

INSPECTION REPORT

BRAINTCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cricklewood

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101532

Headteacher: Chris Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr J Donnelly

23637

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd November 2001

Inspection number: 230230

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Warren Road Cricklewood London
Postcode:	NW2 7LL
Telephone number:	(0208) 452 2413
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Sue Bonner
Date of previous inspection:	24 th – 28 th November 1997

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23637	J Donnelly	Registered inspector		Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
9173	S McDermott	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
16773	R Arora	Team inspector	Geography History Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
22058	C Caniff	Team inspector	English Music Religious education	
20832	M Galowalia	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Information and communication technology Equality of opportunity	
18703	C Richardson	Team inspector	Science Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24216	M Roberts	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Art and design	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Braintcroft Primary School caters for pupils aged 3 to 11. The school, which has a 3-form entry and 565 pupils on roll, of whom 300 are boys and 265 are girls, is well above the average size nationally. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below national averages. The area is one of mixed social and economic conditions, reflecting the transient population of North West London. There are 20 children in the Nursery in the morning and another 20 in the afternoon session. There are 500 pupils with English as an additional language (83 per cent), 200 of whom are at the earliest stages of language acquisition, which is very high in comparison to all schools nationally. The main languages spoken at home include Gujarath, Urdu, Punjabi and Arabic. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is high (46.2 per cent). The school is a rich multi-cultural environment with nearly 50 per cent of pupils having a Muslim background. The level of mobility, at 40 per cent, is high and new arrivals are often refugees (103 pupils). There are 145 pupils (24 per cent) with special educational needs which is also above national averages. There were a significant number of supply teachers in the school during the week of the inspection as a result of teacher recruitment difficulties in the area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Braintcroft is an effective school. It meets the needs of all its pupils well. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science despite standards being below average by age 11. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is usually good for the older pupils. Leadership and management are good. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, science and physical education and very good progress in art and design.
- Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- There are very good opportunities for multi-cultural development.
- Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and physical education in both key stages and in literacy and numeracy across the school.
- The links with other local schools are very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is effective.

What could be improved

- The quality of language support and development for ethnic minority pupils in order to raise standards in reading and writing throughout the school.
- The curriculum and teaching for children in the Foundation Stage.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote learning through other subjects of the curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by the governing body to raise standards further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in November 1997. It has made good progress in developing its provision in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, teaching and pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science. Progress against the key issues identified in the last inspection is satisfactory overall. However, the school has made insufficient progress with regard to the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although parents' views of the school are positive there has been insufficient attention to addressing the key issue to improve links with the parents. Progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses on assessment although a few areas still require further development. The school has very recently made good progress in the quality of its monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior management team. The capacity of the school to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	D	B
Mathematics	E	B	C	A
Science	D	B	E	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Children do not make the progress they should in the Reception classes because of unsatisfactory teaching and many do not reach the nationally expected Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception Year. Inspection findings show progress overall for pupils aged six to eleven is good in English, mathematics, science and physical education. In art and design it is very good. Progress in other subjects is satisfactory.

From the well below average attainment in language and literacy skills at the end of the Reception Year, inspection findings showed pupils' progress in English is good by Year 6.

Standards in the 2001 national tests for Year 2 pupils were in line with all schools in writing but well below average in reading. When compared to similar schools nationally writing is well above average and reading below average. Standards by Year 2 have risen in writing since the last inspection reflecting the emphasis the school has placed upon raising standards overall. Standards in the 2001 national tests were below average in English by Year 6 when compared to all schools and above average when compared to similar schools. This is against a background of a very high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language and significant movement of pupils in and out of the school during Key Stage 2.

In mathematics, inspection findings show that seven-year-olds make good progress and learn well in the lessons observed. They start Year 1 with standards that are well below average. By the age of seven, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is close to average. However, not enough pupils attain the higher Level 3. This depresses the pupils' overall attainment to well below the national average. At the age of 11, standards in the National Curriculum tests were in line with national averages and well above average in comparison to similar schools. Many pupils' lack of fluency in English is a barrier to learning and further progress in mathematics.

In science, by the time they are seven, inspection findings show pupils achieve standards that are close to the levels expected nationally in all areas of the subject. Teacher assessments in the national tests in 2001 are also in-line with national expectations. At the age of 11, standards in National Curriculum tests were well below the national average in 2001. In comparison with similar schools nationally, pupils' performance is average. Many achieved the expected standard, but relatively few achieved above expected standards. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group was high. A significant number of pupils joined or left the school between the ages of seven and eleven.

The use of ICT to support learning in the classroom is unsatisfactory.

Pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs make good progress. The school achieved its agreed targets at Year 6 in English and mathematics in 2001. Over the last five years the trend of improvement is above the national average

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to school and are courteous and friendly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in most lessons, around the school and at break times is good. A few pupils in Year 1 have not been prepared successfully in the Reception class for structured whole-class teaching.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between the many different races and religious backgrounds represented among the pupils.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory overall, This is largely due to parents taking their children on extended holidays or religious observance in term time. Too many pupils are late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall.

Teaching across the school for pupils aged six to eleven is satisfactory overall with examples of very good and excellent teaching. It is good in English, mathematics, science and physical education, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory overall and children are not effectively prepared for the next stage of learning. During the week of the inspection there were five supply teachers in classes who did not know the pupils' learning needs well enough for progress to be consistent.

All pupils, whatever their background and culture, are valued and included well in school life. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well included in learning. This is as a result of many teachers being very adept at making sure they teach their lessons effectively. They concentrate closely on new vocabulary and involve all pupils in speaking and listening. Literacy and numeracy are well taught across the school.

Strengths:

- High expectations by teachers leads to good learning of basic skills and facts.
- Well prepared lessons and materials keep pupils on task so they learn at a good rate.
- Good questioning challenges pupils with English as an additional language and extends their thinking as well as checking their understanding.
- Good pace and enthusiasm, which motivates pupils to work with enthusiasm.

Weaknesses:

- Planning for pupils in the Reception classes who are not fully prepared for Year 1.
- Too little time spent at the end of the lesson to celebrate and evaluate pupils learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is a range of interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. There are very good links with the local secondary school which enhance pupils' learning effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision, together with good quality teaching, enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils are fully included in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The additional language support provision of 2.4 teachers contributes little to the achievement of pupils overall. The identification and targeting of pupils to raise standards is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development is good and all cultures in the school are recognised and valued well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and health and safety. The school successfully promotes mutual respect amongst all of its pupils.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The parents have positive views of the school overall. The information parents receive is satisfactory. However, parents are not sufficiently involved in the life of the school and their children's own learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by the headteacher is good. Lines of communication are clear and the new senior management team is now well focussed on raising standards through good quality teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and recognise the need to improve their procedures for monitoring its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is developing its expertise in analysing data to provide information about the progress pupils make and to set targets.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the budget is used well. However, the delegated grant for ethnic minority pupils is not effectively used to the benefit of some pupils with English as an additional language and contributes little overall to the good progress these pupils make.

Accommodation and resources across the school are satisfactory overall, although accommodation in the Foundation stage and Reception class is unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appointment of the new headteacher. Their children enjoy coming to school. Their children are safe and all pupils respect each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of homework set. More information about what their children are learning in Reception class. The cramped accommodation in the Reception class area.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and have included their concerns in the key issues for school improvement with regard to homework, the quality of teaching in the Reception classes and its cramped accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the Nursery class is well below national averages. Children's progress in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and many do not meet the Early Learning Goals expected nationally, so, attainment on entry into Year 1 is also well below average. Progress for pupils aged six to eleven is good in English, mathematics, science and physical education. In art and design it is very good. Pupils' achievement in other subjects is satisfactory.
2. Standards in the national tests at age 11 are below average overall in English.
3. Pupils' standards in English are below the national average throughout the school. The overall progress of most pupils with English as an additional language is good and generally in-line with their peers. They are well supported by some class teachers who use a range of teaching methods to help them cope and develop their language skills in context.
4. In mathematics, 7 year-olds make good progress and achieve well. They start Year 1 with standards that are well below average. By the age of seven, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is close to average. However, not enough pupils attain the higher Level 3. This depresses the pupils' overall attainment to well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is satisfactory. At present, limited competency in English of a very high percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is a barrier to the development of their skills and of their knowledge and understanding of mathematical ideas.
5. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and who learn English as an additional language, achieve well in science. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is below that expected for their age. By the time they are seven, pupils attain standards that are close to the levels expected nationally in all areas of the subject. In the teacher assessments for pupils aged 7 in 2001 performance was slightly below the national average overall. At the age of 11, standards in National Curriculum tests were below the national average in 2001. Many achieved the expected standard, but relatively few achieved above expected standards. There was a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group, some pupils joined the school during the school Year and others left. These factors are reflected in the results but the upward trends in results over the last few Years continued and standards have risen since the last inspection and are above those in similar schools. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve standards close to the national average, but many of the pupils find it difficult to write down their experiments and findings accurately and quickly because of their difficulties with written English. Significant numbers of pupils leave and enter the school between ages 7 and eleven and those who enter are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
6. Pupils' attainment in art and design work is very good and is well above the standard expected nationally at the end of both key stages.
7. In music, religious education, design and technology, history and geography pupils' progress and achievement in both Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory. These outcomes are the result of satisfactory teaching and learning in both key stages and satisfactory range and quality of learning opportunities. ICT standards in designated ICT are sound, but the use of ICT to support learning in the classroom is unsatisfactory.
8. In physical education, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make good progress across the school.
9. It was only possible to observe a limited number of religious education lessons. These observations and work seen show that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are close to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

10. The school is committed to equal opportunities. Pupils' results are analysed by different grouping and the school is aware how different groups are performing. The 2001 results show that fewer girls attain the higher Level 5. Girls are also under-represented in the present Year 5 and 6 top sets. The school does not currently look at the reasons for this and take steps to redress the discrepancy. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests for the period 1998-2000 there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in the school. Both are behind their respective national averages by about the same margin in all the core subjects.
11. The overall quality of support for pupils in the initial stages of English language acquisition is unsatisfactory because of insufficient expertise. Pupils are suitably assessed for their language needs, but the specialised support to meet their needs is insufficient in quality and quantity. Blocks of time are allocated to some classes and not to others. Other pupils on early stages elsewhere in the school are supported as part of the whole class by the classteachers only. This lack of expert support affects adversely pupils' rates of progress. While a few higher attaining pupils pick up sufficient English, for many average pupils, the current rate of progress is limited.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have good attitudes to school and learning. These have been maintained since the previous inspection. Nearly all parents report that their children like coming to school. Pupils arrive happily and look forward to their day in school. The older pupils talked with enthusiasm about the good range of after school clubs on offer. Many participate keenly in art and design, computer and football clubs. Several girls particularly enjoyed singing with the choir in Brent Town Hall.
13. In the majority of lessons seen the pupils had good attitudes to learning. In a very good Year 2 mathematics lesson identifying three dimensional shapes, the pupils were very keen to acquire new knowledge. The large number of pupils with English as an additional language responded very well to the challenge of complicated vocabulary and by the end of the lesson was able to describe tetrahedrons, spheres and square based prisms. Pupils revel in their newly found understanding when teaching is good. In a very thorough Year 4 mathematics lesson the pupils were proud to demonstrate their confidence in doubling 3 digit numbers. In some lessons pupils are impassive and tend to wait to be told what to do, rather than taking the initiative themselves. Their ability to organise and extend their own learning is limited. In the few unsatisfactory lessons seen, pupils' attitudes were often negative. Disorganised teaching with insufficient challenge allowed the pupils to lose heart and easily go off task. Stimulating and interesting activities, such as drafting individual postcards in the Year 2 creative writing lessons, underpin positive attitudes and lead to effective learning.
14. The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are generally quiet and attentive in lessons. Where behaviour is very good, the learning is free from distraction and most effective. However pupils quickly take advantage of temporary teachers who are unsure of the school's policy on the management of behaviour and lessons rapidly become unruly and unproductive. Pupils move about the school sensibly. The behaviour of pupils in assemblies is nearly always good. Outside the large expanse of uninteresting tarmac and the detachment of some of the lunchtime staff sometimes leads to over boisterous behaviour of boys. However the recent introduction of new playground equipment, such as bats, balls and ropes, has improved the outside behaviour. At the last inspection behaviour was judged to be very good. At that time rules were strict and there was close supervision. In the last year the emphasis has been more on self-discipline. Most pupils are responding well and building a good foundation for well established personal development, although a few pupils are still coming to terms with responsibility for their own actions. There were 5 fixed term exclusions in the last year.
15. Relationships are very good. With over 80 per cent of pupils speaking languages other than English, a very high number of pupils on free school meals and many refugees from a wealth of different ethnic backgrounds. The school is truly multiracial and a very good example of effective harmony between different races and faiths. It is very rare to see any instances of bullying, sexism or racism. In lessons and at play pupils collaborate and support each other well. Often pupils help their fellows into the medical room if they have grazed their knees or are feeling unwell. A pupil who arrived late for her mathematics lesson was welcomed by her classmates and quickly helped by them to catch up with identifying different shapes. Pupils have a very friendly and mature approach to welcoming newcomers into the life of the school. Most pupils show very high levels of respect for feelings, values and beliefs of others. In a Year 1 religious education lesson the pupils listened with

interest about the way Hindus pray and decorate their household shrines. In assemblies the pupils are particularly good at reflecting quietly in the time set aside for silent thought.

16. Pupils with English as an additional language have consistently positive attitudes in all lessons. They behave well, listen with interest and are enthusiastic about all learning.
17. The personal responsibility of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are starting to take some responsibility for their own learning and are beginning to understand targets to improve their progress. However still too many pupils are passive, fail to take the initiative and prefer to wait to be told what to do. Most understand the impact of their actions on others. Often they will open doors for adults or help to tidy the room before they leave, but some pupils who misbehave do not realise the disruption that inappropriate behaviour causes to adults and other pupils. The members of the school council are particularly mature and learning very effectively how to be valuable members of the community. Other pupils take on useful jobs around the school, such as monitoring the corridors and taking registers back to the office.
18. The attendance of the pupils is unsatisfactory. The attendance rate has deteriorated since the last inspection, when it was in line with most primary schools. In the last full academic year the attendance levels were below the national average, with a particularly high rate of authorised absence. The main reasons are days off for religious observance and families taking their children out of school for extended holidays to their country of origin. During the week preceding the inspection many Hindu pupils were absent for Divali celebrations. The school clearly reminds parents that long holidays in term time affect their children's achievement and can only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Ultimately the school is sensitive to the different religious and family needs and permits more holidays in term time than most primary schools.
19. To the school's credit, the levels of unauthorised absence are lower than the national average. Many parents are conscientious in letting the school know the reason why their children are off school. The office staff carefully check up when pupils miss school without notification. The unsatisfactory attendance of many pupils is having a detrimental effect on their ability to settle into effective learning and on their progress over time.
20. The punctuality of the pupils is unsatisfactory. Many pupils are brought to school up to half an hour after the start of the day. Often the time allocated for registration or story time is lax, does not start purposefully at 8.50am or 9.00am and gives an insufficiently clear message to parents about the need for a prompt arrival. Lateness disrupts the learning for the other pupils, upsets the teaching and is embarrassing for the pupil concerned.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, it ranges from unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage to good for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven.
22. Teaching and learning in English are good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is good, particularly for the development of pupils' writing skills. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of texts to develop pupils' understanding of different styles of writing. A consistent feature of planning for literacy is the clear identification of what pupils are expected to learn. Work builds on previous learning and the demands are mostly appropriate and take account of the differing needs of pupils. There is, however, too little additional adult support available for pupils who are at the earlier stages of speaking English as an additional language. Teachers carefully explain vocabulary and ensure that pupils understand and learn effectively, enabling them to take a full part in the lesson. This has a positive effect on their learning, which is good. The teaching of reading is satisfactory. However, the targets set for pupils in some classes, particularly in Key Stage 2, are not precise enough to help pupils know what they need to do in order to improve their skills.
23. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good throughout the school. Teaching is less effective in a few lessons in both key stages. Occasionally, the language used does not take account of the needs of all pupils. For example, use of "row, line, column and lots" caused confusion. Consequently pupils were unsure what to do.

24. The quality of teaching in science is consistently good and sometimes very good. Some very good features of teaching are evident in lessons. Teachers use a wide range of interesting resources to ensure that pupils are purposefully involved in a range of practical activities. They take care to ensure that clear explanations are given to pupils so that they can have success with the practical tasks and learn from each other. The practical work develops pupils' social skills and understanding of taking turns very effectively.
25. Teaching in history and geography and in the designated ICT suite is always satisfactory and sometimes good. In physical education, the teaching is good across the school and in art, teaching overall is very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. This helps them to make good progress.
26. Class teachers support most pupils with English as an additional language within classrooms, but they are not sufficiently guided by the expertise in the field and some do not specifically plan for pupils with English as an additional language. Teachers' regard to pupils' stages of learning English is limited. They are not fully aware of the full range of language needs of the identified pupils and therefore do not plan effectively with clear learning objectives and well matched tasks, or make good use of interesting and appropriate resources for young learners. However, they provide good general support and pupils' responses are suitably supported and extended. The teachers funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) have resources such as story props and tapes in different languages, but these are not readily available or used effectively in the classrooms. A block of time to each class is often used in giving general support rather than more specific, quality and well-planned support to targeted individuals. The quality of teaching of EMAG teachers as judged in lessons where more focused support was given, is mainly sound. EMAG teachers do not effectively keep their own records of pupils' progress. They work in partnership with the classteachers, but often this work is not effectively planned to benefit pupils' learning of English. Pupils in such lessons learn on an adhoc basis. This was noted in some literacy sessions. Pupils' home languages within the whole school are generally well supported.
27. Most teachers have a good subject knowledge particularly in English and mathematics. In a shared reading session of "Goldilocks and the three Bears" for Year 2 the teacher demonstrated good awareness of phonics and grammatical knowledge to challenge and extend pupils' thinking and learning.
28. In a Year 5 netball lesson, a good variety of teaching methods ranging from small group work to a large competitive game challenged and extended pupils' concentration. They worked hard physically and demonstrated their learning to their peers confidently.
29. Most teachers maintain a good pace and all pupils are well prepared for the tasks set. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, the enthusiasm of the teacher and her high expectations of learning stimulated the pupils who recalled the key facts of the "Great Fire of London" with confidence and showed considerable interest in the subject.
30. At the end of lessons, learning is generally assessed well; in a Year 6 science lesson, pupils' knowledge and understanding about the dispersal of seeds was very well celebrated using the objectives of the lesson as the catalyst for pupils' response.
31. Where the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers' subject knowledge was insecure. Supply teachers did not always know pupils' learning needs and the set work was unsuitable so that pupils did not learn effectively.

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

32. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is unsatisfactory. The work of the Nursery is not built upon in a sufficiently structured way and, together with the unsatisfactory teaching in the Reception classes, this results in the children being ill-prepared for the next stage of learning.
33. The curriculum for pupils aged six to eleven is satisfactory overall. It reflects the school's aims well and makes a valuable contribution to the learning of its pupils. The National Curriculum is taught in an interesting way and pupils achieve well in all subjects aged six to eleven. Teachers make good use of nationally recommended guidelines in some subjects for example, science and art and design. However, there are a few weaknesses:
- Some aspects of the curriculum are not taught in appropriate depth and detail to ensure that pupils develop their understanding in a systematic way: and
 - The school has appropriately placed additional emphasis on literacy but there are times when some classes have days with too great a focus on literacy.
34. A total review of the curriculum is planned for next term and it is hoped this will provide an opportunity to ensure that there is a good balance of all subjects across the timetable. Teachers plan some purposeful links between subjects, for instance history, art and design, science and English. Since the last inspection there have been improvements to the curriculum in that the national programmes for literacy and numeracy have been fully implemented and developed effectively. The school meets statutory requirements with regard to the National Curriculum, the teaching of religious education according to the locally agreed guidelines and the arrangements for collective worship.
35. Since the school was last inspected the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and is now good. Pupils are treated as individuals and because teachers and support staff know their pupils well, they make sure that their individual needs are met. The caring and supportive atmosphere in the school helps pupils to make progress in lessons and in specific groups. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all aspects of the school's life. They receive specific support in many literacy and numeracy lessons, but there are occasions when pupils do not make the progress they should because they have no additional support. Special needs teachers prepare carefully planned programmes to support pupils in Years 5 and 6 to ensure that they take part in literacy and numeracy lessons with their class with confidence and greater understanding of their task. Teachers are involved in the preparation and review of individual education plans. There are appropriate and challenging activities for higher attaining pupils in numeracy, literacy and science. A small number of pupils have been identified as having particular talents in numeracy, literacy and science. They have individual education plans to ensure that teachers take their needs into account when planning lessons and have opportunities to join in additional activities with the technology college and specific clubs.
36. Opportunities are provided for pupils with English as an additional language to participate in all curriculum related tasks. The planned activities, the quality of support and teacher interventions ensures equality of access to the curriculum. The language demands of the curriculum are analysed to develop appropriate subject related vocabulary to support learning further.
37. Individual needs including special needs are adequately met. A clear distinction is made between pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of pupils with English as an additional language needs in all school activities. The 90 pupils on the special educational needs register are also on the register of those with English as an additional language.
38. The provision for activities such as clubs, both at lunchtimes and after school, has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Good use is made of visits and visitors into the school to enrich pupils' learning.
39. Satisfactory provision is made for personal, social and health education, based on the recently introduced guidelines used throughout the school. The School Council has made a good start and is a good introduction to pupils understanding of 'Citizenship'. Sex education and drugs awareness

are taught as part of the science curriculum. The school has introduced valuable opportunities for pupils to consider many difficult issues, such as their fears and friendships, at special times during the week when they sit quietly in a circle to discuss them.

40. There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the secondary schools. Curricular links with secondary schools, especially the Technology College, are very good and a strength of the curriculum. There are summer schools, after school and weekend activities and opportunities for teachers from Braintcroft to meet with pupils who have moved into Year 7 in their first term at the new school. Pupils and staff are benefiting from these increased contacts, which have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Links with the community are satisfactory and include contact with representatives of religious groups.
41. A strength of the curriculum is the good provision it makes for pupils' personal development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the cultural elements were less well developed and provision was only satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual development is good and it is well developed through assemblies, religious education and many other lessons. Opportunities to reflect are provided in assemblies. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were asked to 'pause for thought' and think about the message of the Dalai Lama as they listened to the very spiritual music of the Buddhist Chant. This led to a very reverent silence. In art and design and in science there are planned opportunities for pupils to wonder at the beauty and mystery of the world. Pupils wrote of their feelings and reaction to the terrorist attacks in America very movingly and showed a good insight into the feelings of the families involved in the events of the Jarrow Crusade during their history lessons.
42. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and are frequently encouraged to think about how their actions affect others. There is a clear code of behaviour in classes and throughout the school. It is used effectively to promote moral and social development, which is also good. Relationships in the school are good and provide pupils with positive examples on which to model their own social behaviour. Pupils work co-operatively, sharing ideas and supporting each other as needed. They are given opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school by undertaking responsibilities. Members of the School Council take their responsibilities very seriously.
43. Pupils' cultural development is good. They are given regular opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures through visits to places of interest and through people who come in especially to share their own experiences and knowledge. Pupils experience a wide range of music from around the world in assemblies each week. The religious education curriculum, art and design and music all offer good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. This results in high quality, lively displays around the school and provides opportunities for pupils to celebrate the multi-faith nature of the school and enhance their understanding of other religions through the history of the locality and their own cultural heritage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school has improved its procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection. The results of all standardised tests in Key Stage 2 and the end of key stage national tests in both key stages are analysed against gender, ethnicity and English as an additional language. This enables the school to track pupils' progress from year to year. The school uses this information to identify individuals and groups of pupils who are likely to benefit from focused support. This analysis informs the setting arrangements in mathematics.
45. The school has appropriate and effective procedures for ensuring the practical welfare and safety of the pupils. The site is safe and secure. The site manager has many years of experience and does all that is necessary to keep the building satisfactorily maintained and free from hazards. The governors and staff responsible for health and safety are vigilant and ensure risk assessments are carried out routinely. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory, as they were at the last inspection. The deputy headteacher, the nominated person for child protection, has had effective recent training, but there has not been sufficient specific updating for all the staff on current child protection procedures. Although the old policy needs reviewing, in practice staff know what to do if they are suspicious about child abuse. The school has very good procedures for ensuring that the medical needs of the pupils are met. The welfare staff run a very well organised, bright and

comforting medical room. Meticulous records are kept of minor accidents, medicines administered and clothes lent to pupils. The welfare staff liaise very effectively with the school nurse for the benefit of the pupils. If staff or parents have concerns they need only leave a note in the school nurse's "in tray" in the medical room. The arrangements for welfare and care have improved greatly since the last inspection.

46. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and improve attendance. Registers are completed carefully each morning and afternoon and meet all legal requirements. The registration system is not computerised so detailed analysis of attendance trends is difficult to carry out, but the office staff and deputy headteacher are careful to note and follow up any absence or punctuality concerns. The headteacher regularly reminds parents that long holidays in term time are detrimental to their children's learning. He looks at every application for term time holidays with the family's needs in mind, but is aware that extended leave in school time is a growing problem for the school. The prospectus and letters home to parents emphasise the need for regular attendance, but as yet there is no system to reward individuals or classes for good attendance. Good attendance and its benefits are not sufficiently stressed to pupils.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting appropriate behaviour are good. Since the headteacher arrived the management of behaviour is now more effectively embedded in self-discipline. The prospectus states that there are no detailed lists of rules and the old system of house points is gradually being phased out. Pupils are encouraged to behave in a responsible and sensible way. Each class has created its own code of conduct, which, in the best lessons, is referred to very effectively. However, some supply and new teachers are not sufficiently briefed on expectations or given a simple framework on which to base consistent and effective behaviour management. The supervision of the pupils at break and lunchtimes is satisfactory and has been enhanced with the introduction of exciting playground games. The lunchtime staff cope satisfactorily, but have had no training in behaviour management and tend to be insufficiently involved in providing playground activities. The school has good systems to deal with any instances of bullying or other harassment, based firmly on self-discipline and the ethos of harmonious relationships in the school.
48. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The school is working well to develop each pupil as an individual responsible for his or her own actions and achievement. Pupils are encouraged to share in lessons and at playtimes. The school is positively promoting self-esteem in the pupils. The weekly assembly to share good work is generally effective in celebrating achievement, particularly when the pupils proudly describe their work to their fellow pupils. However, the effect is diluted when some classes do not participate and the teachers are not present. There has been some very good preliminary work in introducing personal, social and health education. A well produced leaflet on "circle time" underpins the development of an understanding of self, others and a sense of community. The school council is providing a very good introduction to citizenship. However, the systems for recording and monitoring how the pupils are progressing in their personal development are insufficiently well established. This is particularly important in a large school with many temporary staff. There are no definite times allocated for teaching personal, social and health education, so teachers find it difficult to slot it in during the week. End of year reports are satisfactory overall.
49. Assessment is satisfactory overall and is a focus for development in the school development plan. There are clear and useful formal 'whole school' procedures for monitoring the attainment and progress of all pupils. Tracking progress of the identified pupils with English as an additional language is not fully developed. Guidelines in place for assessments of language needs are effective.
50. Pastoral care is a high priority within the school and the success can be observed in the confident way pupils become happy members of the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents have positive views of the school and appreciate the support and education it gives to their children. Many feel that the school has improved much in the last year. They particularly like the ease with which they can approach the school, the high standards of behaviour, the care and personal development of their children and the good teaching. Some parents were keen to point out

that the assemblies and productions promoted self-esteem very effectively. The inspection team agrees with these favourable opinions of the school.

52. A few parents are worried that they are not well enough informed, feel that the range of extra-curricular activities is limited and are unhappy with homework. At the meeting several parents expressed concern about the standards and teaching in the Foundation Stage. The inspection team judges that the variety and number of clubs at lunch-time and after school are good. The team agrees with parents that homework is inconsistently set and does not sufficiently support learning. Inspectors agree with parents that the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
53. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. The headteacher sends out informative letters as and when needed. Useful notice boards outside and inside the building let parents know about forthcoming events. Translation is organised from amongst the staff, the pupils and other parents. Parents are kept satisfactorily informed about the curriculum. They are invited to a general meeting at the beginning of each year, when the teachers from each year group explain what is going to be covered in the forthcoming year. However there has only been one recent curriculum meeting, when the numeracy strategy was explained and written overviews of topics for those parents who cannot attend the meetings are irregular. Parents new to the education system are introduced satisfactorily through Nursery and Reception class meetings. End of year reports are clearly written and give a good general summary of progress.
54. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is unsatisfactory. Very few parents volunteer to help in the school, the completion of home reading records is unsatisfactory and there is insufficient support for other homework. Many parents take their children for extended holidays during term time and poor punctuality detracts from effective learning. However, the recent inauguration of the Friends of Braintcroft has got off to a good start with a successful International Evening, which attracted a good number of parents for a social event. Most parents attend the individual parent-teacher meetings and a satisfactory number returned questionnaires for the recent survey on the school improvement plan. However, parents are not sufficiently included in their child's education because the school is not clear and consistent in its routines for homework, does not give enough curriculum information such as reading strategies nor adequately include parents in sharing the targets for their children's improvement. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and their children's learning remains unsatisfactory as it was at the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The quality of leadership and management is good.
56. The recently appointed headteacher has been in post nearly four terms and has a very good vision for the development of the school, which is shared by the governing body and key staff in the school. The newly re-formed senior management team is clearly focused on raising standards further through the continued improvement in teaching and learning. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school as a result of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the setting of targets to improve learning further for pupils. It is too early to judge the impact of the newly formed phase co-ordinators on pupils' learning but clear lines of communication are in place. The headteacher has recently completed the school's first development plan, following full consultation with all staff and governors and it is of a good quality. The governors are aware of the need to improve their procedures for monitoring the work of the school with a clear emphasis on raising standards through a focus on evaluating the outcomes for pupils. The capacity of the school to improve further is now good.
57. The governors and senior managers work well together to prepare financial plans and identified educational priorities are funded appropriately. All actions in the school development plan are costed and effective monitoring procedures are in place. The administrative staff are conscientious and efficient, providing a good standard of day-to-day administration and control of the school budget. The systems in place for ensuring value for money, when purchasing goods, are secure. The value principles of comparison, consultation and competition are applied satisfactorily in the management and use of resources. Specific grants are monitored effectively to ensure that they are allocated and spent effectively to improve pupils' learning and for the designated purpose. For

example, the money allocated to support pupils with special educational needs is used well. The spending of the money allocated to support the learning of English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. However, following the audit for the school improvement plan, the school is to reorganise the staffing arrangements to allocate more support for pupils within the earlier stages of learning English (Stage 2). The school currently makes satisfactory use of new technology for financial management, pupils' records and administration. Further developments, including the use of an assessment manager and the writing of individual education plans, are under discussion. The school provides good value for money.

58. Staffing levels are satisfactory. There are sufficient qualified teaching staff, with a suitable range of teaching experience to properly support the needs of all pupils in the school, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs. There have been some recent difficulties in recruiting curriculum co-ordinators and some supply teachers are filling posts temporarily. The relatively few learning support staff work closely with class teachers and are effectively deployed. They make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The quality and range of accommodation is satisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum for pupils aged six to eleven but unsatisfactory for children in the Reception classes. It has been improved since the last inspection, with newly surfaced playgrounds and refurbished temporary classrooms. The classrooms for the Reception classes are very cramped. A specialist computer room is provided and the library is attractive and well resourced. The school provides a generally clean and safe environment in which learning can take place; however children track a lot of mud into both the Nursery and Reception classes because of the poor state of the adjoining outdoor flower beds and inadequate drainage. Teachers make good use of the accommodation with displays in classrooms and public areas. Resources for all subjects are satisfactory except the provision for physical development and computers in the Foundation Stage classes.
59. The EMTAG co-ordinator is well experienced and has provided school-based training to the rest of the teaching staff as well as the support staff in order to equip teachers to provide specific support for pupils with English as an additional language in the lessons. There is an appropriate action plan as part of the school's improvement plan.
60. Levels of support for English as an additional language are currently unsatisfactory. The way in which individual learning needs are identified is unsatisfactory and, as a result, support is not always targeted in the appropriate direction, particularly for the underachieving (middle-band, Stage 2). The school has yet to apply a rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of its provision for these pupils. The school recognises the need for all staff to train in effective strategies to teach those pupils with English as an additional language and for all teachers to plan systematically to meet individual and group needs, when specialist support is not available. The level of support, the organisation, monitoring and evaluation of the provision funded through the EMTAG is unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards further the headteacher, governing body and senior management team should:

- i. Raise standards in the Foundation Stage by: implementing government guidelines (the Foundation Stage curriculum) for children aged three to six by:
- Agreeing an early Years policy which balances the approach to teaching and learning ensuring there is a greater proportion of teacher-led activity;
 - Developing planning across the Foundation Stage to build step-by-step progress so children reach the appropriate level by the end of the stage;
 - Establishing structured and effective systems in Reception classes so time is used efficiently for learning;
 - Providing a balanced timetable for Reception classes which includes the use of the school library, computers and hall;
 - Making sure assessments identify strengths and weaknesses in children's attainment and target appropriate development for all children in all six areas of learning;
 - Involving parents more in their children's learning;
 - Encouraging staff to visit centres of excellence for the teaching of Foundation Stage; and
 - Improving resources and accommodation to ensure full entitlement to the six areas of learning in the Reception class.

(Paragraph: 58)

- ii. Improve the level of support to pupils through the grant for pupils who have English as an additional language by:
- More closely targeting pupils and evaluating their achievements, particularly the middle band Stage 2;
 - Assessing pupils' needs and progress more effectively;
 - Providing opportunities for further training for all teachers in effective strategies to teach pupils with English as an additional language to meet individual and group needs when specialist support is not available.
 - Developing a more structured approach to reading that is applied across the school.

(Paragraph: 60)

- iii. Extend the use of ICT in the classroom by:
- Ensuring teachers' planning is more focused;
 - Sufficient hardware is available to support learning;
 - Improving teachers' knowledge of ICT software.

(Paragraphs: 93, 103, 111, 128, 150)

- iv. Improve the quality of evaluation and monitoring by the governing body through a clear focus on raising standards and outcomes for all pupils (paragraph 56).

MINOR ISSUES:

Improve attendance by:

Decreasing the number of parents taking pupils on extended holidays in term time to reflect national averages.

(Paragraph 18)

Include parents more in the life of the school and in their contribution to their children's learning, particularly regarding homework.

(Paragraph 54)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	30	11	6	0	0
Percentage	5	17	50	18	10	0	0

Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point..

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	38	658
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		230

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		31
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		139

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	450

Pupil mobility in the last school Year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	40
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final Year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting Year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	36	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	22	25
	Girls	28	30	29
	Total	45	52	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (78)	84 (76)	87
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	22	22
	Girls	29	28	31
	Total	51	52	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (79)	84 (81)	85
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final Year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting Year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	44	45	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	33	39
	Girls	30	32	33
	Total	61	65	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (64)	74 (80)	81
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	34	39
	Girls	30	33	33
	Total	61	67	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (61)	75 (81)	81
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	66
Black – African heritage	73
Black – other	13
Indian	130
Pakistani	116
Bangladeshi	30
Chinese	0
White	66
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school Year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	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: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	25
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	324

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial Year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	1,524,149
Total expenditure	1,469,222
Expenditure per pupil	2 379
Balance brought forward from previous year	173,504
Balance carried forward to next year	228,431

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two Years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two Years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	603
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	41	4	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	28	4	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	27	12	6	3
The teaching is good.	65	27	3	3	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	28	10	6	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	28	7	6	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	21	4	3	4
The school works closely with parents.	55	30	6	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	56	31	5	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	33	3	3	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	32	9	5	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. The children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below what is expected for their age. They make good gains, from their starting point, in their personal social and emotional development, language and creative development. They do not make the progress they should in literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Mathematical achievement is generally satisfactory. Overall by the time they enter the Reception classes standards are still below expectations. During the Reception classes children's language skills and personal skills continue to develop but at a slower pace and in all other curriculum areas, except creative development, they make unsatisfactory progress. Consequently, by the end of the Reception classes pupils development overall is still well below what is expected nationally and they have not reached all of the Early Learning Goals.
62. Teaching in the Nursery is satisfactory overall with some good features such as the small group work and creative activities led by the Nursery nurse, whose storytelling sessions are also of a high standard. All staff are very good at helping children, the majority of whom are not fluent in English, to become confident in the in the setting and to try various activities. The staff effectively help children develop their language skills, including counting. Activities are planned to cover all six areas of the curriculum. However, these plans are insufficiently detailed to show exactly what learning is expected. Also not enough checks are conducted to see that all children are involved in a sufficient range of activities to ensure their learning is fully stretched in all six areas of the curriculum. Too much time is allowed when children are undirected and are expected to be learning through play. Only singing and story time are teacher directed. This limited approach to direct teaching is not in line with current national guidance, which expects a balance with some activities being teacher lead throughout the sessions and others promoting learning through play. The current approach does not ensure that the children learn enough about early literacy or the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. Physical development is not fully promoted due to a lack of resources. Consequently, while children make good progress in their social skills and language development, they make slower progress in other areas of learning. Some reach the appropriate stepping stones (stages) towards the Early Learning Goals but overall achievement is not as high as it could be.
63. In the Reception classes over half the teaching seen was unsatisfactory. Children do not maintain the social skills they have gained in the Nursery because teachers have not established sufficient orderly routines to ensure that all children feel secure and comfortable. The days are not well planned. The current timetable does not make use of the many facilities the school has to offer. Plans are very broad with one overall theme lasting a whole term. The theme is not sufficiently planned into discrete weekly sections to provide a clear focus for the teaching.
64. Too often the children are given long periods of 'free choice' and expected to learn through play. They are unsettled and unfocused in their learning. Small groups, working with the teacher, make progress and enjoy the activity but others are less well engaged and occasionally take out their frustrations on each other. Both the morning and afternoon sessions have far too much child-led activity and insufficient teacher-directed learning. Also because of the limited number of planned themes, the material that can be included is limited. Consequently the six learning areas are not covered in sufficient depth or in an orderly manner. Too few children will reach the Early Learning Goals set for children to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage.
65. Teaching is stronger in developing children's language skills with all staff interacting and extending speaking skills. Even in this work pupils can be unsettled and they sometimes fail to listen to each other as well as is expected in Reception classes. The leadership by the co-ordinator of the Reception team is unsatisfactory as the planning and methods used by the leader are not diverse enough to teach the curriculum effectively or guide the other teachers.
66. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, assessments are systematically recorded and children with notably weak areas or special needs are targeted for improvement. Children with special needs are satisfactorily supported. However, the current system fails to fully evaluate each child's areas for development and many children have no targets set for them. Assessment is not

used sufficiently to feed information about individual progress forward into subsequent planned activities, thus ensuring progress. In the Nursery daily evaluations are conducted, but because there are insufficiently clear learning intentions outlined, these evaluations fail to promote learning sufficiently.

67. The leadership and management of the early years by the Phase Co-ordinator is unsatisfactory. The Early Years policy is still in draft form and is incomplete; consequently it has not been through senior management or the governors for approval. Only limited progress has been made since the last inspection on the key issues identified then. The curriculum has been linked to the Early Learning Goals and assessment has been introduced. However, training has not kept up with the developments in Early Years practice. Teachers in this school have not been made sufficiently aware of current practice in other schools. Entrenched views, regarding methods of teaching, have not been sufficiently re-evaluated through for example, sending staff on appropriate training or to visit identified centres of excellence for the Early Years.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. By the end of the Foundation Stage children have begun to meet some aspects of the Early Learning Goals in this area and overall standards are satisfactory. Teaching in this area is satisfactory; their relationships with other children and the adults are mostly good. They are able to co-operate together in small groups sharing the resources amicably, but in whole class situations they are not willing to wait their turn. Children know the difference between right and wrong but are too often unclear about what is expected of them in the Reception classes. In the Nursery these expectations are clearer and children know for example not to run indoors and to be quiet and sit sensibly in story time. There are no positive reward systems in the Reception classes so that when they have done something well, such as coming in from lunch, they are not rewarded or praised for their good behaviour. Children are mostly considerate to each other and are concerned when someone is upset or unwell.
69. Children are developing their independence and use the toilet and cloakroom facilities themselves; they change fairly independently for physical education in the hall in the Reception class and put on aprons in the Nursery. Some are inclined to be over reliant on staff. Children show unsatisfactory levels of concentration and try tasks with varying degrees of application. Those who learn quickly are restless while waiting for the others in the Reception classes and too few challenging expectations are set for them.
70. Children in the Nursery are well managed by the teacher. In the Reception classes children like to help with classroom jobs, like passing out the milk and this helps build their self-confidence and overall self-esteem. Children develop a sense of belonging to a community in the Nursery but this is less evident in the Reception classes as they do not use all the school facilities.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Few children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of the Foundation Stage and overall standards are unsatisfactory. This is partly because of the high number of pupils who are just starting to learn English. Most know how to use books appropriately; they are able to turn the pages correctly to find the beginning and the end of a book. Some are able to use the pictures to discuss what the book is likely to be about but others still lack enough vocabulary or supported practice to do this. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Children in the Nursery are not encouraged sufficiently to share books on a one-to-one basis or in very small groups in the book corner with staff. They can, however, follow a simple story when divided into two groups at the end of the morning. Overall they show limited interest in books. Children do not develop a good enough understanding of the letters and sounds in the Nursery. They are able to write marks but have too few examples and prompts around the room to foster their interest in forming letters. Only one or two higher achievers do so.
72. In the Reception classes few children can copy simple words with letters that are clear and fewer than expected can write their names. Those with higher achievement are not well enough supported, for example, to begin reading a variety of simple books. They talk about their experiences with simple statements and have limited negotiating skills. The support staff try to help them to develop these through for example, getting them to arrange to take turns riding the bikes. They have generally weak listening skills but show a willingness to listen with interest when

other children are talking about the things they have done and made. The children are able to participate in a limited way in role-play, such as the fruit shop currently set up for them, but they are too often distracted by the generally unsettled atmosphere in the rooms.

Mathematical development

73. In the Nursery pupils have opportunities to learn to count to ten and they sing a variety of songs to help them learn the number words. They play with numerals to five and match them to objects. There are shapes for them to play with and some play games with a mathematical element, such as riding a bike three times around the circle. Equipment such as cotton reels and blocks is used for counting and sorting. In their creative work they make patterns. They have little incentive to learn to write any numerals. Water play includes investigating ideas about the relative volume of containers. They make satisfactory progress on the mathematical stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals.
74. However, by the end of Reception too few children have sustained this progress and most will not reach the Early Learning Goals. Teaching and standards are unsatisfactory overall. Higher attaining children are insufficiently challenged. Most children can count to 20 and backwards from ten. Children have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and most can name them accurately. They explore mathematical concepts such as 'longer' and 'shorter' in play activities and are able to describe the position of items in relation to each other in very simple terms. Counting is well promoted by everyday tasks such as establishing how many children are present. However, lessons are not carefully planned around the Early Learning Goals to ensure children are presented with a wide range of equipment and teacher-directed activities to give them practice in all aspects of mathematics. In play they do, for example, count items they make with dough and explore ideas of volume in the water and sand trays. However, they are not grouped according to prior attainment and the potentially higher attaining children are not fully stretched in practical activities, as the staff do not ask sufficiently challenging questions. Good assistance is given to those with special needs or who learn more slowly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area and standards and teaching overall are unsatisfactory. They have too few opportunities to learn about the area in which they live. They are aware of events in their families and talk about these informally with staff. They remember school events like the visit of the helicopter. The organisation of the day helps them develop some sense of the passage of time. Children have no access to any computers or electronically controlled toys. They learn to control the tape recorder in the listening centres. Construction toys are well used and children are proud of what they make, such as the dinosaur museum made in one Reception class. Children have grown cress and made sandwiches with it. They were also involved in both the Nursery and the Reception classes with cutting up and looking at fruit and vegetables. However, there is too little difference in the work in the Nursery and Reception classes. Topics and tasks are repeated and this does not develop the children's knowledge, especially those who are capable of high attainments. The staff use role-play and creative work to reinforce children's learning in this area, with for example a 'fruit shop' but again the props and staff interaction are not challenging the children to their full potential. Play in the Reception classes is at a similar standard to that in the Nursery or on some occasions a lower one due to the unsettled atmosphere in the classrooms and the lack of good staff interaction in it.

Physical development

76. Most children's physical development is at the expected level in ordinary daily activity but too little equipment is available to offer suitable challenges in climbing and balancing. Children are likely to achieve some but not all of the Early Learning Goals set in this area and standards and teaching are unsatisfactory. Children show an awareness of space and move around their classroom and outdoor area appropriately despite the cramped conditions in the Reception classes. When the Reception children work in the hall they avoid bumping into each other and learn to co-operate in movements like controlling the parachute.
77. On the bikes in both the Nursery and the Reception classes they pedal with confidence. Fine motor skills are generally well developed by the wide range of tools and malleable materials

provided for the children to use. They are confident and independent in their use of tools like glue spreaders in a range of other things including pencils.

Creative development

78. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area except in music. There are plenty of opportunities for children to paint and to make items, such as the model cars. They are shown how to use a variety of techniques and textures in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Toys that promote imaginative and creative play are available in the Reception room but not outdoors. The Nursery is well equipped indoors and outside for such play. In art and design activities staff give children plenty of opportunity to practise their independent gluing and making skills. Children have undertaken good three-dimensional projects and their work is effectively displayed in the classrooms. There are good opportunities for children to freely develop their imagination through 'small world play' and their creative expression through a free choice of art materials and activities. They are quite independent at selecting these, even in the Nursery. Children are also confident and independent in their use of tools like glue spreaders.
79. There are too few teacher led music times. Music is not given enough focused attention but pupils have access to a variety of instruments to play with and explore making sounds. Some are willing to perform solo songs and all enjoy music tapes and singing.

ENGLISH

80. Standards are below average for pupils in Year 6 as they were when the school was previously inspected. From the very low attainment when pupils enter Year 1, their progress is good over time by Year 6 as many move from the early stages of language acquisition to a more competent level.
81. From the well below average attainment in language and literacy skills at the end of the Reception Year, inspection findings showed pupils' progress in English is good by Year 6.
82. Standards in the 2001 national tests for Year 2 pupils were in line with all schools in writing but well below average in reading. When compared to similar schools nationally, writing is well above average and reading below average. Standards by Year 2 have risen in writing since the last inspection reflecting the emphasis the school has placed upon raising standards overall. Standards in the 2001 national tests were below average in English by Year 6 when compared to all schools but above average when compared to similar schools. This is against a background of a very high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language and significant movement of pupils in and out of the school during Key Stage 2.
83. By the time pupils leave the school standards are below average because there are weaknesses in their reading and speaking and listening. Standards in writing are above average by Year 6 and there has been real positive change in the number of pupils attaining the expected levels and above. Whilst there is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys, girls do not do so well in comparison with girls nationally.
84. The teaching of English is good and contributes to the better standards in writing since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The focus of many lessons was on exploring different styles of writing. The school has built into the timetable extra time for reading. However, the reading targets for many older pupils do not provide the necessary information to help them improve their work.
85. Over 80 per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language. They make satisfactory progress in their learning of English, but their attainment is not as advanced as it might be by Year 6. This is because there is too little support available from specialist teachers or from learning support assistants. Lack of fluency impacts on pupils' speaking skills, particularly at Key Stage 2 where language demands are greater. The majority of pupils speak clearly but lower attaining pupils find it more difficult to put across their thoughts and ideas coherently. However, teaching in both key stages provides good opportunities for pupils to talk and share ideas. Teachers adapt their use of language and soundly extend pupils' vocabulary in lessons. They carefully explain unfamiliar vocabulary in English lessons and develop their awareness of the language of different

subjects in others, such as mathematics. Pupils' listening skills in both key stages are good because they listen well during whole class discussions. Although they are often slow to respond to questions, pupils are willing to have a go. Their answers are not always extensive, but generally they show a clear understanding of what they hear. Sometimes teachers use pupils' answers to good effect by modelling the response into a well-structured sentence. When pupils are reluctant to answer questions or make a verbal contribution to lessons, teachers overcome this by asking focused questions. This is effective in getting pupils of differing attainment to take an active part and ensuring that all pupils are involved. Teachers' supportive approach helps to build their confidence and this leads to effective learning.

86. Children in the Foundation Stage are not adequately prepared for work in Key Stage 1 and this has a significant impact on standards in reading at the end of Year 2. Insufficient opportunities to learn and practise initial letter sounds or simple phonic and sound patterns results in attainment that is well below average at the start of Year 1. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because teachers use opportunities for group reading well and this is linked well into specific and achievable reading targets, for example knowing three words consistently. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the learning of letter sounds and how to read unfamiliar words and this leads higher attaining pupils to become confident readers. They tackle texts independently and retell the story in detail, expressing their own opinions about major events and ideas. Average and lower attaining pupils use picture clues and their developing knowledge and understanding of individual letter sounds to attempt words that they are not sure of. Some are beginning to notice familiar patterns within a word, for example 'rain' within the word 'train'. During shared text sessions, pupils enjoy reading aloud with the teacher. In Year 2 they follow the teacher's example and begin to use expression, speaking louder when they notice the type size increasing.
87. Teachers offer pupils a good number of opportunities to improve and extend their reading in library periods, reading as part of the literacy hour and whole class guided reading sessions in Key Stage 2. Although pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their reading in relation to prior attainment, the structured approach to the teaching of reading is not carried out consistently throughout Key Stage 2. Reading is regularly assessed, but teachers do not keep good enough track of pupils' progress. For example, pupils' targets are not precise enough to help them know what they need to do in order to improve. By Year 6, most are reasonably competent, but lack a broad vocabulary and expression to be wholly efficient. Pupils are taught strategies such as breaking down new words into syllables, but less able pupils are more hesitant when trying to use this strategy and are not always aware of their errors. Most pupils follow the meaning in a text and say what it is about and describe characters and events with varying degrees of detail. Higher attaining pupils are more confident in responding to questions that call for an understanding that goes beyond the literal meaning of the text, for example they make sensible deductions from the story and use the text to explain their personal preference for an author. Teachers encourage pupils to develop good reading habits and pupils choose books to read at home. However, there is no established system of recording frequency of reading and progress to ensure that pupils get the practice they need, for example through the use of reading diaries. Pupils know how to use the library to locate information books and how to use the contents and index, but they do not have enough opportunities to select from a range of reference books and develop their research skills fully to help them in studying other subjects, such as history.
88. Pupils' achievements in writing are good across the school because teaching is good. Teaching introduces pupils to a wide variety of texts and writers in literacy lessons and this extends pupils' knowledge of different types of writing and ways of expressing ideas through writing. Teaching is strongly focused on developing pupils' understanding of grammar and how different forms of writing are structured. Although many pupils do not have a wide vocabulary, this approach enables them to use their knowledge and understanding more effectively. This has a positive impact on standards in both key stages.
89. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their writing skills during the Foundation Stage and so many are unable to write at the beginning of Year 1. The monitoring of pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers use the information from regular assessment in order to identify what individual pupils can do and to set well-focused targets for the next steps in their learning. By Year 2 the majority of pupils structure their writing properly and express their ideas clearly. The focus on developing pupils' understanding of phonics has a positive impact on spelling. They spell common

words correctly and apply sensible alternatives to more difficult words. However, pupils in Year 6 still make errors in their spelling of everyday words, as some are not secure in their knowledge and understanding of spelling patterns.

90. By Year 6 pupils understand and use different styles of writing, for example poetry writing, writing a diary, scripting a play and sensitive personal response to events such as the terrorist attacks in America on the 11th September. The majority competently communicate information, although the effect of description is sometimes lost through over-use of a string of adjectives based on ideas from class discussions. Teachers introduce pupils to different styles of poetry writing, for example rhyming and acrostic. Pupils respond well and begin to develop an understanding of the pattern in poetry and the effect of using a certain number of syllables in each line of a verse, such as in Haiku. Pupils who are still at the relatively early stages of learning English as an additional language tend to write less, make more errors and use a more limited vocabulary. Teachers set pupils targets for the next stage of their learning but the quality of these varies between classes. Too many are not sufficiently specific to help pupils understand how they can improve the quality and content of their writing.
91. Pupils have many opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum. This provides them with useful practice in applying what they have learned in literacy lessons, for example, how it feels to be involved in the Jarrow march. Whilst assessment is better than it was at the time of the last inspection, sometimes teachers' marking does not provide pupils with the necessary information to help them improve their work. The quality is inconsistent across both key stages, although target setting is better developed in Key Stage 1. The very unsatisfactory support provided for pupils with English as an additional language is even less effective due to lack of specific learning targets. In some whole class sessions, specialist teachers of English as an additional language give pupils too little guidance in order to help them expand phrases to formulate correct statements. However, class teachers have a good understanding of pupils' difficulties. They do their best to help pupils understand and include them through focused questioning. Consequently the majority of these pupils achieve well.
92. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. When pupils work outside the classroom with the special needs co-ordinator, lessons are well matched to pupils' individual education plans and carefully structured to develop their learning in small and manageable steps. Other sessions focus on preparing pupils, at their own level, for the whole class lesson. These sessions are very successful. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and pupils have a clear understanding of what they are to do and learn.
93. ICT is used in literacy lessons but this is not a strong feature of the school's work. Co-ordination of the subject is sound. There are some examples of pupils using the computer to copy work, but little use of it to draft work. Programs that help pupils to practise letter sounds and spellings are not in general use. ICT is used effectively in some sessions for pupils with special educational needs to help them understand how to sequence a story.

MATHEMATICS

94. Standards are average overall by Year 6 and they were well below when the school was previously inspected. Progress since the last inspection is good. Seven-year-olds make good progress and achieve well. They start Year 1 with standards that are well below average. By the age of seven, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is close to average. However, not enough pupils attain the higher Level 3. This depresses the pupils' overall attainment to well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is satisfactory. At present, the limited competency in English of a very high percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is a barrier to the development of their skills and of their knowledge and understanding of mathematical ideas. Mobility of pupils' at this age is also an important contributory factor.
95. During the next four Years, the pupils continue to make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. By the time they reach the age of 11, their standards rise to the national average. These represent above average achievement in comparison with their results when they were at Key Stage 1 and well above average achievement in comparison with similar schools. Pupils' well above average achievement in Key Stage 2 is the result of good teaching and learning and the provision of a good quality curriculum.

Strengths

- Good progress over time.
- Good teaching and learning in Key Stage 2.
- Good arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress
- Good leadership and management of the subject.

Areas for improvement

- The proportion of pupils at higher levels of attainment in Key Stage 1.
- Learning opportunities for girls so that they are equally represented in the top sets in Years 5 and 6.
- Greater use of subject language in the classroom to help pupils learn more effectively.

96. Pupils' attainment at the time of last inspection was broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. It was in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. The results of these pupils in the National Curriculum tests were well below the national average for both Key Stage 1 and 2. The school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved steeply since 1998 when these were well below the national average. These are now in line with the national average. In 2001, the percentage of higher attaining girls was lower than the boys. The present Years 5 and 6 top sets represent a similar picture. The proportion of girls in these sets is significantly smaller than the proportion of boys. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive good provision in Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently they make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs receive good provision in Key Stage 1 and 2 and consequently make good progress.
97. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good as is the overall quality of teaching and learning of mathematics in the school.
98. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematics as a consequence of satisfactory teaching and pupils' good interest and concentration and satisfactory independence when learning. By the age of seven, most pupils count from 0 to 100 and back. The higher attainers count in 100s to 1000. They explain their mental strategies well. For example when adding 11 and 5, "I put 11 in my head and then count on 6." They add one digit number to a two-digit number such as $20+6$ and $15+9$ mentally. They are beginning to understand place values to 100. They use mathematical names for some common two-dimensional shapes such as a rectangle and a triangle and know some of their properties. The higher attainers have a better understanding of geometric shapes. They have started to solve simple problems involving money. Several lower attaining pupils cannot count to 100 and find it difficult to position numbers such as 69 and 90 on a 100 square.
99. Satisfactory learning follows satisfactory teaching in Year 3. Demonstrations are good and explanations are clear. However, planning does not build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding and teachers do not check if the pupils have understood the tasks. As a result, pupils are not clear how to proceed when working independently. Weaknesses in management of pupils also interfere with learning. The standards thus achieved are only just satisfactory. The majority of pupils are just beginning to work out 3×4 in preparation to learn multiplication of table of 3. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs do not know 2 times table beyond 2×3 .
100. Standards in Year 4 are consistent with national expectations. Learning is good as a result of good teaching and pupils good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers' good subject knowledge, use of questioning and explanations provide good intellectual stimulus and help pupils to acquire good skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in a lesson, demonstration of doubling strategies, quick-fire questioning developed mental agility and produced quick responses. Pupils enjoyed the activity. They were able to double 40 and 400. Inviting pupils to demonstrate on the board improved inclusion as pupils became familiar with different strategies and helped them to choose those strategies that work for them. The teacher dealt with pupils' difficulties sensitively which enhanced motivation and confidence. Asking to double numbers such as 29, 92, 206, 843 and 953 challenged higher attainers appropriately. Good management and setting high expectations of attitude and attention led to productive learning. The lesson finished with consolidation of doubling, for example of numbers 42, 94 and 46 and pupils were asked to think about different ways of halving.

101. Teaching is good overall. Standards in Years 5 and 6 reflect national expectations. Pupils' interest, concentration and working independently are good. They work at good pace most of the time. These factors contribute to good achievement and progress. An excellent lesson led to highly productive learning. Mental activity was very stimulating and engaging for all pupils. The teacher made very effective use of a marked stick to develop the idea of negative numbers. Chorus counting, as the teacher moved her finger to different points, developed quick thinking and responses and improved understanding. Rotating the stick from horizontal to vertical position simulated a large thermometer. The strategic use of questioning, for example, which of -5°C or -3°C is colder, increased pupils' understanding of temperature below zero. The activity smoothly moved to teaching/learning of how to read and plot coordinates in all four quadrants. Eventually, pupils were asked to plot co-ordinates such as $(-2, 6)$, $(-7, -7)$, $(5, -2)$ and $(8,5)$. Throughout the lesson, the teacher maintained very high level of interest, challenge and pace. The pupils were aware all the time what the teacher had expected them to learn. The lesson ended with very effective summing up of new learning.
102. Teaching is less effective in a few lessons in both key stages. Occasionally, the language used does not take account of needs of all pupils. For example, use of row, line, column and lots caused confusion. Consequently pupils were unsure what to do. Sometimes lack of clarity about how a certain game should be played, for example, to learn the meaning of "more than" and "less than" caused confusion and led to less productive use of time. In some lessons explanation of the task for the main activity was not followed by checking if all pupils had understood what to do before they were asked to undertake the independent work. This resulted in inefficient use of time. Occasionally, the lesson objectives were not shared clearly. This resulted in pupils not knowing what it was that they were supposed to do or learn and also resulted in ineffective summing up of the lesson.
103. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school significantly exceeded the target set for the end of Key Stage 2. It also exceeded its targets for Key Stage 1. A new scheme of work has been introduced and is providing good range of learning opportunities in Key Stage 2. These opportunities are consistent with the national numeracy strategy. Further work, however, is needed to adapt it for the needs of pupils in Key Stage 1. Assessment arrangements for mathematics are good. Numeracy is well taught across the curriculum. Analysis of pupils' performance is providing useful information on areas of strength and weakness. The information is used for evaluating the curriculum and for setting in Years 5 and 6. Setting is raising standards by more effectively meeting the needs of the pupils. The flexibility allows movement of pupils up and down in sets. However, the presence of fewer girls in top sets warrants taking effective action. The policy is out of date and use of ICT is inadequate. The co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to develop both.

SCIENCE

104. Standards are well below average in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11. In lessons pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations at age seven and eleven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and who learn English as an additional language, achieve well in science. Progress since the last inspection is good. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is below that expected for their age. By the time they are seven, pupils achieve standards that are close to the levels expected nationally in all areas of the subject. In the teacher assessments for pupils aged 7 in 2001 pupils' performance was slightly below the national average overall. At the age of 11, standards in National Curriculum tests were well below the national average in 2001. Many achieved the expected standard, but relatively few achieved the higher Level 5. There was a high percentage of pupils with special needs in the group, some pupils joined the school during the school year and others left. These factors are reflected in the results but the upward trends in results over the last few years have continued and standards have risen since the last inspection and are above those in similar schools. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve standards close to the national average, but many of the pupils find it difficult to write down their experiments and findings accurately and quickly because of their difficulties with written English.
105. There are particular strengths in the teaching and learning of science, including:
- A programme of work that places a strong emphasis on practical scientific enquiry and experimentation.

- Topics are systematically re-visited at a higher level as pupils move through the school.
- Comprehensive assessment of pupils' progress at the end of each unit of work.
- Consistently good and very good teaching with careful attention to the use of specific scientific vocabulary.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and their enjoyment of the activities.

An area for further development is:

- More use of ICT.

106. Pupils in Year 1 show great pleasure when plastic letters stick to a metal tray but not to a white board. After a brief discussion with their partner, pupils decide that it is the magnet on the back of the letters that makes them stick and clearly understand that magnets attract some metal objects. They are very excited by their task of sorting objects to see which attract and which do not. Year 2 pupils understand that the correct word for 'guessing' is 'estimate' and they predict what will happen to butter, chocolate and honey when these are heated. Each pair carries out its own test with great concentration. They write their predictions and what the foods were like before heating, and afterwards, carefully. Teachers use these lessons as an opportunity to develop responsibility and skills of working in small groups. Discussion with the pupils shows that they have a good understanding of their tasks although several find it difficult to record what they did.
107. Pupils in Year 3 develop their studies about magnets further when they carry out an investigation to see whether all magnets are equally strong. All pupils gasp when they see how many paper clips the teacher picks up with her magnet. They understand the need for a fair test and quickly work out that their test meets requirements. Year 4 extend their learning about circuits as they carry out tests to see which materials conduct electricity to light up the bulb in their circuit and which do not. All pupils know that metal conducts electricity and are horrified when the teacher suggests that paper or cotton wool may be conductors. They are beginning to understand that some items are insulators.
108. When explaining what he has found out from the computer about fruits, a higher attaining pupil in Year 6 uses the phrase, "And in science terms, that means...." Many pupils refer to the difference between everyday and scientific language. They are clear about the terms that they use and have a good knowledge and understanding across all aspects of science. For example, they investigate many different seeds, working out how they may be dispersed. Pupils are very clear about how the cycle of germination to dispersal works and have a good understanding of the reasons why there are many ways of dispersal. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 understand that by constructing a fair test it is possible to work out a range of situations in which water evaporates. The majority of pupils understand that the gas produced is known as 'water vapour', which 'disappears into the air.'
109. The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. Some very good features of teaching are evident in lessons. Teachers use a wide range of interesting resources to ensure that pupils are purposefully involved in a range of practical activities. They take care to ensure that clear explanations are given to pupils so that they can have success with the practical tasks and learn from each other. The practical work develops pupils' social skills and understanding of taking turns very effectively. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were checking groups of seeds to see which was the odd one out; similarly, in Year 1 when pupils showed each other what they could see in their magnifying glass. In lessons pupils are fully engrossed in their tasks and behaviour is good as a result. Pupils' behaviour is good because they find the subject so interesting. They come in, see the items set out and exclaim with delight, "Wow! It's science. My favourite!" Pupils want to learn, concentrate for extended periods on their practical activities and try hard with the written elements.
110. Teachers' planning is good and they use a wide variety of methods to maintain pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and to develop understanding of the scientific language used. Lessons are interesting and teachers strike a fine balance between leading pupils to expected conclusions and allowing them to find out for themselves. Questions are carefully phrased and rephrased to enable pupils to work out the answer. For example, the teacher asks, "What colour is water?" and after several connected questions lead the pupils to 'transparent' and its scientific meaning. Significant number of pupils find it difficult to write down their answers to questions on worksheets and teachers and support staff record accurately what a pupils says about the outcome of the experiment. This enables them to check pupils' levels of understanding of the task and helps pupils

to achieve their best before they move their learning on and deepen their understanding. Staff work well together to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those who require additional support because of their developing English language skills are able to participate fully in the lessons.

111. There is currently no co-ordinator for the subject and the deputy headteacher supports the planning of the subject very well and monitors pupils' progress effectively. There is some good use of literacy and mathematical skills. There are some very good examples of observational drawing skills but there is insufficient use of ICT across the school.

ART AND DESIGN

112. Standards are well above average in Year 6 and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment in art and design is very good and is well above the standard expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make very good progress as they move up through the key stages. This is a further improvement since the last inspection. Three art and design lessons were seen during the inspection all in Key Stage 2. Other evidence of attainment was gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays in corridors and classrooms. Discussions also took place with teachers and pupils. Teachers' planning was examined. Progress since the last inspection is good.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have satisfactory skills in colour mixing with paint and know that a new colour is created when two colours are combined. They are secure in using a range of techniques in both two and three-dimensional work. They also know about and appreciate the work of famous artists including Mondrian and Van Gogh. Pupils in Year 1 produce their own computer-based work in the style of the former. Pupils show a good awareness of pattern and the influence on it of other cultures, especially in Africa and the Islamic world. Very attractive effects are achieved in this work. Very good skills of observation are shown in still life drawings of fruit, executed in crayon, for example the exact design and texture of the various fruit bowls and baskets is clearly shown. Pupils use a range of techniques well and there is lots of evidence of them working creatively expressing their own ideas and feelings. They also do a lot of cross-curricular art and design and illustrate all their work well.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have increased their competence in the use of techniques. For example, they have explored various ways of reproducing the effects and colours of posters used in World War II propaganda. Pupils have an increased awareness of the qualities of their work. They evaluate their own work and make suggestions for ways of improving it. In the Year 4 lessons on "Pointillism", pupils showed an understanding of how to outline an image with dots rather than lines so they could sustain the technique even where objects were in front of each other. They also used simple ideas of perspective, such as having objects larger in the front of the painting. Higher attaining pupils recognised how to create depth in their work. All pupils understood how colours are used to create different atmospheres in river scenes in polluted or beautiful places. Year 6 work, on figure drawing involving movement, is of a very good standard with pupils evaluating and critiquing each other's attempts to, for example, make a footballer appear speedy. They had produced some skilled and sadly evocative images of the London Blitz; they were aware of the recent disaster in New York and used the images they had seen on television to help them capture feeling in their work. In Key Stage 2 they also continue to use art and design to support the whole curriculum, good work is produced on Tudor portraits and there are well-executed diagrams in their science books to name but two examples.
115. The leadership and management of art and design are good. There is a clear plan for further developing art and design in the school and it is being steadily implemented. The co-ordinator ensures resources are available. She checks the quality of teaching and learning by reviewing the sketchbooks and teachers' evaluations of work completed. Guidance and feedback are given to teachers after work has been checked. The co-ordinator supports staff when they are concerned about trying new ideas and techniques. A good lead is given to staff on the display of pupils' work and maintaining the aesthetic appearance of the school. Very successful multi-cultural work has been developed. An artist has visited the school and worked with pupils, they also make visits to the London galleries. Assessment is satisfactory and work is annotated and exemplified in the school portfolio collection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards are below average at the end of Year 6 and they were average when the school was previously inspected. No teaching was observed. Evidence for the subject has been gathered from discussions with teachers, curriculum planning and pupils' work. Progress is satisfactory since the last inspection overall.

Strengths

- Good commitment to teach the subject in Key Stage 1.

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient time is spent on teaching the subject.

117. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is as expected nationally and similar to those found in the last inspection. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average in Years 5 and 6 and this represents a decline in standards since the last inspection.

118. Up to the age of seven, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. The standards attained are close to expectations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 design and make houses, and four-wheeled vehicles of sound quality. They use boxes, paper and wheels. They use glue and sticky tape for joining and decorate their products using colour pencils and paint. Further work has been planned for the remaining part of the year.

119. By the age of eleven, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory overall. The older pupils attain below average standards. This is due mainly to insufficient opportunities for the pupils to learn the subject. Discussions with staff also indicate that some teachers lack confidence to teach the subject. They tend to concentrate more on art and design instead of providing opportunities for design and technology. There was little work from Year 6 as the teachers had chosen to do art and design for both half terms. As a result the work undertaken so far consists of sketch plans for free standing items such as a music stand, a photo stand and a coat stand. The sketches are of satisfactory quality. Pupils in Year 5 have designed and made sound quality musical instruments such as drums and shakers using boxes and tubes. Their achievement to date is satisfactory.

120. Over recent years, there has been insufficient focus on the subject. It has not been led and managed satisfactorily until recently. As a result, there are insufficient resources. The policy requires updating to reflect the National Curriculum 2000. The national model scheme of work has been introduced but pupils in Key Stage 2 do not yet receive the quality and range of learning opportunities that they should.

GEOGRAPHY

121. Pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations by the age of seven and eleven. They have satisfactory achievements, particularly in map work and skills related to the study of different locations. The school has maintained the standards reported at the last inspection. There are strengths in the subject, which form the basis for further development. For example, the co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and an appropriate action plan for future developments. The resources are satisfactory and used well to aid learning, for example the aerial photographs of the local area to develop understanding of patterns of settlement and physical features. Older pupils have little knowledge of localities outside the United Kingdom and their fieldwork skills are not fully developed. There are no systematic procedures for assessing pupils' progress in the development of important geographical skills across the school.

122. Pupils in Year 2 develop adequate understanding of different seasons and types of weather. They are beginning to develop a sound understanding of their local area. Most pupils know where they live and many confidently answer questions about different types of shops found in the area near school. They successfully indicate attractive features, for example, the Brent River, park or the swimming pool and unattractive features such as the traffic noise and pollution in Neasden. Pupils in Year 1 were observed working on models of an 'island'. They know that the water surrounds an island and carefully mark out the geographical features such as forest, mountains, rivers, bridges and buildings. Most pupils confidently identify some of the main features noted on their way from home to school, but lack the use of appropriate directional vocabulary to describe the route. This is

partly due to the limited vocabulary and speaking skills of most pupils, particularly those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

123. The discussion with pupils in Year 6 and a scrutiny of their previous work reveals that most pupils have adequate knowledge and understanding of the use of keys and symbols when using atlases and maps. They read and plot co-ordinates on a map accurately. Pupils in Year 4 know how a river is formed and in which direction it flows. They are familiar with the language such as source or estuary. They learn that rivers have tributaries, channels and a mouth. Pupils learn about the River Nile and benefit from learning opportunities such as whole class discussions to note advantages and disadvantages of living by a river. A well-planned question and answer session further supported pupils' understanding and use of appropriate vocabulary such as 'irrigation', 'flood-area' and 'settlements'. Pupils study the local places in relation to the wider world. Their progress in acquiring geographical skills is enhanced by their use of ICT to research and represent findings. Pupils are encouraged to use different sources such as books, maps and photos to extract information and inform their learning.
124. Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning in geography. They are keen to answer questions posed by the teacher and settle down well to the independent tasks that are set. Teaching is mainly satisfactory and has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and use the local environment and other resources to develop pupils' early geographical skills and knowledge. Effective use is made of methods such as discussions and links to pupils' own experiences. For example in a Year 4 lesson the pictures of floods in India encouraged an enthusiastic response from a pupil from Bangladesh. Lessons in geography are linked effectively to other subjects such as mathematics, by reading and plotting co-ordinates; and literacy by developing new vocabulary through stories. For example, the story, 'We're going on a Bear Hunt', was skilfully used to enhance pupils' learning of features such as cave, snow, mud and grass, in a Year 1 literacy lesson.
125. Improvements have been made to the quality of resources since the last inspection. Wall maps and globes are in evidence in most classrooms.

HISTORY

126. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 as they were when the school was previously inspected. Standards in Years 2 and 6 broadly reflect what was reported at the last inspection. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show interest and curiosity in looking at the past. They are beginning to develop a sense of time and chronology, demonstrate knowledge of stories from the past beyond living memory and communicate their learning through talk, drawings and, to a more limited degree, in their writing. They are also able to undertake simple enquiries into the past through their observations of local buildings and through the handling of domestic artefacts, for example, in Year 2 pupils' investigations to find out what homes were like in the past. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
127. Most pupils' achievements in history across both key stages are satisfactory. This is largely due to the mainly sound teaching across the school. Most teachers understand how to make history accessible to pupils of different age and ability and use a range of resources well to engage their interest. They also use careful questioning and discussion to extend pupils' thinking and language. Lively discussion and answers to suitable questions about the Great Fire of London, stimulated pupils in Year 2 to follow the correct order of events and produce independent creative writing.
128. In Years 3 to 5, pupils communicate their knowledge of aspects of past societies, such as those of the Romans and the Tudors, through descriptive writing and drawings. Many pupils' recorded work is hampered by their lack of fluency in writing and ability to apply the subject specific vocabulary in their writing. This is largely due to the high number of pupils on early stages of learning English as an additional language. A significant number of pupils are not sufficiently skilled in using and interpreting a wide range of historical sources and evidence. Most pupils develop their sense of chronology through the use of timelines and describe similarities and differences between life today and life in the past. Pupils' completed work indicates that most have some knowledge of the periods of British history. In Year 5 pupils learn about the Tudor monarchs and know something of the customs and way of life during their times. In Year 6 pupils thought about how lives of people were affected in World War II. They are beginning to think more clearly about everyday lives of ordinary people and compare and contrast what they discover with own lives in the present day.

Many do not confidently ask questions from the past to develop their historical enquiry. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support research and investigation in history.

129. There are some aspects of history that are done well. For example, visits to the transport and the dinosaur museums are used well to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 6 have recently visited the RAF museum in Hendon and a few attempted to make their own gas mask boxes. Some of the work linked with art and design is of a very good quality, for example, the charcoal sketches of the war scenes and the World War 2 propaganda posters as part of literacy work. The school has recently celebrated Black History Month and some of the work by older pupils highlights the work of British Black achievers. Throughout the school pupils learn about famous people in the history, for example, younger pupils know about Mary Seacole, Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale and the older pupils study in more depth to learn about Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, pupils build upon their previous learning and, as in Years 1 and 2, strategies and resources are used effectively to extend their thinking. This was also shown in one Year 6 lesson on 'rationing' during World War II, where good questioning by the teacher at the start of lesson provided clear links with previous learning and consolidated pupils' understanding. The well-organised use of real food items made the task of making a ration book very worthwhile and enjoyable for most pupils. However, the impact of teaching is sometimes weakened when pupils of different abilities in the same class often do the same task. There is a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in particular and this does not give pupils the opportunity to devise their own ways of recording what they have learnt. Where teaching is less effective, over-directive teaching and talking for too long limit progress. In these lessons, teachers pay insufficient attention to pupils' language development or their other learning needs when choosing tasks and resources. For example, in Year 5 most pupils faced difficulties when trying to establish reasons for 'Henry VIII's break from Rome'. Teachers in these lessons lacked good knowledge and understanding of the subject and, as a result, pupils were insecure in their understanding and unable to explore and outline the causes of historical developments.
131. The co-ordinator has clear vision for the subject. New long-term plans have been introduced, based on nationally available schemes of work and these ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. However, the policy or guidance on how the new units can be adapted to meet the particular needs and starting points of the pupils, has not been updated. There are no procedures to support teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and therefore assessment is not being used to inform planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Pupils' standards and progress at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 are as at the previous inspection as a result of satisfactory teaching and learning in both key stages and satisfactory range and quality of learning opportunities. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make sound progress. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Strengths

- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Provision of after school club increases learning opportunities for pupils.
- Training is almost complete, equipping the teachers to teach the subject confidently.

Areas for improvement

- There is not enough teaching of ICT through other subjects.
- Assessment procedures and the use of this information to raise standards of attainment further.

133. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good individual demonstrations and relationships help pupils to learn well. However, pace is sometimes slow and the lack of a multimedia projection facility makes whole class demonstrations difficult to follow. Pupils work with interest and willingly help their partners. The overall effect of teaching and pupils' attitude and behaviour is that all pupils achieve average standards. Year 1 pupils compose pictures, for example of a house and describe it. In Year 2, these are improved further to create pictures with a house and different backgrounds including the sky at night. Year 2 pupils enter, save and retrieve

information. They are developing keyboard skills for word processing. They generate, amend, record and share ideas.

134. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well and maintain good relationships and a good atmosphere for learning. Their secure subject knowledge and good planning provide good opportunities for learning, for example, of creating 'Home page' using a multimedia program. However, the pace of learning is slowed because pupils keep changing their work and do not move on fast enough. In Year 3, they learn to use word art, pictures and different fonts and colour to create effective presentations. In Years 4 and 5, pupils compose stories and move on to write reports in Year 6. The oldest pupils know how to use websites to search, save, copy, paste and print information, for example, about black history, World War II and Britain in the 1930s. They use the spreadsheet to create and cost their own menus. They carry out surveys, for example, of different modes of transport, enter data in spreadsheet and create and interpret graphs. All boys and girls learn with equal zeal and make comparable progress.
135. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The national model scheme of work has been introduced and is being applied across the school. The co-ordinator, who took responsibility in September 2001, has not attended training programmes to update her expertise to help other staff, for example, in the use of sensors. She is aware of the need to update the policy and to develop procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. The subjects' contribution to pupils' literacy is satisfactory; to pupils' numeracy and other subjects it needs to be more effective.

MUSIC

136. Standards at the end of Year 6 in singing are in-line with national expectations. Pupils' skills are not systematically developed throughout the school and this has a negative effect on standards. It is not possible to judge overall standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 because of insufficient evidence.
137. Since the last inspection the school has taken steps to improve pupils' singing throughout; achievement in singing is now satisfactory. By Year 2, pupils sing a range of action songs from memory. They sing and rhythmically match their voices to the shape of the melody. They carefully watch the directions given by the teacher enabling them to keep their actions in time with the music. Opportunities for older pupils to sing are now a regular feature of the music curriculum and there is an appropriate focus on improving pupils' techniques. By Year 6 pupils know a range of activities for improving their diction. They sing expressively matching the style of their singing to the mood reflected in the words of the song.
138. School assembly time provides good opportunities for pupils to listen to and become familiar with a range of music from different cultures. They are beginning to develop their composing skills. They develop their understanding of how words and music fit together by composing their own lyrics for their favourite pop songs. They created independent rhythm patterns for percussion instruments as an accompaniment. Pupils have some opportunities to use ICT, but these are not specifically planned as part of the learning programme for music.
139. Only one lesson was observed and it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, teaching was satisfactory in the lesson seen. The lesson had a clear focus and pupils' knowledge and understanding were appropriately developed through practical activities. Pupils' interest and enjoyment contributed to improvement in the ability to maintain an independent part when performing in a group.
140. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards in music and has put in place a structured curriculum appropriate to the needs of the school. At the time of the last inspection there were no opportunities for pupils to develop their interest and skills outside the classroom. There is now a choir for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and pupils have the opportunity to take keyboard lessons. The choir takes part in local events and regularly performs to parents and the rest of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Seven and eleven year olds achieve standards that are typical of pupils nationally and these have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make good progress across the school. The arrangements for teaching Year 5 pupils to swim are satisfactory. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
142. By the age of seven pupils develop a good range of movements and sequence them as they move around the hall. They build on the skills of travelling around the hall and apparatus in different ways that they learned in Year 1. Pupils successfully balance on three points and listen carefully as their partner evaluates their performance. Pupils challenge themselves and try very hard to move slowly or quickly, as requested by the teacher. Higher attaining pupils hold their balanced positions well. Lower attaining pupils wobble a little but are praised for their efforts.
143. Pupils in Year 6 warm up happily to sitar music and cool down to the inspiring music of a Buddhist chant. This contrasts well with the music, "Living Doll", which is used for their dance. They develop their own six or eight step patterns and work in pairs to evaluate their work. Both boys and girls take an active part in the lesson and enjoy the challenge of creating their own dance patterns. The quality of ball skills develops as pupils move through the school. In Year 3 pupils learn to throw a small ball over arm to a partner. Higher attaining pupils manage this well. Lower attaining pupils throw the ball but do not direct it well. In Year 5 pupils demonstrate a chest pass with a netball and know how to position their hands and feet to throw the ball to a partner. They extend this to a bounced pass and most pupils manage to extend this to passing when dodging away from a partner. When practising football skills higher attaining pupils in Year 4 show good skills in passing the ball accurately to a partner, using different parts of the foot. By watching their classmates and gaining inspiration, other pupils improve their skills.
144. Teaching is good across the school. The curriculum is good and includes all the elements of the National Curriculum. Teachers' levels of expertise and expectations of what pupils should do are high and lessons are well planned. Teachers place good emphasis on the use of space and good use is made of pupils' evaluations of each other's work. Pupils learn effectively and gain new ideas in his way. Teachers demonstrate the required movements well, using higher attaining pupils or themselves to inspire pupils. In Year 5 the teachers give good demonstrations of how to pass the ball accurately and in a controlled way to a partner. They make good teaching points and pupils learn what to do. Good demonstrations have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' work. Teachers make effective use of praise to motivate pupils, especially those with less confidence.
145. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They enjoy lessons and derive much pleasure from taking part. The majority of pupils are interested in what they do and try hard to carry out the teachers' instructions. For example, in a warm up in Year 3, pupils followed a series of instructions well, remembering to change movements as they travelled around the playground.
146. The subject is co-ordinated well and the school's programme of extra-curricular activities is good. It includes netball, football, cricket, dance and sporting visits to other schools. All of these activities raise the standards of pupils' work. The school's accommodation is good. The two halls have sufficient space in which to work and the extensive playground allows two groups to work without interrupting each other. The school uses these spaces to good effect.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. It was only possible to observe a limited number of religious education lessons. These observations and work seen show that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are close to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are similar to those at the last inspection. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
148. Pupils in Year 2 are developing an understanding of symbols they see in their everyday lives. They understand that some objects are special to them and know that there are religious objects, such as necklaces, which are special to people because they are a symbol of their Gods. Most pupils know the reason for the Festival of Diwali and how it is celebrated.

149. Pupils in Key Stage 2 study specific religions in greater depth, such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Pupils in Year 5 understand why Jews celebrate Shabbat. They explain key features of the celebration and the significance of the foods and artefacts used, for example they know that the Kiddush is usually recited over wine. They understand that the Schema is an important belief for Jews and how the mezuzah features in their everyday lives. Pupils learn from religion and understand how some of the Ten Commandments might relate to their own lives. Pupils in Year 6 extend their knowledge of religious symbols and designs. They understand that followers of the Islamic faith believe that no living thing should be represented in pictures and artefacts. They know about special books and understand that the Qur'an should be treated with respect. Many pupils are willing to share their knowledge and experiences arising from their own religious beliefs and practices.
150. In the small number of lessons observed there were examples of good preparation enabling teachers to give clear explanations and engage pupils' interest. Teachers' good questioning and encouragement enabled pupils to make observations and personal contributions, adding to the quality of the lesson. The sensitivity in teachers handling of the different religions was reflected in the respect pupils showed for each other's beliefs and their interest in learning about the different religions.
151. Stories in assembly also contribute to pupils' learning in religious education. Good use is made of visitors who are invited to talk to pupils about different aspects of the religions studied. The planned curriculum is in place, informed by the locally agreed syllabus. However, there are no systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress in the subject. Teachers do not always take the opportunity to use religious education lessons to promote sustained pieces of work to consolidate literacy skills. Written work is lacking scope and depth, although it often shows satisfactory understanding of content. ICT is under-used in the teaching and learning of religious education.