



**OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION**

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Drayton

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 131638

Headteacher: Mr. S. Whitehouse

Reporting inspector: Mr. S. H. Ward
9271

Dates of inspection: 22 - 26 January 2001

Inspection number: 230250

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sipson Road West Drayton Middlesex
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr. S. McWhinnie

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9271	Selwyn Ward	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9561	Husain Akhtar	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents
21927	Christine Curtis	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Equal opportunities
23315	Irene Green	Team inspector	Music	Foundation Stage
23288	Marianne Harris	Team inspector	English Art	Special educational needs English as an additional language
3600	Maggie Howell	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education	
27709	David Major	Team inspector	Science Design technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cherry Lane opened as a primary school in January 1999 as a result of the amalgamation of the previously separate infant and junior schools. With 452 pupils, including 72 who are currently part-time, Cherry Lane is much bigger than most primary schools. There are broadly similar numbers of girls and boys, and about one in seven pupils is from an ethnic minority background. There are few pupils who have English as an additional language who are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs is above average, although the number with statements of special educational need is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Standards have improved considerably since the amalgamation. Very effective leadership and management of the school has resulted in very substantial improvements in teaching so that children make good progress throughout the school. The school is very effective and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good overall, with much very good teaching in Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage.
- Children make good progress in their learning.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- The *National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies* have been used effectively in raising standards.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- Most pupils behave well, get on very well with one another and have a positive attitude to learning.
- There are good procedures for looking after pupils' welfare.

What could be improved

- Children are not doing well enough in art.
- Too many children miss school because their parents take them on holiday in term time.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is not good enough.
- Some lessons are timetabled as too long.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE AMALGAMATION

The then separate infant and junior schools were both inspected in September 1998, immediately prior to amalgamation. The junior school was judged to have required special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education. Improvement since amalgamation has been very good. The headteacher and governing body have very effectively focused the school's priorities on tackling the weaknesses identified in the junior school inspection, and many of these former weaknesses, including teaching and learning and pupil's attitudes and behaviour, are now among the strengths of the primary school. The standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved substantially in all subjects since the amalgamation and the higher standards which were being attained at Key Stage 1 at the time of amalgamation have been maintained.

STANDARDS

Throughout this report, references to *Key Stage 1* and the lower school 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 the upper school and *Key Stage 2*, when pupils are aged 7 to 11. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception year, who enter the school aged under five, are considered to be in the *Foundation Stage*.

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	*	E	E	C	well above average A
mathematics	*	D	C	A	above average B
science	*	D	D	B	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

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

The information above shows that standards achieved in the tests in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average in English, below in science but in line with the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results in English were average. They were above average in Science and they were well above average in mathematics. Pupils' work seen in English and science during the inspection, although judged still to be below the national average, showed clear evidence of improved standards with pupils now making good progress and achieving the levels that would be expected from their attainment at Key Stage 1. The school has set challenging targets for further raising standards in English and mathematics. In other subjects, standards are in line with or close to national expectations with the exception of art where standards remain low. Published data only covers the two years since amalgamation and so does not indicate trends over time. Comparison with the data available from the junior school inspection which immediately preceded the amalgamation show a substantial improvement in standards in all subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, both in lessons and around the school. Behaviour in most classes is very good, although there is still some unsatisfactory behaviour in the older classes. There have been six exclusions over the past year, which is above average.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils get on well with each other and with adults. They are considerate and mutually supportive. They work well collaboratively and in most classes they listen to what others have to say.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Many children miss school by being taken on family holidays during term time. Punctuality is satisfactory, although there are a few pupils who are regularly late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	very good	good

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 93% of lessons seen. It was good or better in 61% of lessons, with 19% of lessons being very good or excellent. This is a considerable improvement since amalgamation, particularly in respect of the former junior school. Cherry Lane has adopted and follows the *National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies* and teaching of both English and mathematics are very good overall, although some literacy and numeracy lessons are too long which restricts opportunities to do more work in other subjects and means that time is not always used to best effect.

The effective teaching is well planned to ensure that time is well used. Children know what it is they are expected to learn and teachers' clear explanations help ensure that children settle quickly to the tasks set them. Teachers know and manage pupils well and organise lessons so that children are fully involved. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations, set work which is appropriately challenging for pupils of different abilities, including brighter pupils, and maintain a brisk pace. Pupils learn best when questioning is used to draw out learning points and teachers encourage them to extend their answers. Learning support assistants are usually well used. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. When teaching was less effective, teachers were not sufficiently clear about what they expected children to achieve. Less effective lessons lack pace or are pitched at an inappropriate level. In some, too much teacher talk means missed opportunities for pupils to become more involved in the lesson. In a few lessons, teachers had inadequate strategies for dealing with the misbehaviour of a small minority of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	National Curriculum requirements are met for infants and juniors, and the curriculum for under fives meets legal requirements. The <i>National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies</i> are making an effective contribution to raising standards, although some literacy and numeracy lessons in Key Stage 1 are too long.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are well supported and helped to make good progress.
Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language	The school has many children who speak English as an additional language but very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. There is satisfactory provision for pupil's cultural development but provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Older pupils are able to take on some responsibilities in the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good provision for pupils' safety and welfare. Information from assessment is appropriately used to raise attainment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide very clear educational direction for the school. Most staff with subject management responsibilities fulfil their roles well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The governing body is closely involved in the strategic management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and this has contributed to the considerable improvements in teaching and in the progress children make. The school has adopted the principles of "best value" to evaluate for itself what it does well and what it might do to improve.
The strategic use of resources	School budgeting is linked well to a clear development plan which targets resources towards raising standards and ensuring improvement.

The school buildings and site offer good facilities. There are sufficient and spacious classrooms, with additional spaces for specialist and small group teaching. The school has good playground space and playing fields. The Reception classes do not have their own play area and are located apart from the Nursery, although the school has plans to improve this.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • The teaching is good • Children make good progress and this is well reported. • The school is approachable and works closely with parents • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best • Children are helped to become mature and responsible • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less reliance on temporary staff • More consistent homework • Reports could be more informative.

Inspectors agreed with the parents' favourable views of the school. Inspectors shared parents' concerns over the difficulties that the school has had with staff recruitment although they recognise that Cherry Lane is working with the local education authority and other schools in the area to improve the situation. Homework seen during the inspection was appropriately used, although it was used more consistently in the younger classes. The majority of parents were satisfied with reports, but some thought the school could do more to provide them with information on how their children were doing and what they needed to do to improve. Inspectors agreed that although school reports were satisfactory, they could be improved to keep parents better informed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Throughout this report, references to *Key Stage 1* and the lower school 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 the upper school and *Key Stage 2*, when pupils are aged 7 to 11. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception year, who enter the school aged under five, are considered to be in the *Foundation Stage*. Schools are compared as against 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.
2. In the national tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English were close to those expected nationally but above those of similar schools. Results in reading were better than in writing. In the Key Stage 2 tests, standards in English were below those expected nationally but were in line with those of similar schools. In mathematics, Key Stage 1 test results were below national expectations but were in line with those of similar schools. Results in the Key Stage 2 tests were in line with national expectations and well above those of similar schools. The school has set challenging targets to further improve standards in English and mathematics.
3. Although there is no national test in science at the end of Key Stage 1, comparisons between schools can be made based on teacher assessments. On this basis, results were below the national average but above the average for similar schools. The position was similar in the national tests in science at the end of Key Stage 2.
4. Test results indicate that boys are achieving better results than girls in Key Stage 2. The school is aware of this phenomenon, which runs counter to the national trend, and is exploring means of boosting the performance of girls. Inspectors were unable during the inspection to identify any obvious gender bias among teachers or in the use of teaching materials which might account for the relative underachievement of girls.
5. Work and lessons seen in English, mathematics and science during the inspection reflected the standards achieved in the 2000 tests. In art, standards seen during the inspection were below those expected of pupils' ages in both key stages but in all other subjects standards were in line with or very close to the nationally expected level.
6. Many pupils arrive in school attaining standards that are well below average and the number on the special needs register is well above the national average, although the number with statements is broadly in line with those found nationally. Although there is an above average number of pupils at the school learning English as an additional language, few pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress.
7. The standards being achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 in all subjects are very substantially improved since the time of the amalgamation.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and their good attitudes to the school contributes positively to the quality of education and the progress which they make. Attendance is well below the national average and is therefore unsatisfactory. The attainment of some pupils is adversely affected by their irregular attendance.
9. Most pupils are developing good work habits and are enthusiastic about lessons. They listen to their teachers' instructions carefully and take part in discussions eagerly, particularly in *Circle Times* where they are discussing feelings and welfare issues like how to avoid and resolve conflict. Most persevere well in lessons, making an effort to get all of their work done. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to

the support that they receive and work hard to improve their learning. Very good relationships and good teaching have positive impacts on pupils' attitudes.

10. Most pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and at play. They are aware of school rules and understand the difference between right and wrong. They treat the school's property with care. There were six fixed period exclusions during the past year. These were for appropriate reasons and correct procedures for exclusions were followed. Some parents expressed their dissatisfaction with the standard of behaviour in older classes. Inspectors found that behaviour is mainly good. There are, however, a small number of pupils, mostly in Years 5 and 6 whose work habits are not well developed and whose behaviour is sometimes not good enough and can lead to the disruption of a lesson.
11. Pupils are generally considerate to each other and adults, holding the door open for those following behind. They are polite and confident when speaking to visitors. All children, including the youngest, show respect for the opinions of others in *Circle Time* activities. All groups of pupils work together well, happily sharing resources. Relationships are very good. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. Pupils respond well to opportunities for personal development, willingly undertaking duties such as classroom helpers, taking registers to the office and participating in the School Council. They carry out their duties responsibly.
12. The overall picture has improved, substantially in the upper school, since amalgamation. For example, pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to work and relationships that were unsatisfactory at the time of the amalgamation are now at least good. Pupils' attendance, however, remains unsatisfactory. Whilst illness accounts for most of the authorised absences, a significant number of absences are because many parents do not take pupils' attendance seriously enough. For example, a significant number take their children on holidays during term time. Unauthorised absence is slightly above the national average, as either parents do not provide an acceptable reason for absence or they exceed the agreed limit of ten-days holidays during term time, and the school appropriately treats these absences as being unauthorised. Most pupils arrive on time in the morning. Although there are a few children who arrive late, this does not disrupt the orderly start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Part of the focus of the inspection was on literacy and numeracy, so that priority was given to observing the teaching of English and mathematics. All classes were seen being taught these subjects. In most cases, inspectors were able to observe full lessons and in judging teaching, inspectors sought evidence that pupils were learning and making progress.
14. The teaching at Cherry Lane is good. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 93% of lessons seen. In 61% of lessons seen, it was good or better, and in 19% of lessons it was very good or excellent. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 is very good overall. The high proportion of good and very good teaching represents a very substantial improvement since amalgamation, at which time rather more than half the teaching in the junior school was judged to have been unsatisfactory. Cherry Lane has responded well to tackling weaknesses in teaching identified in the junior school inspection immediately prior to amalgamation, and its improved systems for monitoring of teaching have been effective. This is a particularly noteworthy success given the difficulties which this and other schools in the locality have had over the recruitment and retention of permanent teaching staff.
15. Throughout the school, teaching is well planned to ensure that time is well used. Learning objectives are shared with the children, so that they are aware from the outset what it is they are expected to learn. Teachers' clear explanation to pupils also helps to ensure that children settle quickly to the tasks set them. Permanent staff know their pupils well and are able to pitch lessons at the appropriate level to ensure that children are engaged and to stimulate their enthusiasm, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Good knowledge of the pupils also contributes to the very effective classroom management which is a feature of teaching through most of the school.

16. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations, set work that is appropriately challenging for pupils of different abilities, including brighter pupils, and maintain a brisk pace. Questioning is used well to draw out learning points as well as to recap previous work. Teachers encourage pupils to be confident speakers, so that, for example, pupils answering mental arithmetic questions extend their answers by explaining their methodology to the rest of the class. Good use is made of assessment in planning lessons and ancillary staff are well used to support learning in the classroom.
17. Where teaching was less effective, lessons were less well paced. In some cases, this was due to an excessive period being allocated in the timetable. Numeracy sessions in the infants, for example, sometimes ran to 80 minutes, which tested the attention span of even the keenest learners in the class. In some lessons, too much teacher talk meant missed opportunities for pupils to become more involved in the lesson. In some lessons taught by temporary staff, lack of knowledge of the pupils and lack of confidence in National Curriculum levels meant that lessons were occasionally pitched inappropriately for the class. In a few lessons, teachers had inadequate strategies for dealing with the misbehaviour of a small minority of pupils.
18. Marking is well used to assess pupils' progress and in delivering constructive feedback to pupils. Although several parents expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of homework, homework seen during the inspection was appropriately used, although it was more consistently used in the younger classes than at the top of the school.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively. The school has a dedicated teacher for each key stage and they are well deployed, both in supporting pupils within class and when withdrawing them for specific lessons. The *Reading Recovery* programme in Key Stage 1 is particularly effective in raising standards in reading. Work is planned appropriately for each individual child and the school has a very good system for sharing information about the progress each child has made during lessons. Feedback sheets are used to record the work individual pupils have experienced and what they have learned. This information is used to plan the next lesson and inform all of the adults who work with the pupils what has been achieved. Expectations for learning and behaviour are made clear and pupils make good progress.
20. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive little extra support in school as the most have a good command of the language. The majority of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are in the Foundation Stage and learn from the other children and from the good adult role models within the Nursery and Reception classes.

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

21. Prior to the amalgamation of the two schools, statutory requirements for the teaching of several national curriculum subjects at Key Stage 2 were not being met. This is no longer the case. Cherry Lane has constructed a long-term plan to ensure that all subjects are covered and that the curriculum is now sufficiently broad at Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has made significant progress in developing medium and short-term plans and these are now of a very good quality. A notable feature is the way in which these plans are regularly evaluated by the teachers and then monitored by senior members of staff. This helps ensure that all pupils in the same year group have access to comparable experiences. The advances in curricular provision have been supported by a significant amount of advice and training, and by the acquisition of new resources notably in information and communications technology and religious education. Requirements for providing a daily collective act of worship are met.
22. In the last two years, the school has quite rightly placed a high degree of emphasis on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in information and communications technology and religious education. This emphasis has been very effective in raising standards in basic skills. Current timetabling however means that sometimes too much time is allocated to individual lessons in English and mathematics resulting in some loss of pace in learning. Insufficient opportunity is also available for developing skills of a high enough standard in art.

23. The curriculum available to pupils under five is very good and pupils experience a wide range of appropriate activities covering all aspects of the Foundation Curriculum. Good use has been made of the two *National Strategies* on literacy and numeracy to ensure that pupils acquire these basic skills at an appropriate rate. At present, whilst literacy skills are used extensively across the curriculum, there are insufficient planned opportunities to develop numeracy skills in subjects such as science and geography.
24. There is equal access to the curriculum regardless of gender, ability or race. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, often supported by very good use of ancillary staff to help both individuals and groups. Pupils learning English as an additional language access the curriculum in line with other pupils even though there is limited targeted support for these pupils at present.
25. Cherry Lane offers a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities including a choir and sporting activities. Instrumental tuition is available to Key Stage 2 pupils whose parents pay for it. The school is providing a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. Recently introduced *Circle Times* are beginning to have a noticeable impact on the way pupils listen and respond to each other. They learn skills of co-operation and respect. Assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' personal and social education. For example, at the Friday lower school assembly both effort in work and in personal skills were sensitively reinforced through the awarding of badges. All staff present the pupils with good role models, showing care and concern for all around them and creating a positive and co-operative ethos in classrooms. The school has developed appropriate policies for sex education and for drugs education and substance abuse.
26. Links with the community are satisfactory. Some members of the community come in to talk to the pupils and share their experiences such as what it was like living in the war. There are positive links with the local church and also links with other local places of worship from other faiths. There are satisfactory links with pre-school groups and with local secondary schools. The school is currently taking part in a local initiative to raise educational standards in the area which will include examination of the issue of girls' standards at the end of Key Stage 2, where they achieve less well than boys.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Whilst some opportunities are built into planning in subjects such as art, music, dance and religious education, these are limited. Insufficient time is given currently to helping pupils to develop the skills of quiet reflection. In assemblies, the impact of music chosen is lost because pupils talk whilst it is playing and opportunities to reflect on the meaning of the songs sung are restricted because pupils move out of assembly whilst singing. Insufficient time is usually given to reflecting on the stories told or the prayers offered. Some opportunities for experiencing a spiritual atmosphere are created, for example through the use of candles and incense during the Chinese New Year Assembly. In a Year 6 *Circle Time*, pupils were asked to talk about an item in the news which had caused them distress. In this instance they were beginning to demonstrate that they have the capacity for reflection and some pupils were able to make sensitive contributions.
28. Moral education is good. A positive approach to behaviour management, consistently applied by all staff, ensures that pupils are very clear about what is right and wrong. Class rules are negotiated with pupils and displayed within the room. Sanctions and rewards are well known to pupils and are well respected by almost all pupils. Pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds work and play harmoniously together. Assemblies are used well to promote moral development through the use of carefully chosen stories, for instance on the themes of persecution and tolerance. Pupils are encouraged to think of others' needs through raising money for a local charity for the homeless.
29. Provision for social education is also good. The quality of relationships throughout the school is good and pupils work well in groups within lessons and on the playground. Older pupils are able to take on responsibilities for looking after younger pupils during wet play and for assisting in the library. All pupils take it in turn to act as monitors within their own classrooms and they generally carry out their responsibilities very sensibly. The school has an established School Council elected from the classes within Key Stage 2. Elections are carried out annually with candidates giving speeches and all pupils casting their vote in democratic style. This is a good example of citizenship education. The delegates take their responsibilities seriously, consulting their "*constituents*" for their opinions. Recently they have drawn up proposals for new playground and wet playtime games and for re-painting toilets. Proposals were costed and a representative attended a Parent Teachers' Association meeting to ask for funding. The pupils keep their

own minutes of the meetings. During Year 6 pupils have the opportunity for a residential trip which also contributes to their social education.

30. Cultural development is sound. Respect for other cultures is well established in the school. The wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds represented in the staff team provides pupils with a very good example of harmonious relationships. There are examples of bilingual books and signs throughout the school and a range of festivals from different cultures is marked in assemblies, supported by a wide range of appropriately chosen artefacts and music. Some use is made of visiting theatre groups and pupils make trips to local places of worship from different faiths. There are insufficient opportunities however for pupils to explore their cultural heritage, for example through looking at art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school takes good care of its pupils. This is a significant improvement in the upper school since amalgamation. Staff know the pupils well and generally make good use of procedures to assess and respond to their individual needs. The school is a safe and secure environment and pupils are generally very well supervised at work and play. Many pupils benefit from a well run Breakfast Club.
32. Cherry Lane has a responsible attitude to matters of child protection and health and safety. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection. He is knowledgeable and keeps the staff well-informed about child protection issues. Well-established links with other agencies ensure that pupils receive any necessary support. Regular health and safety checks are carried out to identify and deal with any potential hazards and systems are in place to ensure that any day-to-day issues can be dealt with immediately. Teachers also ensure that pupils are learning about safe working practices in class, and issues about personal health and safety, including sex education and drug awareness, are dealt with across the school, both in *Circle Time* and by receiving talks from the local police and fire officers.
33. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and emergencies are good. The school's welfare assistant knows pupils and families well and warmly attends to pupils who become ill or who need support. She efficiently keeps the required records about accidents and liaises with parents as necessary.
34. Procedures for assessment are at least satisfactory in all subjects, with particularly effective procedures in English. This is a significant improvement since the amalgamation in the case of the upper school where assessment was judged to have been weak. Assessment of children's learning while they are under five is very good. Baseline assessment is undertaken in the first half term of their entry into the Reception class and the results are used to identify and address their individual needs. Use of assessment information in planning the next stage of pupils' learning is satisfactory. Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is developing and is satisfactory at present. Senior managers sample pupils' work. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator is enthusiastic and *'forecast'* sheets have been introduced in English and mathematics to keep a record of pupils' progress. Setting of improvement targets for pupils and tracking their progress have started. Initiatives like *Reading Recovery* and booster classes for older pupils, grouping them by ability in English and mathematics, and extended writing schemes help pupils to improve their academic performance. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are used well and help them to make good progress. Arrangements for monitoring pastoral concerns and pupils' personal development are good, with weekly staff meetings incorporating an opportunity for a *"child alert"* discussion.
35. Cherry Lane has worked hard to achieve the good behaviour of its pupils. A revised behaviour policy is in place and it works well. Teachers are well trained in behaviour management and any disruptions in lessons are well contained in most classes. Initiatives like *Circle Time*, the anger management project and referrals to specialist agencies are effective in modifying pupils' behaviour. Bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour are not raised as an issue by parents or pupils. Any incidents that occur are dealt with effectively.
36. Procedures for promoting good attendance are satisfactory but the school does not obtain satisfactory attendance because many parents do not co-operate fully in keeping absences to minimum. For example, although it is discouraged by the school, many parents take family holidays during term time. Registration

procedures are efficient and records of attendance are properly maintained. Absences are promptly followed up, in some cases contacting home the same day, and regular contact with the education welfare officer is maintained. Good attendance is well acknowledged and pupils like the rewards. For example, they enjoy the good attendance celebration at weekly assemblies where the best class takes custody of “*Fluffy*” the teddy bear.

37. Individual Education Plans contain specific targets for literacy, numeracy and behaviour as appropriate. Occasionally these targets can be too general however and do not focus precisely on what each child needs to do next. Pupils progress is tracked well, especially in *Reading Recovery*, and this ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents are generally supportive of the school’s work and their involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory. This picture is similar to that reported in the lower school at the time of the amalgamation, but it is a much-improved picture in the upper school where links with parents were judged to have been unsatisfactory.
39. Parents are satisfied with the teaching and consider that the school has high expectations of pupils. They are satisfied with the support for their children’s personal development. They are happy with the ways in which the school works with them. Some parents are unhappy however about the information they receive on their child’s progress. The annual progress reports whilst informative, do not give sufficient information about what pupils should be doing or what their parents can do to help improve academic standards. In between the reports, there is little written feedback to parents about their children’s progress. Some parents are less satisfied with the amount and consistency of homework. Although inspectors found during the inspection that pupils usually take work home and that the amount is appropriate, more helpful information could be provided to parents on homework expectations as well as on the range of extracurricular activities on offer.
40. Links with parents are effective. Parents’ opinions have been solicited, for example, through a recent questionnaire and the governors fulfil their responsibility and publish a prospectus and report to parents. There is an attractive brochure for Nursery parents. The prospectus does not contain national comparators for the statutory tests at present. Overall, parents’ involvement in the education of their children at the school is satisfactory. They attend school activities such as celebration assemblies. Parents’ participation in social and fund-raising events is good. Attendance at parents’ evenings is good but it is only satisfactory at formal and other consultative meetings. There is an active and supportive parents and teachers association that also runs a toddlers group at the school. Some parents assist in the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in assessing their children’s progress. Whilst parents are supportive of the school, a significant minority of parents do not fully co-operate with the school in keeping pupils absences to a minimum.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management have successfully taken the school through a difficult period of transition, following the previous inspection reports on the former infant and junior schools, the amalgamation of the two schools and a high turnover of teaching staff over the past two years. It has been very effective in tackling the serious weaknesses identified in the junior school inspection report and has developed an effective whole school approach to school improvement that is having a positive effect in raising standards.
42. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and has been successful in developing a strong team ethos, involving all staff and governors in school improvement initiatives. He has a clear vision for the school, shared by all members of its community, which is well expressed in the school’s revised aims and is being fulfilled. He has a calm approach to management, offering considerable support to his colleagues, which gives them confidence to develop their own practice. The headteacher shows a strong commitment to creating and maintaining a caring ethos in the school, and helps pupils to establish and maintain good

relationships. He works very closely with an experienced deputy headteacher to provide strong, purposeful leadership, which has enabled the school to improve rapidly during the last two years. Many of the weaknesses identified at the time of the amalgamation have now become strengths of the school.

43. Good delegation ensures an effective contribution from staff with management responsibilities. Four co-ordinators each lead the work of teaching teams across two adjacent year groups and are members of the senior management team. They provide good support to colleagues and ensure that whole school policies are implemented to achieve consistency across the school. Most teachers have subject co-ordinator responsibilities and have been given a clear brief, which includes producing an annual action plan to target priority developments within their subjects. The school has made very good use of local authority advisors to support and develop the work of subject co-ordinators. Although co-ordinators monitor teachers' plans and many have looked at the standard of recorded work in their subjects, they have as yet been given few opportunities to observe or work alongside colleagues in classrooms. The professional development of teachers has been well supported by annual appraisal interviews. The school has recently introduced a new system, drawing on national guidelines, to set clear targets for teachers linked to improving pupils' performance. The school also has good procedures in place for the induction of new staff, and works effectively with partner institutions to provide initial teacher training opportunities for students.
44. The governing body provides good support for the school, and is eager to help it improve further. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is thoroughly involved in all forward planning and development initiatives through the work of its strategy group. Governors bring a wide variety of expertise to their role and have established good working partnerships with the school management, the teaching staff and local authority support teams. They work effectively in committees, and have achieved a great deal during the last two years in dealing with issues relating to curriculum, finance, staffing and premises. The curriculum committee oversees a two-year rolling programme of policy review and implementation, receiving presentations and reports from co-ordinators at meetings. The premises committee has helped the school bring about repairs and improvements to its buildings. Governors also hold regular meetings with local authority representatives to discuss progress made on key issues, and determine how additional support can be optimised. The governing body has become increasingly involved in the analysis of data from pupils' tests and assessments, to track the progress of different groups of pupils and set challenging targets for future year groups. It now plays the role of "*critical friend*" to the school very effectively.
45. The school development plan is a comprehensive and well-structured document, which provides a good basis for managing school improvement. It contains clear priorities and appropriate targets aimed at raising standards. The review of subject development plans, and discussions involving all teaching staff help to identify targets for the next year which are mostly related to the curriculum. Specific time and cost allocations are attached to each target, to ensure sufficient priority is given to each one. The main emphasis has been on implementing new schemes of work, and ensuring that teachers use them effectively when planning a series of lessons on each topic.
46. Cherry Lane has a committed and hard-working staff whose experience and expertise is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. During the last two years, there has been a high turnover within the teaching staff. Despite some difficulties in recruiting replacement teachers, a problem shared by most schools within the locality, the school has been successful in making some good appointments and giving less experienced teachers good opportunities to take on responsibilities. A good number of support staff provide very effective support to teachers during lessons. Educational priorities are very well supported through the school's financial planning. Very good use has been made of additional grants, for example, to provide effective literacy support programmes for lower attaining pupils. The money identified for special educational needs is spent effectively to support the progress of pupils with special needs. Money from the school budget is used where necessary to fully support pupils with special educational needs.
47. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership for special needs within the school. She co-ordinates an effective team of teachers and classroom assistants to ensure that pupils are well supported and make good learning gains. The school has many children who speak English as an additional language but very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Some are among the most able pupils in the school. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress. There is a commitment throughout the school to ensure inclusion and equality of opportunity for all.

48. The school has effective systems for managing its finances. It has been wise to exercise prudence when setting its annual budget, allowing a substantial carry forward figure to be set aside for repairs to the buildings. The use of new technology in the management of the school is developing, and now includes the analysis of information about pupils' performance to inform target setting. Cherry Lane has good accommodation for the needs of the curriculum. There is a specialist computer suite and a spacious library, in addition to two large halls and additional classroom spaces. There is no separately enclosed outside play area for pupils in the Reception year, but this need is being addressed within the school development plan. Learning resources are good for most subjects, and are very good for information and communications technology and religious education.
49. At the time of the amalgamation, leadership and management within the junior school was judged to be poor. The report highlighted poor governor involvement, inconsistent practice within the school, ineffective development planning and unsatisfactory resource levels. The school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues that were raised. The leadership and management is now a very strong feature of a rapidly improving school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to improve the standard of education provided to pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Increase the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in art (*paras 5, 22, 82-85*)
 - (2) Seek closer co-operation of parents in ensuring that their children do not miss valuable school time by being taken out of school for holidays during term time (*paras 8, 12, 36*)
 - (3) Provide greater opportunities for reflection through assemblies and through identifying moments of awe and wonder in subjects of the curriculum, including science, music and art (*para 27, 79*)
 - (4) Review the school timetable to ensure that literacy and numeracy lessons more closely match the recommended length and that more time is made available for other subjects, including art (*paras 22, 63, 71*)

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 Provide more opportunities for the use of numeracy in other curriculum subjects (*para 23, 71, 79, 89*)
- B Review school reports to make them more helpful to parents (*para 39*)
- C Ensure that the school's homework policy is consistently applied and is explained to parents (*paras 18, 39*)
- D Improve the behaviour of the minority of disruptive children in Years 5 and 6. (*para 10, 17, 79*)
- E Ensure that the school prospectus fully meet legal requirements. (*para 39*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	18	42	32	4	2	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. 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)	416
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	136
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	98
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (lower school)

Number of registered pupils in final year of the infants for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	32	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	29
	Girls	28	31	30
	Total	54	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (92)	89 (92)	91 (98)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	27
	Girls	27	25	29
	Total	52	52	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (92)	80 (98)	86 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (upper school)

Number of registered pupils in final year of the juniors for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	22	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	23	29
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	37	36	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (55)	65 (61)	80 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	25	26
	Girls	12	14	16
	Total	36	39	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (63)	71 (65)	79 (61)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	3
Indian	16
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	2
White	285
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	6	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	417

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-00
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	£
Total income	919,755
Total expenditure	866,243
Expenditure per pupil	1917
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	53,512

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

410

Number of questionnaires returned

102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	1	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	50	12	3	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	53	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	56	38	2	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	47	7	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	32	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	44	7	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	49	6	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	46	16	0	16

(figures may not sum to 100 due to

rounding)

Other issues raised by some parents

The school is too dependent on temporary staff.

School reports do not give enough information about well children are doing.

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

51. The school makes good provision for children under five. Very good curriculum planning together with very effective teaching ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs make good progress. Children enter the Nursery with very limited skills, particularly in language and personal, social and emotional development. Strong priority is given to developing these areas, and children make considerable progress during their time spent in the Foundation Stage.
52. There is a strong partnership between Nursery and Reception classes, and very effective teamwork by all staff ensures that all children's needs are met well. Detailed planning, based on thorough knowledge of the Early Learning Goals and the stepping stones towards them, enables all children to progress at an appropriate individual rate. Thus, children achieve well during the Foundation Stage, although their attainment when they leave Reception remains below average overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The majority of children have poorly developed social skills when they first come to the Nursery. The consistently very good relationships between staff and children helps them to settle in quickly. The very good daily organisation enables staff to give children much individual attention, and this has a noticeable effect on children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are helped to behave appropriately in the Nursery, and to know what is unacceptable. Independence is encouraged at an early stage, for example, children decide for themselves when they will have their snack. They select activities with ease, but have a short concentration span and often move on very quickly. Staff are able to follow individual children's interests and choices, due to flexible planning and good teamwork. Reception children generally get on well together. They show kindness when another child is distressed, and share the pleasure of other's achievements. Stimulating, well-planned sessions in Reception help children to sustain concentration and interest, but very occasionally teacher expectations are too high and children become restless because they have been sitting still for too long.

Communication, language and literacy

54. This area of learning is taught well and children are provided with a wide variety of experiences. Appropriately high priority is given to speaking and listening skills in the Nursery. Activities are planned with good opportunities for extending vocabulary, in many cases, encouraging children to respond with answers of more than one word. Children are grouped at storytime so that they can develop good listening skills when sharing stories appropriate to their age. Older children turn the pages of the *'Big Book'* and make predictions about the story, for example, on sounds made by animals in *'Walking Through The Jungle'*. Good questioning techniques are used by staff in both Nursery and Reception. For example, in a model-making activity, very young children were asked, *'What do you need for your car?'*. Older children were asked to talk about the picture in the Goldilocks story. Role-play areas are changed regularly to stimulate children's interest, and most children play co-operatively, but communication between them is quite limited until adults join in. Nursery children have little interest in writing or mark-making, despite staff encouragement. In Reception, careful attention is given to correct pencil control, and children are beginning to write recognisable letters and words. Enjoyment of books is fostered well throughout the Foundation Stage, and children have favourite stories. Children are introduced to sounds and letters in the Nursery, and in Reception they are able to recognise a few simple words. Most older children in Reception are currently *'reading'* books from the very early stages of the *Oxford Reading Tree*.

Mathematical development

55. Mathematical development is promoted well in both Nursery and Reception classes. Staff in Nursery introduce children to counting and take every opportunity to reinforce learning. Very good teaching was noted in an activity involving coloured bears, containers and large plastic numerals. A small group of more able children counted out the appropriate number of bears of the correct colour and placed them in the container. Most other children are learning to count to 10 by rote, with varying degrees of success. Staff record children's achievements and responses to activities, and this is used effectively to plan the next steps for individual children. In Reception, good use is made of resources to extend children's mathematical development. For example, two-coloured dominoes provided opportunities for children to guess/estimate the number of dots, before responding to the question, '*Are there 3 black dots or 3 white dots?*' Children made good progress in reliably counting objects to 10, through a variety of well-chosen activities. In a session with older children to promote understanding of '*less than*', a model of a bed with 10 characters was used successfully to reinforce the idea of removing one character at the end of each verse of the song, thus making the remaining number one less. Children also learned how to use the number line to '*go back*' each time. The teacher extended the challenge for more able children by asking, '*If 6 is one less than 7, what is one less than 17?*' A few children responded correctly. Mathematical language is developed well. Lessons are well-planned to sustain children's interest and to introduce new concepts. Reception children make good progress in learning about the properties of shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well through a broad range of activities and well-chosen topics, for example, '*Toys*' and '*Ourselves*'. Children are taught how to treat the pets in the Nursery, and about the animals' needs. They learn about people in the community, and simple features of the environment. They design their own three-dimensional models using reclaimed materials and construction equipment. Staff help them make decisions. Children in Reception use technology appropriately, for example, operating tape recorders to listen to stories, or using walkie-talkies in a hiding game. Teaching is generally good in this area, but just occasionally it does not meet the needs of the children well, for example, in confusingly linking a biblical story to the tale of Goldilocks, which was inappropriate for Reception children.

Physical development

57. Nursery children have regular access to a secure outdoor area where they climb, balance, manoeuvre wheeled vehicles and develop skills using small equipment. Staff encourage children to take on new challenges, and show children how to succeed in activities such as throwing a bean-bag through a hoop. Reception children are sited too far away from this well-equipped area to use it regularly, but the school has plans to develop the area for all children in the Foundation Stage. Nursery and Reception children have many opportunities to develop cutting and sticking skills, and use a variety of tools. In a lesson in the school hall, Reception children applied themselves well to the challenging tasks provided. About half the class who had difficulty in walking along the balancing beam at the start of the lesson, were confidently approaching the activity by the end of the lesson. This was due to good adult support and encouragement.

Creative development

58. Provision for creative development in the Foundation Stage is rich and varied. Children have many opportunities to express themselves through art, music and imaginative play. Staff make good use of children's portrait paintings in the Nursery to promote self-esteem and a sense of community. Children are taught new techniques, such as marbling or paper-weaving, as well as being encouraged to use their own ideas in model-making. They make good progress in using percussion instruments. They explore instruments freely in the Nursery, and by Reception are able to make decisions and choices when asked which instruments best represent the characters in a story. All classes have role-play areas that are well-equipped, but many children need adult intervention to develop storylines. Resources are used well to provide exciting activities. For example, children were taken down the path outside the Reception classroom to find '*The Cottage of the 3 Bears*' in the woods. They were delighted to find a tent amongst the trees, with selected items from the story inside it.

ENGLISH

59. Pupils aged 7 attain standards in English that are broadly in line with those expected nationally, but above those of similar schools. Standards in reading are above those in writing. Pupils aged 11 attain standards below those expected nationally, but broadly in line with those of similar schools. This is a significant improvement since the amalgamation. These standards are reflected in the analysis of work and in lessons seen at both key stages.
60. By the time they are 7 years old, pupils speak clearly and listen attentively in lessons. They are beginning to read fluently and with expression, using a variety of strategies for reading unfamiliar words. For example, skills taught during literacy sessions, such as the meaning of the text or using initial sounds, are used by the pupils in their reading. Handwriting is generally well formed and neat, but is not consistently joined. Some more able pupils are beginning to write at length and for a variety of purposes, demonstrating a clear understanding of the use of capital letters and full stops.
61. By the time pupils reach 11 years of age, listening skills are well developed and pupils make relevant responses during discussion times in lessons. They are confident when talking in class, explaining recent news items, for example. They begin to ask questions of adults and of each other. When discussing books most of the pupils are able to talk about a variety of authors and express their preferences. They choose their reading books and can explain why they have chosen a particular text. Most pupils are confident and fluent readers who are beginning to discuss the books they read. Writing is neat and usually well formed, but although handwriting is taught throughout the key stage, this is not always evident in the books seen and the skill of joined handwriting is not always transferred to everyday work. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, such as instructions and explanations. However, there are few opportunities for the pupils to write at length and practise the skills and knowledge gained during literacy sessions.
62. Pupils at both key stages make good learning gains. Work is systematically planned, based on the *National Literacy Strategy*, and pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, especially in Key Stage 1 where *Reading Recovery* makes a significant contribution to the achievement in reading. In lessons seen pupils learn about various aspects of grammar, punctuation and story writing. They learn about nouns, pronouns and adjectives. In Key Stage 2, pupils begin to understand about persuasive writing and are able to produce leaflets promoting various leisure pursuits. These skills are beginning to be applied across the curriculum. For example in history, Year 6 pupils were able to write about the Holocaust and pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 were able to explain how to make a paper aeroplane.
63. All the teaching seen across both key stages was satisfactory or better, with more than three quarters being good and close to a third very good. This is a very good picture overall. Teachers use the *National Literacy Strategy* effectively as a basis for teaching. Learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Planning overall is good with tasks well matched to the abilities of each group. Teachers expect the pupils to fully participate in lessons and complete tasks in a reasonable amount of time. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and work is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Assessment is very good with extensive tracking sheets for each pupil. These sheets record achievement and give an indication of what each child needs to do next. Assessment books are used throughout the school and many contain targets for each child. When marking pupils' work teachers make encouraging comments and make sure that most work is completed. Short specific targets are set and this ensures that progress is made in each lesson. The school also uses portfolios of moderated work so that all staff have a clear understanding of what each child should do next to make good progress. In lessons, pupils are well managed. Teachers have good strategies for promoting good behaviour and these are consistently applied throughout the school. Basic skills are well taught and literacy skills are developed in other subjects across the curriculum. Classroom assistants are used well during English lessons to support pupils who have special educational needs and all pupils make good progress. Plenary sessions are well planned but sometimes they are not used effectively to reinforce the

learning objective and are used merely as a "show and tell" time at the end of the lesson. Some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, are too long, being often significantly longer than the recommended period.

64. During lessons, pupils are well behaved and apply themselves to tasks well. Work in books is generally neat and completed, although spellings picked up by the teacher sometimes go uncorrected. Pupils discuss their work confidently and fully participate in lessons. During group work they are beginning to support each other with spellings and explanations of tasks. Through well-presented target sheets, pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve and respond positively.
65. The co-ordinator has been in post for a short while but has already had a positive impact on English across the school. When monitoring her subject she looks at plans and discusses with colleagues work that is in books. However, to date there has been little time for her to monitor lessons to give a clear indication of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. The co-ordinator has identified a lack of clarity in the planning, where learning intentions were unclear. Planning formats were reviewed and altered and now learning intentions are very specific, shared with the pupils and revisited during lessons. This is a positive move and contributes significantly to the quality of teaching in English. The school has identified a possible thread of underachievement of girls in English and are carrying out further data checks to identify whether or not this is an issue. This demonstrates that the staff are committed to further improvement through exhaustive data analysis to raise standards across the school.
66. Resources for English are good, with many big books to support the literacy strategy. These are well stored and used effectively to promote literacy in the school. The *National Literacy Strategy* is fully in place in the school and this is having a positive impact on standards. There has been much improvement in English at Key Stage 2 since the amalgamation, and standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained.

MATHEMATICS

67. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, pupils' attainment in the national tests was, overall, below that found nationally but comparable to similar schools. A similar proportion of pupils reached the expected level as is found nationally, but the number of pupils reaching higher levels was well below that found in most schools. Attainment in 2000 was less favourable than in 1999. This is partly accounted for by the higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs in that year group. Boys achieve better than girls in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
68. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, pupils reached levels which were broadly in line with those found nationally and much higher than those in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was above the national average. Girls have overall attained less well than boys in Key Stage 2 in relation to national results, with a smaller proportion of girls than boys reaching the higher levels in mathematics. The school is aware of this and is actively involved in researching the issue and searching for suitable strategies to ensure that this does not continue in the future. The school has made good progress in reaching the targets set for pupils by the age of 11 and has set challenging targets for the future.
69. Evidence from pupils' books and from lessons during the inspection indicates that in Key Stage 1 in 2001 the pupils are likely to attain at the level found nationally and better than similar schools in all areas of mathematics. For instance, almost all pupils can round numbers up to 100 up or down to the nearest 10 accurately in mental maths sessions. They have a very good understanding of the relationship between addition and subtraction which enables them to find the missing number in an addition sum by using subtraction. They can then record the answers accurately using appropriate symbols. The most able pupils can identify when it is quicker to find an answer by counting on rather than subtracting and can explain why this is so. They can also use mathematical language to talk about common shapes and about graphs they have drawn. During Key Stage 1, pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.
70. In Key Stage 2, pupils' work indicates that the proportion of pupils likely to meet the nationally expected level in 2001 is broadly similar to that found nationally. All pupils, including those with special

educational needs, have a good understanding of place value and can multiply decimals by 10 with the majority able to multiply decimals by 100 and divide them by 10 and 100. Average and more able pupils can very quickly calculate what is needed to add to, for example, 7.28 to make 10. Pupils use spreadsheets on computers to calculate the area of rectangles correctly using the formula to work out the answers to many examples. Pupils are able to find effective methods for working out the answers to problems related to everyday life, for example, the cost of having a tee-shirt printed with a slogan when letters of various sizes and colours cost differing amounts. Overall pupils make good progress in learning mathematics throughout Key Stage 2 and achieve well in relation to their ability.

71. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed progressively and thoroughly throughout the school with a particularly emphasis on the speed and accuracy of mental calculations. The *National Numeracy Strategy* has provided a clear structure for developing numeracy within mathematics lessons and has had a very positive impact on raising standards. Some lessons however, particularly in Key Stage 1, are too long, being significantly longer than the recommended period. There are as yet insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in a systematic way in other subjects.
72. Three quarters of mathematics lessons were good or better, and more than a quarter were very good or excellent. This is a very good picture overall. The best teaching is characterised by very thorough planning which ensure that teachers and pupils are very clear about what is to be learned within the lesson. These objectives are shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson and revisited at the end. This enables the teachers to assess the progress the pupils have made in their learning and allows the pupils to reflect on what skills and knowledge they have gained. Teachers generally have very good knowledge of the *National Numeracy Strategy* and this enables them to structure lessons so that pupils acquire skills at a good rate. Teachers use a variety of approaches to keep pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Where the best learning occurs it is as a result of teachers giving very clear explanations supported by apparatus which in turn supports pupils in developing their own mental approaches to calculations. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson where use of interlocking cubes and diagrams on the board support pupils' understanding of fractions which they were then able to apply to the problems posed. In successful lessons, mathematical vocabulary is very well used and is supported by displays on the walls which reinforce this. A notable strength of the teaching in the school is the way in which teaching assistants are used to give very good support to less able pupils during whole class teaching. This ensures that all pupils are able to take advantage of the high quality of teaching. Teachers keep good records of how pupils progress on a daily basis and use these to ensure that tasks match pupils' needs in subsequent lessons. Work is carefully marked and successes recorded.
73. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning resulted when teachers were not totally clear about what was to be achieved in a lesson and were therefore not giving sufficiently clear explanations of the mathematics to be learned or not setting tasks at an appropriate level. These teachers had insufficient knowledge of their pupils' level of ability and of the small steps in learning necessary to build mathematical understanding.
74. Pupils clearly enjoy learning mathematics and are eager to complete work. They concentrate on the tasks set and complete a good amount of work in the time given. They are enthusiastic and confident when responding to mental and oral activities and generally talk confidently about what they are doing. Occasionally lessons are too long and pace of learning is lost. The homework set is appropriate and computer programs are used appropriately to support learning within the classroom.
75. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and well-informed co-ordinator. Regular feedback is given to staff about the quality of planning and the work in pupils' books. The co-ordinator is a good role model for other staff and some teachers have benefited from watching her teach. She has not however had sufficient opportunity to support others in the classroom through observation and joint working. At present some teaching is carried out in sets which are selected on pupils' ability. The effectiveness of this arrangement has yet to be evaluated by the school. Overall there has been very good progress in mathematics since amalgamation.

SCIENCE

76. Results of the year 2000 teacher assessments for 7 year olds were below the national average at the expected of attainment, but in line with the national average for pupils achieving the higher level. Compared with schools in similar social circumstances, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was above average, and the proportion reaching the higher level was well above average. Results of the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average, both at the expected and higher levels. The results however were above average compared with those achieved by schools in similar social circumstances, and have improved markedly over the last two years. Boys performed significantly better than girls in the end of Key Stage 2 tests.
77. Attainment in the current Year 2 is close to, but not quite reaching national expectations. Their work shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress across the key stage. Attainment in Year 6 is below national expectations. Pupils' skills in planning and carrying out experiments are sound. For example, they can design and carry out experiments to separate particles of different sizes from solutions. Many pupils use correct terminology when describing scientific processes, and understand the importance of fair tests. Pupils' scientific knowledge of life processes and living things is less secure. In one lesson observed, Year 6 pupils researched different creatures and their habitats. Many showed a limited understanding of the concept of a habitat, and how the animal they were studying had been able to adapt to it. Overall pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2.
78. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, although few lessons were observed, evidence from work seen and discussion with pupils shows that there is a strong emphasis on practical activities and teaching enables pupils to make good progress. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils sorted a good range of materials into different groups. The teacher used questions skilfully, challenging pupils to describe their properties using scientific terms, and helping them to extend their knowledge of different materials.
79. The most effective lessons are well paced, with pupils appropriately challenged to produce work of a high standard. For example, in a Year 3 lesson investigated various ways of comparing the strengths of different magnets. A range of recording tasks were well matched to pupils' needs, and the teacher kept reminding them about what progress was expected by the end of the lesson. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, expectations are low and subject knowledge is weak, resulting in few gains in pupils' learning. For example, in one lesson observed, the teacher did not realise that most pupils did not fully understand how to set up a fair test when comparing the sounds made by tapping different materials. Most pupils recorded or achieved very little, and poor behaviour from several pupils made it difficult to conduct the experiments. The quality of teachers' planning is generally good, and they make appropriate use of a good range of quality resources in lessons. There are too few planned opportunities however for pupils to use their numeracy skills in science and opportunities are missed for developing children's sense of awe and wonder when studying the subject.
80. Teachers are beginning to assess pupils' progress and attainment, and the school is now making use of assessment data to inform future planning. The co-ordinator provides effective support to teachers, giving feedback on planning and ensuring that they have appropriate resources to support the scheme of work. She has had no opportunities to evaluate teaching in lessons, but has looked at the standard of pupils' work in books to assess progress and ensure that the scheme of work is being covered. An appropriate action plan identifies priority targets for the subject.
81. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the infant and junior school inspections immediately prior to amalgamation and in improving standards in the subject, particularly in Key Stage 2.

ART

82. Pupils at both key stages do not reach the standards that are expected for their ages. There is insufficient time given to art in the school and many aspects of the subject are not taught.

83. In Year 1 the pupils learn about sculptures and look at various objects, both natural and man-made, but have little opportunity to practise the skills of modelling using a variety of materials. In Key Stage 2 pupils interpret the work of Van Gogh or Monet, for example, and produce their own pictures, but have few opportunities to study the work of a variety of artists. Pupils have sketch books but there is little work recorded and skills are not systematically taught. Although few lessons were seen during the inspection, from evidence gained from analysis of work there is insufficient art taught in both key stages.

84. During both key stages the pupils learn to draw and paint, but there are few opportunities for them to evaluate their work and discuss how it could be improved. Throughout the school there is evidence that pupils are encouraged to observe closely and draw what they see, but there are too few examples of this. In Key Stage 2, for example, pupils learn about shading to show depth and perspective but these skills are not developed to explore composition techniques later in the key stage. Overall pupils make unsatisfactory progress in art.

85. The co-ordinator has been in post for a short while and has not had the opportunity to monitor art around the school or in classes. Plans are not scrutinised to ensure coverage. There are sufficient resources that are appropriately stored. Generally art is restricted to illustrating work in books and used to produce displays outside of the classrooms, many of which are very adult directed and do not reflect the pupils' own ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. At the time of amalgamation, pupils were attaining average standards at the age of 7 but poor standards by the age of 11. Evidence gathered during this inspection indicates that pupils' achievements are now satisfactory during both key stages, and attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at both 7 and 11. The school has made good progress in developing the subject since amalgamation.

87. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in design and making skills in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils good use of construction toys to learn about design and to help them draw simple models from different views. One class made a Palestinian model village, copying designs from photographs before making houses from reclaimable materials. Year 2 pupils design and make a wind-up toy. They observe how the mechanism works and learn the importance of planning, by drawing up a list of the tools and materials they will need. They are also taught how to use tools safely and accurately. In Key Stage 2, most pupils take care with their designs, drawing different views of their plans. They are encouraged to measure and use materials accurately and carefully during the making process. Good links are made to older pupils' work in science, as they draw circuit diagrams to show how they will incorporate batteries. Due emphasis is placed on pupils evaluating completed models and making suggestions for further improvements.

88. No overall judgements were made on the quality of teaching, as few lessons were observed. However, the quality of teachers' planning is good. Since the last inspection the school has adopted a new scheme of work, based on nationally agreed guidelines, which includes a good range of topics. Teachers now place appropriate emphasis on design and making skills in each topic, and encourage pupils to evaluate their own work thoroughly. Pupils keep a record of their work in each topic in a book. The co-ordinator provides good support and advice to colleagues, suggesting improvements to their planning and links to other subjects. She has worked hard to develop and organise tools and resources, and the school now has good provision. A separate small area for food technology has been created, and it is well used. An exhibition of work in design and technology was held during the summer term, helping to develop pupils' interest and parental awareness.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Few geography lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements were made by looking at pupils' work and by talking to the children. Achievement in geography broadly matches what might be expected of children aged 7 and 11. This is similar to the position at the time of amalgamation. By the time they are 7, children have a developing knowledge about the world outside the school. Pupils aged 11 know about the local area and more distant places. They are beginning to understand aspects of different physical environments. Their knowledge of maps is, however, limited, they do not make use of appropriate geographical language and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use numeracy skills such as graphing.
90. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are provided with good opportunities to research and seek information from a range of sources. For example, pupils use CD-Roms confidently as sources of information. This tends to be in response to questions from teachers and few examples were seen of pupils asking their own geographical questions. An exception to this was in the work in Year 4 on life in an Indian village, where pupils identified what they already knew about the subject and then posed their own research questions.
91. There are some opportunities for children to explore different points of view on geographical issues. Some Year 6 pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about work they had done in Year 5. They debated whether there should be a fifth terminal at nearby Heathrow airport. They clearly understood the different points of view for and against the terminal and were able to express them clearly.
92. The subject co-ordinator is new to the role and is beginning to take a lead in developing the subject. Children's geographical education is enlivened by practical experience in local fieldwork and in trips further afield. Year 5 children produced some interesting work on rivers as a result of visits to a local river and to the Denham Country Park.

HISTORY

93. Few history lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements were made by looking at pupils' work in books and displays and by talking to the children. Pupils of all ages have a good knowledge of the aspects of the past they have studied and achieve broadly what might be expected of their age. This is an improvement since amalgamation, when attainment at Key Stage 1 was below that expected for pupils' ages.
94. By the time they are 7, most children can talk about how we know about the past. More able children can talk about how they use different kinds of evidence to tell them about what happened. Children aged 11 have a good understanding about sources of evidence about the past and how they might be used to provide information. However, they do not have much experience of considering different interpretations of events in the past. They are not very confident about suggesting explanations about why things changed or what the consequences were of these changes.
95. Year 3 children have a sound and developing knowledge of life in ancient Egypt. They can describe daily life and report on it in fairly straightforward terms. This develops as children move through the school. Pupils in Year 6 can write about daily life from the point of view of people living in the past. A good example of this was seen in the work on Anne Frank, where children wrote letters and their own diary extracts. They make good progress in understanding historical facts but only satisfactory progress in interpreting and understanding the causes of historical change.
96. The co-ordinator is new to the role. He is knowledgeable about history and is beginning to build up resources. The resources are enriched by a range of visits to historical sites and visitors coming to the school to talk about aspects of the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

97. In Key Stage 1, standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages. For example, pupils in Year 2 can confidently type text making appropriate use of the space bar and shift key to change between upper and lower case letters. In the computer suite they are able to log on to machines confidently, retrieve work from appropriate folders and at the end of the lesson save work in the correct place.
98. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also reach the standards expected for their age. They use spreadsheets to calculate the price of varying quantities of items of different price and can combine words and pictures effectively to produce written work about journeys in relation to their work in religious education. At both key stages pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
99. In three of the four lessons observed during the inspection the quality of teaching was very good. Teachers are very clear about what they are going to teach. Pupils understand what they are to learn and how it builds upon what they have done before. The co-ordinator prepares other staff well so that they can be confident and well informed in their teaching. Lessons are conducted at a very good pace and make full use of the very good facilities available. New ideas and skills are introduced systematically and pupils' work is continuously assessed to ensure all understand. In a Year 2 lesson carried out around one computer in the classroom, skilful use was made of laminated replica keyboards so that all pupils could be actively involved and so that the teacher could assess pupils knowledge. In a Year 6 lesson which took place in the new ICT suite, a half class group of pupils made excellent progress in acquiring skills in using the *Powerpoint*TM program to produce a series of slides to advertise a mountain resort based on work carried out in their geography lessons. They were able to make sensible choices about which layout to use and then choose suitable size and design of font to add text. Pictures were carefully selected from the *Clipart* files to illustrate their work. A carefully constructed demonstration presentation on mountains prepared by the co-ordinator ensured that pupils were aware of the power and application of the program and were eager to add sound and animation in their next lesson. In all lessons observed the pupils worked quickly and confidently and talked enthusiastically about what they were doing.
100. The co-ordinator is well informed and has worked very effectively to support other members of staff. The further training needs of all staff have been researched and appropriate training is planned. The co-ordinator has led training sessions to ensure that staff are confident with current software and has involved all staff in evaluating the wide range of CD-Roms which are available. Following the opening of the computer suite in 2000, the school is very well-equipped with computers which are shortly to be linked to the internet. In addition to the specially designed ICT suite, all classrooms have a computer. Information and communications technology is well used to support or develop other subjects. For instance through the use of support materials for *Oxford Reading Tree* or by using a program that enables pupils to manipulate shapes in mathematics. In some subjects, such as religious education, pupils are able to research topics such as "*pilgrimage*" using the CD-Rom. There has been good progress in information and communications technology since amalgamation.

MUSIC

101. Pupils' attainment at both key stages is in line with that expected for their age. In Year 2, pupils handle percussion instruments correctly and use them, for example to make long and short sounds, or to reinforce their understanding of pitch. They record compositions based on high or low sounds, using simple signs and symbols. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing enthusiastically and tunefully in assemblies. Pupils in Key Stage 2 know some musical terms, such as '*ostinato*', and experiment with sounds to create representations of different types of weather. They successfully combine musical ideas for large group performances. Singing is tentative at times but pupils sustain their own melody in two-part songs. They learn new songs at an appropriate pace, and are clearly enthusiastic to participate in hymn practices.
102. In the most successful lessons, teachers have clear expectations, are well-prepared, and have good control. Lessons are less successful where teachers lack confidence or the intended outcomes are too

challenging for pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 were expected to express their feelings about extracts of popular music onto worksheets. Many pupils lacked any real opinions and became restless and frustrated with the task. Pupils enjoy music, but lose some interest when the teaching pace slows because too much emphasis is placed on getting ready to play rather than actual playing. A particular strength of pupils' response in lessons is their praise of each other's efforts. They also appreciate the lively piano playing in assemblies, and offer spontaneous applause. Pupils have opportunities to listen to a range of music, for example, traditional Chinese music or Scott Joplin Ragtime, but they do not always listen attentively.

103. The music co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the music curriculum since the amalgamation and this has resulted in improvement in provision for all pupils, and in teacher confidence. Thirty pupils are learning to play instruments, for example, violins, brass and recorders, and the school has a thriving choir.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. At the time of amalgamation, pupils were judged as attaining high standards at the age of 7, and low standards by the age of 11. Evidence gathered during this inspection indicates that pupils' achievements are satisfactory during both key stages, and that attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at both 7 and 11. The school has made good progress in developing the subject since the amalgamation.
105. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Lessons are appropriately structured with a warm-up, followed by a focus on skills or group activities, then a cool-down session at the end of the lesson. Where teaching was sound or better, a good feature was the use of demonstrations of pupils' techniques or performances to illustrate good points and stimulate improvement. In these lessons, pupils had good opportunities to watch others perform, and the chance to appraise their own and others' efforts. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to develop and improve skills and spent a significant part of the lesson waiting for their turn. Pupils generally enjoy physical education lessons, work sensibly, and try hard to improve their performances.
106. The school provides a broad and balanced range of activities. There is good provision for swimming, with Year 5 pupils attending lessons at a local pool. A sound range of extracurricular sports clubs is offered, including football, netball, handball, cricket and dance. The school enters teams in local competitions in various sports. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is good. Teachers receive good support and advice on their planning, and clear guidance on implementing routines in lessons, including health and safety practices. The co-ordinator has not yet had opportunities to observe lessons, and give teachers feedback on their practice. She has audited teachers' training needs, and arranged training for dance and games. An appropriate action plan for the subject has addressed the weaknesses identified within Key Stage 2 immediately prior to the amalgamation. The school makes good use of two well-equipped halls for dance and gymnastics. Resources for games and gymnastics are good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. Children's knowledge and understanding of religious education at age 7 and at age 11 is broadly in line with that expected for their ages in the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the amalgamation. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers' knowledge of the religions about which they are teaching is supported by a very good scheme of work which helps them plan appropriate activities for their classes. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. This helps children to form a view of their own progress. Teaching is sometimes enlivened by the use of topical references. For example, Year 6 children studying pilgrimage learned about the *Kumhb Mela*, which was taking place at the time of the inspection. Teachers use a range of methods to maintain children's interest and help them to learn, as, for example, in a Year 2

lesson on parables where the teacher used drama to good effect in helping children to understand the story of the Prodigal Son.

108. Children are interested in the religions they are learning about. They are keen to contribute to discussions in class. They generally listen well to others and behave well. Work in books and on display shows that most pupils take real care with their work, and have good literacy skills. They develop good research skills. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a good knowledge of Christianity and are developing their knowledge of other religions. There are, however few opportunities for pupils to explore why religion is important to people.
109. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has built up an excellent bank of resources and objects that are well used in lessons and in displays to help children to understand aspects of the religious practices of faith communities. This is also enhanced by visits to places of worship and representatives of different religions visiting the school.