

INSPECTION REPORT

DENBIGH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109534

Headteacher: Mrs M M Hearn

Reporting inspector: Neil McAllister
22220

Dates of inspection: 1 - 4 October 2001

Inspection number: 230184

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Denbigh Road Luton
Postcode:	LU3 1NS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Kilby
Date of previous inspection:	6 July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22220	Neil McAllister	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9405	Josephine Philbey	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23588	Charanjit Ajitsingh	Team inspector	English Religious education English as an additional language	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
15918	Margaret Goodchild	Team inspector	Art and design Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
11864	Michael Lafford	Team inspector	Geography History Physical Education	
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	Science Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Denbigh Junior is a larger than average sized community school with 365 pupils aged between seven and eleven. Almost all pupils come from families where English is not the first language and about eight per cent are at an early stage of learning English. Approximately two-thirds are from Pakistani backgrounds and most of the remaining third are Bangladeshi. Virtually all pupils live within the immediate local area of the school. The school experiences very high levels of mobility with a large number of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the usual transfer points. A third of pupils in the current Year 6 did not start in the school at the beginning of Year 3. In the first month of the current term, 18 pupils left the school and 19 new pupils were admitted. Many of those who join the school at other times arrive with little or no English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average and has been very high over recent years. A high number of pupils has special educational needs – 30 per cent. Three of these pupils have a special needs statement, which is broadly average. The vast majority of pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school in Year 3 is well below average but is improving; the most recent intake was below average rather than well below. The school has experienced a high turnover of teaching staff over recent years and significant difficulties in recruiting teachers. At the time of the inspection there were four temporary teachers, three of whom left during the inspection week. One teacher was away with a long-term illness.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Denbigh Junior provides a satisfactory education in challenging circumstances. Results in English and mathematics tests at the end of the key stage are low but pupils make at least satisfactory progress overall. The overall quality of teaching is sound, with excellent practice in some classes, but there are great variations across the school. The school is led and managed well by the headteacher and staff. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- A large proportion of teaching is good or very good and a higher than usual proportion is excellent.
- Pupils make good progress in science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The school is led and managed well.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school has established excellent approaches to promoting attendance in recognition of the serious problem it presents.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching in classes without permanent teachers.
- Standards in English and mathematics.
- The timetabling and allocation of time to some subjects and the amount of time spent on physical education in Year 3.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1998. Since then, the disruptions caused by the high turnover of staff and the difficulties in recruiting suitable teachers have limited its capacity to make significant improvements. It has, nevertheless, made satisfactory progress in the main areas identified for improvement and in some other key areas. Standards in English and mathematics, however, remain well below average and, despite the school's outstanding efforts, levels of attendance are still very low. The quality of teaching has improved and most weaknesses relate to classes taught by temporary teachers. The curriculum is broader and most subjects are taught in more depth, although there are weaknesses in the allocation of time to some subjects. Improved planning and teaching in science, geography and ICT have resulted in pupils making good progress in these subjects.

Governors are now more involved in strategic planning and the school has worked hard to improve links with parents and the wider community.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E	E	E	E*

Key

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

'Similar schools' refers to schools with similar levels of Free School Meals

Standards in English and mathematics have remained well below average in recent years. There have been some improvements in the results over this time but the overall trend has been lower than the trend for improvement nationally. In 2001, the results in English and mathematics were slightly lower and suggest that the school may be falling further behind. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in writing and mathematics are well below average although reading standards are slightly better than this, being below average. Progress through the school is, nevertheless, at least satisfactory overall for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Progress is good in a significant number of lessons but some pupils have underachieved in classes which have suffered frequent changes of teacher. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the language.

Although results in science were well below average in the previous three years, the results of the 2001 tests were significantly higher and reflect the much improved teaching over the last year, and particularly the stronger emphasis on developing pupils' practical and investigational skills. Inspectors found that standards were close to average. Pupils are making good progress in science throughout the school.

Standards in ICT are average in Year 6 but better than this in Year 5. Pupils are achieving well and are well placed to achieve higher standards throughout the school in future years. Standards in art and design are below expected levels and reflect the unsatisfactory provision for this subject. In all other subjects, pupils attain the levels expected nationally and the progress made in some subjects is good. In 2001, the school fell short of the targets set for its oldest pupils in English and mathematics. These targets were over-ambitious in the context within which the school is currently working. The school nevertheless shows a strong commitment to further improvement and its future targets are challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils show enthusiasm and interest in class. Less positive attitudes are evident in some lessons where teaching is less effective.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour in the classrooms and around the school; some inappropriate behaviour at lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Pupils form good relationships. They show increasing maturity as they get older.
Attendance	Poor. Rates are well below the national average despite the school's unstinting efforts.

The school functions as a harmonious multi-cultural community. Pupils generally show respect for the ideas and opinions of others but some minor incidents of bullying were observed.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

The quality of teaching varies dramatically across the school with a large proportion of good, very good or excellent teaching but a significant minority of unsatisfactory lessons and occasionally poor teaching. Half of the unsatisfactory teaching and all the poor teaching was observed in classes taught by temporary 'supply' teachers covering the vacant posts that the school has been unable to fill. In the key areas of English and mathematics, teaching is sound and underpins pupils' sound progress in literacy. Teaching in science and history is good. The specialist teachers and teaching assistants for pupils with special needs or with English as an additional language provide good support.

Teachers plan carefully. They have clear objectives for their lessons and make sure that these are shared appropriately with their pupils. Time in lessons is used well and, in the better lessons, teachers have high expectations of what the pupils should achieve. The management of pupils' behaviour varies at times and ineffective control was a feature of some of the weaker lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad with good provision for extra activities but there are weaknesses in the way time is allocated to some subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Good leadership by the co-ordinator and good support from teachers and teaching assistants ensures that these pupils take a full part in all activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Those with limited English have full access to the whole curriculum. There are some weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' level of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development through many aspects of the curriculum. There is satisfactory provision for their moral development.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Provision for pupils' support and guidance is good, with outstanding procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. There are some weaknesses in the assessment of the foundation subjects.
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The school offers a rich curriculum and many additional activities through clubs, including a breakfast club, and through visits and visitors to the school. There are good programmes of assemblies and of personal, social and health education. A caring and welcoming environment is created. Despite the school's efforts, parents are not involved greatly in the work of the school. A significant number of parents do not ensure that their children attend school regularly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff ensure that the aims of the school are put into practice and they manage the school well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are well informed and ensure that legal requirements are met but much of the work falls on a few core members.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school increasingly collects information on how it is doing. Senior staff monitor the quality of teaching rigorously.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are controlled and managed well. These are directed to areas of priority.

The headteacher and staff share a clear vision for the school and are supported well by the chair of governors and other key governors. They are increasingly questioning what the school does and evaluating its performance; the principles of best value are applied effectively. The headteacher, senior staff and local authority advisory staff are carrying out a rigorous programme of monitoring and supporting the teaching staff. This is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching by the established teachers and on the progress made by pupils in most classes. Although the ratio of teachers to pupils is relatively high, the school does not have an adequate number of staff due to its inability to fill the vacancies. Levels of support staff are good and specialist teachers and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. The accommodation is spacious and well maintained. Practical resources for learning are generally good and used well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventy-three parents (20 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Thirty parents attended the meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy school. The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. The teaching is good. Children are helped to become mature and responsible. Staff are approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The homework that is given. The amount of extra activities available. Behaviour at lunchtimes and the level of supervision by lunchtime staff.

The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' positive views. The provision of homework has been improved and is appropriate although it is not given consistently enough in some classes. The team disagrees with the parents who wanted more extra activities - this aspect is good compared with

most schools. Behaviour at lunchtimes is generally satisfactory but there are incidents of inappropriate behaviour and inspectors agree that supervision needs to be more effective.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

i) Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT)

1. In the tests for eleven-year olds in 2000 (the latest year for which national comparisons are available), pupils' performance was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with schools with similar levels of free school meals, results were well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science. Relative to national trends, boys' performance in recent tests has been slightly worse than girls, although girls underachieved in mathematics in 2000 relative to their performance in English and science.
2. Inspection findings confirm that attainment in English overall and in mathematics is well below average, although reading is below average rather than well below. Attainment in speaking and listening is well below average, reflecting the backgrounds of the vast majority of pupils, who are from families where English is not spoken regularly at home. In general, there is little difference in the progress made in lessons by pupils from different ethnic groups or by boys compared with girls, although the less positive attitudes of a minority of boys in some weaker lessons have a negative impact on the progress they make. There was no clear evidence of any underachievement by girls in mathematics lessons or in the level of their written mathematics work.
3. In science, the 2001 tests showed a substantial improvement and were closer to average. This is confirmed in the lessons observed during the inspection and in pupils' written work. Much improved teaching and, in particular, the greater attention given to practical and investigational skills over the last year have led to significantly higher standards throughout the school and pupils are on track to achieve average standards by the end of the year.
4. Since the previous inspection, improvements in results have not kept pace with the national trend. The school has not improved its performance sufficiently in English and mathematics tests and is falling behind other schools for a variety of reasons including:
 - poor attendance;
 - lack of consistency in the quality of teaching due to staffing shortages;
 - the intermittent arrival of pupils with little English.It is, nevertheless, very committed to raising standards and continues to work hard to achieve this. The initiative to improve science has been particularly successful and this suggests that higher standards in English and mathematics are achievable. Action was taken to improve the performance of girls in mathematics, including the creation of a separate teaching group of girls in Year 6, but the results in 2001 were disappointing. The levels of mobility within the school are high with, for example, more than a third of pupils in Year 6 having arrived since this cohort started in Year 3. Many of the new pupils arrive with little or no English and with very low levels of attainment. A small number of the higher-attaining pupils do not transfer from the infant school, going to other local schools instead. This, along with the poor attendance of a significant number of pupils, has a great impact on the school's ability to raise standards by the time pupils leave the school.
5. Pupils of all levels of ability make at least sound progress through the key stage in these core subjects. Progress is good and sometimes very good in lessons in most year groups but varies dramatically and is unsatisfactory in some classes, notably those taught by temporary teachers. The difficulties in recruiting and retaining good teachers represent a major barrier to raising standards in the school. The good or very good progress made in lessons taught by effective teachers is often cancelled out over time due to pupils encountering unsatisfactory teaching.

6. In ICT, pupils' attainment has improved significantly and has, at the very least, kept pace with the rapid improvements seen nationally. Pupils make good overall progress due to effective planning and teaching and very good resource provision for the subject.
7. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities and make satisfactory progress. When in-class support is particularly good and class work is carefully matched to the needs of these pupils, they make good progress. In some lessons, where there is insufficient support or where there are shortcomings in teaching, they make more limited and, occasionally, unsatisfactory progress.
8. Pupils who have English as an additional language - the vast majority of pupils in the school - make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning. Those who are at the early stages of learning English make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the language. They quickly develop skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing with additional support provided by their specialist and mainstream teachers, and their bilingual and other classroom assistants.

ii) Attainment in the foundation subjects and religious education

Subject	Attainment for eleven year olds
Art and design	below average
Design and technology	average
Geography	average
History	average
Music	average
Physical Education	average overall, but below average in swimming
Religious Education	average

9. The oldest pupils in the key stage attain the levels seen in most schools in all the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, with the exception of art and design which is below average. The range of work in art is too narrow and pupils have too few opportunities to work creatively. Religious education is taught in accordance with the Local Agreed Syllabus and standards are average. While pupils make at least satisfactory progress in learning to swim, fewer than usual achieve the expected standard by the time they leave the school.
10. These findings represent improvements in design and technology, geography and history since the previous inspection. Average standards have been maintained in physical education and religious education and, overall, in music, although there has been a notable improvement in singing. There are weaknesses in the co-ordination and leadership of art and design and progress since the last inspection has been poor.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The attitudes of the vast majority of the boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are generally satisfactory. The positive features identified in the previous report have been maintained. Less positive attitudes were evident in lessons where teaching was less effective, notably in lessons taught by temporary teachers.
12. Virtually all parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their children enjoy coming to school and a very high percentage felt that the school helped their child to become mature and responsible. This confidence is generally well placed. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and keen to be involved in the various activities provided. They are particularly keen about the extra-curricular clubs and groups, and many pupils attend these. In most lessons pupils concentrate and work hard. In a few lessons, mostly in Year 4 and Year 5, a minority of pupils (mainly boys) are not fully engaged in their work. They lack self-discipline and their attitudes to learning deteriorate, slowing the learning of their classmates. A significant proportion of pupils in some classes do not complete their homework, which means that time is lost in class to complete it, to the detriment of those who have.

13. On the whole, behaviour is satisfactory. There were no exclusions during the last year and pupils abide by the school rules displayed in classes and around the school. Behaviour in most lessons is good. Pupils are polite, often opening doors for other pupils and adults, and show their appreciation of the building and its facilities; for example, by treating equipment and displays around the school with appropriate care. Year 6 pupils were seen to demonstrate how to handle the Holy Q'uran reverentially. Parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire, as well as those who attended the meeting, voiced some concern about behaviour in the playground and at lunchtimes but spoke positively about behaviour in assemblies and on school trips. Parents commented that bullying sometimes takes place. Inspectors found that, in general, behaviour at lunchtimes is satisfactory but one or two incidents were indeed observed. Despite good procedures, there is still some bullying by a few children, mainly in the form of name-calling, including one incident of racist name-calling.
14. Relationships between pupils and with adults are mostly good and this encourages pupils to learn and to make sound progress. Boys and girls relate well to other pupils, their teachers and their classroom assistants. They generally respect one another's beliefs, cultures and backgrounds. They mix freely and, although the school pupil population is predominantly Muslim, other religions and the range of languages are also respected. Parents are pleased with the multi-faith teaching and pupils' respect and understanding of other faiths. Most pupils have English as an additional language and those from different backgrounds are fully integrated into the school community. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes and develop good relationships. In lessons where teaching assistants support an individual or group of pupils, they generally apply themselves well and work hard. They focus on the task throughout, and relate well with the teaching assistant and with one another as a group.
15. Pupils' ability to show initiative is limited but improves as they get older; for example, they are better able to organise their own work and work without direct supervision. Pupils respond well when given chances to take on responsibilities, for example, representing their class on the school council or being monitors for lunchtimes or for specific classroom tasks. Last year the school council highlighted a need for new dinner trays and cutlery and were closely involved with the final choices made. They persuaded the school to have a uniform-free day and better quality toilet paper. Pupils are much motivated by the possibility of gaining certificates and look forward to the Friday assembly for the award of star pupil recognition.
16. Attendance rates throughout the school are poor and well below the national average. This is due mainly to extended absences when families return to their home country with their children and to shorter-term absences when relatives from abroad are in England. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average, although this reflects the rigour with which the school follows the criteria for deciding whether an absence is authorised or not. The school has put a great deal of effort into improving attendance but with very limited success. This is having a significant impact on the school's ability to raise standards. Parents are aware of the importance the school places on attendance but feel that family-related absences are often unavoidable.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen varied dramatically across the school. A substantial proportion of teaching was good or better but a significant proportion was unsatisfactory or poor. Of the 88 lessons observed, 34 per cent were good, 16 per cent were very good and eight per cent were excellent. Of the rest, 30 per cent were satisfactory and nine per cent were unsatisfactory. A poor lesson and a very poor lesson were observed in Year 5. Half of the teaching that was less than satisfactory was in lessons taught by temporary teachers who have since left the school. All but one of the unsatisfactory lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were taught by temporary teachers. Outstanding teaching was seen in individual classes in Years 3, 5 and 6 and in some music lessons led by the co-ordinator/subject manager. The figures show an improvement since the previous inspection; the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has dropped and the proportion of good or better teaching has increased significantly.

18. The most significant weaknesses in lessons taken by temporary teachers were a lack of subject knowledge, limited confidence and clarity when introducing and explaining work and poor management of pupils' behaviour. These teachers received substantial support during their time in the school and some of their lessons promoted satisfactory progress as a result.
19. Teaching and learning, overall, are at least satisfactory in all subjects except art and design. Teaching is good in science and history. The good teaching observed in design and technology represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Across the school, teachers' subject knowledge is generally sound although a few of the more established teachers, as well as the temporary teachers, are not yet fully secure in some elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The teaching of basic literacy skills is generally secure among the established and permanent members of the teaching staff but there are weaknesses in how these skills are taught by temporary teachers. Weaknesses in art and design relate to insufficient opportunities for pupils to broaden and to apply their creative skills.
20. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are usually at least sound. Support for these pupils is provided by specialist teachers and classroom assistants, mostly in class but also in short and effective withdrawal sessions. The level of support is particularly good at times, when work is carefully matched to the specific needs of pupils they are supporting. The arrangement whereby support staff and class teachers have timetabled liaison sessions each week constitutes very good practice. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported well and included as much as possible within the class as a whole. The level of support is, however, insufficient in a few cases. This was particularly evident in the lower-attaining mathematics set in Year 3, where all pupils in the group are on the special educational needs register and many have a high level of need. The teaching assistant works predominantly with one pupil with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, leaving the teacher to cope with the needs of the rest of the class. The school is aware of this situation and intends to take appropriate action. The specialist support teachers for pupils with English as an additional language and other staff, particularly bilingual Urdu and Bengali speakers, are providing valuable help, both in classes, through supporting them in literacy and other lessons, and to help these pupils to settle in school. Partnership agreements between class teachers and specialist language-support teachers are being developed to ensure that help is focused appropriately on identified pupils.
21. Significant improvements to planning systems have provided a good structure for helping teachers to plan and prepare their lessons. Joint planning in year groups ensures a good degree of consistency and continuity in pupils' learning. Planning for 'setted' groups in mathematics is now focused more directly on the different attainment levels of each set although there are still variations in the degree to which the needs of the full range of ability in each set are met. In a few classes, work is not always matched sufficiently to different abilities and learning needs and, where this occurs, higher-attaining pupils are most often disadvantaged.
22. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons are usually appropriate but vary significantly in different classes. Some teachers, for example, accept low quality presentation in written work. In the better lessons, pupils are prepared very well in introductions and are expected to work at a good pace and with a high level of independence in the main activity. Pupils are made fully aware of these expectations and usually respond very well. A particular strength, apparent in all classes, is the attention given to ensuring that pupils know what they will be learning in the lesson. The intended learning outcome is written on the board and, in most cases, is explained clearly to pupils in terms they understand. Lessons invariably begin with a useful summary of what had been achieved in the previous lesson. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
23. The majority of lessons develop at a good pace. Appropriate time is given to introductory activities and explanations. Teachers' questioning is often skilful and challenges pupils to respond in detail although, in a number of classes, there is still an overemphasis on closed questions which require short, minimalist answers. Opportunities to develop and promote pupils' speaking and listening skills are thus missed. A feature of some of the weaker lessons

was spending too long on explanations. In some lessons in the ICT suite, teachers attempted to explain and demonstrate with pupils too far away to see and open to distraction from their own computers. This led to the teacher having to spend valuable time repeating instructions to individuals as they worked. Teachers make good use of support staff. The introduction of special lesson-planning and evaluation sheets for classroom assistants is a positive development. A significant feature of some of the best lessons was the use of a computer and projector to illustrate teaching points and provide simple demonstrations.

24. Teachers assess pupils' on going progress satisfactorily. Most teachers plan lessons carefully to allow time for a summary session which, in the better lessons, is used effectively to evaluate what pupils have learned. In some cases, insufficient time is left in practice to make these sessions meaningful and useful. Marking is satisfactory but is inconsistent across the school and the good practice in some classes, for example in Year 6, where helpful, constructive comments on pupils' work helps them to see where to improve, is not apparent in some classes.
25. The arrangements for weekly homework have improved and homework is used increasingly and more consistently to support work in class. In the best cases, teachers prepare useful activities and make sure that pupils know what to do and what is expected. They discuss and stress the importance of the work, creating enthusiasm among their pupils. In some classes, however, there is limited evidence of regular homework. Some teachers are increasingly making use of personal work targets but this is underdeveloped throughout the school. Evaluations of lessons are being carried out consistently in all year groups and subsequent lessons are adapted accordingly.
26. In summary, the level of opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress through the school depends on the quality of teaching within the class they happen to be in. Since the last inspection, difficulties in staffing have necessarily impacted on the school's best efforts to ensure that all pupils have at least satisfactory provision. Some pupils receive a good or even very good quality of education as a result of being in the class of an effective teacher, others have suffered through problems of recruiting suitable teachers.

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

27. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to improve the curriculum since the previous inspection. It meets all statutory requirements, is now broader and almost all subjects are taught in appropriate depth. It reflects the aims of the school in most subjects and in the range and quality of activities provided. There is a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy and additional schemes of work have been implemented for most National Curriculum subjects and for pupils' personal, social and health education. Its overall balance is, however, unsatisfactory due to the way time is allocated to some subjects. Although the amount of teaching time available is high in comparison to most schools, it is not consistently well used.
28. The planning in most subjects follows current national or local authority guidelines and in many subjects is extremely thorough. Improvements, both in curricular planning and in the role of the co-ordinators in monitoring how effectively these are applied by teachers, have been effective in most subjects. Provision for art and design is, however, unsatisfactory with too little opportunity for pupils to develop and apply their creative skills. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills through other subjects, for example, science and history. Planning for science and ICT are particularly good. Great improvements have been made in the quality and range of investigations in science and, as a result, pupils now work more independently and with confidence.
29. Timetabling in some subjects results in some activities lasting too long, especially where, for example, independent reading or a writing activity is followed by an hour or more of literacy. As a result, pupils become restless; some lose interest and do not learn as effectively. Time spent on physical education in Year 3 is low and lessons are too short, with insufficient time to

develop and practise skills. The high quality of investigational work in science, which has contributed to improved standards, is not yet developed in mathematics throughout the school. There are some excellent examples where skilled teachers have incorporated investigations and problem-solving into numeracy lessons and this has promoted a clearer understanding of the work involved. However, the quality of the mathematics curriculum is too dependent on the individual teacher's subject knowledge and competence. There are wide variations in the levels of pupils' spoken English but plans do not indicate clearly how these will be addressed in lessons. In practice, most of the better lessons pay due attention to this and there are more planned opportunities for pupils to develop and improve their speaking skills since the last inspection but this aspect has room for further improvement.

30. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and the procedures for assessing their needs are good. The policy is good, with clear aims and all the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met. Good support ensures that these pupils are involved fully in all activities. Those with limited English have full access to the whole curriculum. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from classes for short periods and are given help to improve their language skills with additional emphasis on speaking and listening. They take a full part in school activities and take responsibility for themselves with additional encouragement from other pupils and staff. The recently-appointed special educational needs co-ordinator has worked closely with teachers, who now write their own individual education plans for their pupils. This makes them more relevant and enables pupils' needs to be met earlier. This success is reflected in the attitudes of pupils with special needs and the progress they make towards the targets on their plans. The targets are often precise and measurable but in some cases can be too general and the school recognises that more work needs to be done in this area. Targets reflect pupils' physical and behavioural needs as well as literacy skills where appropriate. There are very few numeracy targets identified in the plans although this is planned for the future.
31. At this stage, the school does not have a policy for either identifying or giving additional work to gifted and talented pupils. In spite of the lack of procedures, some teachers know the potentially gifted pupils, especially in the most able groups for mathematics, and there are opportunities for talented pupils to excel in activities related to music and sport. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 3 are withdrawn from class soon after they start in the school in order for teachers to identify their specific strengths.
32. The school has extended the range of visits and visitors from the local community and this supports work in many subjects. Volunteers from the local Rotary Club visit school each week to help pupils with their reading. The school was closely involved in the local 'Poetic Voyages' project and several high quality poems written by pupils have been included in a published anthology. Visitors have been into school to talk about religious festivals and art. Representatives from the On-Track Programme support the school in promoting good attendance and behaviour. The local community gives enthusiastic support to the annual Denbigh Festival. The curriculum is enriched by a range of educational visits within the area with pupils visiting local shops, the theatre and Dell Farm at Whipsnade. Relationships with the feeder infant school and with the high school are good and these support continuity in pupils' learning.
33. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Pupils' safety is a high priority in the school; for example, regular visits by the police remind them about road safety, personal safety and, because they live near a main line railway, they are given repeated reminders about safety on the railway track. In addition to the emphasis on healthy eating and exercise, the school encourages pupils to drink water regularly in order to maintain alertness. As part of the school's commitment to health education for pupils, there are talks about the harmful effects of smoking and alcohol and of the abuse of drugs.
34. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities including music, sport and Quiz Clubs. There is a breakfast club and a homework club to provide for the needs of different families. The extra-curricular activities, both during lunchtime and after school, give more pupils the opportunities to take part. The school makes generally satisfactory provision to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities and that all are included. Access to the full range of activities available in the school is open to all pupils.

35. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development and provision for their moral development is satisfactory. This aspect is a strength of the school and shows a marked improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development through whole-school and class assemblies. It provides pupils with knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of others, and enables them to reflect on their experiences. The school complies fully with statutory requirements for daily acts of collective worship. Assemblies are characterised by a warm, friendly atmosphere and are planned well. During the inspection week, pupils developed their understanding of the importance of loyalty by discussing a Welsh story about the courage of a dog and its loyalty to the family. During both upper- and lower-school singing times there was a spiritual feeling throughout the singing and pupils listened to the music '*The Four Seasons*' in total silence with a collective commitment to reflection; this is very difficult to achieve but overwhelming when it is sensitively shared. Pupils are encouraged to speak about their religions and how the teachings affect their daily lives.
36. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. The principles which distinguish right from wrong are explained very well and assemblies often have a moral theme. There are class and school rules which pupils and parents know although these are not applied effectively in a few classes and some teachers do not make enough use of praise as an incentive. Good behaviour and positive attitudes are rewarded through merit certificates and celebrations in assemblies. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider the rights of children all over the world and think about the ways in which children need friendship, care and love. In spite of these initiatives, the unsatisfactory provision at lunchtime, characterised by some inappropriate responses by lunchtime supervisors and ineffective supervision of playground games, results in pockets of unacceptable behaviour.
37. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development with a high level of emphasis on consideration and understanding. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors. Physical education and other sporting activities give pupils many opportunities to understand the importance of fair play, co-operation and a 'team spirit'. The wide range of out-of-school activities gives pupils with different interests and skills time to work together. Visits outside the school provide opportunities for the pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and knowledge about the environment and the need to care for it. Parents speak positively of the attitudes of pupils on school trips. Pupils are given simple responsibilities such as collecting and returning registers, acting as monitors in the classroom and helping to tidy the dining room and the library but there is room for more opportunities to be given in this area. During the inspection there was little evidence of older pupils helping the younger ones.
38. In many lessons, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and are frequently encouraged to take responsibility for their work and actions. They are enthusiastic about the celebration assembly every Friday. 'Star pupils of the week' from each class have their names in the praise book and their certificates are displayed. A particular strength is the School Council, which provides regular opportunities for pupils themselves to identify issues and make choices about how things could be improved. Pupils have raised funds for charities including one for a Bangladesh flood appeal and are involved in the annual Denbigh Festival. A Year 5 visit to a nursery as part of work in religious education reflects the caring focus of this subject. A recent innovation has been pupils' involvement in the Luton Zone Sports; they spoke with enthusiasm about this event and are looking forward to the next.
39. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to recognise and value essential aspects of their own culture and the culture of other people in Britain and the wider world. The weaknesses in this aspect identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed. There is much celebration of the school's own cultural diversity and pupils are encouraged to celebrate their own heritage and the history of other cultures and faiths. The study of the different religions enhances their personal religious beliefs and informs them of the religions of other people in the world and in multi-faith Britain. Pupils also benefit from visiting the places of worship of some of the religious faiths of people in Britain. A visit to a local museum provided additional insight into the culture of Mirpur. A parent spoke positively of how her son has developed a good knowledge and understanding of a faith very different from their own. Pupils benefit from specialist music

lessons featuring a wide range of instruments which reflect some of the many cultures in Britain today, for example, steel pan tuition. Attractive displays, including those celebrating the many faiths and cultures in Britain, especially the calligraphy featuring Urdu writing, a Bengali tapestry and the inclusion of a story from the Qur'an in assembly, are positive and enriching aspects.

40. Although a few parents showed concern about the lack of opportunities for the study and celebration of traditional British culture, the inspection team found evidence of many opportunities including visits to the church, history and geography lessons and the selection of suitable stories in lessons and assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school makes good provision for the educational and personal support and guidance of the pupils. It tries hard to promote a secure environment and most parents report that their children come happily to school. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good and most pupils turn readily to the headteacher or a member of staff of their choice for help and guidance when needed.
42. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are satisfactory overall. Two members of staff are responsible for child protection and have been fully trained. Information on child protection procedures is available to the staff, who are well aware that any concerns should be reported immediately. The school liaises effectively with outside agencies when necessary. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety and there are a number of trained first-aiders. The school's welfare assistant takes great care of pupils who are upset or feel unwell. Accidents are methodically recorded and parents advised if necessary. The medical room is light and airy and well equipped. A Breakfast Club has recently opened for pupils who come to school very early and leave home without eating. The member of staff responsible for initiating this club is to be congratulated on his initiative to provide a welcoming start to the day for a number of pupils.
43. Some parents were concerned about the levels of safety on the roads outside the school. The staff and governors of the school share this concern. Following appeals by the school, local authority proposals to create traffic-calming measures are undergoing consultation.
44. Good links with external agencies ensure pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support and the school has a good deal of input from a range of specialists. There is often close liaison between parents, the school and specialists in an attempt to resolve a pupil's difficulties.
45. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Class rules are discussed with the pupils at the beginning of the term and these are displayed in classrooms. Class teachers praise pupils for good work and behaviour, and this works well. The school rewards pupils' good behaviour with stickers, certificates and the chance to have their name recorded in the Praise Book. In addition, class teachers nominate a 'Star Pupil' each week who has worked hard or behaved well. The school's pastoral policy outlines the systems for dealing with pupils' poor behaviour with parents being involved if necessary. During the inspection a number of class teachers were seen implementing these sanction procedures so that lessons could continue without interruption. Inappropriate behaviour in lessons was only evident when teaching was less effective. At present, there are not enough lunchtime supervisors for the pupils who stay for lunch although the school expended great efforts to try to recruit more. Lunchtime staff have received training and monitor behaviour in the playground and dining hall. Whilst relationships between pupils and supervisors are generally sound, there are instances when individual supervisors are unfriendly towards the pupils and methods of supervision are inappropriate. The headteacher is dealing with this problem and intends to spend more time monitoring lunchtime procedures.
46. The school tries hard to eliminate bullying. 'Circle time' enables pupils to talk informally about their concerns. 'Say No to Bullying' notices are displayed in classrooms and hallways, A

celebrity has visited the school encouraging pupils to seek help from their teachers if they are victims of bullying. Parents and pupils are confident that when incidents of bullying are brought to the attention of the headteacher and her staff, they are dealt with immediately and effectively. However, some incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying, in the playground are going undetected, especially at lunchtimes, and some pupils still do not have the confidence to approach an adult for help when needed. While the majority of pupils play happily together at lunch and playtimes, there are a few pupils, particularly boys, who persistently tease and provoke others. More vigilance is needed on the part of the school to seek out the few offending pupils who spoil playtime for others and cause distress.

47. The procedures for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality are exceptional. Registration takes place at the beginning of each session and attendance is recorded correctly in class registers. The headteacher and additional administrative staff monitor attendance, unauthorised absence and punctuality with exceptional rigour. Parents are constantly made aware of their relevant responsibility through newsletters. The headteacher asks to see all parents who wish to take their children on extended holidays. The Compact Programme, sponsored by the local Education Business Partnership, encourages pupils to come to school regularly by providing certificates and small gifts as rewards for those pupils with over 95 per cent attendance. Despite the time consuming work put in by the school to improve pupils' attendance, many parents remain unco-operative and attendance rates are still too low. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection and most pupils are now arriving at school on time in the mornings.
48. The systems for monitoring and supporting personal development are satisfactory. Class teachers know their pupils well and keep a close eye on their personal development. Poor behaviour is formally recorded and monitored by the teacher. Both personal, social and health education and 'circle time' are timetabled into the curriculum. The school has recently set up a School Council and a range of issues are discussed with the elected pupils. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through various school outings including a residential visit.
49. The school has sound systems for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. In addition to the statutory national tests at the age of eleven, good use is made of optional tests in these subjects and the school carefully tracks pupils' attainment year on year. The results of these and of the Key Stage 1 national tests are used effectively, for example, to set individual targets for all pupils and to allocate pupils to appropriate sets in mathematics. Detailed analyses of pupils' test papers have provided useful information, for example, about the impact of levels of mobility and about areas of weakness in English, mathematics and science. Assessments of pupils who have English as an additional language, generally relate to their attainment in relation to the national standards. There is, as yet, too little information about their stages of fluency in English, particularly in speaking and listening, for example. Most teachers know the limitations of those pupils with little English but the lack of recorded assessments in relation to this aspect of their learning means that there is limited specific information available when planning lessons.
50. The school collects data and analyses results by ethnicity, gender, attendance, mobility and long-term holidays and is beginning to use this information in planning for the specific needs of these pupils. The procedures for identifying and tracking pupils with special educational needs are good, and the inclusion of tracking pupils' progress within the responsibilities of the special educational needs co-ordinator is a particularly good development. The co-ordinator is active in observing and diagnosing the needs of individual pupils, then working with class teachers in the production of relevant targets and strategies to support their needs. The school does not, however, have a system for assessing pupils' mathematical learning difficulties and producing individual plans for specific mathematical needs.
51. In other subjects, with the exception of music and religious education, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Most schemes of work in use provide an outline of what could be assessed but, in practice, the school lacks a simple system for identifying and recording the relative strengths and weaknesses at the end of units of work in these subjects. This makes it difficult for teachers to set tasks which are appropriate to the pupils' needs and build on what they already know or can do.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents' views of the school are very positive. They confirm that their children enjoy coming to school and they are pleased with the progress they make. Most parents feel that pupils behave well overall and have nothing but praise for the school's standards of pastoral care. Parents report that class teachers are approachable and listen carefully to their concerns. Parents who responded to the questionnaire, those who attended the meeting and parents interviewed during the inspection week were unanimously appreciative of the commitment of the school and its aims and expectations for their children. These positive views are well founded.
53. Some parents have minor concerns about the school's performance in three areas. They feel that pupils do not always get the right amount of homework and that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. There is also some concern that the school does not keep parents well informed about how their children are progressing. The inspection finds that some class teachers set their class homework tasks with strict regularity in line with the school's homework policy, whilst other teachers are not so consistent, and in this respect parents' concerns are justified. It was noticeable, during the week of the inspection, however, that significant numbers of pupils in some classes did not always complete their homework and precious time was wasted in class discussing this issue. Many pupils attend the mosque school at the end of each day and this limits the time they have left for homework tasks. The school provides a good range of extra activities suitable for children of this age; there are a number of sports, music and quiz clubs as well as the lunchtime games club. The information given to parents on pupils' progress is satisfactory. The school holds regular parents' meetings, provides clearly written annual reports for pupils and actively encourages informal contact at any time by parents. The reports set out what the class has studied, highlight pupils' strengths and set targets for improvement for the forthcoming year. Interpreters are provided during parents' meetings to cater for parents with limited English.
54. The school recognises that liaison between home and school is most important and has endeavoured to improve its partnership with parents, which was unsatisfactory in the last inspection report. The quality of information provided for parents has improved significantly. The school's prospectus and annual governors' report are both welcoming and useful documents. Parents receive regular newsletters and other school letters advising them of activities, events and other general information. A web-site has recently been set up with a range of information about the school and contributions from pupils. The school has provided parents with curriculum meetings to raise their awareness of literacy and numeracy initiatives. A further mathematics meeting is planned for this term and two further literacy meetings next term. It provides little written curriculum information and parents rely heavily on their children to tell them what class work and topics they are studying. The school recognises that this is an area for development.
55. Despite the school's efforts, parents are not involved greatly in the work of the school and they provide limited support for their children's learning both at home and at school. Many parents choose to withdraw their children from school during term time for extended holidays and family occasions. The school finds it difficult to engage parents in the life of the school; there are no parent helpers in the classrooms and no parents' association. Parents are asked to sign homework and reading diaries but the response to this is variable. On the positive side, the school reports that most parents have signed the Home/School Agreement and that almost all now attend consultation evenings. Parents also respond quickly when they are asked to come into school to discuss any problems their child may be experiencing. The school has introduced a number of clubs for parents, particularly those who wish to improve their English speaking skills and a number of parents attend English classes and Parents' Club. An ICT class has been set up for parents to learn computer skills. The school is currently taking part in the national 'On-Track' programme which seeks to increase the involvement of families in the education of their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in decisions and in the review of provision for their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The overall quality of leadership and management is good and this is having a positive effect on school improvement; although its impact on performance in national English and mathematics tests is not yet apparent there have been significant improvements in science, ICT and some foundation subjects. There is a constant and concerted effort by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff to improve the quality of teaching and this is beginning to prove successful. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The impact of poor attendance on standards is substantial and the school is doing all it can to work with parents in improving this.
57. A major concern for the continued improvement of the school is the high turnover of teaching staff and difficulties in recruiting suitable teachers. The subsequent disruption to classes is constantly eroding the efforts to raise standards and has been a major barrier to school improvement since the last inspection. Strategic planning places a suitably strong emphasis on improving the school's results but, given the changes in staffing, there have been problems implementing these plans. Nevertheless, the headteacher and governors have taken steps to ensure that key priorities are dealt with rigorously and the expertise of senior staff is used to best advantage.
58. The involvement and consultation of teachers and non-teaching staff in school matters are strengths of the management system and of the 'family' atmosphere created in the school. There is an appropriate staffing structure and responsibilities are delegated well. Clear aims, policies and procedures are in place for all aspects of school life. There are good relationships and commitment among staff.
59. The headteacher works closely with the chair of governors, who is well supported by the chairs of the finance committee and personnel committee. They provide very good support to the headteacher and have a clear vision for the school's continuing development. The governing body meets its statutory duties in all respects. There are detailed and relevant development and action plans. The headteacher keeps all governors well informed by clear reports to the termly meetings of the governing body. However, the majority of other governors are not closely involved in the management of the school and most are not given specific roles or responsibilities. The experienced chair of governors has a good understanding of the factors that account for the school's progress in recent years and the difficulties it now faces. She provides much valued expertise as new governors settle into their roles.
60. The systems for monitoring and analysing the quality of provision in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are good. They have been refined and developed to give the school a solid foundation in evaluating its effectiveness compared to other schools and in deciding what action to take. Detailed analyses of test results, for example, have identified relative underachievement by boys in English and girls in mathematics. The school has taken action to address these issues albeit, as yet, with limited success. The headteacher has taken a strong lead in dealing with the key issues from the previous report. The process for monitoring and supporting the quality of teaching is well established and very rigorous. Members of the senior management team now have time allocated to monitor teaching and to provide advice and support to other teachers. While this new system is generally successful, the supporting role of the deputy headteacher and key teachers needs to be more clearly defined and carefully directed to provide help and expertise where it is needed most. For example, one temporary teacher is very experienced and did not need some of the extra help provided during the inspection; at times, other temporary staff were not given the constant support they needed.
61. The overall management of special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has introduced a number of clear improvements to the school's procedures and practices. She is fulfilling all aspects of the role, as set out in the National Quality Standards for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and liaises closely with the co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language and the special needs governor, so that the governing body is kept well informed and involved. There

is satisfactory management of the school's provision for pupils with English as an additional language. The additional staff are deployed appropriately and the introduction of partnership agreements between class teachers and support teachers is a useful development.

62. The day-to-day administration of the school is efficient. Its smooth running is supported very well by the office staff and enhanced by additional staff for monitoring attendance. ICT is used well to provide efficient systems of recording and monitoring information about pupils and administration. The headteacher copes well with the bureaucratic demands on her time but she reports concern about the need to produce similar information several times for local and national authorities. She feels that national comparative information about standards does not provide a fair picture of the context of her school. She feels that the school has benefited substantially from initiatives such as the On-Track project but that evaluations of these are unnecessarily bureaucratic.
63. Good financial planning ensures that educational priorities are suitably supported. The headteacher and chair of the finance committee maintain a clear view of financial issues and the budget is monitored appropriately. The last audit report concluded that the financial records were well ordered and its recommendations have been carried out appropriately. Resources are allocated carefully according to priorities identified in the school improvement plan. While the plan includes priorities for up to three years ahead, there is no outline financial plan recorded over the same period to support this. The large budget carry-forward in the last year reflects the uncertainties in the levels of additional income for pupils with English as an additional language and, in the circumstances, is suitably prudent. Specific grants received by the school, such as funding for school improvement, are being used effectively for the required purpose. The school applies the principles of best value to all its expenditure – in particular, to questioning what it does and evaluating its performance.
64. Although the overall ratio of teachers to pupils is relatively high and allows senior staff to carry out non-class based management responsibilities, the school does not have an adequate number of trained teachers. There are four full-time posts currently unfilled; one teacher is on long-term sick leave and another is due to retire at the end of the current term. The governors have not been able to recruit permanent teachers of suitable quality and are relying on temporary teachers, more often trained overseas. Although the headteacher and key staff ensure that all are familiar with school policies and expectations, these teachers have not all familiar with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies nor with National Curriculum programmes of study or levels of attainment. They often lack a sufficiently high command of English to allow them to relate well to pupils and teach effectively. This is an added burden in terms of professional training and is an additional barrier to providing pupils with the quality of teaching that they require and deserve in order to make progress.
65. The permanent staff are suitably qualified and there is good provision of support staff. There is good representation on the teaching staff of the different languages and ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. Systems for the appraisal and professional development of staff are good. They are thorough and effective and incorporate appropriate procedures for the performance management of teachers and for the training and development of teaching assistants. The induction programme for new staff is satisfactory and temporary teachers are given substantial support. The school has adopted the principles of the 'Investors in People' scheme and is working towards a subsequent application for its award.
66. The school provides good quality accommodation and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. Extra spacious areas provide a large library, community and meeting rooms, a special technology workroom, an excellent music room and an ICT suite. The varying levels and sets of stairs within the building do, however, prevent disabled access to most areas. The school suffered serious disruption over the last year due to major roofing repairs. Since then the building has been redecorated and provides pupils with a very pleasant learning environment. The building is spotlessly clean thanks to the efforts of the site agent and his staff. The school grounds have been enhanced with planted areas but there are no grassed playing areas. Pupils are able to use a detached playing field for games and sports days but this entails a bus journey.

67. Resources for learning are, overall, good and used effectively to support learning in all subjects. The quality and range of library and other books is satisfactory and covers the linguistic and cultural diversity of the school and the community although the quantity of challenging books for higher-attaining readers is limited. Resources for design and technology and ICT are very good and computer software is regularly being added to support work in other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. To build on the school's strengths and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and the governing body should:

(1) continue to take all necessary steps to recruit suitably qualified teachers to the vacant posts and to ensure that, in the meantime, the existing staff is deployed to the maximum benefit of the classes without a permanently appointed teacher. (paragraph 65)

(2) raise standards in English by:

- creating more opportunities for pupils to read to adults so that they develop a wider range of effective reading strategies;
- providing opportunities for average and higher-attaining pupils to improve their writing skills, and particularly their use of grammar, through applying what they have learned in literacy lessons;
- providing further opportunities for the older pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills;
- developing an effective system for assessing the needs of pupils with English as an additional language, especially those at an early stage of learning English, and using this information to guide planning in literacy lessons;
- sustaining and, where possible, extending the successful 'partnership approach' for teaching English to pupils with English as an additional language, to enable them to develop speaking and listening skills appropriate to their age and to improve their comprehension. (paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 70-72, 74-77)

(3) raise standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring a suitable emphasis on the development of investigational work and pupils' ability to use and apply their knowledge and understanding of number;
- providing opportunities for demonstration lessons that illustrate the very good practice evident in the school;
- ensuring that activities in lessons are appropriate for the full range of abilities present in the class and taking into account pupils' levels of spoken and written English;
- ensuring that the specific needs of the lowest-attaining pupils are identified and met, where appropriate, through individual education plans;
- continuing to investigate reasons for girls' underachievement in tests and take subsequent action to raise their levels of attainment. (paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 84-89)

(4) review the time allocations for subjects, particularly physical education, and the organisation of the timetable in order to ensure that all sessions are a) of appropriate length and b) make the most effective use of the time available. (paragraphs 27-29)

It is acknowledged that a number of the areas for improvement have been identified by the school and already feature in its improvement plan.

(5) Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- The lack of a manageable and effective system for assessing pupils' attainment in the foundation subjects, particularly information and communication technology. (paragraph 51)
- The unsatisfactory provision and attainment in art and design. (paragraphs 28, 100-105)
- The supervision of pupils at lunchtimes and the occasional bullying that takes place during the lunchtime break. (paragraphs 36, 45, 46, 54)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	81

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	14	30	26	8	1	1
Percentage	9	16	34	30	9	1	1

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	378
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	152

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	92

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	365

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	53
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	56

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	56	33	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	29	25
	Girls	22	10	20
	Total	49	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (57)	44 (50)	52 (65)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	31	31
	Girls	22	18	21
	Total	53	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (58)	55 (52)	58 (68)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	11
Black – other	1
Indian	5
Pakistani	237
Bangladeshi	101
Chinese	0
White	12
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.4
Average class size	25.9

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	239

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.0
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Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	944,072
Total expenditure	935,619
Expenditure per pupil	2,522
Balance brought forward from previous year	75,914
Balance carried forward to next year	84,367

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	362
Number of questionnaires returned	73

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	40	5	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	27	10	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	23	26	7	4
The teaching is good.	66	26	4	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	30	11	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	36	3	3	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	51	33	8	1	7
The school is well led and managed.	53	33	1	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	37	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	29	11	7	7

Other issues raised by parents

A significant number of parents felt that behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes was poor and that supervision at lunchtimes was ineffective. A small number of parents felt that:

- the school did not celebrate traditional British culture enough;
- there were not enough outings and residential trips for pupils;
- there were issues of safety and security near the gates and on nearby roads when pupils arrived at school and left at the end of the afternoon

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

69. Since the last inspection, standards in reading and writing have remained much lower than the national average and recent test results have been well below average compared with schools with similar levels of free school meals. Although the results in reading have improved from a very low base five years ago, writing results have been relatively static.
70. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, the most recent year for which there are national comparisons available, were well below national averages. The percentage achieving the higher grade in these tests was average compared with similar schools, indicating that the higher-attaining pupils achieved relatively well. Results in 2001 were slightly lower, reflecting a cohort with fewer higher-attaining pupils. Test results have been significantly lower than teachers' own assessments in recent years. These larger than usual differences reflect the pupils' language difficulties and their response to written tests. However, the lack of specific assessments of the level of language acquisition for pupils who have English as an additional language and the teachers' lack of training in such assessments seem also to be important contributory factors to these differences. The results of Year 6 tests have been analysed to identify the effects of pupils joining the school at times other than in Year 3. The findings indicate that this high level of mobility, which affects more than a third of pupils, lowers standards at the end of Year 6. Many of the new pupils arrive with little or no English and with low levels of attainment.
71. Inspection findings confirm that, at the end of Year 6, standards in reading are below expectations and writing standards are well below national expectations. The majority of pupils - boys, girls, more able pupils and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds - are nevertheless making satisfactory progress as a result of sound teaching. Since the last inspection, action has been taken to improve provision and there is a strong commitment to raising standards. The performance of pupils in writing tests has been analysed well and specialist teachers from the local authority have worked with the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of literacy skills. This has been particularly helpful for teachers to enable pupils to identify their own targets in writing. Additional teaching time is now provided for reading and handwriting practice.
72. Overall, boys' attainment is lower than that of girls but the differing standards achieved by boys and girls are most frequently linked with levels of attainment on entry to the school. Occasionally, small numbers of boys are more likely to be inattentive in some classes. Books and other resources have been scrutinised to identify their effect on the learning of boys and additional appropriate resources have been acquired. It is too soon for the action taken during the previous year to improve the school's results at the end of Year 6.
73. Pupils' listening skills are below expectations. A significant number of pupils find it difficult to listen and to concentrate when asked to work in groups. 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 consistently find it difficult to talk effectively as group members, to employ different ways to develop an argument or to give explanations using more complex sentences. Progress over time is, nevertheless, satisfactory. Most teachers pay appropriate attention in English lessons to providing opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions and to develop their vocabulary. In part of a good lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils in the 'hot seat' replied effectively to questions from their partner about characters with the more able taking on the role of the character and using more elaborate yet accurate phrases. Lower-achieving pupils were helped to participate and to make contributions because of the structured support from classroom assistants. All pupils made good progress during this activity.
74. Progress in reading is satisfactory. The younger pupils learn to recognise the sounds of letters and are taught how to use phonic and context clues when reading unfamiliar words. By Year 6,

pupils have developed their comprehension skills and their basic understanding is sound but pupils' ability to use deduction and inference when reading for meaning remains weak. Pupils have access to an appropriate variety of fiction and non-fiction books, though the range for the more advanced readers is limited. The progress of less able pupils and pupils with special needs is satisfactory but their overall fluency and ability to interpret meaning remains weak by Year 6. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to read to others and thereby learn effective strategies to improve their reading as many of them do not have such opportunities at home. The school has identified this need and has introduced a new initiative supported by the local Rotary Club. Members of the club visit the school each week and listen to pupils reading. There are weaknesses and some unsatisfactory teaching in the specific lessons observed for guided reading. Although a good range of activities is provided in these lessons, these are not always managed well and a purposeful atmosphere is not maintained, with the result that pupils make insufficient gains in their reading.

75. Although overall writing standards remain well below average, progress is satisfactory. By Year 6, the range of pupils' writing is satisfactory and many pupils write stories in a fluent narrative style but their grasp of grammar remains weak, particularly for the average and higher-attaining pupils. In general, pupils make clear gains in their knowledge and understanding in lessons but their ability to apply what they have learnt in their writing is slower to be achieved. Progress in some lessons is good and is occasionally very good. In a lesson in Year 6, in response to very good teaching, higher-attaining pupils chose words for their particular effect and incorporated description, action and dialogue into their stories. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with special needs and less well-developed English, also included some of these elements in their writing as a result of the very good prompting from the teacher, classroom assistants and a bilingual assistant.
76. Handwriting improves satisfactorily as there are brief, brisk, well-focused handwriting sessions during registration each morning in the majority of classes. Standards in spelling are well below average. Not enough support is provided for spelling in a number of lessons, particularly for lower-achieving pupils. A new spelling programme has, however, recently been introduced in Year 6. Teachers are beginning to make more effective use of ICT to help pupils to draft their writing but there is scope for further improvement.
77. In response to the effective teaching, the behaviour and attitudes of the majority of boys and girls to learning are satisfactory and often good in Years 5 and 6. However, younger pupils, particularly boys, have difficulty sustaining concentration for any length of time and this has a significant impact on their progress.
78. The school's overall strategy for literacy is satisfactory. Work in all subjects contributes positively to pupils' listening and speaking skills. Suitable attention is paid to increasing pupils' technical vocabulary and in providing opportunities for focused discussions in pairs. Good examples were observed in lessons in mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. To improve pupils' reading and spelling, special and technical vocabulary is carefully displayed for several subjects. Reading skills are also enhanced by work in history, music and religious education. There are several good examples of opportunities provided to develop pupils' writing skills, for example solving real-life problems in mathematics and in design and technology work on biscuits in Year 5. Support for pupils to organise and structure their writing in other subjects is limited, although ICT lessons in Year 4, where pupils corrected prepared texts about Henry VIII on the computer, are examples of good practice.
79. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the majority of the teaching was satisfactory and was better in Year 3 and Year 6. There are, however, wide variations in the quality of teaching in other year groups. Learning objectives for each lesson are clear and shared consistently with pupils. The planning for the literacy hour is sound and is consistent across the school as teachers in year groups plan together. In addition, all classes have similar amounts of time for reading and handwriting. Activities in the better lessons are matched closely with pupils' prior attainment. Teachers manage pupils well and the planned work engages and presents a challenge to all of the pupils at an appropriate level. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, despite initial difficulties in forming complex sentences using connectives, the good support provided by the teacher, particularly for some lower-achieving boys, ensured that they made good progress in developing their understanding of how to make complex sentences. The short

periods of withdrawal from lessons for pupils at an early stage of learning English are effective. Partnership teaching by the specialist EAL teachers and class teachers enables these pupils to have good support and thereby achieve better progress. Teachers in Year 6 make helpful, constructive comments on pupils' work, which helps them to improve. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school and there are occasions where teachers themselves are unsure of their own grammar and spelling when marking work. The arrangements for weekly homework have improved but are not yet consistent in all classes.

80. Assessment information has been used well to group pupils based on their prior attainment. As a consequence, the teaching groups within most classes are well organised, purposeful and help the pupils to make progress. In a small number of lessons, activities were not planned in sufficient detail for pupils of differing attainment. This most frequently had an adverse effect on the progress of pupils with special needs or limited English as they struggled with spellings. Spelling is timetabled in some classes but the variations in provision mean that pupils' spelling skills are not developed systematically enough through the school. In a weaker lesson in Year 5, there were shortcomings in the way that pupils were guided to note the language required for particular effects, for example, comparing informal and formal writing. Weaknesses in an unsatisfactory literacy lesson in Year 4 related mainly to the teacher's limited confidence in explaining the work and the poor management of the pupils. Noise levels were too high and pupils lacked concentration.
81. The overall curriculum and the arrangements for assessment are satisfactory although there is too little recording of pupils' levels of fluency in learning English. The National Literacy Framework is used well to underpin the planning in all year groups. Resources are satisfactory. The range of books celebrates the linguistic and cultural diversity of the school and the community though the fiction books for higher-attaining pupils are limited. A new programme for spelling has recently been introduced and spelling is timetabled in some classes but the provision does not yet build on pupils' spelling skills systematically enough. The school is raising the profile of writing through competitions and celebrations of pupils' poetry writing. High quality poems have recently been published in a local anthology.
82. Leadership and management of English are good. Teaching has been rigorously and systematically monitored by the senior staff and areas for improvement have been identified. The manager has provided extensive support to help teachers with their work on planning, spelling, reading and writing and assessments in English. Teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching literacy has improved and weaknesses relate mostly to temporary teachers. The school is now well placed to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

83. Standards in mathematics are well below average although levels of achievement for most pupils are satisfactory in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection and the school has fallen further behind other schools. Test results in recent years and attainment levels of pupils who are presently in Year 6 are well below those expected for pupils of this age. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are better and reflect the higher level of pupils' attainment on entry in the last two years. Lesson observations and examination of results and pupils' previous work show that, although the more able pupils in all years achieve high standards, the large majority of pupils still achieve standards below average, and in Years 5 and 6, well below average. The setting of pupils into groups according to ability and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy have not, as yet, had a significant impact on results in national tests in Year 6. Girls in particular have underachieved in tests, despite action taken by the school to try to address this.
84. Pupils in most classes make at least satisfactory progress in their knowledge of number facts and processes. Many know their multiplication tables well. By Year 6 they have a good understanding of fractions and decimals but limited knowledge and understanding of percentages. Some pupils depend heavily on memorised facts and routines with insufficient understanding of basic numerical and mathematical skills. Many pupils make unsatisfactory progress in learning algebra and carrying out investigations in mathematics, especially in shape and space, data handling and coordinates. Pupils' ability to use their knowledge of

number in investigations and problem-solving is unsatisfactory. Work examined from the four year groups shows that pupils have been expected to repeat too many number activities and exercises with too few opportunities to learn new mathematical skills, especially how to apply their knowledge when solving problems. These areas of underachievement have been identified by the school's own analyses of test results but have not yet been addressed adequately.

85. Teaching is satisfactory overall and during the inspection many good lessons were seen. There are, however, wide inconsistencies between the qualities of teaching throughout the school and, in the lessons observed, teaching varied from excellent to unsatisfactory. Some of the weaker teaching was observed in lessons taught by temporary staff with limited knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy but some more established staff are not yet secure in all elements of the strategy. The analysis of pupils' work across all year groups indicates satisfactory teaching overall but with little evidence of the high expectations observed in the better lessons seen during the inspection. In the excellent lessons observed, pupils were encouraged to solve problems independently and good use was made of apparatus and realistic situations to support problem solving skills. Pupils were challenged to think logically and to explain their reasoning. Teachers had excellent business-like, yet supportive relationships with pupils. All teachers identify what is to be taught and learned during the lessons and ensure that pupils clearly understand their expectations. This process is established well and reflects a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. The introduction and mental sessions are generally appropriate but, where teaching is unsatisfactory, the group activities do not always relate sufficiently well to pupils' previous work or the pupils' abilities in English. These are elements which cause confusion and lead to unsatisfactory levels of progress.
86. There are inconsistencies in the planning for pupils of differing levels within the sets. In the best lessons, the varied group activities and different expectations enhance pupils' learning. In the less effective lessons too many pupils are involved in the same activity, some finding it too easy and others having difficulty with the vocabulary, some of the explanations and the mathematical expectations.
87. In the most successful lessons, teachers create friendly but purposeful atmospheres, ensure that pupils are enthusiastically involved and move activities along at a rapid pace. As a result, pupils behave very well, listen very attentively, are confident and brimming over with interest and anticipation. In the best lessons, observed in Years 3 and 6, teachers use the final activity to give pupils opportunities to explain their calculations and in order to assess their learning.
88. In most lessons, pupils make good use of small white boards when answering mental questions and for calculations during class activities. This allows teachers to keep ongoing checks of their knowledge and understanding. A very good feature of the best lessons was the use of a computer and projector to illustrate essential points. This enhances pupils' understanding and is particularly beneficial for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Some other teachers struggled with unwieldy explanations which could have been more easily illustrated using this new technology.
89. There are inconsistencies in the frequency and quality of marking, and in the feedback given to pupils. Homework is used increasingly to support work in class and in the best cases teachers discuss and stress the importance of this; they create great enthusiasm among their pupils and ensure that parents are well informed about what is expected.
90. The school has adopted effective systems for assessing pupils' work and tracking their progress through the school. Girls' underachievement in the tests was identified and changes were made to provision, including the creation of a separate setted group of average-attaining girls, although this had little overall effect on results in the 2001 tests. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory. In some lessons observed, teachers had made overnight amendments to lessons in the light of assessments made at the end of the previous day's learning. This is a good feature.
91. The co-ordinator, in the short time since his appointment, has developed a good overview of the school's provision, is aware of where improvements are needed and has started a number

of appropriate initiatives. Practical resources have been improved and there are now separate plans for each set within every year group. This needs to be extended to ensure that all teachers plan for the different ability groups within these sets and pay sufficient attention to how the mathematical language relates to the very wide range of English competency present in each set. Although standards remain too low, the school is now well placed to improve.

SCIENCE

92. Although test results in 2000 were well below the national average there was a marked improvement in the 2001 results and inspection evidence indicates that standards in Year 6 are close to average. This improvement can be explained through the strong and effective emphasis on teaching scientific skills through investigations which is being followed through the school.
93. By the age of eleven, pupils have developed their investigative skills to a good level. Pupils throughout the school have a structured approach to carrying out investigations and making accurate recordings. An analysis of work carried out during the previous year showed that pupils completed a good range of work, which increased in difficulty over time. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of how the body works. They are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties through experiments such as determining if the temperature of the water has an effect on the rate at which salt dissolved.
94. Pupils' attitudes to science are very positive. Some in Year 6 said that science was their favourite lesson because it was so interesting. When asked about their work, pupils accurately recall information from previous lessons. They show that they have a growing scientific vocabulary and that they are acquiring a good range of investigative and experimental skills.
95. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding. A very good example of this was observed in a Year 5 lesson when pupils developed an understanding about a healthy diet. Through research, they were able to identify seven types of food, which were important to having a healthy diet. The teacher's good subject knowledge was reflected in the challenging questioning and high expectations of what the pupils should achieve in the time. The whole class showed great interest and worked hard. By the end of the lesson they had made good gains in knowledge and understanding of their diet. The teacher set an exciting project for homework and pupils were very enthusiastic as they prepared to record all they would eat over the next seven days and decide if they were following a balanced diet.
96. Overall the quality of teaching in science is good; some very good lessons and one outstanding lesson were seen. Only one lesson, taught by a temporary teacher new to the school, was judged to be less than satisfactory. All teachers share the lesson objectives with their pupils and this enables pupils to understand what it is they are to learn. The lessons observed during the inspection were very similar in parallel classes, which indicates that all year groups of teachers plan well together. For example, three of the Year 3 classes were observed carrying out an experiment to recognise that some materials stretch when a force is applied. The teachers provided good resources, which were readily available in all classes. They set tasks which captured the pupils' interest and attention immediately. All classes used a simple but effective planning board to plan their tests. They now know the importance of devising a fair test, can predict what they think might happen and know that they must only vary one condition at a time. The teachers skilfully arranged the work to match the ability of the different groups of pupils and all were included in the investigation. Pupils were very interested in their work, listened carefully to advice and the teachers' clear instructions before completing the task, working well together in small groups. The teachers and their assistants gave very good support, moving round the groups, challenging the pupils to work carefully, predict what might happen and record the results accurately. Towards the end of the lessons, the teachers brought the pupils back together and each group was encouraged to explain to the whole class what they had discovered. This gave all pupils an opportunity to tell everyone what they had accomplished, including pupils with special educational needs. Pupils showed good understanding of the scientific principles they had tested.

97. Assessment systems have been reorganised and improved during the last year. These enable teachers to keep a useful check of pupils' progress by recording what pupils know before the unit of work and what they have learned at the end of it. Assessment of pupils' investigational skills is now an important feature. The information gained is used to set targets for pupils and this is having a positive impact on the standards they achieve. Homework is set on a regular basis but some pupils do not complete it or return it to school on time. The quality and frequency of marking is satisfactory. In a Year 6 class the teacher arranged for pupils to discuss his comments on the work he had marked to ensure they knew what he intended should be improved. Work on spreadsheets in ICT in Year 5 links well to future work in interpreting scientific data although there is less evidence of effective use of computer technology to support science work in other year groups.
98. The improved range of resources since the previous inspection has enabled teachers to include more practical activities, and, as a result, pupils' investigative abilities are constantly improving. The school is well placed to achieve improved results in future tests.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is below national expectations. There are some examples of satisfactory or good work but the range of work is too narrow. Pupils have too few opportunities to:
- work in three dimensions;
 - make creative decisions and select materials;
 - express their own ideas and feelings through art;
 - learn about and evaluate the work of other artists, craftspeople and designers.
100. Pupils make the most progress in Year 3 although the quality of teaching and, thus, pupils' progress, varies from class to class. Achievement is satisfactory in this year group. Pupils create patterns by colouring in shapes within a printed grid; higher-attaining pupils colour neatly within the lines; others colour in various directions and show less colour awareness. Pupils in another Year 3 class draw pictures of themselves to a satisfactory standard. Pupils mix colours and the work of higher-attaining pupils shows a sound understanding of a range of shades. They have also worked on symmetry using a computer graphics program and some have produced imaginative paintings which show a wide range of attainment. A talented pupil produced an effective clown painting showing the features clearly and including specific and carefully considered detail: spots on the clown's hat, a star under his nose, a pathetic look to his eyes and a fair knowledge of perspective. Middle and lower-attaining pupils paint two-dimensional objects but all pupils express their ideas effectively. In one Year 3 lesson observed, pupils made very good progress as a result of high quality teaching. Drawing from direct observation, they achieved three-dimensional drawings using light and shade to good effect. They were able to look carefully and follow the teacher's excellent guidance, then evaluate the work of a number of members of the group showing they had learned a great deal.
101. Between Years 4 and 6, pupils underachieve as teaching does not build systematically on their prior attainment. Tasks are generally overly prescribed, the curriculum is too narrow, and there is some unsatisfactory teaching. Year 4 pupils produced collages to illustrate the story of 'The Truthful Boy', which consisted of silhouettes against a marbled background. These were effectively executed but all very similar and the task gave little opportunity for personal choice and expression. One class decorated pre-drawn hand shapes, which resulted in some attractive use of colour and shape, but the task was too narrowly prescribed and gave insufficient scope for learning. Similarly, in a Year 4 class during the inspection, progress was unsatisfactory because pupils were required to draw details within a partly or completely drawn outline of a figure. Higher-attaining pupils showed that they could be innovative and expressed themselves as much as the task allowed. The rest of the class found it difficult to include much detail and all pupils would have benefited from a more open-ended task. Pupils in Year 4 have used a computer graphics program effectively to develop pictures of Islamic buildings against a layered background and, on the theme of 'disguise', where they were able to manipulate

imagery, and change colours and shapes. As part of the Denbigh Festival, Year 5 pupils produced attractive work with a strong decorative element using calligraphy to represent buildings and symbols. Pastel drawings of portraits by pupils in one Year 6 class show a good grasp of proportion as a result of effective teaching. This work includes some satisfactory use of tone. Other Year 5 and 6 pupils have had limited opportunities in art and there is little work on display by older pupils.

102. Overall, teaching in art is satisfactory. Good teaching in one Year 6 class and very good teaching in a Year 3 class were observed but other lessons and work on display show that there is also some unsatisfactory teaching. A few teachers have very good subject knowledge, and this ensures that pupils in their classes make good progress within individual lessons. However, not all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to support pupils' progress and their expectations are low. Tasks are too often narrow and this restricts the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' short-term planning follows the scheme of work. Some teachers develop the planned topic in a way that makes it both challenging and accessible to pupils, and they maximise learning opportunities. Less confident teachers seek the advice of the subject co-ordinator about what might constitute suitable activities but the result is too often a narrow task that does not truly reflect the expectations of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
103. In a Year 3 lesson observed, teaching was very good and the features within this lesson provide a useful example of good practice. Explanations by the teacher ensured that pupils understood the task of using light and shade to make the drawing of a vase look three-dimensional. This was supported by having three slightly differently shaped vases for pupils to observe: they could choose which vase they preferred to draw and they were able to say which one they had chosen and why. They were shown a high quality finished drawing on paper, executed in chalk and charcoal like they were using, to raise their expectations of what they should be aiming for, and the teacher demonstrated the techniques directly on the white board. As pupils worked on their drawings, the teacher provided excellent guidance and feedback to individuals and was relentless in the pursuit of excellence from them. As a result, their progress was tangible throughout the lesson – they could be seen to be learning new skills all the time and were very absorbed in their work. They produced drawings that were above expectation for pupils of their age and all pupils made very good progress in skills, knowledge and understanding. The lesson ended with a detailed whole-class evaluation, which consolidated pupils' understanding and provided very good opportunities for speaking and listening. Their comments as well as their finished drawings showed that they had learned a great deal.
104. Co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. There has been poor progress since the last inspection and teachers need more guidance in how to provide a variety of learning opportunities that reflect fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and, thus, raise standards. The planned introduction of national schemes of work should deepen and broaden the range of learning opportunities provided but most teachers are likely to need a good deal of support if the suggested activities are to be taught effectively. Teachers have received ongoing support and advice from the subject co-ordinator but they have not had training in practical skills over the past few years and the co-ordinator is also lacking in recent professional development in the subject. Since there is no assessment system in place and teachers do not keep a record of pupils' attainment other than their sketchbooks, there is no means of using pupils' past performance to inform future planning or to monitor their progress. Some work by pupils is on display in classrooms and corridors but pupils' achievement in art is not celebrated sufficiently around the school or in most classes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. The previous inspection found that pupils performed below national expectations, and made unsatisfactory progress. Teachers lacked sufficient knowledge to develop the subject to a satisfactory depth. The school has addressed these weaknesses systematically and sensitively and pupils achieve average standards in designing and making. Based on the three lessons observed, which were in Years 5 and 6 only, and a scrutiny of pupils' work from across the

school, the teaching of design and technology is now good. Knowledge and understanding of the subject and the programmes of study have been increased and the introduction of a good scheme of work has helped teachers plan the work effectively. The design and technology room, which was underused at the time of the previous inspection, has been reorganised and is now in good order. All tools and the very good resources are expertly displayed and readily available to the pupils, who treat them with care, being reminded of safety issues by their teachers. Teachers have gained in confidence and this has raised teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve. By using appropriate technical language, teachers extend their pupils' vocabulary and subject knowledge.

106. The variety of good work on display in the design and technology room collected from all year groups and from pupils with special educational needs shows that learning for pupils of all abilities is good. Pupils put a great deal of creative effort into their work and talk with enthusiasm about what they are designing. As the inspection was carried out early in the term, pupils were at the designing stage of their unit of work. Year 5 designed a toy with a moving part. After a very clear initial explanation of what was required by the teacher, pupils worked with enthusiasm in pairs or small groups planning their design and deciding what materials would be best suited for their purpose. They made a detailed diagram of their model and labelled all parts carefully. The plan was intended to help them to begin work on their construction in the next lesson. Year 6 pupils were observed in a lesson based on structures. Pupils were challenged to design and build a bridge taking into account the best techniques for reinforcing and strengthening the structure using very basic materials. The task was carefully timed by the teacher, thus making sure all groups sustained their concentration during the whole lesson. This produced good results with the majority producing work to the required standard. Most pupils finished the project on time and appeared to enjoy the challenge.
107. Appropriate links with other subjects, including science and history are made. A clear scheme of work indicates that pupils are given work to suit their age and ability as they progress through the school. The co-ordinator sees teachers' plans and has a satisfactory overview of the subject. Assessment opportunities are not yet identified in the scheme of work but the co-ordinator is aware of this and intends to take action by the end of the term.

GEOGRAPHY

108. During the period of the inspection only the Year 6 classes were timetabled to have geography and two of these lessons were observed. A range of work done by pupils in all year groups was scrutinised.
109. By the end of Key Stage 2 at the age of eleven pupils attain levels in geography which are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' geographical skills were found to be below standard. Year 6 pupils show sound understanding of the stages of a river and can use the associated terminology such as estuary, meander and flood plain. They are also beginning to understand the processes which lead to the formation of landscape features. Their work shows that they appreciate the importance of environmental issues such as river pollution and they have considered the arguments for and against pedestrianisation in towns. Year 6 pupils have also covered irrigation and demonstrate their understanding of the consequences of the shortage of clean water in many third-world countries. They are also beginning to appreciate how the human landscape changes over time. Their work shows that they are able to use and interpret bar charts and line graphs. They also use maps of different scales and understand the use of a key. Younger pupils name the main cities of the United Kingdom and acquire sound knowledge of different types of dwellings. Year 4 pupils compare a Kenyan village with their own environment and this topic provides useful links with other activities, such as dance.
110. In the small number of lessons observed teaching was satisfactory and pupils' learning was accordingly sound. Pupils were kept on task by effective monitoring of their group activities. This also ensured that pupils with limited English skills and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. The samples of work show that there is a good quantity of written work, making a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills. There is a wide variation in the

standard of presentation required by teachers. Sometimes teachers give the whole class work which is not sufficiently challenging for the highest attainers. For example, Year 5 pupils work on directions using right, left and four points of the compass. Learning is supported by visits to a river, a water processing plant and to a farm. Teachers are beginning to make use of ICT to support learning in geography. For example, pupils in Year 6 are soon to use their developing skills in interrogating computer databases to find out about rivers of the world and there are increasing opportunities to search the Internet to find information.

111. In the lessons observed pupils showed that they have good attitudes to learning. They are attentive and keen to take part in question/answer sessions. For the most part they are able to concentrate well and listen carefully when the teacher explains a difficult topic.
112. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The temporary co-ordinator has clear ideas about the way geography should develop in the immediate future. This includes the implementation of the nationally recommended schemes of work. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment in geography are currently unsatisfactory but the new schemes of work will provide many opportunities for this. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

HISTORY

113. By the age of eleven pupils attain expected levels in history. Since the last inspection attainment has improved because greater emphasis is now being placed on using evidence sources and on considering the causes and consequences of events. Observation of work done by pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are acquiring a good understanding of the impact of the railway on the growth of Luton and how the town has developed. They show an appreciation of what motivated the fifteenth century explorers. Their work also shows an understanding of the Aztec way of life. Pupils in Year 5 compare living conditions of rich and poor people in Victorian times. They then go on to learn how the lives of the poorest people improved during Queen Victoria's reign. Year 3 work shows that pupils have some understanding of why the Romans wanted to invade Britain. Observation of lessons shows that most pupils in Year 4 know the names of the wives of Henry VIII and they are learning about their respective fates. These pupils are making a good start in using texts and pictures as sources of evidence but many still need very close guidance because of gaps in their basic vocabulary. Teachers try to overcome this by making effective use of pictures. An example of this was evident in a Year 3 lesson where pupils showed that they were developing a sound appreciation of chronology.
114. The quality of teaching in lessons is good. The huge variation in the pupils' understanding of English, however, means that their learning is only satisfactory. Teachers expect a good quantity of written work from their older pupils so that the subject makes a sound contribution to their acquisition of literacy skills. They also endeavour to get pupils to use sources to obtain information. However, teachers vary in their requirements for standards of presentation and some accept low quality written work. Some lessons are well structured and make good use of resources. For example, pupils in one Year 4 class learn about the Tudors by putting pictures in the correct sequence and then writing about them. By contrast, another Year 4 group copy information about Henry VIII's wives from a textbook; a task which does not require them to extract relevant information. Classes are managed well although teachers' tolerance of calling out varies considerably. Sometimes too much time is lost in getting them to listen. Pupils with lower levels of English as an additional language and those with special needs achieve satisfactorily because teachers try to ensure that they understand the vocabulary used in the lessons. They are diligent in monitoring their work to keep them on task and use support staff effectively where it is needed most.
115. Pupils' attitudes in history are satisfactory, as is their behaviour in class. However, many younger pupils lack self-control and the ability to listen to others. This sometimes has an adverse effect on achievement because of the time spent getting them to focus on their work. In other lessons they are well motivated, enthusiastic and polite. They show that they are able to work well in groups

116. The subject has sound leadership. The temporary co-ordinator is aware of the areas on which further development needs to be focused. The requirements of the National Curriculum are being met but without a detailed scheme of work to ensure consistency. There are plans to introduce the nationally recommended schemes in the near future. Limited use is made of ICT to further pupils' learning in history, although increasing use is being made of information from the Internet. A weakness in the planning for history is the very limited use of artefacts and primary sources of evidence. There are no visits to historical places. As a consequence, pupils' historical skills, while improving, are not developing as they could. There are no clear and simple procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment in history. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

117. The school has continued to improve its provision for ICT and has built on the strengths outlined in the previous report. Resources are now very good and planning is supported by a very good scheme of work that provides appropriate progression in pupils' learning. Standards are average in Year 6 and are above average in Year 5, reflecting the extra time this year group has had with the improved provision. Pupils are now entering in Year 3 with a more secure range of skills and knowledge and the school is well placed to achieve above average standards next year and beyond.
118. Pupils in Year 6 search and sort information on a computer database and are beginning to develop the skills needed for more complex searches. They speak confidently about how to combine text and picture images to create interesting presentations. They describe how to search for information on the Internet or on CD-ROMs and the higher-attainers explain how they could give sequences of instructions to control an on-screen 'turtle'. They talk confidently about how they use the computer in other subjects such as geography, history, music and art.
119. Throughout the school, pupils encounter a wide range of experiences covering all elements of the Programmes of Study and make good progress. Pupils in Year 3 are generally knowledgeable about the everyday use of computers and show a satisfactory range of general skills in using them. In a lesson observed they created repeated pattern designs using a range of on-screen tools and confidently printed and saved their work. Pupils in Year 4 develop their word-processing skills by correcting prepared texts about Henry VIII. In Year 5, pupils rapidly learn how to enter formulae into a spreadsheet in order to calculate totals. Many show knowledge and understanding of the features of the program beyond expectations for their age. Progress in some lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 is very good due to the particularly effective teaching they receive.
120. Teaching is always at least sound and was very good in two lessons observed in Year 5 and Year 6. The established staff, including classroom assistants, have a sound level of subject knowledge and know the software they are using in lessons well. Explanations are usually clear and invariably start with a brief recap of earlier work and an outline of what pupils will be expected to learn in the lesson. The main features in the best lessons that promoted very good progress included careful adaptation of the weekly plan and modifications to worksheets in order to meet the specific needs of the pupils in their classes. The most significant impact on progress was the good organisation of the class when the teacher was introducing and demonstrating how to use the software. The pupils gathered around the projector so they could see clearly and were not distracted by their own computer and the teacher involved pupils themselves in demonstrating different features. This did not take place in some lessons with the result that pupils did not concentrate during introductions and the teacher had to spend the lesson repeating instructions to individuals in turn. The presence of support teachers and classroom assistants, as well as a technician, helped to minimise this but the overall impact was to slow the pace of the lesson. Pupils with special needs or with little English receive good levels of support and achieve well in lessons. Some use specialist software and receive additional close support enabling them to make particularly good progress.

121. The teachers' high expectations in the better lessons promotes pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils listen very carefully to introductions and work confidently on their own when the time comes to practise what they have been shown. Good examples of collaboration were seen in Year 5 and Year 6 where, without any fuss or prompting, pupils helped their neighbour and shared ideas.
122. While good use is made of brief evaluations of the previous lesson to remind pupils and make sure they know what they will be learning next, there is no recorded assessment of what pupils can do at the end of a unit of work. This means that new units start with an assumption that pupils have similar levels of knowledge and understanding and should therefore start at the same point, whereas, in practice, some pupils are highly competent and do not need to cover the introductory work, while others still need work at a simpler level.
123. The subject is led very well by the co-ordinator who has a clear overview of current and future development and provides a very good role model for teaching ICT. Teachers' plans are monitored and samples of pupils' work, stored electronically on floppy disks, are collected and examined. The staff have completed the national training programme and this has raised teachers' levels of subject knowledge and their confidence in teaching. Increasingly effective use is made of links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn spreadsheet skills ready for later work in interpreting science results; music and art skills are enhanced using computer software; pupils in Year 6 learn about databases before searching for information about rivers in geography.
124. The very good resources include a large ICT suite with enough computers for pupils to have one each where needed, a smaller suite in the library with Internet access and access to further computers in each year group. The projector in the suite allows teachers to demonstrate new skills and procedures and is a major contributor to the progress made in lessons. Some teachers are beginning to make very effective use of a second projector to support lessons in classrooms. The quality and range of computer software is good and constantly being improved. Useful specialist software is available for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. The timetabling of a trained and experienced classroom assistant as a computer technician during all class lessons in the ICT suite is particularly effective and releases the class teacher from having to deal with the inevitable technical problems.

MUSIC

125. Standards in music are average overall and the quality of singing has improved since the previous inspection. This is reflected in good rhythmic awareness, dynamics, accurate pitch and pupils' ability to sing with power and sensitivity. Pupils develop appropriate levels of understanding of how musical styles and rhythms are used to communicate moods and effects. They know that changing the dynamics and pace of music also changes the impact, meaning and suitability of songs for particular occasions. This was clearly shown during upper school singing time when pupils sang 'Blowing in the Wind' and related the song to recent events. In the lower school singing time, pupils sang 'Living and Learning' with a good feel for the style of the song and the message about peace.
126. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils improve their ability in singing and in instrumental playing, especially when maintaining a melody and reading conventional notation. In the best lessons in Years 5 and 6, pupils maintain a steady beat while playing different arrangements of notes on a wide range of instruments. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to use pictorial scores when reading notation.
127. Teaching is satisfactory overall in lessons and is excellent in the upper and lower school singing lessons. Pupils make satisfactory progress and many of them benefit from additional musical activities in their own time. Teachers plan their lessons systematically using the adopted commercial scheme. High expectations of pupils' handling of music notation was evident in the best lessons seen. Some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This generally

reflected a lack of subject knowledge and confidence, resulting in a slow pace and a reluctance to allow pupils to experiment with instruments.

128. Teaching and learning is supported well by visiting music tutors and teachers. Pupils learning to play steel pans quickly improve their skills in playing chords. Those who play lead pans memorise notes well and play the parts they have learned accurately and with a good feel for rhythm. Pupils who have begun to learn the harmonium concentrate well as they learn to increase the volume and play a scale with accurate fingering. Pupils also benefit from brass, strings and woodwind lessons.
129. All pupils have regular weekly opportunities to sing during upper and lower school 'singing times'. These sessions are very skilfully led by the co-ordinator and pupils enjoy their singing. This is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and enthusiasm for learning and the desire to improve their performance. Music, especially singing, contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
130. The improving standards in singing throughout the school reflect the very high quality of skill and enthusiasm of the very recently appointed music manager. She organises and leads the upper and lower school singing lessons, supports many teachers and has developed a well-planned scheme of work which reflects the abilities of the pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum. She has also recently introduced an effective system for recording on tape the achievements of pupils in every class each half term. Two years ago, the school initiated the 'Denbigh Festival' and musical performances by pupils are an important feature each year. In addition to the regular opportunities for listening to a wide range of music in class lessons and during assembly, a wide range of after-school musical activities ensures that music retains a high priority in the school's curriculum. The spacious, carpeted and well-equipped music room provides excellent accommodation and is an inspiration for all pupils. All resources are regularly used, improving pupils' musical skills and enhancing their enjoyment and participation.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. During the week of the inspection, lessons in cricket, hockey, football, dance and swimming were observed. Pupils reach expected standards in most of these aspects by the age of eleven and this indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In swimming, however, the proportion of pupils able to swim 25 metres is well below that found in most schools. Circumstances are exceptional because very few pupils are able to swim when they come to the school and many have no prior experience of swimming. Pupils in Year 4 swim each week and achieve satisfactorily in this aspect of physical education when this factor is taken into account.

132. In the lessons observed, Year 6 pupils demonstrated that they have acquired satisfactory skills in hockey. Most are able to send, receive and dribble the ball with confidence. In football, older pupils have developed sound kicking and passing skills. In a Year 5 lesson on cricket they are able to throw and catch with reasonable accuracy and many show sound bat-handling skills. In dance, Year 4 pupils perform the required movements with enthusiasm but their lack of self-control inhibits their progression to more imaginative work. Some have poor awareness of space and lack the ability to use it sensibly. In all years pupils understand the need to warm up before an activity.
133. The quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory overall although one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. There is wide variation in teaching practice. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on cricket skills and in a Year 6 hockey lesson, pupils learn well because the session is well planned, the class is well managed and the lesson moves at a brisk pace. By contrast, in a Year 4 dance lesson, learning is only satisfactory because the teacher does not have effective strategies to get complete attention and participation. Too much time is lost in keeping them on task. In a Year 3 lesson, learning is constrained by lack of time to practise and improve skills. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and then, in the better lessons, get the class together to evaluate the success of the lesson.
134. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Inspection evidence shows that older pupils have better self-control and are able to listen to instructions, stay on task and concentrate on demonstrations. Some younger pupils slow down the pace of lessons through their inability to concentrate on the task in hand and to watch while others perform. This was evident in two Year 4 lessons - one dance and the other swimming.
135. The subject has sound leadership. Long-term planning is not supported by a detailed scheme of work to ensure to ensure continuity and consistency. There are plans to introduce the local authority schemes in the near future. There are no clear procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment. Both resources and accommodation are adequate but the constraints of the playground sometimes means that pupils have limited space to practise their skills. There is no playing field on site. Pupils have access to a suitable area locally but this requires a bus journey.
136. The planned curriculum in physical education is broad and balanced. However, the time allocation in Year 3 is inadequate for the planned activities to be covered satisfactorily. The long-term planning ensures that all pupils cover the National Curriculum requirements. Previously pupils received two terms of instruction in Years 3 – 5, however, the school recognised that attainment and progress in swimming was relatively low. The school has made changes so that, from the current term, Year 4 pupils will receive swimming lessons throughout the year. It is anticipated that pupils will benefit from this further instruction and that pupils' attainment in this activity will improve. In addition to timetabled activities, pupils have the opportunity to take part in cricket, football and dance outside school time. At the time of the last inspection there was no sporting contact with other schools. However, football matches against local schools now take place on a regular basis and pupils show great enthusiasm for these. In addition, representatives from each year group have competed in the 'zonal sports', an event involving several local primary schools. Taking the subject as a whole, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of other beliefs and cultures.
138. Pupils in Year 6 know about many features of the Islamic faith including the importance of the Holy Qur'an and its rituals. Their learning is promoted well through the effective use of resources and the involvement of pupils themselves in describing their faith. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 5 learn about Hindu worship. In their separate sessions with a visitor from a local Hindu Temple they learn how to do the Hindu greeting, 'Namaste', with folded hands. Pupils

enjoyed seeing two pupils dress up as traditional Hindus while learning about the Hindu teachings about respecting animals and creatures, sharing with each other and being nice to each other. Pupils also learnt about the Puja ceremony by watching, in awe, the visitor performing it. Pupils in Year 4 had visited the church the previous week. As a result, they can identify the various places within the church such as the font, the lectern, the altar, and were able to share the feelings they had by sitting in pews. They are developing a sound understanding of why the church is a special place for a Christian. Overall, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make satisfactory progress in learning about the special features of different religions, although their progress in relation to reflecting deeply on the questions of meaning of religious and moral issues is not as well developed. Pupils generally respond to religious education with great interest. They are keen to share their experiences and learn from each other.

139. Based on the lessons observed and from the analysis of pupils' previous work, teaching throughout the school is generally satisfactory. In most classes, teachers plan well and use questioning effectively to help pupils recall facts from the current or previous lesson. Very good planning in Year 6 promoted pupils' knowledge and understanding of Islamic rituals and practices. In a particularly good lesson in this year group, the use of a well chosen CD-ROM projected on to the white board captured the pupils' interest and this was followed by a demonstration by a Muslim boy of ritual washing to the rest of the class and explanations of rituals surrounding the Holy Qur'an. They made sound gains in their knowledge and understanding of the cross and its symbolism through the teacher's very good questioning skills and opportunities to discuss symbols and to compare Christian symbols with those of Islam. Sometimes teachers are insecure in their knowledge of some aspects of the subject, particularly religions other than Christianity, and do not adequately draw out the religious significance of pictures, artefacts and stories or show sensitivity and understanding of religious practices amongst their pupils. Some of them find managing behaviour difficult, which has an adverse effect on the progress that all pupils make, particularly the more able pupils in some classes.
140. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the manager has a sound overview of the school's provision. Teachers plan in accordance with the guidance of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and the scheme of work links to the school's programme for personal, social and health education. Arrangements for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory and include tests at the end of each unit of work. The level of work in these tests is checked by the co-ordinator. The subject is integrated well into the life of the school to give the pupils a range of experiences, and to build on their skills, knowledge and understanding. There are good links with literacy, art and design and design and technology. The comparisons drawn between Christian beliefs and practices with the Sikh and Muslim traditions, especially about respect for holy books and the lives of founders and their teachings, support and promote moral values well. The religious education curriculum is enhanced by visitors to the school. There are visits to places of worship such as the local church and displays about a particular religion are organised every year at the local library. There are celebrations of festivals such as Diwali or Eid to give first-hand experience to support pupils' learning. Resources, such as books, artefacts, posters, CD-ROMs and videos, are adequate for pupils' learning.