



**OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION**

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITEHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 109132

Headteacher: Mrs Claire Fagan

Reporting inspector: Mr Selwyn Ward
9271

Dates of inspection: 14 – 18 January 2002

Inspection number: 230247

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Amanda Lane
Date of previous inspection:	27 April – 1 May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Selwyn Ward	9271	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well does the school provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? How good are pupils' attitudes, values and personal development? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Michael Hudson	14324	Lay inspector		How good is attendance? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Godfrey Bancroft	3687	Team inspector	English Design technology Geography History	
Irene Green	23315	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Music	How well is the school led and managed?
Marianne Harris	23288	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education	How well does the school provide for pupils with special educational needs?
Robina Scahill	27654	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school provide for pupils learning English as an additional language? How well does the school provide equal opportunities?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
How well the school is led and managed	
Other aspects of the school	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whitehall is a large, community primary school for boys and girls aged 4 – 11 years. The school currently has 480 pupils, of whom around two thirds are white, with broadly similar numbers of children of black and Asian origin among the remaining third. Around a quarter of the pupils are learning English as an additional language, with a high proportion still at an early stage of learning the language. A high proportion of pupils have their education interrupted by moving schools part way through their primary education. The school is part of an Education Action Zone and serves an area where there is a well above average level of social need, and an above average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A similarly above average proportion of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs for a range of learning and behavioural difficulties. Overall, children join the school with attainment that is well below average. The school has had a very high turnover of staff over recent years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Although test results have risen in line with the national trend, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory in English and mathematics, standards remain stubbornly depressed. The leadership and management of the school have been effective, however, in improving the climate for learning so that children now get off to a good start and achieve well in the reception and infant classes, although there is still too much unsatisfactory teaching in the junior classes and there are weaknesses in the way the curriculum is organised. Children have a positive attitude to learning and they achieve very well in the practical subjects of information and design technology. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Whitehall Primary is an effective school that provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- ? The school is well led and managed.
- ? Teaching is good in reception and very good in the infants.
- ? Information from assessment is now being used well to plan teaching and learning and is beginning to raise standards.
- ? The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils behave well in most lessons and develop positive attitudes to learning.
- ? Children of all ages and from different backgrounds get on well with one another and are able to take on responsibility within the school.
- ? Children are looked after well.

What could be improved

- ? Standards are too low in English, mathematics and science.
- ? There is too much unsatisfactory teaching in the juniors.
- ? The curriculum is not well organised and pupils are not taught enough in some subjects, including science.
- ? Parents could do more to ensure that their children attend regularly and on time.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Whitehall Primary was last inspected in April 1998. The school has made good progress in tackling the issues for improvement raised in the last inspection. Although test results in English, mathematics and science remain at a similar level to the time of the last inspection, pupils now have more opportunities to develop their speaking and writing skills and carry out mathematics investigations. Teaching has improved, with a much higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching than was seen in the previous inspection. Design technology is now much improved so that standards in the work seen are now in line with national expectations. There are appropriate arrangements in place for child protection and the

provision in the reception classes, the use of assessment, and reporting arrangements for parents are now all notable strengths of the school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the results attained at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in national tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	D	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	E	E	
science	E	D	E	E	

Schools are categorised as similar according to the number of children known to be eligible for free school meals.

Results remain well below average, which, given pupils' starting point nevertheless represents satisfactory progress overall. Analysis shows evidence of a gradual improvement in results but no more than the national trend. Test results at the end of Year 2 are similarly well below average. Work seen however shows a more positive picture. Although pupils' current work remains well below average in science, it has improved in English, where it is below average. In mathematics, work is below average in Year 6 but is now in line with expectations in Year 2. This improvement matches improved teaching in the lower part of the school and the effects of recent improvements in the school's systems for assessment and marking, so that children are now making good progress in the infants. There is no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, and pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the additional support they receive. An above average number of pupils have their education interrupted by high levels of absence or by moving from one school to another, and this contributes to their low attainment. Standards of work seen in history and geography are below national expectations, but pupils are attaining standards in line with national expectations in information technology, design technology and physical education. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Not enough evidence was available for inspectors to make judgements about attainment overall in art and music. In the *Foundation Stage* (Reception), children make good progress, but very few children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and develop a positive attitude to learning. They are attentive in lessons, and where activities are appropriately chosen, they work with concentration. Many take a growing pride in their school and in the work they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in most lessons and satisfactory around the school. Pupils appreciate and respond well to the high expectations that most teachers have of good behaviour and this contributes to the progress that they make. There have been 24 temporary exclusions over the past year. This number is high but there is no evidence that exclusion has been used as an inappropriate sanction.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. Children help each other and work well together. Boys and girls of different abilities and from different backgrounds mix and get on well together and are all included in the full range of school activities.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are poor. Too many children have their education interrupted by absence and a number of parents continue to bring their children to school late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Lessons seen overall	good	very good	unsatisfactory

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

The quality of teaching was good or better in more than half the lessons seen, and in about one in four lessons the teaching was very good or excellent. In about one in ten lessons, teaching was less than satisfactory. This represents satisfactory teaching overall, although there was a notable difference between the quality of teaching in each key stage. Teaching in the *Foundation Stage* (reception) was consistently good. It was very good in *Key Stage 1* (Years 1-2), where almost half the lessons were very good or excellent. In *Key Stage 2*, teaching was judged unsatisfactory because a fifth of the teaching was less than satisfactory. The teaching of English and mathematics was satisfactory, with very good teaching at *Key Stage 1*. Marking is a particular strength of teaching throughout the school. It is of a consistently high standard, engaging pupils in a genuine dialogue in what they need to do to do better. The very effective use of marking, coupled with the setting of individual learning targets for pupils, has had a significant impact on pupils' learning and has contributed to a rise in standards during the past year.

Teachers plan lessons well so that they build on what pupils have learnt before. Activities were varied and pupils were well motivated and knew what it was that they were expected to learn. The most effective lessons were well paced. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils helped ensure that children settled quickly and with minimal fuss to the tasks set them. Teachers had high expectations of their pupils and managed their behaviour well. Work was generally well matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class, and where there were learning support assistants, they were usually used well to help pupils learn. In many of the most effective lessons, learning was reinforced through a short session at the end which highlighted the main learning points, although in some lessons these plenary sessions were too hurried or were merely used to show off some work. Where lessons were less effective, it was usually because pupils were not well managed and their behaviour deteriorated and this adversely affected their progress. Some lessons suffered from being inappropriately timed, with some excessively short teaching slots and other lessons running overlong. In a few lessons, including some science lessons, there were gaps in teachers' subject knowledge.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior leadership team provide very clear educational direction for the school with a strong commitment to raising standards. The school has been unable to recruit experienced teachers to middle management roles, so not all subjects have long-term management arrangements in place.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are keen for the school to do well and satisfactorily fulfil their legal duties but they have not been sufficiently aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and this limits their effectiveness in managing the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching and learning are monitored very well and this has contributed to the improvement in teaching, particularly in the infant classes. The school has successfully adopted the principles of "best value" to evaluate for itself what it does well and what it needs to do to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Spending closely follows the priorities set out in the school's comprehensive three-year development plan.
The school's buildings and facilities	Unsatisfactory. The school has the benefit of some additional teaching and resource areas, but there are insufficient classrooms. Some rooms are very cramped and the school hall has to serve as assembly hall, canteen and gymnasium. The space is very crowded and the need to share hall time for physical education results in some teaching periods which are too short. Displays are well used to create a stimulating learning environment. There is an adequate library and satisfactory resources for information technology, but resources are unsatisfactory overall.

Staffing	Although there is a qualified teacher for every class, the school has been unable to appoint experienced staff to middle management positions and as a result a third of the staff are on temporary contracts. Teaching assistants are generally used well although there are classes which would benefit from support but where no support was provided.
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OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum in reception is well matched to children's needs. Throughout the school, the <i>National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies</i> are beginning to make a contribution to raising standards, but there are major weaknesses in the organisation of the curriculum for other subjects. Some subjects, including science and history, are not covered in sufficient depth and pupils do not do enough written or recorded work. Timetabling is weak, so that some lessons are too long and others too short. The amount of teaching time during the school day is below the recommended minimum. There is a very good range of activities provided for pupils outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language	Pupils are well supported and as a result they make good progress both in their language development and in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and they have good opportunities to take on responsibility in the school. Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is very good, and this has had a positive effect on improving behaviour and relationships across the school. Provision for spiritual education is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teaching and non-teaching staff are caring and supportive. Children's welfare is looked after well. There are very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and good systems for monitoring and promoting attendance.
How well the school uses assessment information	The school collects and analyses information from tests and other assessments and is now using these to plan teaching and learning, including the setting for pupils of individual learning targets. Although assessment is now used well, this is a recent initiative which has only just begun to have an effect on raising standards.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Information to parents is very good. Reports include detailed information for parents on how well their child is doing and targets for improvement in every subject. The school works hard to involve parents, and a number are very supportive, but some parents could do more to ensure their children attend school more regularly and arrive at school on time.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Their children like school ? Children make good progress ? The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best ? The amount of homework is about right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Children are not doing as well in the juniors as they do in the infants ? The school is not well led and managed ? There are not enough extra activities outside lessons ? They do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on at school ? The school is not approachable and does not work closely with parents

Only 73 questionnaires were returned which is a low response rate. Inspectors agree with most of the parents' favourable views about the school. Teaching is notably better in the infants than in the juniors and this accounts for the better progress these children make. Inspectors judged the range of after school activities to be much better than usually found,

with a wide range of clubs on offer to children of all ages. The school is well led and managed and works hard to involve parents and keep them informed. Inspectors judged school reports to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Throughout this report, references to *Key Stage 1* relate to the infant years (Years 1 and 2) when pupils are aged 5 to 7 years. The junior years (from Year 3 to Year 6) are referred to as *Key Stage 2*, when pupils are aged 7 to 11. Children in the Reception classes, who are aged 5 and under, are considered to be in the *Foundation Stage*. Schools' test results are compared with the national average, as well as against "*similar schools*". Schools are grouped as similar according to the proportion of children attending who are known to be eligible for free school meals. In judging standards, inspectors analysed results attained in the national standard assessment tests (SATs) taken at the end of Years 2 and 6, both in 2001 and in previous years. Inspectors looked at work currently being done in lessons and at work done throughout last year. They listened to children read and discussed children's work with them, as well as with their teachers. Whereas judgements on attainment relate to comparisons with nationally expected standards, achievement relates to the progress pupils make and compares how well children do as against their prior attainment.
2. Although children join the school with a wide range of attainment, taken overall their attainment when they start school is well below average. About a third have very low communication and language skills. They get off to a good start in their Reception classes and during the *Foundation Stage* they make good progress, but few are likely to meet all of the early learning goals by the end of their *Foundation Stage* year.
3. In the national tests taken at the end of Year 2 in 2001, results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, both in national comparisons and when compared with similar schools. With some fluctuation, test results have improved a little since the time of the last inspection, but little more than the national trend. Girls have tended to do better than boys, but by no greater margin than seen nationally. There is no national test in Year 2 for science, but in the assessments made by teachers, pupils attained standards that were well below average. Although pupils' work in science remains well below average, there is evidence from current work of significant improvement in English and mathematics. Work in English is below average. In mathematics it is now in line with national expectations. Given pupils' low starting point, even last year's well below average test results represent satisfactory achievement. Current standards in *Key Stage 1* in English and mathematics represent good achievement which is due to the consistently high standard of teaching in the Year 1 and 2 classes and the impact of recent improvements in the school's systems for marking and assessment.
4. Test results in Year 6 in 2001 were well below average in English, mathematics and science, both in national comparisons and when compared with similar schools. Again, results have fluctuated a little but are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Any difference in attainment between boys and girls is only in line with that found nationally. Pupils' current work is well below average in science, in part because not enough science is taught, but in English and mathematics it is below average. This represents an improvement since last year. Pupils of all abilities in *Key Stage 2* are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment.
5. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards in English and mathematics that are well below national expectations. Some pupils have behavioural difficulties which hinder their academic progress, although in most lessons they are well managed. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school because of the additional learning support which they receive. This is also the case for those pupils learning English as an additional language. Around a quarter of the children in the school are learning English as an additional language, and roughly two thirds of these are at an early stage of learning English. They make good progress because they are well supported, including the additional support they receive from part-time specialist teachers.
6. A number of pupils have had their education interrupted by high levels of absence. Mobility in the locality is also high, so a much higher than average number of pupils move schools, and this interrupts the continuity of children's education. Both of these factors contribute to pupils' low attainment.

7. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below national expectations in history and geography. Standards in information and communication technology, design technology and physical education are in line with national expectations and this represents very good achievement for pupils in both key stages. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Not enough evidence was available in the inspection to make secure overall judgements about attainment in art and music at the end of Year 6.
8. Of the parents who returned their questionnaires, 93 per cent expressed the view that their children made good progress at school. Inspectors judged progress and achievement in Reception and *Key Stage 1* to be good. In *Key Stage 2*, it is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children enjoy coming to school. Parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed this view, and the children themselves confirmed it. Children at Whitehall Primary are taught to have a positive attitude to learning. Pupils of all abilities learn the school's orderly routines from the time they first join the school and, as a result, they are attentive in lessons and keen to join in. Even those who find sustained concentration difficult, try hard at the tasks they are given, particularly where these are appropriately chosen and where children are given clear instructions so that they know exactly what is expected of them. For example, Year 2 pupils made good progress in a physical education lesson because they were shown clearly what to do and how they could improve their throwing and catching skills. In a few lessons, however, when pupils were not set time limits for completing work, some children drifted off task. The school is increasingly encouraging pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning, through the use of personal learning targets and through inviting children to undertake research, and pupils are responding positively to this.
10. Children speak with pride about their school. They recognise the school as a safe and supportive community of which they are part. Their social development is very good. Pupils relate well to the teachers and other adults in the school and get on well with each other. Because pupils benefit from the school's very good provision for their social and personal development, the school functions as a very civilised racially harmonious community where boys and girls and pupils of different abilities and different backgrounds, including different ethnic backgrounds, mix, play and work together as friends. Many examples were seen of pupils spontaneously helping one another, for example with children discreetly and without fuss consoling another child who was upset. Pupils' growing self-confidence, and the respect which children throughout the school show for one another and for each others' cultures, represent good spiritual and cultural development.
11. Behaviour in the vast majority of lessons is good. Around the school, behaviour is satisfactory, although the children can be rumbustious at play. Pupils understand and appreciate the school's positive behaviour rules and their moral development is very good, although many pupils lack self-discipline and sometimes misbehave when their teacher does not manage the class well. In the few lessons where behaviour was unsatisfactory, it was due to weaknesses in teachers' management of the class, which allowed the poor behaviour of a few to disrupt their own and others' learning. There was no evidence of bullying seen during the inspection, and pupils told inspectors that they were confident that staff would deal with any incidents that occurred. There have been 24 fixed-term exclusions over the past year. This number is high but there is no evidence of exclusion being used as an inappropriate sanction.
12. At the last inspection, pupils' behaviour and attitudes were considered to be good overall. Since that inspection, as a result of the school's improved provision for pupils' social, moral and personal development, pupils' behaviour and attitude have been sustained and further improved, as have the good relationships between pupils.
13. Attendance is poor. The latest figure, which is very similar to that at the last inspection, is well below the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is exceptionally high and worse than at the last inspection. There are two main reasons for the very high unauthorised absence: parental attitudes and the school's systems for recording absence and lateness. The school is rigorous in properly recording all

unauthorised absence, for instance when parents do not observe the absence procedure or take their children on holidays in term time without school approval. In addition, punctuality is poor and the computer software used by the school to record attendance shows pupils who arrive so late that the register has closed as having unauthorised absence. These late arrivers disrupt classes while the poor attendance restricts the learning of those involved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Part of the focus of the inspection was on literacy and numeracy, so priority was given to observing the teaching of English and mathematics. All classes were seen being taught these subjects. A good sample of lessons was also seen in the other core subject of science. In most cases, inspectors were able to observe full lessons and, in judging teaching, inspectors sought evidence that pupils were learning and making progress.
15. The teaching seen ranged from poor to excellent. More than half of the teaching seen was good or better. Teaching was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons, but in one in ten it was unsatisfactory or poor. The teaching of both English and mathematics were satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching varied substantially between key stages. In the *Foundation Stage*, all lessons were satisfactory or better, and three quarters were good. In *Key Stage 1*, almost all were satisfactory, more than three quarters were good or better and almost half were very good or excellent. The profile of teaching was much less positive in *Key Stage 2*. Here the proportion of teaching that was good or better was about a third, and although around one in six lessons was very good, one in every five lessons was unsatisfactory or poor. This represents an unacceptable proportion of less than satisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 6. Despite this weakness, teaching has improved overall since the last inspection. There is a much higher proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching than was seen previously.
16. Pupils' learning and their achievement over time is correspondingly better in *Key Stage 1* than *Key Stage 2*. For some pupils, progress is inhibited by erratic attendance or by interruptions to their learning caused by moving schools. Pupils learn best over time in information and communication technology, design technology and physical education. In these practical subjects, pupils are able to demonstrate and take pride in their achievement, and are able to take a step-by-step approach to learning: learning and consolidating skills and knowledge, and generally building progressively on these from week to week. A particular strength of teaching throughout the school is the consistently high standard of marking where pupils are given very practical advice on what they need to do to do better. Often this involved a real dialogue between teacher and pupil, with teachers posing questions to pupils about their work and pupils adding their own thoughtful responses. The very effective marking, coupled with the setting of individual learning targets for pupils, has had a significant impact on pupils' learning and has contributed to the rise in standards seen over the past year.
17. Lessons were generally well planned so that pupils built on what they had learnt before. Teachers generally used question and answer sessions well, drawing all pupils in to an often lively recap of what had been learnt in the previous lesson. In most lessons, teachers set out the pupils' learning objectives at the start of the lesson and as a result, pupils knew why they were undertaking and what it was they were expected to learn. In the best lessons, this was followed up with a short whole class plenary session at the end of the lesson where pupils briefly discussed what they had learnt and which helped to consolidate their learning. In some lessons however, this plenary session was curtailed through lack of time, and as a result children made less progress than they might otherwise have done. Similarly, plenary sessions which were little more than "show and tell" interludes for some children to show the work they had done, were less effective in helping pupils to reinforce the key learning objectives of the lesson.
18. The most effective lessons were well paced with appropriately varied activities, including written tasks, that held pupils' attention and motivated them to work hard and learn. Work was generally well matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class, and where learning support assistants were in classes they were generally used well to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers frequently made good use of more complex vocabulary which encouraged the development of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English, and a good feature of teaching was the focus on points of comprehension, checking that pupils understood the terms being used.

19. Teachers usually had high expectations of their pupils and managed their behaviour well. Teachers' very good relationships with their pupils helped ensure that children settled quickly and with the minimum of fuss to the tasks set them. In the most effective lessons, teachers were successful in making learning fun. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils made excellent progress in learning about rounding to the nearest 10 through the teacher's use of a "frog" that jumped along the number square. The teacher so successfully brought the two-dimensional frog to life in the children's eyes that they all were eager to please both their teacher and the frog.
20. Where lessons were less effective, it was usually because pupils were not well managed, their behaviour deteriorated and this adversely affected their progress. In these lessons, the orderly routines implemented in most classes were not so consistently followed and as a result children were distracted and drifted off task. Some lessons suffered from being inappropriately timed, with some excessively short teaching slots and other lessons running overlong. For example, within the same year group, two music lessons were seen with identical content and planning, one of which lasted twenty minutes and the other an hour. In a few lessons, including some science lessons, there were gaps in teachers' subject knowledge.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught within the classroom, supported by a dedicated and effective team of learning support assistants. When they are supported they make good progress in lessons and they have full access to the curriculum. Many strategies and teaching programmes are used to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. For example, good use is made of whiteboards to remind the pupils what they are focussing on and to give encouragement by ticking when a small target has been met. However, there are times when support is not available and progress slows. This is especially so when pupils with behavioural difficulties have no support, and this was a contributory factor in some of the lessons in *Key Stage 2* that were judged to be less than satisfactory.
22. There are four part-time teachers involved in teaching English as an additional language, some of whom speak several languages. They work alongside the class teachers in lessons, working with small groups and developing pupils' language skills and vocabulary in whatever lesson the pupils are following. Class teachers and these support teachers plan together so that all pupils take a full part in the main activities. In an English lesson, pupils showed the good progress they were making when, for the first time, they had the confidence to share their ideas with the whole class. In other lessons, class teachers take into account pupils who might have difficulty understanding and speak slowly and clearly to them, often getting them to repeat words correctly. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher checked carefully that a child at an early stage of learning English could clearly distinguish and articulate the difference between *sixty* and *sixteen*.
23. Of the parents who returned the questionnaire, 90 per cent indicated that they considered that the school had high expectations of the pupils. 86 per cent indicated that they were happy that their children had the right amount of homework. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Teachers' expectations are generally high and homework is used satisfactorily throughout the school to support pupils' learning.

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

24. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and statutory requirements, including those for religious education, are met. However, the quality and range of the learning opportunities offered to the pupils are unsatisfactory. Teaching time and the time allocated to some subjects is less than that recommended and there is an imbalance, both within and between subjects. In some instances, time given to literacy, numeracy and music lessons is too long. Timetables leave small amounts of time on most days that are not used effectively. The total time allocated to teaching subjects such as science and physical education is not long enough and this has contributed to low standards. Swimming is taught in Years 3 and 4, but, as there are no lessons for older pupils, children do not all reach the required standard by the end of Year 6. Provision for design and technology has improved since the last inspection.
25. The curriculum for children in the Reception classes has improved since the last inspection when it had been identified as a weakness. It is now good and is appropriately based on the national guidance for

children of this age. Throughout the rest of the school, the *National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies* are well established. “Booster” support provides the opportunity for pupils to be taught in smaller groups. However, the skills pupils learn in numeracy and literacy are not being adequately developed across the curriculum and used in other subjects such as history and geography. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write or record work in these subjects and, as a result, pupils are not able to practise and consolidate their skills. The planned use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum has been identified by the school as an area for development. It is well used in information and communication technology. The school is making appropriate provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education for the older pupils. However, this is not sufficiently structured throughout the school and there is scant provision for teaching about the dangers of the misuse of drugs.

26. The curriculum provides equal access for all pupils. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported so that they make good progress in their language development. Support in class is well planned to enable all pupils take a full part in everything that is going on. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils and racial harmony is a very positive feature of the school.
27. In their questionnaire responses, 23 per cent of parents indicated that they thought there were not enough out-of-school activities for children. Inspectors disagree. Whitehall Primary makes very good provision for extracurricular activities in which many pupils from Reception class onwards take part. All the teachers are involved in running an unusually wide variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include choir, guitars, dance, drama, games, art, problem-solving and social skills. Pupils visit local places of interest to develop social skills and to motivate their learning. Visitors to the school also add a further dimension to the curriculum as pupils learn to appreciate the music and art of other countries. This enriches the curriculum as was demonstrated in the lively and stimulating African dance lessons seen during the inspection.
28. Supported by some joint funding initiatives through the Education Action Zone, the close links with the partner nursery school, which is on the adjoining site, ensures that children feel happy and comfortable and settle quickly when they start school. The school also has very good links with secondary schools and colleges. The good relationship with a local secondary school has involved pupils visiting the school and working on specific projects in science, history, art and music. This is reciprocated with secondary school students visiting Whitehall Primary to help with sports and games activities. The school welcomes students from local colleges. Both the pupils in the school and the students benefit from this arrangement. The school participates in local festivals and events. The very good links with a local charity promoting the arts, and with the city’s professional football, rugby and cricket clubs enrich the curriculum and pupils' social and cultural development.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and there is very good provision for pupils’ cultural development. The school is successful in instilling pupils with a growing sense of self-esteem and respect for others, for example through religious education lessons which include opportunities for children from different backgrounds to talk about their own cultures and beliefs. School assemblies include many jolly songs in which children, regardless of cultural backgrounds, enjoy and feel able to take part. Assemblies also include a moment of quiet reflection on a weekly theme. In the week inspectors were in the school, assemblies extolled to the school community the importance of being kind not just to friends but to people who you do not particularly like. Respect for the wide range of pupils' home experiences and beliefs is a strong feature of school life and makes a major contribution to the racial harmony that permeates the school. Whitehall Primary has well established links with several schools around the world through its participation in an international *Comenius Project*. This has helped to further raise children’s horizons, as well as facilitating teacher visits and exchanges.
30. The school’s provision for pupils’ social and moral development is very good and this is a significant reason for the high quality of pupils’ personal development and relationships. Both teaching and non-teaching staff offer very good role models. They show respect for the range of pupils’ values and beliefs, and emphasise the importance of honesty, sympathy and fairness in dealing with others. Pupils learn to appreciate the needs of others by helping raise funds for charities. Rules are clearly displayed in classes, making clear the reasons behind the rules and with an emphasis on the positive. The school works hard to raise pupils' respect for themselves and others in a wide range of ways. These include *Circle Time* discussions, where pupils have the opportunity to discuss any worries or concerns, in achievement

awards displayed on the school's "Wonderwall" and in school assemblies. As a result, pupils work well together in class and support each other. Pupils nominate their own "Special Person Of The Week" where they all write good things about a classmate, which helps raise self-esteem. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibility in the school, including as monitors or "special helpers" in class. Representatives are elected from each class to form the school council, which meets each week to tackle issues of concern and which runs a school shop. School councillors take their duties very seriously and during the inspection were seen devising a numeracy test for volunteers helping in the shop so as to ensure that pupils buying from the shops were given the correct change. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good overall, as they were at the last inspection. Staff know pupils very well and pastoral care has a high priority. Pupils feel nurtured and secure. The school has a designated medical room and there are good procedures for dealing with accidents and illness, and for administering medicines. Sufficient staff have first aid qualifications and these are kept up-to-date. The child protection policy and procedures are very good. The child protection officer is trained and known to staff and good links are established with the requisite agencies. Staff are now fully aware of the school's child protection procedures and this addresses the weakness identified in the last inspection.
32. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory with some issues needing attention. Staff have a good awareness of health and safety matters. Risk reviews are carried out, fire alarm and emergency lighting systems are regularly tested and fire drills are appropriately carried out. Cleanliness within the school is satisfactory and hazardous substances are well managed. The school health and safety policy is good, but certain procedures require clarification, for example responsibility for the kiln. The visitors' book is not diligently kept and there is no record of the boiler being inspected. All other inspections are in-date.
33. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. *Circle time*, during which pupils are free to express themselves, is used well to develop children's confidence and self-image. *Golden time* encourages them to make choices, while class discussions on topics such as racism broaden their worldly understanding. Most teachers keep records of pupils who have personal or social difficulties, but the pupils are not formally tracked as they progress through the school. To help younger pupils become more responsible and mature they undertake classroom duties such as tidying books and taking registers to the school office. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are given tasks that enable them to play an important role in the life of the school, including supervision of Reception playtimes. Older pupils go on residential visits and assist with charitable collections and this contributes to their social and moral development.
34. Individual education plans are very specific for pupils with special educational needs. They are monitored on a weekly basis and a clear record is kept of work carried out to meet the targets set out for pupils. Teachers and learning support assistants frequently remind individual pupils of their targets and give good praise and encouragement when a child is working well. This good practice contributes to the good progress made by children with special educational needs.
35. Since the last inspection the school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have been strengthened and are now good. The attendance policy is well structured and clear, and it is included in the prospectus. Parents are promptly contacted when they do not follow the correct procedures. Both attendance and punctuality are carefully checked, a late book is kept and applications for pupils taking holidays in term time have to be approved by the school. Incentives and rewards for good attendance are given to pupils and classes. Attendance records are accurately maintained and attendance figures are published in both the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. The school liaises closely with the education welfare officer where attendance problems are identified.
36. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' good behaviour. The behaviour policy suitably defines standards and expectations of good behaviour and reinforces the importance of positive

behaviour. It includes a balanced range of rewards and sanctions which are implemented by staff with consistency and common-sense. The policy is supplemented by school rules that are prominently displayed. Instances of unacceptable behaviour are closely monitored and a register of any racial incidents is maintained. Playtimes are well supervised, although the playground does include several areas where children can drift out of the direct sight of staff. There are suitable arrangements for managing break times when it is raining and these are effective. The school's procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good and no groups or individuals are unfairly treated or disadvantaged. The equal opportunities policy is good and the anti-bullying policy, which is properly inclusive, has very clear rules on bullying and racism. Pupils are fully aware that any signs of abuse, harassment or aggression will be dealt with firmly.

37. The school has developed good assessment procedures since the last inspection and this is a significant improvement as assessment was identified as a weakness last time. Each pupil has a portfolio with samples of work that are annotated, giving a clear indication of how much progress each child has made over time. The assessment co-ordinator keeps a careful record of the levels that pupils attain and tracks their progress effectively. High expectations are set for the amount of progress each child should make over the course of a year, and class and individual targets are set based on these records. These targets are shared with pupils and parents and regularly discussed at meetings. During lessons, teachers often remind pupils of their targets and this is especially effective for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are set achievable targets in individual education plans and these are monitored weekly with written records of what work has been carried out to enable the pupils to achieve their targets. This means that pupils with special educational needs usually make good progress.
38. The assessment co-ordinator analyses test results and tracks pupils' progress by ethnicity and gender. Weaknesses are identified and planning is reviewed in the light of this information. Test results in English and mathematics have been thoroughly analysed and weaknesses in science have been identified. The other subjects in the curriculum have yet to be formally assessed and weaknesses dealt with. Overall the school has good assessment procedures that track individual pupils. However the systems have been introduced very recently and are only just beginning to have an impact on standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents have a broadly positive view of the school. Relatively few parents attended the parents' meeting held before the inspection and only 15 per cent of parents returned the questionnaire, which is a lower rate of response than is commonly seen. A high proportion of those parents who responded expressed favourable views on their children's attitudes to school, the progress they make, the school's expectations of pupils and the amount of homework children are given. Inspectors agree with most of these favourable views. Teaching is notably better overall in *Key Stage 1* than *Key Stage 2* and this accounts for the better progress that children make in the younger classes. A significant number of parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed concerns about several aspects of the school's provision. They are unhappy about the school's leadership and management, the home/school links and the information they receive about their children's progress. Some parents said they found it difficult to approach staff with questions and problems, while others were unhappy with the range of school activities outside lessons. Inspectors disagree. The school is well led and managed and there is a very good range of activities which children of all ages can join in with after school. The school has worked hard to involve parents and keep them well informed, and inspectors judged school reports to be of very good quality.
40. Since the last inspection the effectiveness of the school's links with parents have continued to be good. Pupils' attainment and learning benefit accordingly. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of information it provides for parents, including that on pupils' progress, and this is now very good. Parents are invited to curriculum workshops and receive regular newsletters. The parents' noticeboard keeps them up-to-date with school activities and school policies are readily accessible. There are termly parents' evenings and staff make themselves available after school to speak to parents. The school/home group and ethnic minorities parent group provide further important links. Reports, which were identified as a weakness in the last inspection, are now very good. They give a very clear commentary on pupils' efforts and achievements and include individual targets for improvement in each subject. The governors' annual

report is succinct, but there are some omissions. It does not mention action on previous resolutions, election of parent governors or the professional development of staff. The prospectus is clearly written and attractively presented. It imparts very helpful information and meets statutory requirements. Attendance, behaviour, homework and the complaint procedure are very well covered. Parents are kept fully informed of the targets for pupils with special educational needs and they are encouraged to review these targets. They are encouraged to help set new targets on individual education plans and to discuss these with their children.

41. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. The school values the part families play in pupils' education and welcomes their interest in all aspects of school life. A number of parents help in classes and with activities, and more accompany educational visits. Parents attend celebratory assemblies. A breakfast club has been started to encourage further parental involvement. The Friends of Whitehall Primary School is active and fundraising and social events are arranged which meet parents' different backgrounds and expectations. Many parents help their children with homework. Pupils all have home/school reading books, although they are not completed by all parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs work very closely with staff in drawing up and implementing their individual education plans. There is a home/school agreement which properly emphasises mutual commitment, although some parents do not comply with their undertaking about attendance. Most parents understand the importance of the home/school partnership and the part they play in their children's education. However, a minority does not yet contribute fully to the learning process or to the life of the school and some parents could do more to support their children's education, not least by getting them to school regularly and on time.
42. Pupils learning English as an additional language are encouraged to continue to speak their first language and there are dual-language books, dictionaries and games in school. Links with their parents are good. Parents are encouraged to come into the school and talk about their culture and customs and become involved in activities and assemblies. The staff are available for consultation by the parents on three afternoons a week. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. The school receives funding from the Education Action Zone, which they are using for whole school in-service training to further develop their equal opportunities and anti-racism policies.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. She is a strong leader, and very committed to providing a high quality learning environment for pupils. She has high expectations for everyone, including herself, and a determination to succeed in raising standards in all areas. Her vision is clear to all within the school, although not fully appreciated by some parents, and her commitment to improvement is reflected in action already taken, and in future plans. For example, a thorough review of provision for early years has resulted in well-motivated children who are eager to learn, able to make decisions, and who understand what they need to do to improve their own achievement. This is a significant change of culture, and shows very good improvement since the last inspection. It also reflects the school's goals of creating independent learners, encouraging mutual respect between children, and ensuring that all children feel valued and secure. The headteacher is ably supported by the senior leadership team, who play a major part in the running of the school. This team is somewhat overloaded with responsibilities due to the difficulties the school has had in recruiting permanent experienced staff to take on key middle management roles, but the members of the team fulfil their duties enthusiastically and effectively. The quality of subject leaders varies but is strong in areas such as special educational needs, literacy and early years. Some leaders are fairly new to their responsibilities and have had insufficient time to make a significant impact on the curriculum or standards.
44. Procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching are very good and firmly embedded in school practice. The senior leadership team and other key staff monitor teaching through direct observation and work sampling, and the headteacher has a good knowledge of what is happening in classrooms. Strengths are acknowledged and shared with others. Where there are weaknesses, these are dealt with in a direct way and advice is provided. Very effective written documentation has provided a firm basis on which to make judgements. For example, last year a *Presentation of Work* policy was introduced. Under the policy, a team of six members of staff monitor seventeen individual pupils' work trays against

specific criteria. Each pupil is given written feedback. At the end of each half term, class teachers are given feedback of strengths and points to develop. The impact of this can be seen in greatly improved marking, a dramatic improvement in the presentation of pupils' work, and a good start in involving pupils in improving their learning through evaluation and feedback. All these procedures require considerable time and effort to implement but are very effective. However, the emphasis on providing written work samples from Reception children is proving to be unduly burdensome for teachers and is creating unnecessary pressure for children to be recording activities on paper when it is not appropriate for their stage of development. The school's strategies for appraisal and performance management are firmly in place and are closely linked with extensive regular systems of monitoring and evaluation. Class teachers are seen teach around six or eight times each year. This is much more thorough monitoring of teaching and learning than is commonly found.

45. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very efficient and knowledgeable. He has a clear budget plan and uses the money well. Relevant resources are purchased to enable pupils with special educational needs to fully access the curriculum and all of the resources are well organised, labelled and stored. The special educational needs co-ordinator meets regularly with the learning support assistants to ensure that pupils are fully supported and that appropriate strategies are used to ensure that the pupils make good progress. He has introduced good monitoring systems for pupils' individual education plans and knows all the pupils well.
46. The governing body, although broadly supportive of the school, is a relatively inexperienced team. Although they meet their legal requirements, governors do not have a sufficiently detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, they are still not sufficiently knowledgeable to take a strategic view in shaping the direction of the school. Restructuring of committees, more systematic monitoring of aspects of the life of the school, and in-house training workshops have all helped governors to develop their role. However, they do not currently understand how to achieve the school's main target of raising standards.
47. The school development plan is a crisp, concise document which clearly states the school's goals. These goals and targets are entirely appropriate and considerable progress has been made in achieving them. For example, standards have risen in numeracy and literacy, and the quality of teaching has improved significantly in Reception classes and *Key Stage 1*. This reflects the usefulness of the plan in its precision and focus. The plan is realistically costed with, for the most part, measurable success criteria.
48. The management of finances is effective, and educational priorities dictate financial decisions. The school uses its financial resources wisely. Investment in staff training has been a major factor in raising pupils' achievement. The school has a good understanding of the principle of "*best value*", and is well placed to evaluate financial decisions and the work of the school against similar institutions. Money carried forward is earmarked for particular projects, including an additional classroom. All grants are used appropriately, and particularly effectively for pupils with special educational needs. Funding and other resources from the Education Action Zone have been used very effectively, for example, in reviewing the curriculum for Reception children. Time was spent with the neighbouring nursery school's staff to ensure that provision for these children was firmly based on the early learning goals and took account of what children had already achieved. This has also helped to create a smooth transition for children from the Limes Nursery to Whitehall School. Clerical staff make an important contribution to the smooth running of the school. The office is managed well, making appropriate use of technology.
49. The school is strongly committed to further improvement and has very good capacity to succeed, based on a shared vision by headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, governors and most staff. Staff turnover has been high in recent years and there are currently many members of staff on temporary contracts. However, there are sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and a strong team of learning support assistants who provide good support for pupils. There are good systems in place for the induction of newly-qualified teachers, and the school provides many placements for trainee teachers. However, additional support for new teachers is not always provided at the time when it is most needed, for example, in establishing and reinforcing the school's expected standards of behaviour to ensure an ordered learning environment in class. Neither is the expertise of the release teacher who works with these classes used to best advantage. She is obliged to work from others' planning on different subjects each week. As a result, there is little continuity of learning for pupils.

50. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall. The oldest pupils work in classrooms that are very cramped and hinder learning. Little variation in the layout of these rooms is possible and, as a result, some pupils struggle to see the whiteboard at the front of the class. A class in Year 1 has no room of its own, although the school does its best to compensate for this by making good use of the available space. The hall is dimly lit and is not adequate for the needs of such a large school, particularly for physical education requirements. Changing facilities are also inadequate. The library is satisfactory, but the school has identified the need to improve this facility as soon as it is possible to do so. The provision of learning resources is unsatisfactory overall. Some subjects and areas, such as special educational needs, music and religious education are well provided for, but there are insufficient tools for design and technology. Resources for literacy and numeracy are adequate only because they are based in a single classroom in each year group and classes swap rooms so that they can share the resources. Displays are generally used well in classrooms to celebrate pupils' work and create a stimulating environment for learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. Inspectors have identified the following interrelated and overlapping key issues for action. In order to improve the standard of education provided to pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science by
 - (i) providing more opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects, for example through more extended writing and recording work
 - (ii) improving the quality of teaching in *Key Stage 2*
 - (iii) remedying weaknesses in the curriculum
 - (iv) encouraging pupils to learn their multiplication tables
 - (v) gaining better co-operation from parents in improving attendance and punctuality
(*paras 13, 15-16, 24-25, 41, 66, 74, 77, 80-82, 92, 96*)

- (2) Improve the effectiveness of teaching in *Key Stage 2* by
 - (i) providing more support to teachers who need help in managing pupils' behaviour
 - (i) reviewing timetables to ensure that lessons are of an appropriate length
 - (ii) ensuring that teachers benefit from training where there are gaps in their subject knowledge
 - (iii) making more consistent effective use of a plenary session at the end of lessons to help pupils appreciate and consolidate what they have learnt
(*paras 15-17, 20-21, 69, 76, 82, 85, 101, 105*)

- (3) Improve the curriculum offered to pupils by
 - (ii) increasing the amount of teaching time
 - (iii) reviewing timetables to ensure that lessons are of an appropriate length
 - (iv) ensuring that all subjects, including science, history, art and physical education, are taught often enough and in sufficient depth
 - (v) providing more opportunities for writing and recording work in all subjects
 - (vi) extending opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills in other subjects
(*paras 4, 20, 24-25, 66, 70, 80-82, 88, 92, 96, 99, 101, 105*)

- (4) Continue to work to involve more parents in supporting their children's education through
 - (i) ensuring that children attend regularly
 - (ii) ensuring that their children arrive at school on time
(*paras 6, 13, 41*)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan. (*Paragraph references are in brackets*)

- A. Extend provision for drugs awareness in personal, social and health education (*para 25*)
- B. Broaden the involvement of governors so that all are more fully able to take part in monitoring the effectiveness of the school and in the setting of school priorities (*para 46*)
- C. Review playground arrangements to eliminate occasions where pupils can be out of the line of sight of adults (*para 36*)
- D. Ensure that areas such as the kiln and boiler area are included in health and safety arrangements (*para 32*)
- E. Develop plans to improve the school buildings to ensure that they best meet children's educational needs (*paras 50, 100, 105*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

80

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	14	23	27	6	3	0
Percentage	9	18	29	34	8	4	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point. Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	484
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	117

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	133

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils learning English as an additional language	114
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	52
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	46

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for 2001, which is the most recent year for which national comparative data is available.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of <i>Key Stage 1</i> for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	32	25	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	18	17	20
	Total	38	38	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (61)	67 (48)	74 (65)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	26
	Girls	17	18	21
	Total	35	39	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (65)	68 (66)	82 (58)
	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 <i>Key Stage 2</i> for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	36	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	22
	Girls	22	18	22
	Total	42	36	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (61)	54 (55)	66 (72)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	20	19
	Girls	16	20	19
	Total	29	40	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (41)	60 (44)	57 (59)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	16
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	48
Indian	25
Pakistani	47
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	0
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	71

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	9	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	6	0
Other minority ethnic groups	6	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)	24
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	228

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	957,962
Total expenditure	945,981
Expenditure per pupil	1,512
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,707
Balance carried forward to next year	59,688

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	7

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	480
Number of questionnaires returned	73

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	38	7	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	55	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	49	14	4	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	56	4	3	7
The teaching is good.	42	40	3	0	15
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	43	20	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	40	10	11	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	47	4	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	22	51	15	11	1
The school is well led and managed.	22	43	15	11	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	42	7	4	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	34	15	8	16

(figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding)

The proportion of returned questionnaires was quite low (15 per cent), and each questionnaire represents more than one percentage point.

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

52. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in provision for children in Reception. The school has thoroughly addressed the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, and provision is now consistently good. Teaching in all of the areas of learning is good, and effective systems of observation and assessment ensure that planned activities for all children are suitably challenging, taking account of children's ability, and are firmly based on the curriculum guidance for the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them. Reception staff plan together very effectively and share expertise well. There is also good liaison with teachers in Year 1. Classroom assistants support children well and lead group activities effectively.
53. There are three Reception classes and all children join them in September. There is a smooth transition from the neighbouring nursery, with which many good links have been established. These links have been made even stronger with the help of the Education Action Zone which has provided extra funding and resources. The age range of the classes is broadly similar. Children have an induction period of part-time attendance in their Reception class for about four weeks. Children's attainment when they join Reception varies, but is well below average overall when compared with what is expected nationally. About a third of the children have very significant weaknesses in communication skills. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well during their time in Reception, but are nevertheless unlikely to meet all of the early learning goals by the end of their *Foundation Stage* year.

Personal, social and emotional development

54. Strong priority is given to this area through activities which develop children's self-esteem, confidence and social skills. For example, in 'I Can Do' sessions, children are helped to feel successful. They share achievements and are encouraged to participate in activities such as paying each other compliments, thus raising their awareness of others in the group. Through well thought out planning systems, children are given appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for their own choice of activities. This allows staff to interact purposefully with individuals and groups, and to monitor children's progress with regard to independence and social skills. Some children communicate well with each other during their chosen activities, but a significant number play on their own and need adult help to encourage them to talk about what they are doing. Relationships between adults and children are very good. Any minor disputes between children or instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively, but in fact these are rare. Most children have very short concentration spans but activities are designed to meet their needs by being of a suitable length to sustain their interest. Thus any restlessness only occurs when children are unable to concentrate further. A minor weakness in this area is the use of snacktime, which currently does not promote independence or responsibility and is in marked contrast to the aims in all other areas of provision. It is heavily teacher managed and children do not take an active role in preparing or serving food and drink.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Children's language skills are very weak when they join Reception. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing children's communication skills through focused activities, structured play and spontaneous events such as talking about objects that have been brought in to show adults and each other. All adults use good questioning techniques to encourage speaking and listening skills, for example, 'Who are you phoning?' (in the role-play area) or 'What happens when you add white to your paint?'. A few children respond with a full sentence, but others use isolated words and gestures to convey their message. Occasionally, whole class plenary sessions, which are planned to encourage group discussion, are unsuccessful because children are too tired to contribute, or they simply need a change of focus.

Children enjoy stories and handle books well. A few children are beginning to recognise familiar words, and use them in writing, but most children's knowledge of sounds and letters is poorly developed. Good opportunities are provided for writing, for example, in role-play settings for writing messages, or in more formal sessions such as name-writing or handwriting practice. Staff monitor children's progress carefully through close observation, and help children to understand how they are getting on and what they need to do next. Language sessions are very well organised, with appropriate activities, for example, 'writing' and sending letters in the Post Office, or reinforcing the reading and writing of simple words using a *look, cover, write* method.

Mathematical development

56. Teaching in this area is effective overall. Planned sessions use elements of national guidance well, and many other spontaneous opportunities are taken to reinforce counting and mathematical language. Particularly good use is made of number rhymes and songs with actions, to demonstrate the concepts of adding and taking away. These are also accompanied by clear charts to help children recognise numerals. Activities are organised in large and small groups, ably led by both the teacher and learning support assistant. Children are grouped appropriately according to their stage of development, and many children are more confident to respond in a smaller group. For example, one group who had to thread beads were given a strict time limit to do so which effectively kept them focused and ensured that the number of beads they would have to count was manageable. There was much interest in who had the most. Most children count confidently to 10, and a few are able to carry on to 15. Higher attainers understand simple comparison of size and length and use vocabulary such as *most, least* and *same* appropriately. Mathematical opportunities are provided in other structured activities such as sorting wooden and metal instruments in music sessions. However, there is some inappropriate use of written recording where children are not ready to transfer their practical skills onto paper. The task is too abstract for most of the children to understand and complete.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. When they enter Reception, most children's knowledge and understanding of the world is less well developed than usually found. The planned programme for this area of learning is broad and relevant with many activities linked to personal, social and emotional development, language and mathematical development. Children are encouraged to explore and examine objects, for example, taking turns to sort toys into mains or battery operated sets. Children are encouraged to investigate construction materials and to use appropriate tools. They have recently made musical instruments from reclaimed materials and are excited about the possibility of playing them in their next music session. Children are enthusiastic to use computers and many do so confidently. They are familiar with terms such as *icons, log on* and *print* and enjoy sessions in the computer suite. Independent use of computers in classrooms supports their learning well. The outdoor area is spacious and used well for a wide variety of activities.

Physical development

58. Physical development is well planned, and children have many opportunities to use a wide range of tools and equipment. Large muscle development and manipulative skills are given equal emphasis and are developed well through a good variety of activities both in the classroom and other areas of the school. Children enjoy their outdoor sessions, where good adult interaction encourages them to develop skills such as throwing and catching. Children play well together, and two boys demonstrated their initiative in using their tennis racquets as cricket bats because this gave them more chances of hitting the ball backward and forward to each other.

Creative development

59. Children have many opportunities to express themselves through art, music and imaginative play. Displays and photographs show the wide variety of art techniques that children have experienced. For

example, children confidently mixed paints to recreate the colours in various pictures by Monet. The results were very effective. Role-play areas are well equipped and children enjoy playing in them. Adults join them whenever possible, which helps children to extend their storylines. Music is a strong feature of the programme for this area and children handle instruments with care. They know the names of percussion instruments and many are able to play a rhythmical accompaniment to simple songs. Singing is used to support this and the other areas of learning.

ENGLISH

60. Work seen during the inspection shows that by the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are below average. However, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is very good and standards are improving. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Over recent years, the results of the national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 show attainment to be well below average when compared with schools nationally and when compared with the results of similar schools. Standards in reading by the end of Year 2 improved steadily between 1996 and 1999 before falling in 2000. They improved again slightly in 2001. Measured over the same period, standards in writing for this age group were lower than those for reading. However, the underlying trend shows a small improvement and in 2001 standards in writing were closer to the national average than at any time in the past. Test results show that, despite a dip in 2001, results since the last inspection have improved at a similar rate to the national pattern.
61. Girls attain slightly higher standards than boys, but the difference is only in line with the pattern found nationally. Pupils of differing abilities, including those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds are included effectively in all aspects of provision for the subject. These pupils also achieve well as they progress through the school. Throughout the school, but particularly over the four years of *Key Stage 2*, the high turnover of pupils contributes to the low results. Pupils whose education is interrupted by moving schools midway through the key stage generally do less well than those who benefit from continuity.
62. Attainment in speaking and listening is below average. Teachers frequently provide good opportunities for pupils to speak and listen, especially during the shared reading and writing part of many literacy lessons. For example, pupils in Year 2 achieved well when they retold the story of Rumpelstiltskin in their own words. Some pupils are confident speakers and are eager to answer questions and share their ideas. This is because their teachers encourage them to speak and provide them with prompts to help them speak correctly. They also celebrate appropriately when pupils respond successfully. However, many pupils struggle to speak in sentences. They find it very difficult to sustain what they want to say and explain what they are thinking without significant support from their teachers and teaching assistants. Support for those pupils for whom English is an additional language is good and these pupils are achieving well.
63. Attainment in reading is below average, but standards are higher than those for speaking and listening and for writing. Standards in reading are improving rapidly in Years 1 and 2. More able pupils read fluently and speak with enthusiasm about the books they read. Many lower attaining pupils are also enthusiastic readers. They talk about the characters from the stories they read and predict, often correctly, what might happen next based on their previous reading. These pupils work hard to read words they find difficult without help, usually by sounding out the initial letter or combinations of letters in words. This is because teachers frequently provide them with good opportunities to develop this skill. The school has recently introduced a Reading Recovery programme for the lowest attaining pupils in Year 1. This is helping to raise standards and the pupils involved are now achieving well.
64. With the exception of a few able pupils, most children in Years 3 to 6 are weak readers. They are often hesitant when they read and many lower attaining pupils do not have strategies that are developed sufficiently well for them read words they find hard. Many pupils read without expression and do not change the tone of their voice to bring alive the characters in the stories they read or to place emphasis on important points. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are proud of their reading records. The teachers, parents, carers and the pupils themselves often write comments in the records explaining the progress that pupils are making. However, many pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not enjoy reading and are less enthusiastic readers. They tend only to read when asked to do so by their teachers and too rarely read independently or for pleasure.

65. Attainment in writing is below average. During the shared writing part of lessons based on the principles of the *National Literacy Strategy*, pupils learn well, especially in Years 1 and 2. For example, pupils in Year 1 responded well to their target, set by their teacher, to include full stops and capital letters and “finger spaces” between each word when they wrote about their ‘Magic Gardens’. However, pupils’ basic writing skills are not established sufficiently well for them to sustain their independent writing to the standard expected. In some lessons, in Years 3 to 6, pupils who are eager to learn during the shared writing part of the lesson, write very little when they are expected to work without the direct support of their teacher or a teaching assistant.
66. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes in English lessons. These include writing poetry, reports, letters, instructions and presenting arguments. However, samples of pupils work show that relatively little sustained writing is undertaken in other subjects. This restricts the opportunities that pupils have to use their writing skills in lessons other than English. The quality of pupil’s handwriting is improving, especially in activities dedicated to this purpose. However, their handwriting is often not as good when it is not the specific focus of the work they are doing.
67. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in *Key Stage 2*, but in *Key Stage 1* the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers are good at sharing the intended outcomes of lessons with their pupils and at explaining what they will be looking for when they mark the work. This helps pupils to clearly understand what is expected of them. Teachers also make good use of the final part of lessons to assess the progress pupils have made. This part of lessons is used most effectively when teachers involve pupils in assessing their own work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher asked pupils to explain if they thought they had met the learning objective that was shared with them earlier. She also asked pupils to share the poems they had written, with partners, to assess the quality. Pupils provided short, written, evaluations for each other and commented on the fairness of their partners’ views. This did much to ensure that pupils understood what they had learned.
68. Throughout the school the quality of teachers’ marking is very good. They frequently provide pupils with detailed information about how good their work is and exactly what they need to do to improve it further. This helps pupils to understand clearly how well they are doing. Some pupils enter into a productive dialogue with their teachers, responding to comments by explaining how they intend to improve their work. Arrangements to assess pupils’ attainment and progress are good. Although such arrangements are relatively recent, teachers now make good use of the information they collect from their assessments to decide what to teach next and to identify any weaknesses in children’s knowledge or understanding. Teachers also set individual targets for pupils’ learning. This process works particularly well in Years 1 and 2, where it is helping to motivate pupils to work hard.
69. Usually pupils behave well in lessons and show good attitudes to their work. Just occasionally, in *Key Stage 2*, poor behaviour has a detrimental effect on pupils’ learning. This occurs when teachers do not apply the agreed procedures for managing pupils’ behaviour effectively or there is not enough additional support to meet the needs of pupils.
70. The use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils’ learning is satisfactory. Pupils use computers to modify and improve their writing. However, there are still too many lessons in which teachers miss opportunities for their pupils to use computers. Homework is used effectively. Pupils have annotated sheets accompanying each piece of homework explaining the learning objective and what the teachers will be looking for when they mark the work. This helps pupils and parents and carers to understand what is expected.
71. Provision for the subject benefits from the strong and effective leadership of the subject leader. With the headteacher and senior leadership team, she has worked successfully to improve the quality of teachers’ planning and to ensure that the introduction of the *National Literacy Strategy* is effective. Despite the continued weakness in test results, improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has worked effectively to address the issues concerning the provision for English identified in the last report. There are more opportunities for younger pupils to take part in role-play and for pupils throughout the school to participate in drama and other planned opportunities for speaking and listening. There are also more opportunities for younger pupils to write independently and for older pupils to redraft their work and undertake extended writing. This is partly due to the successful introduction of the *National Literacy Strategy*.

MATHEMATICS

72. The school's mathematics results in the national tests have risen since the last inspection, although only in line with the national trend. The Year 2 and the Year 6 results in 2001 were well below both the national average and that of similar schools. However, the proportion of more able pupils attaining the higher level was close to the national average. The results indicate that those pupils who were at the school throughout their primary education made satisfactory progress in *Key Stage 2*, when taking account of their prior attainment in Year 2. There is no significant difference in the relative performance of boys compared with girls at either Year 2 or Year 6, but results, particularly at the end of Year 6, are generally depressed by the number of pupils who have their education interrupted by changing schools partway through their education, several of whom do less well than the children who benefit from more stability. In lessons seen, there was no apparent difference in the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language.
73. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 2 are in line with national expectations and pupils are achieving well. More able pupils understand the relationship between addition and subtraction, can add and subtract numbers up to 100 and have a good understanding of place value. Lower attaining pupils are confident in adding and subtracting lower numbers, have learned all addition facts to ten and are beginning to apply this to numbers beyond ten. The majority can use addition and subtraction to solve money and measures problems. Pupils are extending their knowledge of counting in tens to understanding rounding two digit numbers to the nearest ten. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well because they are given appropriate help in lessons.
74. Standards in the current Year 6 are below those expected nationally, although if reflected in the end of year tests, this will nevertheless be a significant improvement on the results for 2001. Pupils understand different written methods of multiplication, but because they do not know their multiplication tables by heart, they make slow progress in their calculations. More able pupils competently handle decimals and fractions, and use a range of metric units of measurement. The work in pupils' books shows that they are making sound progress overall. They have covered all required areas in mathematics. They name and classify two-dimensional shape, find the area and perimeter and measure and calculate angles. More able pupils recognise axes of reflective symmetry, plotting co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Lower attaining pupils are helped to understand different methods of addition and subtraction. Pupils with special educational needs work at an appropriate level with place value and shapes. All pupils have learnt the basic ideas of probability, collecting data and using different graphs to record it.
75. Overall, the teaching observed was satisfactory. It was very good in *Key Stage 1*. In over half the lessons, teaching was good or better and in two lessons it was excellent. A key feature is the impact of the *National Numeracy Strategy*, particularly in the consistent use of the three-part lesson. Mental and oral starters to mathematics lessons are generally used well. In the best lessons these actively involved many pupils, especially using equipment such as individual white boards so that individuals or pairs could attempt answers to problems. Teachers plan effectively and set work at different levels to meet the needs of the pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where planning for the needs of more able pupils was identified as a key weakness. Nevertheless in some lessons the match of tasks to pupils' different abilities was still insufficiently refined. In some lessons, for example, the learning of lower attaining pupils could be better supported through more practical activities. Pupils with special educational needs often benefited from the additional adult help and discussion they were given in small groups within lessons. Overall, pupils respond very well to the routine of group work. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' abilities and ask appropriate questions in whole class sessions so that all pupils are involved. Teachers give clear explanations. However, pupils tend to be too reliant on the teacher and this limits their ability to apply or explore ideas independently. Pupils are encouraged to use the correct terms and teachers emphasise mathematical language.
76. Planning includes what the pupils are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. This is written on the board and shared with the pupils. As a result, a clear focus is given to the lesson and pupils understand the purpose of the work they are doing. A sound foundation of basic skills is established in Year 1, where

pupils learn to double numbers, add three numbers together and describe and classify two and three-dimensional shapes. Teachers ask challenging questions, assess pupils' knowledge, and encourage them to think for themselves. Consequently, pupils are attentive and eager to answer questions. In the best lessons, the pace and challenge are very good and teachers use different activities and time targets to ensure that the majority of the class stay focused and work quickly. Where lessons were less successful, teachers failed to manage the poor behaviour of some of the pupils, which slowed the pace, interrupted continuity and meant that pupils made insufficient progress. However, in most lessons, good class management and positive reinforcement led to the majority of pupils' good behaviour and good progress. Learning support assistants are well informed and mostly well deployed, both in behaviour management and to reassure and guide.

77. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. They use games to motivate pupils, and vary activities in order to repeat facts and still maintain interest. In one excellent session, Year 2 pupils made very good progress in learning how to round numbers to the nearest ten. The teacher made very effective and imaginative use of resources, which held pupils' attention and made the lesson fun. Throughout the school, pupils take pride in their mathematics exercise books and present their work carefully. The teachers' very thorough regular marking of pupils' work, with extra guidance and praise, helps pupils to make progress and understand their learning. Pupils respond well to this, correct their work and often write answers to the teachers' questions. Although some examples were seen of numeracy skills being used in other subjects, opportunities for pupils to practise using mathematics across the curriculum are not sufficiently planned for and developed.
78. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, has monitored planning and pupils' work and is implementing new planning sheets. The procedures for assessing pupils are good. Test results are analysed to identify areas for development. Pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. This information is used well in order to match the level of pupils' work closely to their needs. Target setting for individual pupils is helping to raise standards. The subject has not been well resourced, but shortcomings in resources are made up for through sharing between the classes in each year group. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in mathematics through the timetabling for each class of a regular teaching slot in the computer suite, although little use is made of classroom computers for learning in mathematics. Despite the fact that results remain low, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in *Key Stage 1* where pupils now benefit from a very high standard of teaching.

SCIENCE

79. In the 2001 national tests, pupils at the end of Year 6 attained standards that were well below those expected when compared with all schools and those considered to be similar. The number of pupils who attained higher standards were also well below those nationally and below those of similar schools. This represents a significant drop in standards from the previous year, and over the last five years standards have fluctuated quite widely. There are no national tests in science for pupils at the end of Year 2 and attainment is judged through teacher assessments. These assessments show that the number of pupils attaining the expected levels was well below those nationally, and below those of similar schools. The number of pupils who attained higher standards were well below those nationally and those of similar schools.
80. When they enter school, most of the children have knowledge and understanding of the world which is well below that expected of five year olds. Although standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average, pupils make satisfactory progress in *Key Stage 1*. By the end of Year 6, pupils do not achieve as well. This is because there is too little science taught in the school, particularly in *Key Stage 2*. Pupils in *Key Stage 1*, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in *Key Stage 2* make insufficient progress and the overall standard of attainment at the end of Year 6 is further depressed by the number of pupils who have their education interrupted by changing schools partway through their education.
81. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to label parts of the body and understand about the function of the skeleton. They are able to carry out simple experiments, such as finding out how ice melts, and can discuss the properties of various materials. They use relevant scientific vocabulary, such as *rough* and

smooth and are able to accurately identify materials such as plastic and wood. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop their skills of classifying materials and use their knowledge to describe various rocks. However, there is little recorded work to show how other scientific knowledge is developed and this adversely impacts on the progress that the pupils make. Some pupils are able to use a thermometer and record an experiment, but too little scientific knowledge is taught and pupils are unable to use relevant scientific vocabulary. During Years 5 and 6, pupils carry out more scientific investigations but the range of science recorded is narrow and work is of a low standard. Too little science is carried out to ensure that previous knowledge is consolidated and used to investigate new scientific ideas. For example, themes such as earth and space or the functions of parts of the body, are not covered in depth and so pupils move from one topic to another without really adequately understanding basic ideas.

82. The teaching of science was satisfactory in the lessons seen, but unsatisfactory over time as too little science is taught and as a result pupils do not make as much progress over time as they do in individual lessons. In lessons seen in *Key Stage 1*, science was taught well, with staff demonstrating a good knowledge of the subject. Plans were clear and the pupils knew what they were expected to learn. Lessons were made interesting and pupils were fully involved. This was especially evident in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were using good vocabulary to describe a variety of materials. Teachers had appropriately high expectations of good behaviour and for achievement in lessons. As a result, pupils responded well and make good learning gains. In *Key Stage 2*, teachers do not always have sufficient knowledge to teach the necessary ideas to enable pupils to make enough progress. However, in some lessons expectations are high and very well organised teaching means that some pupils make good learning gains in individual lessons. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson, where the teacher set very high expectations for recording an experiment and pupils responded very well. Past learning was consolidated and pupils were able to make predictions and record their findings on a table, using relevant mathematical skills.
83. There is currently no co-ordinator for science and this has had an impact on the standards achieved throughout the school. Work has been carried out by the assessment co-ordinator in identifying the weaknesses in science and the school has built up an accurate picture of the shortcomings in the science curriculum. However, standards are unlikely to rise until there is someone in place who can give priority to advising and supporting the staff and ensuring that there is sufficient coverage of science within the school, and that this is recorded in dedicated science books so that the pupils may refer to past learning. There are sufficient resources to teach science, but these are not used effectively to ensure full coverage of the subject. The strengths identified during the last inspection have not been maintained and there has been insufficient improvement since that time.

ART AND DESIGN

84. There was insufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement on standards of attainment in art. Very few lessons were seen, only a limited sample of work was on display, and there was no portfolio of examples to show the pupils' work over time. Discussion with older pupils showed that they knew the name of some famous artists and facts about them: for example, that Monet liked painting gardens. Discussion also reflected an appropriate range of activities during their time in school and quite adventurous projects in the later years. For example, pupils have made batik banners entitled '*A Sense of Place*', and made masks for participation in the local carnival.
85. The small amount of teaching seen during the inspection was largely unsuccessful in consolidating previous learning or in moving pupils forward in the subject. This was due either to unclear learning objectives, or the slow pacing of activities which led to a deterioration of behaviour. Therefore, the majority of pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Where lessons were satisfactory, teaching built on earlier work prepared in sketchbooks that enabled pupils to make sound progress in applying their skills to create a portrait showing a particular expression.
86. The subject leader is new to the post and has rightly identified the school's strengths in creating displays which reflect cultural diversity and using the expertise of visiting artists. Weaknesses in drawing at *Key Stage 2* have been correctly identified as a priority for development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are close to those expected for pupils' ages and pupils of different abilities achieve very well. Design technology was judged to be a key area of weakness in the last inspection. Improvement since that time is good. Pupils are provided with more opportunities to evaluate their own products and the good practice already in the school is shared. However, there is little evidence to indicate that the range of materials and tools with which pupils work has increased sufficiently.
88. Throughout the school the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are helped to extend their vocabulary and speaking and listening skills, as, for example, when Year 2 pupils used words such as *chassis* and *axle* in taking apart model vehicles. More able pupils produce very accurate designs of the stick puppets they intend to make. This is linked effectively to pupils' work in science when pupils list the properties of the materials they intend to use. They also record accurately the instructions for how their puppets will be made. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well and show good attitudes to their learning when they discuss how lightweight materials might be strengthened when constructing frameworks for shelters. Their learning is extended effectively by the skilful use of questions by their teacher. There are good opportunities for discussion when they consider how their designs meet the objectives for testing that they have identified. These pupils have also made slippers as part of a project on footwear design, showing appropriate understanding of the requirements of footwear for different purposes. Following the production of initial plans, pupils discussed how they might need to modify their designs to eliminate weaknesses. They also considered how their products might be marketed. More able pupils record their findings in considerable detail at every stage of development. They are helped greatly by the guidance for writing provided by their teachers. However, this aspect of their work is developed less well by lower attaining pupils. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils learning in the subject. However, many pupils use a digital camera confidently to provide a record of the development and results of their work.
89. Effective leadership provided by the subject manager is contributing to the improvement evident since the last inspection. He observes colleagues teaching and provides advice to support their continued improvement. Arrangements to assess the attainment and progress of pupils have also improved through the use of nationally recommended guidance for this process. The subject also makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development and to their speaking and listening skills through the frequent and well-planned opportunities for pupils to discuss their work together.

GEOGRAPHY

90. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are below those expected for pupils' ages. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils of different abilities generally make similar progress, although those with special educational needs who receive additional support, achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, arrangements to assess pupils attainment and progress were judged to be unsatisfactory. Nationally available guidance for these processes is now followed closely and the arrangements are satisfactory.
91. The quality of teaching and learning in the small number of lessons observed was good. Teachers throughout the school provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and their use of maps. In Year 6, teachers successfully link pupils' work about rivers to their work in science. Pupils consider the properties of surface drainage typical of different soil types. More able pupils use such terms as *permeable* and *impermeable*, explaining correctly what each means. A high proportion of other pupils are far less secure in their knowledge of these features. However, these pupils learn well and benefit from good teaching. For example, their teacher provides good quality maps and pictures for pupils to plot the courses taken by rivers, taking into account the nature of the terrain.
92. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils' learning in the subject. The analysis of pupils' work also contains few examples of writing about their studies in geography. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to record what they have learned in the subject. The current arrangements of teaching geography and history in alternate terms means pupils experience relatively long gaps between periods of study for these subjects. This makes recalling what they have learned difficult, particularly for lower attaining pupils.

93. The school has a teacher responsible for promoting international links. These are displayed in the school, effectively enhancing pupils' knowledge and understanding of places, such as Belgium, Crete, Italy, Jamaica and South Africa. The subject leader monitors standards and provision in the subject. She has a clear view of the strengths and areas for improvement, recognising that pupils do not write enough about their work in the subject. Her work has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching in the subject.

HISTORY

94. By the end of Year 2, standards in history are close to but below national expectations. At the end of Year 6, standards are below the level expected. However, throughout the school pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Those of different abilities, those with special educational needs, and those from different ethnic backgrounds are included effectively in all aspects of provision for the subject. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. In last inspection, arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress were judged to be unsatisfactory. Nationally available guidance is now followed closely and these arrangements are satisfactory.
95. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils in Year 2 benefited from excellent teaching and learnt very well when their teacher related the events of the Great Fire of London to the recent bush fires in Australia. This helped pupils to understand the magnitude of the fires, having seen them on television. Very good opportunities were created for pupils in this age group to discuss their knowledge of events surrounding the fire and present knowledge imaginatively during role-play. They did this well and these experiences made a positive contribution to their speaking and listening abilities.
96. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils learning in the subject. However, pupils in Year 6 search the internet when undertaking research for their work on Ancient Greece. More able pupils use the information they find effectively to provide a basis for writing a "travel agents guide" to the country. Overall, however, there is very little writing about history evident in the sample of pupils' work, indicating insufficient opportunities for pupils to record what they know about the periods they study. The current arrangements of teaching geography and history in alternate terms means pupils experience relatively long gaps between periods of study for the subject. This makes recalling what they have learned difficult for lower attaining pupils.
97. The subject leader has only recently taken on the temporary responsibility for managing history pending the appointment of a permanent postholder. She has undertaken an audit of provision and of the standards achieved by pupils. She has a clear grasp of the strengths and areas for development but has not had sufficient time to make an impact on raising standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

98. Pupils attain standards in information and communication technology that are higher than those reported at the time of the last inspection and broadly in line with national expectations. This represents very good achievement and good improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use computers confidently, word processing their work, and changing fonts and colours. Pupils in Year 1 are able to use an art programme to produce pictures and drawings, confidently printing them and saving their work. By the end of Year 6, pupils have experience of using spreadsheets, can record using a variety of formats and log on to the internet. They have also had experience of control technology and are able to use a programmable "roamer".
99. There were few information and communication technology lessons seen during the inspection, although the new computer suite is used well to support learning across the curriculum. Every week, each class has an English and a mathematics lesson in the suite and one other to be used for another curriculum area. A particularly good feature of the teaching is the dedicated learning support assistant who works with all of the pupils in the school. She is very knowledgeable and is able to help the pupils make good progress during lessons. Pupils are very enthusiastic about using the computers and work well together. There are many examples of the digital camera being used in other areas of learning. For example, some of the pupils' work contains photographs of activities in physical education that have been annotated to show what the

pupils have learnt. The lessons observed were at least sound with many good features. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and encourage the pupils to work together on the computers. Full use is made of the computers in the suite, but computers in classrooms are not used effectively to support learning. In many lessons, classroom computers were not used at all. However, where they were utilised, pupils were able to use relevant programmes to support their learning, for example, in mathematics. Good use is made of specialist programmes to support pupils who have special educational needs, and they quickly become independent and confident.

100. The subject leader for information and communication technology has overseen the setting up of the new suite well. A consultant advised on the best siting for the suite but although it is in the best available place it is still less than ideal. There is much disturbance from pupils going past as it is sited in an open-plan area. The data projector is difficult to see as there is no proper projection screen and the area is cramped. However, provision is much better than at the time of the last inspection and pupils rarely lose concentration because of the accommodation difficulties.

MUSIC

101. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 play loud and soft sounds on unpitched percussion in a controlled way and follow the conductor's signal appropriately for a crescendo. They know that symbols can represent musical sounds. Teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. In the best lessons, teachers made very good use of the time available which ensured that pupils were well focused, alert, and purposefully engaged at all times. Pupils knew what they were intended to learn and made every effort to achieve this result. Skilful use was made of pupils' interest, and an activity concerned with long and short sounds concluded with a scientific investigation into whether these sounds could be linked to metal or wooden instruments. The time available for lessons was sometimes inappropriate however, with some teaching slots as short as twenty minutes and some taking as long as an hour.
102. Only two class lessons for older pupils were seen during the inspection, so it was not possible to make a judgement on standards in *Key Stage 2*. However, pupils have a good sense of rhythm and this was evident in their singing both in assemblies and singing club, particularly in the three-part performance of '*Kookaburra*'. Pupils' singing is not generally tuneful and their enthusiasm varies. They are often expected to begin without a suitable, clearly pitched note, which means that the opening verse of each song is not harmonious, and occasionally too low or too high for pupils to cope with.
103. Discussion with pupils from Year 6 reflected a broad musical curriculum throughout their time in school. Some pupils are learning instruments, and a performance of '*Edelweiss*' on the clarinet during assembly was expressive and accurate. Pupils are encouraged to take part in music festivals and concerts, and enjoy listening to different types of music. The subject leader is new to the post and has had insufficient time to monitor the subject, but she has recognised the need for a scheme of work that is more easily accessible for teachers without musical expertise.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. In the lessons seen, standards in physical education were in line with national expectations for pupils' ages. This is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection. Only one lesson in games skills was seen in *Key Stage 1* in which pupils improved their throwing and catching. Pupils in *Key Stage 2* achieve well in dance and pupils in Year 5 were seen moving rhythmically to the music of the 50s, building up sequences of appropriate moves. Year 6 pupils responded enthusiastically to inspired teaching of African dance by a visiting troupe. Individuals performed confidently and the whole group participated with vigour and obvious enjoyment. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged and helped to participate, and all lessons are fully inclusive. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the standards identified at that time have been maintained.

105. Some lessons are poorly timetabled. In part, this is because of the limited space available for physical education with all having to share the school hall which is also used for other purposes. Where sessions are too short, pupils make little progress as there is insufficient time to develop the lesson or use the apparatus. Pupils lose interest and their behaviour deteriorates which results in further time being lost. Teachers set a good example by being appropriately dressed. However, not all pupils wear suitable clothes for physical education. Pupils understand why they have to warm up before exercise and lessons generally end with a suitable cool down period.
106. The curriculum includes all aspects of physical education including, in Year 6, such outdoor pursuits as sailing for those that go on their residential visit to the Isle of Wight. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have swimming lessons. This is not repeated for the older pupils and, as a result, not all of them are able to swim 25 metres by the age of eleven. There are very good extracurricular sporting opportunities for all pupils. For example, there is a very popular games club for Years 1 and 2 and African dance for Reception children and those from the neighbouring Nursery. Older pupils take part in physical education club, dance, and football. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues and is developing a new scheme of work. Pupils take part in sports and dance festivals and there are productive links with the local secondary school, with students coming in to help groups of pupils in games lessons. The school also has productive links with local professional football, rugby and cricket clubs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. Pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Most of the religious education within the school is carried out through discussions and talking with visitors and children, and there is little recorded work. However, during lessons pupils throughout the school demonstrate a good knowledge of other religions and are able to understand the importance of various celebrations within other faiths. The school make good use of the knowledge that the pupils bring to school to share beliefs and traditions. For example, in a Year 5 class the teacher made very good use of two pupils who are Muslims to tell the class about their faith. This additionally made a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development as these pupils were treated with great respect by the rest of the class who asked relevant and appropriate questions in order to deepen their own understanding. The two pupils who led the session were very assured and one read from her holy book with clarity and confidence.
108. Pupils in *Key Stage 1* learn about special days and begin to understand about stories from other religions. In *Key Stage 2*, pupils discuss religious beliefs, for example the Hindu teachings on reincarnation and the Circle of Life. They are able to compare the beliefs of Hindus and Christians, and are beginning to understand about religious symbolism. Pupils are very positive about religious education and value the opportunities they have to learn first-hand about the beliefs of other people.
109. All of the lessons seen during the inspection were in *Key Stage 2*. The teaching ranged from poor to excellent, with most of the lessons being satisfactory or better. The teachers show sound subject knowledge and teach the pupils to respect the views of others and to learn from a wide variety of cultures. Where teaching was poor, strategies for classroom management were inadequate and disruptive behaviour hindered learning. Analysis of work shows that the small amount of written work is well marked, and pupils take pride in their writings and drawings. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She manages the subject well, ensures that the good resources that the school has are used effectively and gives good support to her colleagues. Many visits are arranged to support the curriculum for religious education. For example, the pupils visit the Hindu temple and learn stories from the Hindu religion. Many visitors come into school and parents are welcomed in to share their knowledge with the pupils. Good use has been made of the digital camera to record some of the activities that the pupils have participated in. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the standards identified at that time have been maintained.