaism. A wide range of visitors, including theatrical groups and a section of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, is a particular strength in the provision for pupils' cultural development. The many opportunities for religious celebrations and performances, and effective links with the local Church, are strengths. Positive steps have been taken to introduce pupils to the wide and enriching cultures in the school. For example, pupils study the Hindu festival of Diwali, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, and the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, and learn about their importance to people of these faiths. An excellent upper school team assembly actively celebrated the personal interests, cultures, languages and religions of many pupils in the school. This was an outstanding example of pupils learning not only about the cultures of each other but also how cultures and beliefs are reflected in everyday life as well as special occasions. This was an excellent example of all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school continues to provide a caring atmosphere where the headteacher and staff know the pupils well.
41. While day-to-day care is apparent, more structured procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare have not been fully established. Child protection is taken seriously but formal arrangements are not in place to ensure that all staff are clear about procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. The school uses local guidance, but is without a policy or documents clearly explaining procedures to follow. The designated person, recently appointed, has begun training to raise her awareness. Day-to-day first aid arrangements are satisfactory. Minor playground injuries are dealt with appropriately and carefully recorded, although pupils are not always treated by any of the staff qualified in first aid. Satisfactory arrangements ensure staff are aware of pupils with particular medical conditions. The school has no up-to date health and safety policy. Informal checks of the site and premises are carried out but formal arrangements to identify health and safety risks are not in place. Appropriate action is taken where needed but any issues and action taken are not being systematically recorded. Most equipment is checked annually. Effective links have been established with outside agencies to support the care and development of pupils with special educational needs.
42. The school has clear procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour that are not dependent on reward. The five-stage code of conduct provides guidance for staff on how to deal with bad behaviour. Pupils understand the system and are fully aware of the consequences of any inappropriate behaviour. In general, teachers have high expectations and most manage behaviour using the schools' procedures although this is not entirely successful for a small number of pupils, especially boys. Daily report cards monitor individual pupils causing concern. Suitable procedures deal with any incidents of harassment and bullying that may occur.
43. Pupils' personal development is well supported through the caring atmosphere in the school and the good relations that exist between teachers and their pupils. Class teachers know the pupils well. They understand their individual needs and difficulties, using this knowledge informally to monitor personal development. Information is not recorded in a standard format but any issues are informally discussed with the headteacher. A high value is placed on recognising and rewarding pupils' success. Their achievements and good work are acknowledged in weekly 'Golden Book' and 'Merit' assemblies.

44. The school has some procedures to monitor attendance and follow up unexplained absence and punctuality, but these are not sufficiently regular or systematic to reduce the high levels of unauthorised absence and to improve punctuality. Attendance registers are checked weekly and unexplained absences are initially followed up, but this is not continued. Pupils with unsatisfactory patterns of attendance are identified and monitored each month and, although the headteacher sends letters to the most serious cases, this is not frequent enough to improve the situation. Newsletters remind parents about the need to arrive at school on time and the school has recently held a 'punctuality week', but the impact has been insufficient to reduce the high number of pupils who arrive late. Pupils with poor punctuality are not being regularly identified and parents are not being routinely notified when their children are frequently late. Pupils are rewarded for high levels of attendance and arriving at school punctually, but this is having limited effect. The school recognises the need to improve attendance and punctuality and has plans to appoint an attendance officer.
45. The school's assessment procedures are satisfactory for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The procedures for measuring progress in other subjects are still largely informal and not standardised throughout the school. The assessment procedures for special educational needs are sound but those for English as an additional language are not. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are good, overall. The records kept for individual children are thorough and make clear the next steps in learning. There is specific information about children who have special educational needs but not about those who speak English as an additional language. However, the Foundation Stage records include detailed information about the language development of each child and are used to support their needs well. Monitoring and review procedures for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Information gathered is used systematically to identify further need or insufficient progress.
46. Optional tests for the core subjects in Years 3, 4 and 5 and the Years 2 and 6 national tests are analysed and information used to identify where improvement in learning is needed. Assessment procedures have been effective in tracking pupils' progress in mathematics and English and this has helped to raise standards, particularly in mathematics. However, assessment has not identified gaps in the investigative aspects in science. Teachers know their pupils well and use both formal and informal assessment information to help them plan their lessons to meet pupils' needs. The school's system for setting learning targets for individual pupils is working well. Targets are set initially from test results then converted into 'pupil friendly' targets and put in their books. Teachers work closely with pupils to involve them in the process. Pupils' work is usually marked and comments are helpful. Records of achievement are kept for each pupil, which transfer with them to secondary school. Pupils help to select pieces of work to include in the file, but these are rarely levelled for attainment. Pupils also complete assessment sheets that are concerned with personal development and self-esteem. The records contain information about each pupil's progress, but are not central to the effort to raise standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The few parents who responded to the questionnaires and the parents' meeting were very supportive of the school and what it offers their children. No serious concerns were raised. Without exception, parents felt their children liked school and the teaching was good. They consider the school to be well led and managed and staff approachable. They are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress, feel the school has high expectations and is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The vast majority of parents are happy with behaviour and with their children's progress. They feel the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best and that the school works closely with them. Inspection evidence supports most of the positive views expressed by parents. A number of those parents who did respond expressed concern about the range of activities outside lessons. The inspection found the school to offer a good range of activities beyond the classroom.
48. The school has established satisfactory links with parents. Induction procedures are satisfactory and parents are invited to class assemblies, but there are few activities to encourage parents to

work more closely with the school, either in school or at home. In particular, the rich variety of cultures represented by parents is not being used as a resource and the school has no opportunities for parents of different cultures to be involved in the learning process. The school is not routinely translating documents into community languages or providing interpreters for those parents attending meetings whose first language is not English. Many parents have little involvement in the life of the school although a few do help in the reception and Year 1 classes. A small 'Friends of Viking School' organises fund-raising events. When the school has organised events, such as a recent drugs awareness evening, these have not been well attended.

49. Several parents expressed their concern about the level and consistency of homework. From the nursery onwards pupils are expected to take reading books home regularly. Some parents are involved with their children at home by sharing books and listening to them read. For many reasons, however, some parents find it hard to support their children's education. Home-school reading records are in place but are not being used consistently by either parents or teachers. Other homework such as mathematics and spellings are being set. A brief statement about homework is in the home-school agreement but there is no homework policy and parents do not have any specific information about the work that their children will receive each week.
50. The information that the school provides for parents is satisfactory, but has some shortcomings. Regular newsletters and additional letters, when necessary, keep parents informed about school matters, diary dates and events. The prospectus contains basic information about school routines but, together with the governor's annual report, has some minor omissions. The school provides parents with little information about the curriculum and work being taught in lessons. Parents have the opportunity each term to discuss their child's progress but many do not attend. Annual written reports are satisfactory; however, they vary in the style and the amount of detail provided and do not provide sufficient information on pupils' strengths or weaknesses or ensure that parents are aware of the progress their children have made.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school was judged to have several serious weaknesses at the last inspection. These particularly related to the standards being achieved but also to the quality of teaching in the nursery and in the lower part of Key Stage 2. The firm action subsequently taken by the headteacher, with the support of governors has been instrumental in securing considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and has also begun to show some success in raising standards. The satisfactory leadership and management of the headteacher have focused on the need to raise standards and she provides a clear direction for the improvement of the school. Some aspects, such as improving literacy, have not been grasped as firmly as necessary, but by contrast considerable improvement has been achieved in numeracy.
52. One reason for the improvements seen is that the structures introduced to monitor the work of teachers and to evaluate the work of the school are becoming increasingly effective. The regular observation of teaching has enabled good practice to be recognised, weaknesses identified and steps taken to bring about improvements. This has supported the school in its efforts to deal with the key issues from the last inspection, and as a result improvements have occurred in several key areas, although some significant shortcomings remain. Subject management arrangements have not been stable in all areas. Some very effective co-ordinators have played a major role in developing the provision, improving teaching and raising standards in subjects such as mathematics and physical education. By contrast, the literacy co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the drive to raise standards in English have suffered because of the previous lack of focus and support that the co-ordinator is now rectifying.
53. The governing body fulfils its roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. Several individual governors provide considerable support for the school and visit regularly. They have played a major role in the realistic reduction in the admission number and in securing the planned redevelopment of the school site. They have also given valuable support to the headteacher, sharing the commitment

to higher standards. Planning for the school's improvement is secure, with appropriate priorities identified and the action to be taken clearly outlined. Financial planning has supported the priorities of small class sizes at Key Stage 2, increasing the number of classroom assistants and refurbishing the computer suite. As a consequence, there is little funding to carry-forward in case of emergencies; however, careful budget projections have been undertaken to assure the financial viability of the school as it contracts in size.

54. There have been several staff changes since the last inspection. These have served to strengthen teaching but have also resulted in problems for the consistent management of some subjects. The school is now well staffed, although several teachers, while experienced from teaching abroad, do not have qualified teacher status in this country. Arrangements for the induction of staff, including newly qualified teachers are secure as are the arrangements for the further professional development of all teachers. The school has invested heavily in increasing the number of teaching assistants to a favourable level, although their deployment and that of other teachers operating in a support role is not always sufficiently targeted to meet the greatest pupil need. The general administration operates smoothly, although the school recognises that more time needs to be devoted to reducing absence and to this end has appointed an attendance officer.
55. The accommodation is spacious for the number of pupils, but will reduce over the next few years as the site is reorganised. Nursery accommodation is far from ideal at present, but plans are in place to incorporate this class into the main building adjacent to a new reception class base. Plans are also in hand to move the secure outdoor play area so that it is readily accessible to nursery and reception children. The school benefits considerably from two halls, a library, a computer suite and other small rooms for withdrawal groups and music lessons. Outdoor play areas are reasonably extensive. Corridors and classrooms are considerably enhanced by a wide variety of interesting displays, including several that celebrate pupils' work and achievements. Resources for learning are good overall, well organised and used effectively by teachers to make their lessons interesting. The computer room was not in operation during the inspection but, when refurbishment is complete and the suite is in full operation, resources for teaching ICT will be good. The library has a good stock of non-fiction books and some dual language books to support pupils learning English as an additional language.
56. Satisfactory progress has been made in the two years since the last inspection in dealing with the school's identified weaknesses. Other shortcomings remain to be tackled vigorously if pupils are to make the rapid and consistent progress needed to raise standards. Further challenges, such as the re-organisation of the school require careful planning to ensure that stability can be maintained and that these changes do not impede the main focus of ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. To improve standards and raise the achievement of all pupils, the school needs to:
- (1) Improve standards of literacy by:
- Creating more opportunities for pupils to read so that they develop a wider range of reading strategies*;
 - Providing opportunities for all pupils, especially average and more able pupils, to improve their writing skills through applying what they have learned in literacy lessons to other subjects and therefore reducing the amount of copied work;
 - Providing further opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills building on the good practice identified in some classes.
(paragraphs 8, 9, 24, 30, 88, 91-93 and 95)
- (2) Meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language more consistently by:

- Targeting those with greatest need more effectively and providing them with extra focused support;
- Giving pupils for whom English is an additional language more opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills appropriate to their age;
- Deploying staff with responsibility for supporting the progress of these pupils more efficiently and effectively and establishing clearly the role of the bilingual assistants;
- Providing more effective guidance for class teachers to improve their expertise in identifying the next steps to be taken in pupils' learning.
(paragraphs 25, 33, 59-61 and 63)

- (3) Require teachers to identify clearly in their planning how they intend to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes, how materials and methods are to be adapted and how support staff are to be utilised.
(paragraphs 10, 22, 23, 26 and 101)
- (4) Provide further training for staff to improve their expertise in teaching science through experiment and investigation.
(paragraphs 7, 23, 106, 107 and 110)
- (5) Take vigorous action to improve attendance and punctuality, making the requirements of the school and the law clear to parents, particularly to persistent offenders.*
(paragraphs 19 and 44)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

58. In addition to the items above, the governors may wish to consider the inclusion of the following points in their action plan:
- Extending assessment procedures and the role of co-ordinators in non-core subjects.*
(paragraphs 45 and 52)
 - Formalising procedures for child protection and health and safety.
(paragraph 41)
 - Ensuring that class-based collective worship fulfils school policy and statutory requirements.
(paragraph 36)
 - Creating a scheme of work for PSHE.
(paragraph 31)
 - Exploring further strategies for improving the behaviour of some boys, particularly those identified with behavioural difficulties on the register of special educational needs.
(paragraphs 13, 15 and 16)

* The items have been identified as priorities in the school development plan.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

59. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is unsatisfactory. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion speaking English as an additional language is high. Most pupils enter the school with varying degrees of spoken English, but a very low attainment in literacy. The school also admits a significant number of refugees, and a high number of pupils join or leave during the school year. The arrangements for meeting the needs of these pupils are not managed with good care and efficiency. This represents a decline in the quality of provision reported at the last inspection. Staffing consists of an experienced co-ordinator and two bilingual assistants, but the quality of their support is ineffective. The achievement of most pupils who are new arrivals and on initial stages of English language acquisition is unsatisfactory. Pupils' needs are not consistently and explicitly tackled.
60. The school has effective admission procedures, which focus on collecting the most useful information about the pupils' backgrounds and their linguistic competencies in English as well as their other languages. This information is recorded on profiles, which also identify pertinent background information. Providing interpreters and translating texts also support the ethnic minority pupils and their parents. In spite of this, there is insufficient, systematic intervention and targeting of pupils in need of specialised support. Pupils are not carefully assessed and identified on the recommended stages of English language acquisition. The pupils with greatest need and particularly those who may be achieving less than their potential are not identified effectively for

extra support. Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have specific language learning targets against which their individual achievements can be measured and recorded.

61. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. There is a lack of regard to pupils' levels of competency in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The teacher working specifically with these pupils is not aware of the full range of their language needs and little regard is given to the learning of subject specific vocabulary. The available support is not deployed efficiently. The system of in-class support requires intensive planning in order to benefit pupils. Both the bilingual assistants are new to their roles and are not trained specifically to support the pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Their support to small groups is not well focused and they remain inactive during whole-class literacy and numeracy sessions. Class teachers are not sufficiently guided by the expertise in the field and some do not specifically plan with these pupils in mind. They do not identify the specific steps needed to be taken to meet the needs of pupils or use interesting and stimulating resources. The tasks are not always matched to pupils' needs. The lead teacher also supports small groups of the newly arrived pupils. The style of teaching lacks clear focus and appropriate structure carefully based on the identified needs of pupils. This adversely affects their quality of learning and overall achievement. Most teachers do not make good use of pupils' first language to support their acquisition of English and insufficient attention is given to supporting pupils' home languages in displays around the school.
62. Pupils with English as an additional language mix well with their peers and are keen to participate fully in activities and school events. They are motivated, ready to learn and enjoy the attention given to them when they are supported in their learning. This was exemplified well in a group supported in the classroom by a learning support assistant with clear focus to develop vocabulary of words beginning with the letter 'B'. In this session, the pupils were eager to answer questions and showed high level of motivation. In another group session, based on language activities, they were confident to share information with each other and the teacher. In all lessons observed, pupils responded well to the teachers' encouragement and praise, and were fully involved, for example when they played a word pairing and matching game.
63. The school does not have a well-considered action plan to develop and improve the quality of provision with a clear direction, and has not applied a rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of its provision. There is need for all staff to train in effective strategies to teach pupils with English as an additional language. All teachers also need to plan systematically to meet individual and group needs, when specialist support is not available.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	15	15	25	6	0	0
Percentage	6	23	23	39	9	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

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)	21	245
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	111

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	1	78

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	142

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	17	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	16
	Girls	22	19	24
	Total	33	30	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (53)	68 (35)	91 (65)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	14	13
	Girls	22	24	22
	Total	32	38	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (44)	86 (53)	80 (70)
	National	85 (84)	98 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	17	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	16
	Girls	2	3	13
	Total	13	15	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	36 (46)	42 (57)	81 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	11
	Girls	4	6	2
	Total	14	18	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (54)	50 (69)	62 (60)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	52
Black – other	9
Indian	17
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	90
Any other minority ethnic group	30

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.1
Average class size	24.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	2.5
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	725,827
Total expenditure	722,857
Expenditure per pupil	2,717
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	2,970

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	266
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	29	0	0	6
My child is making good progress in school.	53	44	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	47	0	6	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	26	32	3	3
The teaching is good.	62	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	79	21	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	24	0	0	9
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	26	6	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	56	38	0	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	47	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	29	21	0	3

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

64. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery, although for the majority this is very low. Baseline assessments show that the intake to the reception year is also well below the average, although there is some improvement from year to year.
65. There has been very good improvement in the nursery provision since the previous inspection and children now make good progress. The good teaching in the reception class has been maintained and throughout the Foundation Stage children often receive high quality teaching. As a result, children make good progress in all aspects of their learning. Despite this, the majority of children are not expected to reach all of the early learning goals that have been set for children of their age by the time they enter Year 1. This is because the very low levels of attainment on entry remain a factor in the standards reached. The majority should reach the goals for personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development. However, they are not expected to reach the goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development or their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year.
66. Teachers and nursery nurses work well together as a team and there is good co-operation between the nursery and reception class teachers. This facilitates a consistent approach to children's learning throughout the Foundation Stage and a smooth transition from the nursery to the reception class. The curriculum is well planned to meet pupils' needs and to give them the opportunity to meet the early learning goals. The outside space is not as well used by the reception class as it could be, but plans are in hand to develop the accommodation for the whole of the Foundation Stage, which should result in better access for all children.
67. The care of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers and other members of staff know the children very well and cater effectively for their needs. Assessment procedures are good overall. The adults record progress as children undertake activities. The records kept for individual children are thorough and make clear the next steps in learning. There is specific information about children who have special educational needs but not about those who speak English as an additional language. However, the records for the Foundation Stage have detailed information about the language development of each child, and it is clear from the lessons that the teachers and nursery nurses know the children's language needs and support these well.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. The teaching of this area of learning is particularly good. There is good encouragement for children to be co-operative. In the nursery, for example, children play happily alongside each other and have learned to co-operate to build with blocks and are beginning to negotiate as they play in the café. They do this because the staff have spent time playing in the café with the children, providing them with models for how to behave.
69. Independence is encouraged from the beginning and children in the nursery choose some of their own activities and move sensibly from one task to another. They know class routines, and always remember to put on aprons for painting and messy work. There is good encouragement for children to continue with activities so that they get maximum learning from these. As a result, children concentrate well and stay longer than they otherwise might at tasks such as writing, because of the good level of support they receive. There is a similar approach and response by children in the reception class. Having first become confident doing an activity with the teacher or nursery nurse, the children are then able to continue together once the adult has moved elsewhere.
70. Emotional development is carefully considered and teachers find ways to include the practice of talking about feelings. The teacher and nursery nurse use sad and happy clown faces made by

the children from paper plates as a starting point. This ensures that all children, including those new to English, are included in the activity. By the time the children get to the reception class they are learning to express emotions in other ways, for example in a movement lesson where they use their whole bodies to show sad and happy feelings.

71. The teachers are very effective at handling the few very minor disputes that arise. Children are helped to see the consequences of their actions and shown better ways to behave. Teachers give children plenty of time to explain and also suggest suitable ways for them to deal firmly but politely with the actions of others.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Despite good teaching overall, the proportion of children at an early stage in language development means only a small minority of higher-attaining children are expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
73. There is very good teaching to develop children's speaking and listening in the nursery. Instructions for activities are very practical. Demonstration and use of visual information enables all children, including those new to English, to understand what they have to do. The adults develop children's communication by providing very good models in the way they talk to each other and to the children. In small groups and on an individual basis, the teacher questions children and also listens very carefully to what they have to say. She helps build vocabulary that is associated with the activity and the appropriate way to say something, so that the children have a good model to follow. As a result, children talk to adults and to each other as they play.
74. There is very good teaching of early literacy in the nursery. As children enter in the morning they find their name cards and put these in the box. The resources the children use are labelled. For example, there is a menu in the cafe, an order book for meals and one child explained that the labels show you where to put pots and pans. A few children write their names but many others are still at the stage of needing encouragement to make marks on paper.
75. Effective support for speaking and listening continues in the reception class. For example, the nursery nurse helps children at an early stage of learning English to describe and name items in a story. She is effective in getting the children to use the language they have learned. The teacher is equally successful in her choice of a repetitive song to increase the confidence of children so that they speak in front of the whole class. Despite this good support, the speaking skills are well below average.
76. The teaching of literacy in the reception class is generally good and on the whole children make good progress. However, more emphasis could be given to the literacy development of some of the children.
77. The children are learning how books are made and know where to look for the title. The majority read along with a familiar class text using prediction skills well. They are learning initial sounds. Of those heard reading, only a pupil of above average attainment read a text with fluency and understanding. The others are at a very early stage, telling the story but not recognising any words. Children are learning to enjoy stories by choosing their own books, but there is not enough emphasis on building a sight vocabulary through repetitive texts. Children are very keen to practise what they know about writing in the writing corner, and above average writers make good use of their knowledge of sounds to write out instructions. However, there is no evidence of intervention by the teacher to introduce these children to correct spellings of basic words to enable them to make better progress.

Mathematical development

78. The teaching of this area of learning is well done throughout the Foundation Stage and as a result, children make good progress from their low level at entry; nonetheless, the majority are not expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
79. As a result of effective teaching, nursery children make good progress in mathematical development. However, there is a wide variation in their starting points. Some know basic shapes, count accurately and are adept at mathematics puzzles. Many are not yet secure in counting numbers up to five. The children in the reception class make good progress in understanding and applying mathematical language such as length and comparison. For example, at the beginning of the week children ordered 3 different lengths accurately and by the end of the week some recognised that length does not change according to its position. They can say which containers of water are full and which are half full. As a group, children count orally up to 15 and above average pupils count accurately the 16 to 20 clouds and raindrops in their pictures. Some know about larger numbers and one estimated that there may be as many as one hundred pieces in his Lego construction. There is a wide variation in children's recognition and ability to write numerals and good opportunity to practise these in play situations. In general, above average children do not get enough opportunity to record what they have learned.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. While the children are getting good experiences for developing this area of learning in the school and a few have good attainment, the poor start of many children remains a factor in their overall achievement. Teaching is particularly good for exploring and investigating. In the nursery, children are invited to predict what will happen to frozen blocks of coloured ice, but have little understanding that these might melt. They enjoy the experience of putting their hands into buckets of hot, warm and cold water, know which is hot and cold although are not able to say any more about the differences. Reception children are well prepared to use their senses to recognise the smell and taste of substances. First they have to close their eyes to smell, next listen to a smell story, then have blindfold tasting and smelling of foods such as sugar, salt, orange, lemon and onion. They are also reminded to be careful about what they put in their mouths and which parts of the body are involved. These practical activities have a good impact on the learning of children speaking English as an additional language.
81. Many of the children have very limited ideas of time and place despite effective teaching for this. Most nursery children have very hazy ideas of the days of the week or which month it is, and very few reception children know the day of the week and which day was yesterday. To develop their sense of place, the children walk around the school begin to understand how a map represents the layout of the school. A few have a good sense of direction using terms such as 'turn to the right'.
82. Children throughout the Foundation Stage make and put together objects. Reception children have made teddies with jointed limbs from card and paper fasteners. Computers are well used with software selected to reinforce what is being learned in the class.

Physical development

83. There is very good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage to promote children's physical development. The younger children learn to cut cherries in half to decorate their biscuits. They carefully spread icing and place eyes, nose and mouth in approximate positions for faces. They learn to hold pencils correctly and paint carefully with brushes. The space outside the nursery is set up for physical activities. However, it is not possible for this area to be supervised at the same time as the nursery building so children only use it at set periods and do not have the opportunity for free access to outside play. They also use the school hall for physical education. All the children are able to catch a beanbag, hop up and down and change direction. They know the routines of the cool down period, going to sleep like bunnies, for example.

84. By the time they reach the reception class, the children have learned to use this space well. They gain good control over their bodies and are able to express feelings through movement. Effective teaching and demonstration enables them all, including those speaking English as an additional language, to change mood in response to different kinds of music. They are given the opportunity for individual experimentation and in answer to the teachers' questions begin to say what they feel about the music. The children are encouraged to dress independently, managing buckles and buttons and put their shoes on the correct feet.

Creative development

85. The teachers provide good opportunities for creativity. The nursery children draw, paint, make collages and invent constructions using large wood blocks. They respond very well to imaginative play in the 'café', taking the role of waiters and customers, providing a menu, asking for orders and serving meals.
86. Reception children are introduced to different styles of music from a variety of cultural backgrounds as part of a movement lesson. They join in singing, although they would benefit from tapes or other sources of music other than the teacher to improve their sense of pitch. Relationships between the adults and children encourage doing things and finding out together. For example, they are helped to express feelings in a movement lesson and to join in a pretence that the teacher does not know which feet to put her shoes on. When the nursery nurse soaks a long strip of crêpe paper in a cup to make blue water the children are amazed and excited by this 'magic'.
87. The children are given the opportunity for observational drawing and a few make good attempts at representing the stem and leaves of a rubber plant. The children's self-portraits show quite an early stage of drawing faces but good observation of different skin tones.

ENGLISH

88. Standards in English are low, with writing being the weakest element throughout the school. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school recognises this and has put into place some appropriate measures to try to improve standards. As a result, although standards are still low, pupils are making satisfactory progress from the low levels of attainment they have on entry to the reception class. Pupils are making good progress in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6, although there are some inconsistencies in these years. There are many contributory factors to pupils' standards and quality of learning that are beyond the school's control. These include the low levels of attainment of pupils on entry to the school, the high level of pupil mobility and the large number of pupils at an early stage of learning English. Since the last inspection, standards in all aspects of English have remained lower than the national average and recent test results have been well below the national average for seven-year-olds and low for eleven-year-olds. Evidence from the inspection shows similar attainment to the recent test results at Year 2 but improvements at Year 6, and in both cases standards currently are well below average.
89. When the children start school, they have low levels of ability in speaking and listening. They make good progress and become more confident as they move through the school. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Teachers develop pupils' confidence and skills by encouraging them to join in discussions, although pupils' speaking and listening skills are still well below expectations. A significant number of pupils find it difficult to listen and concentrate when working in groups, although pupils listen (passively at times) during the shared text activity during the literacy hour. This was more noticeable in lessons where the teaching was less effective. Pupils' speaking skills are well below expectations and many have a limited range of vocabulary, for example, a significant number of pupils in Year 6 find it difficult to give opinions rather than preferences or to give explanations using complex sentences.

90. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. However, it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In lessons which are good or better, teachers pay appropriate attention in the literacy hour and in other lessons to give opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions and to develop their vocabulary. In part of a very good science lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils were put in the position of justifying their selection of different papers for different purposes. They answered questions about the properties of materials using the terms 'transparent' and 'translucent' at levels well beyond those expected for their age. However, this high quality teaching and effective use of English and extending its use across the curriculum is not a regular feature of the school's everyday practice and teachers show varying levels of understanding and commitment to this.
91. Given that children have very limited reading skills when they start school, most of them make satisfactory progress throughout the school and good progress in Years 1 and 2. For example, some pupils in Year 2 recognise a good range of words with more able pupils using letter sounds and blends to read unfamiliar words. Through literacy lessons, pupils are now taught skills more systematically and successfully than during the previous inspection. However, they still have insufficient time and therefore, opportunities for reading either individually to adults or in groups.
92. The limited progress that pupils make in some lessons in Years 3 to 6 was reflected when listening to their reading and showed that insufficient time is spent on reading and that not all teachers use effective systems in order to improve standards. This leads to pupils lacking confidence in reading unfamiliar words. Older pupils, although able to read more difficult words and texts, often do not understand the meaning of some of them. This has a detrimental effect on pupils' understanding and also their enjoyment and appreciation of books. The pupils who the teachers have accurately identified as high achievers in reading read fluently with understanding and refer to the book when justifying their answers. Many of these pupils are interested in the whole range of 'Harry Potter' books and the most able in the groups identified the most important aspects of the story and of the personalities.
93. The opportunities for reading throughout the school are unsatisfactory in ensuring that sufficient progress is made by all pupils. There is a structured reading scheme and in Years 1 and 2, there is an interesting range of suitable books for pupils to choose from in the classroom. The effective home/school reading system used by most pupils in Years 1 and 2, where teachers have been successful in encouraging parents and carers to hear their children read, is not satisfactorily extended to all classes of older pupils. Although pupils in Years 5 and 6 use dictionaries and information books for research, there are insufficient opportunities for them either to discuss or incorporate the information that they find. The reading of fiction books or for research is not sufficiently well developed through other subjects such as history or science.
94. Although writing is the weakest element of the subject, the leadership and management of the school is taking appropriate steps to improve it. More able seven-year-old pupils write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters and are beginning to spell more complex words, especially when referring to characters in stories or scientific experiments. The teaching is consistently good, marking is positive and encouraging and pupils make good progress.
95. By the age of 11, although the more able pupils can use a wide range of interesting words when writing and also use more complex sentences showing good use of punctuation and an awareness of atmosphere, this is not sufficiently well developed for all pupils. In general, there are insufficient opportunities to write in other subjects in Years 3 to 6. However, there are some good features. For example, in Year 4 the more able pupils write a wide range of stories incorporating good detail about physical features and events. Their writing has a good sense of urgency and flows well. They write good factual accounts, some recipes and there is good emphasis on improved sentence structure. In many classes in Years 3 to 6, teaching is not as effective as it could be because of the overuse of worksheets and punctuation exercises, which do not develop pupils' writing skills sufficiently. There is much copying or filling in missing words, especially in religious education and science. Spelling of key words is variable and handwriting, although it is good in many cases in the handwriting books, is not consistent in other subjects

and presentation is variable and sometimes untidy. This is especially so in classes where teachers' marking, although frequent, is cursory.

96. The quality of pupils' learning is directly related to the quality of teaching. Although there was a high percentage of good teaching observed during the inspection, the analysis of pupils' work shows a greater inconsistency in teaching, especially in terms of teaching of reading skills, the use of worksheets and match of work to pupils' ability. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and this includes the more able pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils for whom English is an additional language in Years 3 to 6 especially, are not making satisfactory progress because the work is not planned according to their assessed needs. The systems for assessment of these pupils are unsatisfactory. This feature results in these pupils not having a guaranteed equality of opportunity to literacy activities planned for their levels of understanding. When they do make good progress, both in literacy lessons and in other lessons with a strong literacy content, it is because of the knowledge, understanding and commitment of the teachers rather than an effective school-based system.
97. Overall, the standard of teaching is satisfactory. This is an improvement compared to the previous inspection. The consistently high quality of teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not reflected in Years 3 to 6 where it varies from excellent to satisfactory, and where the work in pupils' writing books is satisfactory overall and varies from good to unsatisfactory. Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of each aspect and teach basic skills well. Relationships are generally strong and pupils' behaviour managed well. Classroom assistants give valuable support when pupils are involved in activities but do not play a sufficiently effective role during whole-class teaching sessions. Where pupils are set by ability for the literacy hour, their previous abilities are not reflected in the planning by all teachers – in some cases all pupils were involved in the same group activities, although there was a wide range of abilities and language needs. This was particularly apparent in a lower ability set comprised of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
98. The leadership and management of literacy has much improved during the last two terms and has made a positive impact as all teachers now plan the literacy hour. However, the school has still not fully recovered from the previous years of unsatisfactory leadership and management when the planning of the literacy hour was not in place and pupils failed to make satisfactory progress. The recently appointed co-ordinator for English has devised highly relevant and manageable action plans, both for literacy and for the library. These plans, together with the potential of the majority of teachers to improve, and the many areas of strength in the school, including the support of the literacy governor, ensure that the school is well placed to improve further.

MATHEMATICS

99. Good progress has been made in improving the quality of teaching and the standards achieved in mathematics since the last inspection. The vigorous attention paid to tackling weakness identified has secured improvements in pupils' achievements throughout the school, and teaching is now good at both key stages. National Curriculum test results have yet to reflect the progress that has been made and were well below average in 2001. Inspection evidence indicates that a greater proportion of pupils are now working at the level expected for their age in Year 2, and significantly more in Year 6. Standards, although improving, are still well below average at Year 2, but are now only below average at Year 6. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress throughout the school. Pupils with identified learning needs also make good progress when they benefit from the direct support of classroom assistants, but make slow progress when support does not intervene to support their learning. The emphasis placed by all teachers on understanding and using mathematical vocabulary correctly and the development of speaking skills by the best teachers supports the learning of pupils with English as an additional language effectively. However, as with pupils with special educational needs, their progress is good only when they receive direct and carefully targeted support.

100. The structure of the daily mathematics lesson has been successfully introduced, with the teaching of each element of the recommended three-part lesson reasonably secure in all classes. Teaching is brisk and explanations are clear; pupils are encouraged and praised for their efforts, giving them the confidence to try new ideas and answer in front of others. Lessons are usually made interesting. Pupils receive good attention because class sizes are small at Key Stage 2 and classroom assistants effectively support small groups of pupils engaged in written tasks. Skills are consolidated well because teachers review what has previously been learnt at the start of lessons and then develop new ideas systematically. Pupils generally concentrate well and work hard, with some exceptions.
101. The otherwise good pace to learning is held back in some classes because teachers are not sufficiently precise about their intentions for each lesson. They do not always routinely share or review the purpose of a lesson with the pupils. As a result, these lessons lack a sharp focus and pupils are not clear about what they are trying to learn. A further shortcoming in some lessons is that teachers do not plan their teaching and provide tasks to meet the wide range of abilities in the class. This limits the challenge for more able pupils. This also results in weaker pupils and those with English as an additional language not having teaching targeted towards their identified needs or materials adapted appropriately. Classroom assistants provide valuable and effective support when pupils are engaged in tasks and activities but do not participate sufficiently during periods of whole-class teaching, considerably reducing their effectiveness.
102. Mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons are usually interesting and lively, with teachers using a good variety of tasks to retain the pupils' interest. These sessions help to sharpen the pupils' skills as well as giving them confidence and a range of methods to help them calculate. Year 1 pupils counted forwards and backwards to 30 to support their understanding of 'before', 'after', 'between' and 'one more than'. Year 4 pupils practise their seven-times table and pupils in Year 6 Identified regular polygons by the number of sides. Mental arithmetic and basic number skills are improving but are below expected levels for many pupils. Direct teaching is usually clear and at a pace appropriate to the class. Teachers in the better lessons used questioning well to draw out ideas from pupils and to give them confidence that their contributions are valued. Year 6 pupils extended the work that they had undertaken in the oral section of the lesson by learning how to classify quadrilaterals by their various properties. The pupils in this low ability group concentrated hard but were working much below the standard expected for their age. Pupils generally work hard on activities that they are given and this helps them to consolidate what they have learnt. Most lessons end with a review of what has been learnt, these sessions being more effective in some classes than others. Where teachers plan and focus on a careful review of what has been completed they enable pupils to confirm what they can now do and often set the scene for future lessons.
103. Teachers have rightly focused on trying to improve the pupils' comprehension of what is required from worded problems; this having been identified as an impediment to their success in National Curriculum tests. Lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, now routinely use problems to help pupils to consolidate and practise their skills with careful discussions taking place of the operation required by each question. This technique is beginning to show some benefit as older pupils are becoming more confident in tackling problems. Where there is a shortcoming that needs to be tackled, it is because insufficient opportunities are provided for older pupils to develop and extend their understanding by undertaking mathematical investigations. As a consequence, pupils do not readily search for patterns in their work and do not learn how to approach a complex task systematically or test predictions they have made. By contrast, many teachers support the development and application of the pupils' number skills effectively in subjects such as science and design and technology. Skills needed for drawing and interpreting graphs are also fostered in geography and also in science. This successfully helps pupils to identify how they can use their mathematical skills to support their learning in other subjects.
104. The subject is very well led and managed. As a result, significant improvements have been secured in the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. The monitoring of teachers' work has been systematic and rigorous, with good support provided to eliminate shortcomings through advice and training. National Curriculum test data has been carefully analysed and the

information used to adjust priorities for teachers. The assessment of pupils' progress is also secure, although more use could be made of the results to pitch work in lessons more closely to the needs of pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The many strengths in the management of mathematics and the quality of teaching throughout the school mean that the school is well placed to secure further improvements in standards.

SCIENCE

105. The latest teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2001 tests mark a significant improvement over the previous year's results. Although the overall standards were still well below the national average, an encouraging number of pupils were able to secure higher levels, close to the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. The 2001 national test results for eleven-year-olds also showed a marked improvement overall and compare favourably with standards in similar schools. The inspection findings confirm that the standards are improving for both seven and eleven-year-olds, but remain below the national average. The science curriculum, previously a weakness, has greatly improved, although the standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
106. The analysis of pupils' work and observations made during lessons indicate that most pupils achieve well, because of a greater emphasis on practical work. This is leading to a particular increase in pupils' enquiry skills. However, more work is needed to develop pupils' investigative skills and their ability to set up own experiments. Pupils do not receive enough guidance on how to record their work efficiently and present their findings systematically. Their ability to seek patterns and evaluate results in investigations is also limited. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate levels as a result of focused support based on carefully identified needs. In view of the low attainment on entry to the school, most pupils achieve well and make satisfactory progress through the school.
107. Several factors restrict the progress made by pupils in science. Pupils' literacy skills are not sufficiently developed. Accounts are often not well written, reflecting pupils' difficulties with spelling correctly and using grammar accurately. Pupils make limited progress in developing and using scientific vocabulary. Opportunities for pupils to develop research skills and be involved in independent scientific enquiry are limited. Most pupils show limited understanding of fair testing and the need for accuracy and precision in their investigative work in order to produce meaningful results. They do not always make predictions, understand the 'cause and effect' and record their observations in a variety of ways. Independent recording skills are generally weak. Often the work is copied from the board or recorded on prepared worksheets using missing word exercises, which limit progress and provide insufficient challenge. Little use is made of computers to present data in a more interesting way or to record results of experiments.
108. In their study of living things, the younger pupils understand the main parts of the human body. They demonstrate some knowledge of what plants need in order to grow. Year 2 pupils describe the need for food for the body to stay alive and healthy. Pupils carry out investigations to develop their use and awareness of senses. For example, in a very good lesson, Year 1 pupils classified materials according to their texture and appearance. The teacher provided a variety of paper materials to enhance learning and developed pupils' understanding of the similarities and differences through a very good link with previous learning and skilful questioning to extend it further. In another good lesson, the Year 2 teacher used an 'ice balloon' and kept pupils well focused and engaged in making suggestions and developing vocabulary such as 'smooth', 'solid' and 'frosty', applying their senses to observe carefully to note how the ice melted and why. One pupil holding the ball explained that the ice ball had melting because her hands were warm.
109. Older pupils know about seed germination, name the parts of plants and where to locate stamen or stigma of a flower. They describe the effect of change, for example, of heating or cooling on a range of materials. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson developed an awareness of the processes of separating materials through evaporating. They can participate in guided experiments to carry out a 'fair test' on substances and use simple equipment successfully.

110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. It is unsatisfactory in some junior classes, largely because the teachers' knowledge of the subject and scientific understanding are limited and affect the quality of planning and pupils' rate of learning. Teachers do not make attempts to modify activities and match different abilities particularly in mixed-age classes. Another weakness is the organisation of the experiment and the expectation of pupil participation. This was noted in a Year 4 lesson, in an experiment to find out which materials are best insulators for ice. The teacher exercised excessive control and let pupils wait around, resulting in their loss of interest. Where teachers use probing and open-ended questions to elicit a fuller response, prompt further enquiry and provide challenge, pupils are enthusiastic, listen well and take an active part in discussions. They work safely and co-operatively, share equipment and help each other. Pupils clearly enjoy science and are excited by it. However, in some lessons, they become excessively noisy because of weaknesses in the management and organisation, which affect the quality of their learning.
111. The school has worked hard to improve the coverage of all aspects of science, through careful planning based on the nationally recommended schemes of work and guidance in the subject. Most teachers regularly mark pupils' work and praise good effort. Their good-humoured management of pupils and constructive relationships encourage effective learning. There is a clear direction for the development of the subject and plans to raise its profile within the school. The science policy is being updated to guide teachers in their planning and much has been achieved in organising and setting up a range of resources centrally for ease of access.

ART AND DESIGN

112. The standards reached are broadly as expected both by Year 2 and by the time pupils leave the school. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and is the result of a more effective art curriculum and better teaching. Lesson planning is now based on national guidelines and as a result, the school is moving towards a more consistent approach to the development skills and an appreciation of the work of famous artists. This change is still at a fairly early stage and not all teachers are fully confident with the new approach and how to adapt it to the pupils' needs. Pupils are making progress in the study of artists and how to use their different styles as a way of expressing their own experience. Several displays show that art is used well to extend pupils' understanding of other artists but the progression of skills is given less consideration.
113. There has been good progress throughout the school in the development of skills, particularly in the teaching of observational drawing. This is evident in the portraits on display. For example, Year 1 pupils' drawings of faces show increased detail and expression compared with those of reception children and this progress is maintained by Year 2 children. The portraits drawn by some of the Year 4 pupils effectively convey the features of the sitter. Year 5 and 6 pupils have begun to use techniques such as cross-hatching and shading to give form to drawings of household objects. Observations of a fruit still-life drawn by Year 5 and 6 pupils, then painted in warm tones, show how well pupils applied what they learned through making light and dark tone shade cards.
114. Good links are made between design and printing, evident in the autumn leaves of Year 3 pupils. Year 5 and 6 pupils use computers to demonstrate rotation in colour but equally good are some of the coloured paper versions that show pupils can select subtle gradations of colour. Teachers also use art from different cultures as a stimulus. For example, Year 2 pupils made Rangoli and Mendhi patterns to celebrate Diwali. Year 5 and 6 pupils made a collage showing mosques at sunset and decorated Islamic letters. African clay pots and masks were made in workshops as part of a visit from 'Heritage Ceramics'.
115. When teaching is confident, pupils make very good progress in the development of their knowledge and skills. For example, the teacher helped Year 4 pupils think about the relationship between people in paintings so that they looked more carefully and began to recognise the differences between natural and more formal poses. Good instruction for drawing and extra

challenge for two more talented pupils enabled all pupils to do their best. As they drew their hands, the teacher intervened to show them how Leonardo da Vinci sketched a hand, which spurred them onto greater effort. Sometimes teachers allow pupils to take short cuts but this does not improve their powers of observation or ultimately their skills. Occasionally introductions are too long so that there is insufficient time for practical work and for pupils to have the opportunity to practise and improve their work

116. The priorities for art are appropriate and teachers are working hard to raise standards. The school has held an Arts Week but pupils do not visit art galleries, and more interaction with art and artists would enhance their knowledge and understanding.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards have largely been maintained since the previous inspection and are broadly in line with expectations. Because of the timetable arrangements, only one lesson was seen during the inspection, but an analysis of teachers' plans, pupils' work and displays points to a sound balance between design and making. However, the arrangements for managing the curriculum for mixed-age classes in Years 5 and 6 are not wholly satisfactory. While the two-year programme ensures that pupils do not cover the same topic twice, there are insufficient differences in what the two age groups are expected to achieve, particularly in respect of the written elements of the curriculum.
118. Year 2 pupils have designed and made buggies this term in response to a challenge by the teachers that these should be able to move and to hold a specific number of play-people. Pupils thought about the different materials they might use and how to fix these so the wheels ran freely on the axle. They labelled their plans and made the buggies utilising a variety of recycled materials. These were then evaluated to see how well they had worked.
119. Year 6 pupils are currently designing and making biscuits and containers as part of the food technology programme. They have designed the shape of Christmas biscuits, written recipes and worked out costs. In a mathematics lesson, pupils weighed the ingredients and packaged these so that each pupil could make his or her own biscuits. The teacher organised the cooking lesson so that all could participate. The pupils were very industrious, creaming butter and sugar. When too much egg was added the teacher took the opportunity to make pupils aware of the difference this makes to the consistency. As a result of a very positive approach to relationships by the teacher, pupils were very helpful to each other, asking advice about the best way to do something. They waited their turn to make their biscuits and in the meantime put a good amount of effort and thought into designing their containers. Although the objective was the decorative aspect, pupils showed some idea of how to represent three-dimensions in their drawings. A few used the computer to design the label on the packet, changing font size and colour.
120. There is currently no permanent co-ordinator but an appropriate action plan is in place for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

121. Standards in geography are below nationally expected levels for both seven and eleven-year-olds. The previous report noted that much of the work was not carefully presented. The books seen and discussions with pupils, indicate that the school has successfully tackled this issue. Most pupils now present their work well, particularly where they have obtained relevant information through research. For example, both Year 5 and 6 pupils working in pairs produced fact files about mountain ranges. The pupils spoke enthusiastically about their work and had clearly enjoyed it. In most other classes, too much use of commercially produced work sheets limits the pupils' personal effort in recording their answers with understanding.

122. Most seven-year-olds acquire geographical vocabulary and identify key features noted on their walk to school, such as a bridge, a garage, park and a playground. Pupils in Year 1 identify key features of a seaside noted from photographs. The discussion with Year 6 pupils indicates that they have some knowledge and understanding of the use of keys and symbols.

123. In the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory, overall. Most teachers demonstrated sound geographical knowledge and understanding. The lessons were planned well and based on clear objectives. In good lessons, teachers used appropriate methods and effective questioning. Praise and encouragement were used well in most lessons and these effectively supported pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils' achievement improved when the work provided appropriate challenge, for example in a Year 6 lesson to compare weather patterns in different parts of the world. Pupils were enthused and eager to answer questions. In another lesson observed, the teacher had good geographical knowledge and understanding. The lesson was planned well and based on clear objectives. The teacher used appropriate methods and effective questioning. Praise and encouragement were used to a good effect in this lesson. Effective questioning and encouragement to use appropriate terminology improved pupils' speaking and listening skills and extended their vocabulary. Pupils presented their own work to the rest of the class and evaluated it for quality of information and presentation. They were eager, collaborated well and worked with enthusiasm.

124. Most pupils achieve well overall considering the low level of their attainment on entry to the school, but they make insufficient gains in acquiring geographical skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through school. One factor impeding progress is that pupils' literacy skills are weak and this hinders reading for information and recording. The teaching of geography does not sufficiently extend pupils' skills of plotting routes on maps or working on plans. Older pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop skills of fieldwork. When planning, teachers take insufficient account of different abilities and needs of pupils on early stages of learning English. Pupils are often given the same work to complete. There is no formalised assessment in the subject. Therefore the work does not always build on what pupils already know and understand; for example, the young infants are introduced to co-ordinates too early and this leads to superficial learning and achievement.
125. In spite of these shortcomings, there are strengths in the subject, which form a secure basis for further development. Leadership of the subject is sound. There is an appropriate action plan to raise the subject's profile, the policy has been reviewed and resources improved. However, the co-ordinator has little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through focused lesson observations or to examine pupils' work regularly to check standards. Resources, such as books, globes, atlases, maps and photographs, are in plentiful supply, are very well organised and centrally stored for ease of access. These are generally well used, as noted in a lesson on the study of Chembakolli, a village in India. Visits to local places of interest through which pupils experience and learn geography are given appropriate emphasis and help to bring the subject to life.

HISTORY

126. The arrangement on the school's timetable meant that it was not possible to observe any history lessons during the inspection. Therefore no judgement can be made on quality of teaching in history. Judgements on the standard of pupils' work are therefore based on an analysis of their books and work on display, interviews with staff and pupils and from teachers' planning. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding are below the levels expected by the ages of seven and eleven. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection. The progress shown by pupils is somewhat limited, as the topics recently covered do not present pupils with the required depth and understanding. The school has recently adopted the national guidance to support teachers' planning, but this has not yet had impact on pupils' achievement. Where pupils with special educational needs are suitably supported, they make satisfactory progress overall. However, those with English as an additional language make limited progress due to a lack of well-organised extra support. One major factor impeding progress is the low standard of speaking, reading and writing that makes it difficult for pupils to gather information from a wide range of texts, to explain why people acted as they did, and to record their findings in writing. Furthermore, only a small amount of work is completed over half a term throughout the school and this indicates lack of depth in study of different topics, such as the Ancient Greeks and the Ancient Egyptians. There are also no formalised procedures for assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school. This affects the quality of teachers' planning, as it is not well informed by pupils' prior attainment. One consequence is that there can be insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils, as most work is either copied or completed on photocopied worksheets that do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to devise their own ways of recording what they have learnt.
127. Most Year 2 pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of the past and a sense of chronology by their ability to sequence events and objects. They learn about famous people in the past, for example Florence Nightingale and her work. They note facts carefully and confidently describe the work done by her in the hospital during the war. Most pupils lack confidence and the skill in the correct use of words and phrases that relate to the passing of time. Discussions with older pupils indicate that most have some knowledge of the periods of British history, such as the Victorian times, although only a few place them accurately on a time-line in relation to the Ancient Greeks and the present day. They also study World War 2, and are beginning to think more clearly about everyday lives of ordinary people and compare and contrast

what they discover with their lives in the present day. Many pupils' recorded work is hampered by their lack of fluency in writing and shortcomings in their ability to apply subject-specific vocabulary in their writing. Most pupils are not sufficiently skilled in using and interpreting a wide range of historical sources and evidence, and many do not confidently ask questions about the past in order to develop their skills of historical enquiry.

128. Teaching of history makes satisfactory contributions to the development and use of literacy skills such as the development of writing and spellings, where pupils are encouraged to record what they know. The teaching also contributes adequately to the development of pupils' knowledge of numbers to work on time-lines.
129. There is a clear plan for the future direction of the subject, although the monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator is not extended to include monitoring of standards in teaching and learning. The policy provides guidance to teachers, and teaching benefits from carefully organised resources such as books and artefacts, that are good in range and quality.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. The provision for ICT was in a period of transition at the time of the inspection. As a consequence, it is not possible to make secure overall judgements about the standards that pupils achieve or the quality of teaching. Pupils were previously taught ICT skills in a computer suite; however, this was in the process of being refurbished. Pupils' saved work was not retrievable from the networked computers and only a very limited quantity of printed work was available for scrutiny. Some ICT lessons did take place during the inspection using the single computer in each classroom. Pupils were also observed using computers to support their learning in other subjects and using other devices such as the 'floor roamer'.
131. The teaching observed was generally satisfactory but limited in its scope. Lessons consisted of a brief demonstration of the application of new software or instructions on how to use other properties. These generally took place from small groups of pupils, or individuals, while the remainder of the class completed a written task or other form of paper exercise. For example, Year 2 pupils used gummed paper, felt pens and rulers to create their own picture in the style of Mondrian, while a small group learnt how to do this using properties of the art package. Year 5 and 6 pupils drew plans of a playground area on paper while individuals tried to do the same on the computer. This was reasonably successful in the circumstances, but far from ideal and not the normal form for an ICT lesson in the school. This structure gave pupils limited access to computers, although their use in other lessons, such as Year 2 pupils sorting fruit by colour, was effective for those concerned. One particular aspect that needs attention is that pupils were rarely seen loading software or saving work themselves, this being undertaken by staff. Older pupils in particular need to become independent in their use of computers and therefore these skills need to be developed from a young age.
132. Subject management was also in a state of transition, with the new co-ordinator taking up the post at the start of the Easter term. Staff have previously been supported well to extend their expertise. There are clear and appropriate plans for the development of the subject. The new computer suite has the potential to be a valuable resource for the teaching of ICT, once it is up and running. Monitoring of the work of teachers has been limited and, along with the implementation of the proposed assessment system, is a necessary area of future development.

MUSIC

133. Standards in music are broadly as expected by the ages of seven and eleven. There has been an improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection, although as this is largely recent there has not been time for this to have a significant impact on raising standards. Few full lessons were observed because of timetable arrangements and the school's preparations for

Christmas. Some teaching is very good, but there was some unsatisfactory teaching, which was due largely to weaknesses in managing the behaviour of the pupils. Lessons are generally well planned, although the timetabling of music for Years 1 and 2 is not wholly satisfactory as it is often at the end of the day allowing insufficient time for teachers to develop the lesson.

134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy singing and keep in time with others. A Year 2 teacher involved pupils so that some sang independently, then as a group. They experienced listening to different kinds of music, such as African and Hebrew songs, learning to distinguish between one or two voices singing. In a singing assembly that included children from the nursery to Year 2, supportive piano playing enabled the pupils to sing together, although some had difficulty with pitch. They sang the Rocking Carol unaccompanied with good feel for its style.
135. A lesson that combined pupils in Years 3 and 4 very successfully improved their singing and musical knowledge. The teacher's high expectations and exceptionally good expertise in the subject enabled the pupils to make very good progress. Voice exercises helped them to improve their pitch, and teaching about musical notation and the correct use of terminology enabled pupils to modulate their voices in response to 'piano' and 'forte'. They progressed from shouting to singing a lullaby softly with good feeling. As a result of challenging teaching, pupils improved their clapping of rhythm and reading music notation. In a lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils did not learn as much as they could about different instruments or show sufficient respect for others because of the poor behaviour of a few.
136. The music clubs make a good contribution to the enrichment of the subject, and the choir has been newly formed. The co-ordinator, who is a music specialist, is at present working with large groups as preparation for Christmas concerts and this is raising attainment. These sessions are very well structured to improve pupils' pitch and diction and to respond to contrasting styles. The choir is due to perform in the school, at a community centre and at a home for the elderly. Pupils in the recorder club make good progress in reading music. Pupils learn the violin and, through this, arrangements are made for gifted and talented pupils. To broaden the pupils' musical experience, visiting groups such as the London Symphony Orchestra have come to the school to run workshops for the older pupils. Furthermore, about eight adults and twenty-five children recently attended a local authority led family music session.
137. Management of the subject is now good and is raising the profile of music in the school. There is a clear sense of direction for the subject and a new scheme of work has been introduced to give teachers more confidence in teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Standards in physical education are good with some very good features. Levels of attainment for both 7 and 11-year-olds are above national expectations. This shows a significant improvement in nearly all aspects of physical education since the previous inspection. During the inspection, pupils were observed in games and dance lessons and in some aspects of gymnastics. The full range of physical education activities, including athletics, is undertaken throughout each year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good opportunities to take part in outdoor adventurous activities during a residential visit. Year 4 pupils have swimming lessons, but these lessons were not observed during the inspection.
139. The quality of teaching is high, in some cases excellent, and never less than good. These very high standards of teaching reflect the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the purpose of each activity and their very good teaching of basic skills. This was evident in many lessons of basketball where some outstanding demonstrations and the ability of teachers to discuss tactics in ways that pupils understood contributed to their high standards. Teachers develop pupils' creativity as well as their physical development by encouraging them to think about their movements, discuss methods of improving them and also helps them to improve their speaking skills in this way.

140. Pupils in Year 2 achieve high standards as demonstrated by their ability to sequence a wide range of movements when creating a dance. They think very carefully about the sequence, and control their actions using space and direction very effectively. These movements show a high level of agility and flexibility. This was reflected in a Year 2 class when pupils were developing a dance based on a snowman. Their ability to move in different directions and swirl in response to the rhythm of the music reflected standards above those expected of seven-year-old pupils. Other good features included the wide variety of shapes at different levels and their ability to retain shapes and repeat sequences. These high quality movements and very high levels of concentration and commitment from nearly all pupils reflect good teaching, especially in terms of high expectations. The direct teaching of physical education skills is good and the teachers use demonstrations by pupils very effectively to show good practice. Pupils show high levels of control and fluency in performance and reflect the mood and rhythm of the music. They increase their physical skills by running, balancing and controlling themselves well in the space available. Pupils develop confidence, co-operative skills and awareness of space to levels higher than those expected at this age. By watching the work of others, and with the teacher's guidance, they learn to evaluate each other's work, compare this to their own and improve their own performance.
141. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have refined their movement and performance. Although the lessons observed were games lessons, the gymnastic skills of effective use of space and control of various parts of the body, observed initially in the warming-up exercises, were then extended to high levels of agility and good ball control in a wide range of activities. Particular strengths are in the pupils' ability to position, mark opponents, and find a space and the high levels of skill of passing, retaining position and scoring goals. The understanding by pupils in Year 2 about the reasons for warming-up and cooling-down exercises in terms of the effect on muscles, breathing and circulation are extended to pupils in Year 6. Here they explain the advantages of physical activity as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle and understand the advantages in terms of muscle development and agility.
142. Physical education contributes very positively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in the quality of teamwork which was very well reflected during games lessons and, in a Year 4 class, where pupils devised their own rules and considered their effectiveness. All pupils are eager to learn from one another, and the teachers are extremely confident in demonstrating their skills. All pupils are conscious of safety, and realise the importance of following the teachers' instructions obediently.
143. There are many contributory factors to the improving standards in physical education and the high profile of the subject within the school. The subject is very well led and managed and given a high profile within the school. Effective use is made of resources in the community, in particular the involvement of players from a local football team as coaches as well as a physical education coach who teaches a wide range of activities to each year group in Years 3 to 6 for one lunchtime a week. These factors, and the high quality of much of the teaching, place the subject in a strong position to raise standards further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. The previous inspection reported that standards complied with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and this is reflected in the standards observed during this inspection. A particular strength is the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the important books, festivals and leaders of the world faiths they study, especially in Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Pupils, including more able, those with special educational needs and pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress where the teaching is good. Teaching is satisfactory overall but inconsistent. In the successful lessons, pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations and very good lesson plans. Teachers' questions are probing and place high demands on pupils of all abilities. In these lessons, pupils are highly motivated. In other lessons, work is not well enough planned for the different abilities of pupils. There is much copying of teachers' work and few opportunities for

pupils to either discuss or write their own accounts. A further weakness that impedes progress is the low literacy skills of the pupils aged seven to eleven.

145. Standards of seven-year-old pupils are satisfactory and sometimes good when taking into account their levels of attainment on entry to the school. For example, pupils know the story of the birth of Jesus and explain why he was born in a manger. They described the work of Joseph and why Joseph and Mary were travelling to Bethlehem. They knew the gifts brought by the Wise Men and also the Shepherds. Pupils also know some of the events of the Creation and know the importance of Ramadan for Muslims, why Hindus celebrate Diwali and many of the customs associated with this festival.
146. The majority of pupils in Year 6 extend their learning of the Bible to include knowledge of the Old and New Testaments. During Year 5 and 6 lessons, pupils developed a good understanding of the different styles of writing in the Bible. They described some of the historical events told in the Old Testament and knew that the parables told by Jesus were a way of making knowledge easily understood by people who could not read. Knowledge about the other world faiths is appropriately developed. For example, pupils know many of the basic principles of Islam and how Muslims care for the Qur'an. They can describe the important features of a mosque and how prayer and customs of cleanliness are important aspects of the Islamic faith. They also know that Basaikhi is an important Sikh festival and that Guru Nanak was the first Sikh guru. Their knowledge of the Hindu festival of Diwali is suitably extended to include detailed knowledge of Rama and Sita and why Rama was exiled and the importance of divas during Diwali.
147. Effective links are made between religious education and some assemblies, and this is one of the ways in which religious education contributes positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are keen to discuss their learning and religious beliefs. They understand the importance of personal values and commitments, attributes and feelings. They write prayers of thanks for Harvest and consider the good work undertaken by people of all religions. The good links, which the school has developed with some of the major religious groups, impact positively on their knowledge and understanding.
148. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. Particular strengths are in the commitment to teaching about world faiths and the guidance given to teachers to support their planning. A weakness in the leadership and management is that the scheme of work has not been updated to include the new locally Agreed Syllabus. Monitoring of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and has failed to tackle the lack of planning for the different ability groups in some classes.