

INSPECTION REPORT

GAYHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gayhurst Road, Hackney London

E8 3EN

LEA area: 204 Hackney

Unique reference number: 130303

Headteacher:

Ms Diane Roome

Reporting inspector:

P D Holwill

2705

Dates of inspection: 17-20th September 2001

Inspection number: 230386

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gayhurst Road Hackney London E8 3EN
Telephone number:	020 7725 46138
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms S Beamer
Date of previous inspection:	8 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2705	P D Holwill	Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9502	Rosalind Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25787	Edmund Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How well are pupils taught
1395	Pauline Hoey	Team inspector		English as an additional language
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	English Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2686	Brian Oppenheim	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science	
18381	Gordon Ewing	Team inspector	Information and communications technology History Geography	
28046	Carole Goodchild	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Design & technology	
22839	Alan Jenner	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Gayhurst is a larger than average, 2 and a half form entry primary school with 557 pupils aged from 3 to 11, including 30 full-time and 40 part-time pupils who attend the nursery. 48.2 per cent of pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. 226 pupils speak English as an additional language, a high number when compared nationally with other schools. Of these, 58 pupils are at an early stage of learning English. A significant number of pupils of all ages join or leave during the year. Approximately only a quarter of the 11 year old pupils have been in the school since the nursery. The number of pupils supported through Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant funding is very high: well above the national average. The school is supported by the Excellence in Cities initiative. Nearly 29 per cent of pupils in the school are entitled to free school meals this year which is above average. 30.9 per cent of pupils have special needs, including those with statements, which is above average. The attainment of pupils when they arrive at the school is well below that expected.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Gayhurst is a very effective school where all pupils are valued and achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment and abilities. Standards for pupils by the end of Year 6, although below the national average, have improved largely because of the good quality teaching and clear planning. The headteacher provides excellent, strong leadership and staff share her commitment and sense of purpose, working hard to raise standards for all pupils. One of the school's many strengths is that there is respect shown for all cultures and faiths and it makes very good provision for its ethnically diverse community. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress. Financial controls by the governing body are very good. The school makes very good use of the resources available to it and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The children in the nursery are given a good start to their school lives.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership so that together with key staff and governors there is a clear educational direction to the school. The governing body has a high commitment to school improvement.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. Their behaviour is good, well managed and enables pupils to become self-disciplined.
- Child protection and procedures for promoting their welfare are very good. There are very good relationships amongst pupils and adults.
- Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour and arrangements for pupils' personal, social moral and cultural education are very effective. The school achieves an impressive degree of racial harmony and integration.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the very good provision made for them.

What could be improved

- Although standards are gradually improving for all pupils, many of them still do not reach national expectations in English and science.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills of enquiry and investigation and to work with others to solve problems, reach agreed conclusions and record their findings in different ways.
- Provision and use of information and communications technology is not yet enabling pupils to reach high enough standards.
- The consistency of marking and the assessment of pupils' progress and attainment in foundation subjects need improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvements since the last inspection in 1997 have been good. Attainment in mathematics, history and design and technology is now at expected standards. English and science are improving but are still below national expectations. All classes have new computers linked to the Internet, teachers are trained well and there are plans for more computers to bring considerable improvement in the next year. The revised management structure provides clear channels of accountability and subject co-ordinators are now taking a leading role in helping to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Specialist staff who work with pupils who have English as an additional language or special educational needs are very good. They have a significant impact on the behaviour and standards of attainment for these pupils in the classrooms. Teaching throughout the school is good. Pupil behaviour is good and procedures for monitoring it are excellent. Development planning is excellent. There are very good systems of assessment for English, mathematics and science that ensure a clear focus on learning.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	B	E	C
Mathematics	C	C	C	A
Science	C	C	E	C

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

In the 2000 national tests for Year 6 pupils, results were well below average for all schools in English and science but average in mathematics. The results in English and science were as good as those in similar schools and were very high in mathematics. In the national tests for Year 2 pupils, results in reading were in the lowest 5 percent of all schools: well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, Year 2 pupils' reading and writing results were very low but in mathematics they were typical. In the teacher assessed science tasks pupils' results were below average when compared with similar schools.

Year 2 pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics have remained well below the national average since 1996. In 2000 there was an improvement in mathematics, although results are still below average. Year 6 pupils' results in English, mathematics and science had been broadly in line with the national average up to 1999. In 2000 results fell in English and science but remained steady in mathematics. There are a number of factors that explain this downturn: low attainment of pupils when they start school, the high proportion with special educational needs and the high number who start school mid-year, many of whom are just beginning to learn English. The school has exceeded its Year 6 targets for English and mathematics in the 2001 tests but has not reached the target for science. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows that the greatest improvement of Year 6 pupils has been made in mathematics. The present Years 2 and 6 pupils are likely to achieve better standards in 2002, particularly in mathematics. Overall pupils make sound progress and achieve well in all key stages. The achievement and progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are good. When pupils become proficient in English, their progress in all curriculum areas is comparable with that of other pupils of similar ability.

The school has prioritised raising standards in English and science. Its targets are suitably challenging and it is meeting them effectively. The literacy and numeracy strategies, good teaching and very effective use of assessment in English and mathematics to track pupils' progress across the school, are all beginning to have a positive effect on attainment. Attainment in most other subjects including religious education, is broadly average. Standards in information and communication technology are below average by the end of Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are very interested and involved with their work. They respond in a mature manner to class and group discussions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous polite and respectful. They behave well at playtime and around the school. Younger and older pupils play together well.
Personal development and Relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils show respect for others' feelings and understand the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	It is well below the national average due to the number of term time holidays, the level of mobility and the difficult home circumstances of some children.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and relationships throughout the school are significant strengths and have a very positive impact on progress. Pupils who arrive at the school speaking little or no English praise their classmates and staff for making them feel welcome. School routines are established well from the nursery upwards.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and makes a substantial contribution towards promoting pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Teaching in English and mathematics is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the strategies for literacy and numeracy which have been successfully implemented. These have a significant impact: improving and maintaining standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. At present, too little use is being made of ICT during literacy and numeracy periods. Teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Learning support assistants are well briefed, competent and are used effectively to help pupils make good progress. All pupils learn well and work with interest and concentration. Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are very good and the mutual respect shown has a good impact on learning. Marking is inconsistent. Where it is good the pupils are given useful pointers to help them improve their work in the future. However, much of the marking does not help pupils know how to improve.

The noticeable strengths of good teaching are:

- Effective lesson planning with work set at suitable levels for all pupils.
- High expectations of work and behaviour. Time is used effectively.
- Good assessment of pupils' understanding through careful questioning.
- Good use of support staff.

These strengths make learning a pleasure and pupils respond by being interested and determined to do well in all aspects of their education.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum.	The school provides a good curriculum, teaching all required subjects. Procedures to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum are excellent, and the provision for extra-curricular activities is outstanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and take full part in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.	Provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good. The staff offer valuable support to help pupils have full access to the curriculum. Pupils make good progress as a result of this support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	The provision for ensuring pupils' moral, social, cultural and personal development is very good. There is good provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils.	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The school has very good support systems and effective links with external agencies. All staff work hard to maintain a caring, supportive environment.

The school has very effective links with parents: they are given the opportunity to become involved in the education of their children. Parents receive an annual report on the progress of their child that is detailed, gives clear targets for improvement in all subjects. They are informed about their child's curriculum and are given good information about national tests and the need for regular attendance. Staff work hard to develop the pupils' social skills and maturity. All pupils benefit from the provision made by the school. Newcomers are warmly welcomed. Many documents are translated into home languages and interpreters often assist discussions with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher provides outstanding, purposeful leadership and is supported very well by the hard working deputy headteacher. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their roles and fulfil them effectively. Teaching and learning are monitored well and school planning is seen as an important way of ensuring further improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors' commitment to supporting school improvement is very good and they fulfil their statutory responsibilities efficiently. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Financial oversight and planning are very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has developed and implemented some excellent systems for evaluating its performance. Information and data gained from this process are used very well to identify areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of staff, accommodation and its other facilities. This particularly enhances pupils' learning experiences, in science, physical education and environmental work.

The staff have a good range of expertise and are well trained. The re-organisation and development of the senior management team has provided greater depth to the management structure. In addition it has enabled more staff to take on responsibilities to support school development. All available resources are used well to support pupils' learning. The working environment is clean, well maintained and effectively managed. Governors apply principles of best value to all their spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are well cared for. Children have very positive attitudes to learning. • They make good progress, the teaching is good and teachers are always available to discuss matters. • Parents feel confident that all staff take their views or concerns seriously. • Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. • All families are made to feel welcome when the children come to school. • The school provides an interesting and wide range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents were concerned about the amount of homework.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive comments made by parents. However, the team found no evidence to confirm their concerns about homework.

COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to the nursery and Reception classes is well below that expected of children of their age. Many of these children begin school learning to speak English for the first time. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve the early learning goals in all the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy. Children make a good start to their education in the school and make good progress. They quickly become confident and are eager to learn. Most speak confidently. They learn to recognise words, start to write and enjoy sharing books. They learn to sort and count objects, understand the concepts of more and less and to recognise and write numbers. Children develop their understanding and knowledge of the world through observing living and growing things, finding out why things happen and how things work. They develop their creativity through using a range of materials, taking part in role-play and learning to recognise symbols in music.

2. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. All pupils contribute to discussions and participate actively in classroom activities. The school receives pupils entering the school in different years throughout the academic year. Many pupils speak very little English on entry to the nursery or to the school. This means that overall attainment on entry is often well below the expected levels.

3. The 2001 test results show that the school has exceeded its targets for English and mathematics but has not been able to reach those for science. Although national comparisons are not yet available it is likely that the greatest improvements have been made in the attainment of Year 6 pupils, particularly in mathematics. The school has targeted standards in English and science in its plan for improvement. Its targets are suitably challenging and it is meeting them effectively. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work bears this out: improvements are being maintained and the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are likely to achieve better standards than last year, particularly in mathematics. It is judged that pupils are making sound progress across the key stages and that the standards in both key stages are rising.

4. Effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, good teaching and very effective use of assessment in English and mathematics to track pupils' progress across the school are beginning to have a positive effect on standards of attainment. Evidence gathered during the inspection reflects the results of national tests and assessments. Skills in speaking and listening are taught well throughout the school. Staff set a good example to pupils by listening carefully to what they have to say. Pupils learn to explain their ideas and opinions, and the majority speaks confidently when answering in class and talking to visitors. By the end of Year 6 most pupils reach the expected standard in speaking and listening. This represents a good achievement and reflects the good teaching seen across the school.

5. Standards in reading by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2 are improving so that most pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words, and read simple text with reasonable understanding. They are able to use the library and to locate information by using the contents and index pages of reference books. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils read short passages with reasonable accuracy and have a sound understanding of the main points. They confidently refer to the text to answer straightforward questions about their reading, but find it harder to use the skills of inference and deduction. Some higher-attaining readers enjoy books and talk eagerly about their preferences for different authors. Year 6 many pupils understand how to scan texts to locate key words quickly. Pupils have too few opportunities to use these skills for independent research in subjects such as history.

6. Standards in writing are below average, and written work often does not reflect pupils' understanding of the curriculum. By the end of Year 2 most pupils can sequence their ideas when they write. They produce short passages and use some basic punctuation in their writing, although their vocabulary choices are often quite limited. A few higher-attaining seven-year-olds write lively short stories, employ a variety of punctuation, begin to vary their sentence structures and use imaginative vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils write fluently, and in their best work the average attainers show a satisfactory grasp of grammar and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have a limited understanding of punctuation, and make frequent spelling errors. Pupils practise handwriting in all classes, but in a few classes not enough attention is paid to teaching handwriting and the pupils form letters incorrectly even during writing practice. The presentation of written work in some classes is unsatisfactory, although other teachers expect and achieve sound standards.

7. In mathematics pupils in Year 2 attain standards as expected nationally for their age in numeracy and other areas of mathematics. This judgement is based on the standards of work seen in the current Year 2 classes and is a very good improvement since the last inspection. At the end of Year 2 pupils understand the language of number, have a good knowledge of place value to at least 100 and can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. Pupils know the names and some of the properties, such as the number of sides and corners of two-dimensional shapes. They solve shopping problems to a pound with more able pupils confidently working to five pounds or more. Pupils tell the time in hours and half hours and some pupils are able to use a bus timetable correctly to find a journey time.

8. At the end of Year 6 pupils also attain standards in mathematics which are similar to those found nationally and well above those found in similar schools. In the tests taken in 2001 four pupils were successful in reaching level 6 which is most commendable and a strong indication that more able pupils are being fully stretched. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of place value to 1,000 with many pupils confidently handling numbers to 1,000,000. Pupils accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide two and three digit numbers with the majority able to work to at least two decimal places. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils accurately construct and measure angles using appropriate equipment and calculate area by using the correct formula. Higher achieving pupils are able to calculate the volume of cuboids also using a formula. Only occasionally do pupils use information and communication technology to help them in their work. This is an area that has been identified by the school for further development.

9. By the end of Year 2 test results in science are lower than they are in other schools but lessons show that attainment is rising. Those pupils now in Year 2 are on track to achieve better results in 2002. The reason for this is the way the school is now giving greater emphasis to recording the results of experiments. The standards of those who have just started in Year 6 remain a little below average but are rising so that pupils are on track to do better in 2002 than in 2001. Although attainment is a little below average, pupils' achievements in lessons are satisfactory and they are taking appropriate steps to continue to improve. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of plants and animals. In a very successful Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were able to recognise different living things and their habitats, and could talk about the conditions needed for their survival. Most sort these animals and insects into different groups using simple classifications such as "bug" or "fish". Pupils also have a sound knowledge of physical phenomena such as magnetism and electricity. By Year 6 pupils consolidate their knowledge appropriately and have a broad understanding of scientific ideas. In one Year 6 lesson pupils were able to describe correctly the relationship between gravity and mass. However, pupils are not confident in applying their knowledge to experimental work and find it difficult to predict what might happen, draw conclusions and then record their work.

10. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has progressed significantly since the last inspection when it was a specific key issue for action. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is now in line with expectation in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Year 2. Pupils in the nursery and Reception years perform well and this lays an important foundation for future progress through the school. However, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their attainment in ICT is below expectations because pupils have not had sufficient experience of all aspects of the National Curriculum. By the end of Year 2, photographic evidence shows that pupils have used word processing to support work in design and technology where they created a logo and title to go on the side of their bus. They are able to draw landscapes with animals positioned correctly, they interpret desktop icons and edit their work. These satisfactory levels of achievement demonstrate the effectiveness of the teaching of ICT in some areas. Standards in the upper end of Key Stage 2 in Years 5 and 6 are less strong with several classes failing to take advantage of the improved equipment in the school. Time restrictions with often only one computer to 25 pupils sometimes stops them from achieving their tasks satisfactorily. Computers are currently used to support work in some subjects although it is not used enough to promote data-handling skills in mathematics.

11. Standards achieved in the religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus on which the school bases its scheme of work. Pupils are taught about the major world faiths. Year 2 pupils learn about important landmarks in Christian life and growing up in a Christian family. Year 6 pupils develop an understanding of some aspects of Buddhism and its relevance to their own lives. By the end of Year 6, pupils know the main festivals and beliefs associated with different faith groups. Many pupils are able to reflect on the beliefs of others and relate them to their own experiences. In design and technology, geography, history, art, physical education and music, pupils' achievements are appropriate for their age.

12. The achievement and progress of the large number of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is enhanced by the very high quality of support provided by the support staff and assistants and the careful planning which takes the needs of all pupils into account. The school values pupils' knowledge and skills in other languages. When pupils become proficient in English, they make similar progress to that of their classmates, comparable with that of other pupils of similar ability. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in their work because teachers plan work which builds on what they already know. The school works very hard at finding out how to help pupils learn best by tracking their progress and giving them appropriate work. The result is that pupils are able to achieve their potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and to their work. They are enthusiastic and keen to become involved in activities. They take pride in their school and feel part of its community. Pupils are proud of their own achievements, for example, in learning to speak English, and of whole school projects such as the poetry book launched last year and the dance group's participation in the Hackney Dance Festival. They are keen to participate in the excellent range of clubs and activities that take place after school.

14. Behaviour in lessons from the majority of pupils is good. It is also good in assemblies where pupils listen attentively. Pupils behave well at playtime and younger and older pupils play together well. The school functions as a calm and orderly community that is focused on learning. School routines are established well from the nursery upwards. The key issue from the last inspection relating to behaviour in the infant classes has been resolved and all members of staff apply the behaviour policy with absolute consistency.

15. The school deals particularly well with the small number of pupils in each class whose behaviour is more challenging so that disruption by them is kept to a minimum. These pupils are

often angry and time is taken to provide them with strategies to deal with this. Staff stress the need for each individual to take responsibility for their own behaviour and many pupils are trying very hard to do this. Occasionally, however, pupils do lose control. They are dealt with calmly and sanctions are applied. The ultimate sanction is exclusion; these were checked and found to be carried out for valid reasons in line with the school policy. The school is very aware that one or two African boys dominate the current number of exclusions. In order to raise pupils' self-esteem, the school held a 'Black History' month earlier in the Autumn term. This attracted over two hundred responses from children and was generally seen as a very effective and worthwhile exercise.

16. Relationships are a significant strength of the school; adults know each child as an individual and there is a high degree of racial harmony. Pupils worked well in pairs and small groups, for example in Year 2 science lessons they searched the playground and pond for insects and pond creatures. The majority of pupils have a high level of understanding of the effects of their actions on others; this was evident in many Circle Time discussions. They are developing respect for feelings, values and beliefs of others and demonstrate this in many religious education lessons and in an assembly enacted by teachers about a newcomer in school who did not speak the same language as the other pupils. Pupils' responses to the questions raised were thoughtful and positive in seeking solutions to the situation. Pupils who had arrived at the school with little or no English praised their peers and staff for making them welcome.

17. Pupils undertake responsibilities, such as taking the register to the office, well. At the parents' meeting a number of parents stated that the conduct and confidence of those pupils who had shown them around the school when they had visited had been a key factor in their decision to apply for a place for their own child. Older children are monitors and act as Playground Friends to younger pupils. The school council works very well; pupils prepare for the meetings and debate issues such as litter and behaviour. Opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and independence in their learning are more limited although this is one of the positive features of the activities provided for children in the nursery.

18. The level of attendance at the school is well below the national average due to the number of term time holidays, the level of mobility and the difficult home circumstances of some of the children. Since the last inspection the school has reduced the number of unauthorised absences by more rigorous monitoring and working with families more effectively to ensure reasons for absence are given. Although the school works hard to encourage punctuality a small number of children are late each day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In 45 per cent of lessons teaching was good with a further 12 per cent being very good and three per cent excellent. Satisfactory teaching was seen in 36 per cent of lessons and four per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection when 40 per cent of teaching was judged to be good or better and 18 per cent, a significant minority, was unsatisfactory. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed throughout the school with a small number of excellent lessons being taught in Years 1 to 6. This overall good quality of teaching makes a substantial contribution towards promoting pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

20. All of the teaching seen in the nursery and Reception classes is at least satisfactory with 77 per cent of teaching being good or very good. A particular strength is the good management of the children by both teachers and learning support staff. Planning of activities appropriate to the children's stage of development is good and supports their learning of basic skills and understanding in all areas of learning. In the Reception classes, teachers make flexible use of the planning format from the National Literacy Strategy. The children enjoy sharing a book with adults, for example, joining in with the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. A group of

children are able to re-tell the story orally using finger puppets and teddy bears. Children are beginning to learn initial letter sounds. Both classrooms are rich in print and this teaches children that print has meaning. Teachers have high expectations of the children in their care and all children are appropriately challenged. Teachers listen to children carefully and consistently reinforce children's positive self-esteem and confidence. Expectations for behaviour are high. A variety of imaginative approaches are employed to capture the interest of the children and maintain their motivation. For example, in the nursery two children using magnets to pick up paper clips from the sand chatted to one another about how this happened and was it magic? Children's learning is good and all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, do well in relation to their capabilities and previous learning.

21. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is predominantly good or better with no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Planning of lessons is good and teachers clearly outline exactly what they expect pupils to learn in the course of the lesson. This was clearly seen in a Year 2 science lesson about habitats where the teacher made sure that all pupils understood the purpose of the work before they went outside to collect animals and investigate the environment. All the pupils in this class were well motivated and succeeded in learning a great deal in the lesson, giving them a real sense of achievement. Good use is made of learning support assistants and teachers to assist pupils in small group activities or support individual pupils during whole class sessions. Both the teachers and their assistants provide the pupils with ongoing feedback and guidance during the lessons that helps them learn more effectively. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 numeracy lesson on addition. The teacher, despite focusing on one group of pupils, remained very aware of the progress of others in the class and the support assistant worked very well with another group. Both gave very good guidance to pupils and had high expectations of work and behaviour. By the end of the lesson pupils had successfully learned that two numbers added together in any order resulted in the same answer.

22. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is also good overall although a few lessons were unsatisfactory. Questioning of pupils is good with teachers taking care to involve all pupils. For example, in an excellent Year 6 numeracy lesson the teacher swiftly spotted the pupils who were experiencing difficulties and, through careful questioning, found out where they were going wrong and corrected their misconceptions. Lessons move along at a brisk pace with pupils quickly going on to the next task and not wasting time. Relationships are good and teachers motivate their pupils well so that they are eager to learn and keen to participate. For instance, in a Year 4 literacy lesson writing non-fiction text the pupils were told of the criteria by which they could evaluate their success in achieving the aims of the lesson. They knew exactly what they had to do and worked hard throughout the lesson. Where teaching is less than satisfactory the teachers do not challenge the pupils sufficiently and the tasks provided are too simple or uninteresting. The available time is not always used effectively as pupils are allowed to interrupt the teacher and each other during the lesson. In such lessons pupils learn at a slow rate as much of the time is spent keeping the class in order. Occasionally, for example in physical education, the teacher does not have sufficient subject knowledge to teach pupils new skills and their progress is hindered by the lack of suitable advice about how to improve.

23. The numeracy strategy and literacy hour have been successfully introduced and implemented and have had a significant impact on improving and maintaining standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of numeracy skills is good and pupils are given many well-planned opportunities to understand number. Strategies for teaching literacy are satisfactory. The introduction of the literacy hour, improvements made in the teaching of English identified by the school's self-evaluation programme and improved target-setting have contributed significantly to an improvement in standards in some aspects of English since the last inspection. In most classes the teachers understand the need to ensure that the start of the lesson is brisk, snappy and interesting so as to capture the pupils' interest and motivation.

24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Support is targeted at different year groups, often in literacy and mathematics, but not exclusively, and often involves highly effective “team teaching”, where the English as an additional language teacher works alongside the class teacher, at times leading the lesson. This is seen in the careful planning of lessons, the match of work to the ability and needs of each pupil and the preparation of resources to support the work of individuals. There is increasing challenge in the work provided for such pupils and achievable and relevant targets are set. Learning support assistants are well briefed, competent and are used effectively to help pupils with learning difficulties to make good progress.

25. Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are very good and the mutual respect shown has a good impact on learning. In class all teachers make positive comments to pupils and encourage them to improve and extend their work. Marking of books is inconsistent. Where it is good the pupils are given useful pointers to help them improve their work in the future. However, much of the marking seen was mainly ticks with a few encouraging comments and this does little to help pupils know exactly how to make better progress in their learning.

26. The noticeable strengths of the good teaching are:

- Effective lesson planning with work set at suitable levels for all pupils;
- High expectations of work and behaviour;
- Time used effectively, especially in Key Stage 2;
- Good assessment of pupils through careful questioning;
- Good use of all support staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

27. These strengths in teaching make learning a pleasure for pupils and they respond by being interested in their work and determined to do well in all aspects of their education.

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

28. The school provides a good curriculum, teaching all required National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Procedures to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum are excellent, and the provision for extra-curricular activities is outstanding. The provision for ensuring pupils’ personal development is very good.

29. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in tackling key issues related to the curriculum. The provision for mathematics and history is now good, and adequate time is now allocated to science. A scheme of work is in place to guide teachers’ planning in design and technology. A systematic programme of staff training and monitoring has supported all developments. Progress in tackling shortcomings in the provision for information technology has been slower. Although new computers have been installed in classrooms, and the curriculum is covered during class lessons, the school has not yet installed the planned computer suite. There is still very little use of information technology across the curriculum, and this remains an area for improvement.

30. There are some shortcomings in relation to the organisation of the timetable for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Morning sessions are usually devoted to literacy and numeracy periods, and some of these lessons are too long, pupils become restless and the rate of learning is slowed. The organisation of the day for older pupils is more efficient, and the school monitors the allocation of time to subjects carefully to ensure that the curriculum is covered fully. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure that pupils in the mixed age classes do not repeat work covered previously. Joint planning between teachers in each of the years is effective and provides pupils with similar experiences in all subjects. An additional strength is that staff

employed to support pupils with English as an additional language are fully involved in all the curriculum planning.

31. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage covers all the relevant areas of learning with particular emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and on encouraging speaking and listening skills. The school has already identified the need to improve the links between the Foundation Stage and Year 1. In particular there is not enough emphasis during the Reception year in developing early writing skills.

32. Equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum for all pupils is excellent. All pupils benefit from the excellent provision. Since the last inspection much good work on establishing an equal opportunities (EO) policy and the school is aware that even more is possible and has already taken steps to build upon this excellent foundation. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The help pupils with learning needs receive in lessons ensures that they understand and benefit fully from their work. They are given work at a variety of levels to stretch them all. Support staff work effectively in classes and often help all pupils in the class, not only targeted pupils. Emphasis is placed on providing plenty of opportunities for pupils with learning needs to practise and refine their basic skills of numeracy and literacy.

33. Strategies for teaching literacy are satisfactory. English teaching is strongly underpinned by an emphasis on developing pupils' confidence in speaking. Although pupils use their reading and writing skills across the curriculum, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length, for example, in history. Strategies for teaching numeracy are good, and setting arrangements at the top of the school ensure that the highest attainers are able to achieve well.

34. Very good arrangements are in place for pupils' personal development. The programme for personal, social, and health education is well planned and systematically taught. Class discussion periods (circle times) are used very effectively to discuss sensitive matters and social and moral issues in a supportive atmosphere. Moral issues are also raised in assemblies, and dealt with as they arise during lessons, and this supports the strong provision for moral development. Pupils are helped to understand right and wrong by teachers' patient explanations and calm approach when there is any anti-social behaviour. The consistent and positive approach to behaviour management is a significant strength. The Golden Rules and systems of rewards and sanctions are clear and fair, and are respected by pupils and staff.

35. The provision for pupils' social development is very good, and is supported by the excellent programme for extra-curricular activities. Pupils from Year 2 onwards have the opportunity to attend well-organised after-school clubs. Activities are varied, and include drumming, sculpture, football and choir. All pupils, from nursery onwards take part in a regular programme of educational visits to support their work in class. Most classes go on two visits each term, and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential journey. The school has established good links with the local and wider community, and with some local schools. These links are used productively to widen pupils' experience and include working on projects with the London Symphony Orchestra and workshop visits from authors, art and sports professionals. All pupils take part in two concerts each year and pupils have the opportunity to watch performances at local secondary schools.

36. In most classes pupils take responsibility for tidying up and taking registers to the office. Pupils begin to develop their concept of citizenship through the school council. As pupils reach the top of the school, they have the opportunity to take responsibility as monitors around the school. Pupils apply in writing to be playground helpers, and Year 6 pupils have been trained to play board games with younger classes during wet playtimes. Year 6 pupils show prospective parents round the school. There are fewer planned opportunities for pupils to develop skills in working independently during lesson times.

37. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils have time in lessons, particularly during circle time, to reflect on their experiences and to gain an insight into the values and beliefs of others. Although assemblies do not always fulfil statutory requirements in terms of worship, they do provide pupils with a useful sense of community and an opportunity to widen their understanding of their place in the world. Religious education lessons give pupils an understanding of features of the major world religions and pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their own lives. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good and pupils benefit significantly from the enriched curriculum in art, English and particularly in music. The cultural diversity of the school community continues to be used to give all pupils an insight into different traditions, and pupils are proud of their school. In June the school published a poetry book, developed following a visit from a poet. The book portrays a lively, confident and racially diverse community. In one of the poems a child summed up beautifully and succinctly what pupils think of their school "Gayhurst school is cool"

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The educational and personal guidance for pupils is very good. Pastoral systems in the school are strengths and make a significant contribution to the quality of education it provides. Pupils are known well by adults and communication between all who work at the school is good which assists this informal knowledge.

39. Procedures to ensure the health, safety and well being of children are very good. Health and safety inspections are carried out regularly and action is taken promptly to address any issues. The school follows the local guidelines for child protection and procedures are reviewed with staff regularly. All teachers and many support staff are trained in first aid and records are kept of any incidents.

40. The school has worked hard to reduce the level of unauthorised absence and attendance procedures are good. Rewards are given for good attendance and those who are late are challenged and monitored. The headteacher meets with those parents who wish to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time to explain the implications such an absence will have on the child's progress.

41. The procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are excellent. All staff provide excellent role models for pupils. Pupils are aware of the school's Golden Rules. Good work and behaviour is rewarded. Staff are consistent in their application of the school's policy. This is a notable improvement since the last inspection. Systems to deal with challenging behaviour are very good. Most poor behaviour is a result of individual anger that can spill over to violence for a minority of pupils. Time is taken to discuss with these pupils how they feel and what strategies they can use themselves to control their behaviour. This approach was seen to defuse many situations successfully and allow learning to continue for the rest of the class. The role of the learning mentors and the home school worker is significant in this area. Poor behaviour is recorded systematically and monitored carefully by staff.

42. Behaviour is discussed regularly in assemblies and at the school council. Circle time is used well to support the discussion of specific issues. A programme has been introduced and runs alongside circle time; topics include citizenship, drugs awareness and sex education. The school council is another forum where the welfare of pupils and relationships are discussed. Bullying is addressed regularly in assemblies and pupils complete an annual Bully Buster questionnaire. Pupils were clear that if such an incident occurs, once they have told a member of staff it is dealt with quickly.

43. A significant feature of the school is the deployment of a home school worker and two learning mentors. The home school worker supports families in a variety of ways, for example,

with housing problems or the special educational needs statementing process. She also focuses on attendance issues and pupils at risk of exclusion. The learning mentors support children who find school difficult or who have emotional or behavioural problems. The learning mentors and the home school worker are available to parents at the start and end of the day. They support the headteacher in her work with parents very well and their role allows teachers in the classroom to concentrate on teaching.

44. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Throughout the school pupils are set targets in English, mathematics and science each half term. Pupils are able to explain what these targets are and what they need to do to achieve them. They are reviewed regularly and used in the pupils' annual reports to parents. Target setting is good, as are procedures for moderating judgements. This means that teachers and pupils know exactly how much progress they have made. The school also uses baseline assessment, the SATs in each key stage and optional SATs in Years 3, 4 and 5 to monitor overall performance. The school is now making assessment in the foundation subjects a priority for development in the coming year. The deputy headteacher has prepared a new system but it is still at an early stage of implementation.

45. The school continues to look for ways to improve its pastoral provision. In addition to the successful nurture group, which supports Key Stage 1 pupils, it is in the process of introducing peer mediations and a 'circle of friends' system.

46. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well organised and well supervised. They provide good opportunities for pupils' social development, for example, at each sitting for lunch pupils sit at specific tables with those from different classes and chat together as they eat their meal. Pupils have good relationships with the midday supervisors and pupils in Year 5 and 6 act as Playground Friends to younger pupils. A good range of toys and equipment is available to pupils in the playground and is enjoyed by all. The school provides a special lunchtime clubroom for those pupils who find lunchtime more difficult.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents' views of the school are very positive. From the results of the questionnaire there was overwhelming agreement with the statements about their child liking school, that teaching is good, that parents feel comfortable in approaching the school and that the school expects children to work hard and that they are making good progress. At the meeting and in the questionnaire issues were raised about homework but the inspection team judged that provision for this is satisfactory. In the questionnaire a few parents did not feel that the school provided an interesting range of activities outside the curriculum but the inspection team judged the organisation and the wide range and quality of activities and clubs that take place at the end of the school day to be excellent.

48. The school has made very effective links with parents, which ensures that all parents are given the opportunity to become involved in the education of their child. The quality of information they receive is good. The prospectus and the annual report to parents from the governing body are well written. Parents receive an annual report on the progress of their child that is detailed, gives clear targets for improvement in all subjects and meets requirements. Parents are informed about the curriculum each child will undertake and are given good information about national tests, EAL provision and the need for regular attendance. Many documents are translated into home languages and the school uses an interpreter to assist in discussions with parents.

49. Arrangements for the induction of new children at whatever time they arrive in the school year are very good. Links with nursery parents are made early through home visits and parents are involved well in settling in their child. The many refugees and asylum seekers who join the

school are warmly welcomed. In one example a young Turkish girl entered the nursery during the inspection and by the end of the day all the children in her class were able to sing “head, shoulders, knees and toes” in her first language. This form of welcome is typical of the school.

50. The school sees the relationship with parents as vital in its work to raise standards. As a result much time is spent talking with parents and advising them both of concerns about their children and about other aspects of family life. Much of this work is undertaken by the home school worker and the learning mentors whose roles have become very valuable in assisting teachers and the senior management team in this area. Parents praised all staff for their approachability and availability. The school listens carefully to the concerns of parents, sends out regular newsletters and questionnaires and asks for suggestions for improvements.

51. There are regular parents’ meetings that are well attended and at home many parents hear their child read and ensure homework is completed. The school has involved parents in parenting skills classes and English language lessons. Parents help in school particularly in the younger classes. Many more help at weekend ‘Action Days’ when bulbs are planted or painting work is done. A real sense of community is evident and the school and parents work hard to maintain this, for example, the Gayhurst School Association organises a party each term that is well attended by parents, staff and children. Fundraising events such as jumble sales and an auction of promises are also successful and have enabled the school to improve the playground areas.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides excellent, purposeful leadership. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection through the commitment, hard work and vision of the headteacher, ably supported by her deputy. She manages to address the day-to-day difficulties faced by the school successfully. She provides very clear direction for the work of the school and has developed and maintained a strong focus on raising the standard and quality of education for pupils. Through her direct management style and the establishment of a strong senior management team, she has ensured a firm foundation for the continued growth and development of the school. All staff have clear and high expectations of pupils’ behaviour and standards of work. They follow the school guidelines consistently encouraging positive pupil attitudes and behaviour and helping them to develop self-discipline. Performance management is in place and is seen by the headteacher and staff as a valuable means of identifying where improvements are needed.

53. Since the last inspection the school has taken effective measures to strengthen the roles and responsibilities of all senior members of staff and the subject co-ordinators. The re-organisation and development of the senior management team by creating phase co-ordinators working with the EAL and SEN co-ordinators has provided greater depth to the management structure. In addition it has enabled more staff to take on responsibilities and support developments. Phase co-ordinators take responsibility for the pastoral management of pupils and staff in their respective phases and have direct responsibility for monitoring developments and ensuring policies are implemented consistently. The subject co-ordinators have suitable monitoring tasks such as checking teachers’ lesson planning and work sampling to help ensure that appropriate work is provided for pupils across the classes and year groups in each subject. Time has been allocated to enable subject co-ordinators to develop their management roles more effectively by supporting their colleagues in the classroom and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Very good systems for assessment in the core subjects are now in place. These are used analytically to monitor each child’s progress in English, mathematics and science but are not yet in place for all the foundation subjects.

54. The deployment of teaching and support staff is effective and ensures efficient management of the school. In the classes, the learning support assistants work well in close

partnership with the teachers. Provision for special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is very good and is very well managed by the two co-ordinators. All staff, teaching and non-teaching involved in this work, are clear about their roles and understand the important part they play in helping pupils in their care to learn well. No pupil's difficulties are taken as a reason not to strive for excellence.

55. The development of a coherent programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning has been a major priority for the headteacher and staff and the system is working well. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. The organisation, management and support for newly qualified teachers are very good. For example, the school ensures that every teacher new to the school has a colleague mentor in order to provide relevant information. This works very well to give support and guidance to newly appointed or temporary staff who are called in to work in the school. The school successfully recruits new teachers when needed and has a loyal band of supply teachers ready to step in at very short notice. This is a testimony to the support provided and the encouraging ethos the school generates to attract teachers to work in the school.

56. The headteacher, staff and governors are all involved in school development planning. The priorities for development are carefully analysed and the appropriateness of them and the actions taken to meet these targets set are excellent as is the shared commitment by everyone to focus on improvement and the capacity to succeed. The governors are very clear about their roles and their importance to the school. They see themselves as 'critical friends' and their effectiveness in fulfilling their statutory and other responsibilities is excellent. Governors are developing links with subject co-ordinators to help them monitor curriculum developments.

57. The governors apply the principles of best value in all spending decisions and then monitor its impact on financial planning. They ensure the school spends its resources wisely and seek to obtain best value when improving learning resources or refurbishment of classrooms. Educational priorities are very well supported through very good financial planning. The school has been very successful in obtaining a number of additional funds to support developments in the school and these funds are used effectively and fully for their designated purposes. Governors are clear about their monitoring role and the expectations and focus of visits in order to improve their contribution to shaping the direction of the school. The school gives good value for money.

58. The school makes satisfactory use of all the accommodation available although in some of the smaller classrooms, teachers are not always able to organise practical activities in the way that they would wish. However, some new pupils' tables with storage trays have been purchased and they have helped to overcome some of the small classroom difficulties successfully. Overall, however, there is insufficient storage space in the school and the proposal to use half of the small library as an IT suite remains a problem which needs to be solved. The three halls are used efficiently for assemblies and indoor physical education. Recently, the nursery outside area has been imaginatively refurbished with exciting and interesting features to enrich the quality of learning for the youngest pupils. The school's working environment is very clean, well maintained and effectively managed. The adequacy of the school's learning resources is satisfactory and sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum in all subjects except ICT. Resources for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are effectively used and are of good quality.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (i) Raise standards of English throughout the school by ensuring that pupils develop their skills in reading and writing by;
 - engaging in a wider range of reading activities and writing techniques, including drafting;
 - developing pupils' reference and comprehension skills to enable them to become more competent researchers and to improve writing skills;
 - ensuring that pupils become more confident and competent when using reading and writing skills in other subjects.
(paragraphs 1-6, 78, 82, 83, 94)

- (ii) Increase the focus on the key learning skills in science by:
 - ensuring that pupils can respond to a range of enquiries, investigations and tasks using appropriate forms of recording;
 - developing pupils' skills of independent learning by increasing their opportunities for problem solving and research;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups on a selected task, to agree conclusions and share their findings with the rest of the class.
(paragraphs 9, 92, 93, 98)

- (iii) Raise attainment in information technology by:
 - improving provision of resources;
 - ensuring information technology is used in all relevant subjects where possible and that this is regularly monitored and checked;
 - developing clear curriculum guidance on what and how to teach information technology set in the context of other subjects and topics.
(paragraphs 10, 120-126)

- (iv) Develop a more consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work and the assessment of pupils' progress and attainment in the foundation subjects.
(paragraphs 112, 116)

Address the minor issues that appear within the report including:

- Review class timetables to guarantee more effective use of time in literacy and numeracy especially in Key Stage 1.
- Put more emphasis in the Reception classes on developing pupils' early writing skills.
- Implement a more coherent approach to teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

60. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good. There are three teachers in the team. Of these, 2.6 teachers are funded through the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant (EMAG) and the school pays an additional £13,000 from its annual budget to support the work. The school uses the expertise of the specialist teachers well, both to directly support pupils in Year 1 up to Year 6 and to support teachers' planning and expertise in lessons. Pupils are making good progress through this support. They start to acquire English quickly, but they are not expected to reach national standards at age 11. Each teacher works in two-year groups but at present there is no additional provision for the support team to work with pupils in the Foundation Stage classes.

61. The deployment of the staff takes into account the fluency levels of pupils for whom English is an additional language and their general learning needs. The staff offer valuable support to help these pupils who have full access to the curriculum. They work mainly within the classroom, tightly focusing their attention on a targeted group of pupils. This is directly related to the work of the class as a whole. In this way the work mirrors that of mainstream teachers operating in a support role targeting small groups of pupils with special educational needs. In consequence, the team meet the class teachers in the year groups they support weekly to share expertise and combine resources. In addition, the co-ordinator and the special educational needs co-ordinator meet regularly to ensure that pupils are receiving the consistent support to which they are entitled.

62. The quality of teaching is consistently good or very good. This consistency of good teaching has a direct effect on the standards achieved in the two key stages and the good progress made by all pupils for whom English is an additional language. In all class lessons the support teachers work effectively with the class teacher to support pupils' learning. On many occasions, they lead the lesson with the class teacher in a supporting capacity. The high expectations of the teachers and the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils provide the context for successful teaching and learning. Staff are skilful in ensuring that pupils make a contribution to the plenary session' thus developing their confidence and self-esteem. Lessons move with pace so that pupils work hard, often to capacity, and cover a range of activities. Pupils are managed very well with quiet but effective authority. The use of the specialist staff is flexible. Sometimes they support newly arrived pupils having little English by withdrawing them to develop their self confidence and consolidate and extend their learning.

63. The work of the EMAG team is very well managed by the co-ordinator who has ensured that systems are in place for setting language targets for individual pupils in the early stages of acquiring English, weekly individualised planning, and regular sampling and monitoring of progress. Planning and liaison with class teachers is clearly on going in all contexts, and all three staff maintain detailed records.

64. The partnership between the team and parents is excellent and has a positive effect on their children's learning. The co-ordinator attends every parents' meeting to give support to them. They are encouraged to help in setting up displays on specific themes and their cultures and festivals have a high profile in the school. English language classes for parents are organised by the team.

65. The assessment of the progress of pupils with an additional language is recorded in detail. It is carefully matched to their individual language plans. Targets are drawn up which are written into their programmes and are reviewed frequently. Some pupils have gaps in everyday language and need help with the differences in pronunciation or in the grammar of two or more languages they are learning. Many learners do not have an adequate grasp of colloquial English and of nuances of meaning. However, the rigorous and effective assessment and review procedures already established and the good teaching throughout the school, enable these pupils to make good progress in their English language acquisition and understanding.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	98
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	12	44	35	4	0	0
Percentage	3	12	45	36	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	507
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7	139

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	161

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	226

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	70
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	59

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	38	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	28	31	31
	Total	46	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (62)	70 (66)	76 (74)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	19
	Girls	29	30	30
	Total	45	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (59)	70 (74)	71 (75)
	National	(84)	(88)	(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	41	28	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	29
	Girls	20	21	25
	Total	48	48	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (71)	70 (70)	78 (82)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	29	31
	Girls	17	19	18
	Total	42	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (48)	69 (60)	71 (63)
	National	(70)	(72)	(79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	108
Black – African heritage	70
Black – other	11
Indian	9
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	9
Chinese	0
White	153
Any other minority ethnic group	42

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	23.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.37
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	191.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	35
Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	16.66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	4	0
Black – African heritage	11	1
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/20001
	£
Total income	1,587,326
Total expenditure	1,565,984
Expenditure per pupil	2,812
Balance brought forward from previous year	152,402
Balance carried forward to next year	173,744

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	530
Number of questionnaires returned	160

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	40	7	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	46	15	1	6
The teaching is good.	69	30	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	30	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	35	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	29	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	55	37	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	59	35	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	38	8	2	8

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.

66. Children are admitted to the nursery class, on a part time basis, when they are three years old. They are able to attend on a full time basis, for a minimum of one term, as and when a place becomes available. Children are admitted to the three Reception classes as rising-fives in September or January. There is a wide spread of ability, the great majority of children starting with skills well below average for their age. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out by the staff. Many of these children speak little or no English. Good home school links are initiated through home visits before the children start in the nursery. These visits, and the fact that parents are invited into the nursery to stay with their child during the first few days, are appreciated by the parents and help the children to settle in.

67. By the end of the Reception year, attainment in communication, language and literacy is well below average, although speaking and listening skills are better developed. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good and is a strength of the setting. Children reach the early learning goals for mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Children with special educational needs make good progress against their targets. Children who speak English as an additional language also make good progress.

68. There is strong teamwork and adults provide good support, which ensures that the children's mother tongue is valued. The adults provide good role models and the children respond well to the teaching and non-teaching staff, who establish good relationships with them. Teachers listen to children carefully and consistently reinforce children's positive self-esteem and confidence. Expectations for behaviour are high. Children's attitudes are very good and they are confident to try out new activities and enjoy what they are doing. Planning is very detailed and makes good use of assessment to ensure that work is appropriately differentiated. Resources and accommodation are used well. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good with the result that there is a consistent ethos and high expectations of what the children can achieve by all adults.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Personal, social and emotional development is seen as a priority in the nursery and Reception classes. The quality of teaching is good and results in the children making very good progress in this area of learning. Teachers have high expectations and children are frequently reminded to keep to expected standards of behaviour. To help them develop socially, the children are taught to share equipment, follow classroom routines and take turns. In the nursery, children are confident in speaking to adults. They know how to take turns and wait patiently to count out paper candles for birthday cards. They are learning to understand that there are rules and they obey them, at the same time understanding right from wrong. The children are encouraged to be independent when they choose activities and show concentration when engaged in their tasks. In the Reception classes, children take off their own shoes, socks and jumpers ready for physical activity and lay them neatly in place. They select outdoor equipment and readily change from bikes to smaller equipment when asked. In both groups, adults promote children's personal development by ensuring that equipment and resources are easily accessible to them and help them to become independent. Children regularly choose from the variety of activities on offer and help clear up after the activity is over. Children enjoy learning throughout the Foundation Stage. Relationships between children and adults are very good.

Communication, language and literacy.

70. Many children begin nursery at a level well below that expected for children of the same age nationally with a significant proportion having English as an additional language and being at the early stages of learning English. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children have not reached the standards expected nationally, especially in writing. The development of children's language skills is given suitable priority and a wide variety of experiences are provided to enable children to make good progress in their learning. The teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well and are well aware of the abilities of different children. During group sessions in both nursery and Reception, children share books and enjoy rhymes and songs. Children in the nursery enjoy singing 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes' in Turkish. The quality of interaction between all the adults and children in all areas of learning has a significant impact on the progress children make. The role-play areas in nursery and Reception provide good opportunities for speaking and listening. Useful opportunities to work and play together are planned by the teacher. In the nursery two children using magnets to pick up paper clips from the sand chatted to one another about how this happened and was it magic? Some children show an understanding of the elements of a story and enjoy hearing the story of 'Bad Egg' and link this to the story of Humpty Dumpty.

71. In the Reception classes, the teachers make flexible use of the planning format from the National Literacy Strategy. The children enjoy sharing a book with adults, for example, joining in with the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. A group of children are able to re-tell the story orally using finger puppets and teddy bears. Children are beginning to learn initial letter sounds. Both classrooms are rich in print and this teaches children that print has meaning. Some children can write their own name legibly and all children have the opportunity to use pencils and crayons on a regular basis. Children in the Reception classes are familiar with routines and are able to sit and concentrate and listen to an adult. By the end of the Foundation Stage, although attainment is well below average, the children will have made good progress especially in speaking and listening.

Mathematical development.

72. Teaching is good and a range of activities is provided to help children make good progress and acquire the skills necessary for mathematical development. Numbers are clearly displayed throughout the Foundation Stage with opportunities for counting, sorting, matching, adding and subtracting. There is a number line for children to follow and jigsaws to complete. In Reception, teachers use the planning format from the National Numeracy Strategy and begin to introduce the main teaching activity. Children sing number songs and rhymes. In nursery they can differentiate between big, middle sized and small scoops of sand and whether father bear, mother bear or baby bear would use them. They learn about measuring as they draw around their hands and develop their knowledge of shape through using square and circular cutters in play dough. In Reception, children immediately recognise that the numbers on the number line are not in the correct sequence. They are able to sequence the numbers and know that the line started with zero. By the end of Reception year, most children are likely to be achieving the expected levels.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

73. The quality of teaching for this area is good. Staff provide a wide variety of materials and resources to stimulate the children's interest in the world around them. This enables the children to make good progress. Children use the keyboard and mouse with increasing confidence when using the computer. In the nursery they plant bulbs and plants in the outdoor area and understand that plants are living things. They talk about the plants and bulbs and are fascinated when a spider appears in one of the plant pots. Later, children in Reception build on

and use this knowledge to keep a plant diary. Children in the nursery are able to identify the rooms in their house and understand that homes have the same basic pattern. In Reception, children can talk about themselves, why they have bones and that some joints swivel.

74. Teachers provide well-structured and stimulating learning experiences, building effectively on children's previous knowledge and understanding. For example, photographs in the Reception classes depict the local environment and the children visit Kew Gardens. Many visitors such as the 'Lollipop Man' and parents with young babies are welcomed into the nursery to help the children extend their learning experiences. Children in both the nursery and Reception classes build with a range of construction toys and through these activities select the pieces they want to use. For example, children in Reception build chairs for the three bears and choose the pieces depending on the size of bear. Good quality displays in and around the classrooms help children to develop a respect for other cultures and beliefs. For example, in the nursery the caption 'Writing Area' is also written in Bengali, Turkish and Chinese. The children enjoy learning in this area and make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the Reception year most children are likely to be achieving the expected levels.

Physical development

75. Children make good progress across the Foundation Stage in this area of learning as a result of good teaching that recognises the importance of healthy, physical development. Children learn to move with increasing confidence, balance and control. The good provision for outdoor play in the nursery has helped this. Nursery children have access to a good range of equipment which enables the physical skills of running, jumping and climbing to develop. They show an awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. The Reception children have access to an outdoor play area which has been imaginatively developed with roadways and wall paintings. The children readily share the wheeled toys and use the outdoor climbing frame with dexterity. In physical education (PE) lessons the children learn to use all the space around them as they learn to walk whilst balancing a beanbag. They move confidently, with appropriate control and co-ordination, following instructions to 'freeze'. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have many opportunities to improve their manipulative skills by cutting, sticking, threading or fitting jigsaws together to develop hand eye co-ordination. Attention to health and safety issues is appropriate at all times, including the careful use of scissors and other tools to help children gain safe control of these finer movements. By the end of their year in Reception most children are likely to meet the early learning goals for this area of learning.

Creative development

76. Teaching is good and children make good progress in this area of learning. The children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creative skills. Children in the nursery explore texture well for effect. They paint interesting portraits of themselves and make good progress as they work with different media to create textured pictures. The children use their imaginations in role play and stories. Their creativity is developed well because they are encouraged to explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities. Children sing along to taped music and explore rhythm and beat with a variety of musical instruments. A child with English as an additional language enthusiastically joined in the singing in her own language. Children in the Reception classes explore colour and texture effectively through a range of resources and sensory experiences. They continue to develop in confidence as they try out new ideas, with adults working alongside them, talking to them about their work and introducing appropriate vocabulary. For example, when the children decorated their name using a variety of coloured threads, shiny paper and collage materials relevant vocabulary was used and encouraged. The attainment of children in creative development is broadly in line with expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English have improved since the previous inspection, although they remain below average when compared with standards achieved nationally. The most recent school assessment data indicates that a greater number of pupils are achieving above average levels by the time they are 11. Test results and school records show that pupils achieve well between the ages of seven and 11. This reflects the good teaching seen in most classes at this stage.

78. When pupils enter Year 1, their overall attainment is below average and standards in writing are particularly low. The school has already identified the need to improve links between the Foundation Stage and Year 1, so that the pupils are better prepared for the literacy period. At present many pupils have not achieved the early learning goals for writing by the end of the Reception year.

79. Skills in speaking and listening are taught well throughout the school, and most pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 6. This represents a good achievement and reflects the good teaching across the school. Pupils learn to listen to each other and share ideas, as seen in Year 2 where pupils quietly discussed instructions for simple tasks with their partners. Almost all teachers provide good models of clear speech, and all staff set a good example to pupils by listening carefully to what they have to say. Pupils learn to explain their ideas and opinions, and the majority speak confidently when answering in class and talking to visitors. In one Year 6 lesson a group of pupils talked together in a mature way as they tried to distinguish between fact and opinion in a text. Higher attaining pupils speak with assurance and develop ideas competently. In an assembly for Year 5 and 6, a pupil played the part of Rosa Parks with considerable poise, confidently answering questions about the segregation laws in the USA.

80. Standards in reading by the time pupils reach the age of seven are improving, and the focused support given to Year 2 pupils last year was effective. By the end of Year 2 most pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words, and read simple text with reasonable understanding. Skills with letter sounds are not as well developed in younger pupils. At the start of Year 2, pupils tend to focus more on letter names rather than the sounds and this impedes their ability to tackle new words independently. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils read short passages with reasonable accuracy and have a sound understanding of the main points. They confidently refer to the text to answer straightforward questions about their reading, but find it harder to use the skills of inference and deduction. This is an aspect identified by the co-ordinator as an area for development. Some higher-attaining readers enjoy books and talk eagerly about their preferences for different authors. In general, however, there is little evidence of pupils developing an enthusiasm for reading. Although some time is allocated during the week for reading, not all pupils have a book "on the go" and many do not read every day. Few of the pupils heard reading could recall books which they had enjoyed. Some pupils said they enjoyed "Harry Potter", but were unable to describe the characters or plots of the stories.

81. Pupils do, however, acquire a sound understanding of features of non-fiction texts. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of alphabetical order. They learn to use the index in the library, and to locate information by using the index and contents pages of reference books. By Year 6 many pupils understand how to scan texts to locate key words quickly. Pupils have too few opportunities to use these skills for independent research in subjects such as history.

82. Standards in writing are below average, and written work often does not reflect pupils' understanding of the curriculum. By the end of Year 2 most pupils can sequence their ideas when they write. They produce short passages and use some basic punctuation in their writing, although their vocabulary choices are often quite limited. A few higher-attaining seven-year-olds write lively short stories, employ a variety of punctuation; begin to vary their sentence structures and use imaginative vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils write fluently,

and in their best work the average attainers show a satisfactory grasp of grammar and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have a limited understanding of punctuation, and make frequent spelling errors. In some books teachers give pupils useful guidance on how to improve their work, but this is not always the case.

83. Pupils practise handwriting in all classes, and some pupils develop neat well-formed writing. Younger pupils, for example in Year 1, are carefully taught how to form their letters, but in a few classes not enough attention is paid to teaching handwriting and the pupils form letters incorrectly even during writing practice. The presentation of written work in some classes is unsatisfactory, although other teachers expect and achieve sound standards.

84. The quality of teaching across the school is good, with more than half the lessons seen being good. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching where explanations were unclear, and the task did not move pupils' learning forward. In most lessons tasks are matched well to pupils' needs. A significant strength of the teaching is the very good contribution of teachers employed to work with pupils learning English as an additional language and to promote the inclusion of those from ethnic minorities called EMAS teachers. Support is targeted at different year groups, and often involves highly effective "team teaching", where the EMAS teacher works alongside the class teacher, at times leading the lesson. Presentation is often lively in these lessons, motivating the pupils to offer answers and to try hard. In a Year 6 lesson on adverbs, for example, all pupils were eager to contribute, and learning was good as pupils suggested increasingly adventurous words.

85. Teachers in all classes use praise very effectively to encourage pupils and to give them confidence. Relationships during lessons are very good. Pupils know that their ideas and efforts will be valued and are willing to try. Learning support staff and primary helpers are effective in working with groups, and as a result pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers. Teachers are particularly good at explaining work. New vocabulary and figures of speech are always clarified, and they are skilful at checking that those with limited skills in English are fully included throughout the lesson. Presentation of lessons is often interesting. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher captured pupils' interest very effectively by using a puppet who "mispronounced" some words. They were very eager to correct him and to use the correct initial consonant.

86. All pupils have targets in reading and writing, and they know what these are, at times referring to them as they work. Assessment procedures are very good, and are used very effectively to identify pupils who need additional help. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans, which guide the good support they receive.

87. The management of English is very good. The information gathered from monitoring of teaching and learning, and from detailed analysis of tests and assessments is used effectively to identify areas for improvement. The school has begun to focus closely on improving standards in Key Stage 1. There is scope here for a review of the timetable, since some literacy periods are much longer than the recommended hour and pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration. Little use is made of information technology during literacy periods, and this is an aspect which needs to be developed across the school.

MATHEMATICS

88. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards as expected nationally for their age in numeracy and other areas of mathematics. This judgement is based on the standards of work seen in the current Year 2 classes and is a very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be well below those found nationally. Test results since 1998 have shown a steady improvement each year with standards rising at a higher rate than is found nationally. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the predominantly good teaching

seen in Years 1 and 2 are having a positive impact on the standards reached by pupils. At the end of Year 6 pupils also attain standards in line with those found nationally and well above those found in similar schools. These standards have been maintained since 1998 with the school's performance closely matching the general rise in national standards. In the tests taken in 2001, four pupils were successful in reaching Level 6 which is most commendable and a strong indication that more able pupils are being fully stretched. Again, the overall good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is helping pupils learn most effectively. Pupils throughout the school with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are making the same good progress as their classmates. This is due to the good support they receive in class from their teachers and learning support assistants and the careful planning which takes the needs of all pupils into account. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.

89. At the end of Year 2 pupils understand the language of number, have a good knowledge of place value to at least 100 and can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. Pupils know the names and some of the properties, such as the number of sides and corners of two-dimensional shapes. They solve shopping problems of amounts up to a pound with more able pupils confidently working to five pounds or more. Pupils tell the time in hours and half hours and some pupils are able to use a bus timetable correctly to find journey times. By the end of Year 6, pupils have progressed to having a good understanding of place value to 1,000 with many pupils confidently handling numbers to 1,000,000. Pupils accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide two and three digit numbers with the majority able to work to at least two decimal places. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. For example, they know that 0.4 is the same as four tenths as well as 40 per cent. Pupils accurately construct and measure angles using appropriate equipment and calculate area by using the correct formula. Higher achieving pupils are able to calculate the volume of cuboids also using a formula. Only occasionally do pupils use information and communication technology to help them in their work. For instance, very little of their data handling work is done on the computers using spreadsheets and other programs. This is an area that has been identified by the school for further development.

90. The quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Planning is good throughout the school and is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers plan together in year groups to ensure similar depth of coverage and to share ideas and expertise. The setting of pupils in Year 6 has also had a positive effect on standards for pupils of all abilities with more able pupils reaching higher levels than would be expected and many lower ability pupils commendably reaching the nationally expected level. All lessons start with a brisk mental session that grabs the pupils' attention and immediately makes them receptive to learning. Individual whiteboards and number cards or fans are often used most effectively by teachers during this session to accurately assess pupils' understanding and thereby tailor the work to the correct level. This was clearly seen in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher called out a number and said, for example, 'five more than' or 'ten less than' and the pupils held up their card if their number fitted the criteria. The teacher was able to see immediately which pupils understood the value of the number they had been given and move them on swiftly to the next stage in their learning. Work for pupils is closely matched to their prior attainment. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson about subtraction with two places of decimals. The teacher had carefully graded the work so that all pupils were being challenged by the task but none were given work that was too easy or beyond their capabilities. The pupils in this class made excellent progress in the lesson and worked confidently and quickly. Teachers explain work well to pupils and always share the lesson objectives with them at the start. This enables the pupils to focus on the learning objectives and know when they have been successful in meeting them. Good relationships are a strong feature with pupils being attentive to their teacher and able to work well together. In a few lessons time was not used as effectively as it might have been and there was a lack of urgency for pupils to finish the given work on time. In these lessons learning was limited, as the pupils didn't feel the need to complete the work and

were unsure of the teachers' expectations. Some lessons for younger pupils were too long and pupils became restless resulting in them losing concentration and interest. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported in lessons by their teachers and support staff. All work and plan well together to ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from the support provided whether it is for a specific pupil or group of pupils.

91. The management of the subject is good and has a positive impact on raising standards. Teaching, planning and completed work are thoroughly monitored to identify areas for improvement and to celebrate success. Assessment procedures are very good and are used most effectively to help future planning and to set targets for groups and individual pupils. Test results are carefully analysed to highlight any differences in attainment by various groups of pupils and to put in place strategies to successfully correct these. They are also analysed to identify any aspects of mathematics that are weak and to address these in the planning. For example, problem solving was found to be an area in need of improvement and the school has worked hard to successfully address this. They have even put a variety of problems on the staircases for pupils to think about and find the answers. This has stimulated the interest of the pupils in a novel and imaginative way.

SCIENCE

92. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are below the national picture but are similar to those found in schools that have the same number of free school meals as Gayhurst. National tests and the work seen in lessons bear this out: pupils do not do as well as other 11 year olds in England but are on a par with pupils who go to similar schools. By the end of Year 2, test results are also lower than they are in other schools but lessons show that attainment is rising. Those pupils now in Year 2 are on track to achieve better results in 2002. The reason for this is the way the school is now giving greater stress to recording the results of experiments. The school has identified why pupils are not doing as well in science as they did a few years ago and are changing what, and how, they teach to help improve standards. This is most certainly having an impact: the standards of those who have just started in Year 6 remain a little below average but are rising so that pupils are on track to do better in 2002 than in 2001. Another aspect of the work in lessons is that although attainment is a little below average, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. They are making appropriate steps to continue to improve. This is very important because it shows that the school is making a difference to pupils' achievements. On the other hand, however, it also shows that things could be even better. Because the school has already identified why pupils are not doing as well as they should, it is now in a strong position to improve standards in science.

93. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of plants and animals. In a very successful Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were able to recognise different living things and their habitats, and could talk about the conditions needed for their survival. Most sort these animals and insects into different groups using simple classifications such as "bug" or "fish". Pupils also have a sound knowledge of physical phenomena such as magnetism and electricity. By Year 6 pupils consolidate their knowledge appropriately and have a broad understanding of scientific ideas. In one Year 6 lesson pupils were able to describe correctly the relationship between gravity and mass. However, pupils are not confident in applying their knowledge to experimental work and find it difficult to predict what might happen, draw conclusions and then record their work. This partly explains why standards are below average: pupils have a broad knowledge but not the skills to apply it to scientific enquiry or understanding. In other words, pupils have only a partial understanding of how to apply their knowledge to practical situations. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson on weighing different objects when some pupils presented their ideas using a graph without really understanding the information they were showing.

94. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates as they move through the school. Science makes some contribution to improving literacy skills, for example, through writing up experiments, but this is not a well-developed aspect of the work. Science also contributes to pupils' numeracy skills, but as the example above shows, this is not always well thought out.

95. Both teaching and learning are always satisfactory and often good or better and have improved since the last inspection. The particular strengths in teaching and learning are:

- teachers' very good relationships with their classes encourages and motivates pupils;
- good preparation and careful planning ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and understand what they are doing;
- teachers are good at encouraging pupils to behave well so that all pupils benefit from lessons;
- pupils are supported well by their teachers and this helps them to make good progress.

96. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and often share the lesson objectives with their class ensuring that pupils know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. In a very good Year 2 lesson, for example, the class teacher used a poster to show pupils what she wanted them to learn and read through carefully so they understood. Here, too, all the adults in the room, including the class teacher, the teacher supporting pupils new to learning English, support staff and parents, all worked together very closely to help pupils learn. As a result the work collecting animals and insects outside was very successful: pupils were very enthusiastic and got huge enjoyment from the work.

97. Teachers manage their pupils well and establish a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms. This not only helps pupils to concentrate on their work by also helps to bring everyone into the lesson. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, challenging behaviour from a small number of pupils was managed well so that the learning of others was not disrupted. Much of this is achieved by the good relationships teachers have with pupils: the respectful way teachers treat pupils is reciprocated. This was illustrated well in a Year 6 lesson about forces: here, the relaxed but purposeful relationships meant that pupils were interested and keen to do well.

98. The work of science is led and managed reasonably well. Teachers' plans and pupils' work is monitored to help ensure that the right topics are covered: as a result pupils study a broad range of topics. There is a well thought out set of improvement targets which are beginning to raise standards in lessons. Analyses of the national tests, for example, and the way pupils answer different questions, shows that science investigations and the way pupils record their work are weaknesses. As a result teachers are giving particular emphasis to these aspects in their lessons and evidence from lessons shows that this is beginning to have a good effect on pupils ability to apply what they know. However, pupils' work also shows that sometimes their knowledge is not always as secure as it should be. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils' knowledge was not quite good enough to enable them to present their findings accurately. The emphasis on recording, experiments and ensuring pupils cover a broad range of topics is right, but there is still a need to keep a balance between experiments and knowledge, so that pupils have the knowledge and practical skills to deepen their understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Because of the small number of lessons observed and the school's timetable arrangements, judgements about standards and teaching are also based on scrutiny of past and present work, and on discussions with pupils and teachers. The attainment of pupils in both key stages is in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the last inspection's findings but there have been significant improvements in the pupils' understanding and ability to work with different media and explore ideas such as line and texture and form, especially in Key Stage 2.

100. The youngest pupils in school often make interesting and effective drawings and paintings. Many of them are very good at making things and love cutting out and sticking things. In one of the Reception classes, pupils used sequins and pieces of materials to provide the texture for their work. These early steps are gradually systematically built upon as pupils move through the school and pupils begin to develop the necessary skills and understanding of pattern and form over time. Another very positive development is that from the earliest years, pupils are encouraged to draw or paint something they are looking at rather than from memory. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils were introduced to a viewfinder and then selected for themselves whether to draw objects using the portrait or landscape form. They experimented carefully and eventually most pupils decided to choose the most appropriate form. Close observational drawing work has been used throughout the school to help develop pupils' fine pencil and observational skills. Work in their sketchbooks shows clear evidence of improvement over time. Pupils in Year 5 experimented finding different techniques with paint, using water colours. They examined the effects of water to give depth of tone and colour to their work, how wax changes the appearance and then used sponges to create a different effect. The results are all very attractive and encourage creativity.

101. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory and sometimes better. Teachers set out the learning objectives at the start of the lesson and ensure that correct terms and vocabulary are used when discussing individual pupil's ideas and work. Suggestions and support are given quietly so that more hesitant pupils feel reassured that their efforts are valued. Teachers give positive feedback to all pupils during the lesson. Their supportive and encouraging remarks are a strength of the teaching in all classes observed. As a result, pupils return to their work eager to improve on it, and then are keen to talk about it to their friends and visitors. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make sound progress in art work.

102. The school now has a good programme for art that is interesting and ensures pupils from year to year have a broad range of experiences to develop better skills. For example, sculpture has a place in the curriculum with some pupils working with clay and wood. Art is used effectively to illustrate work in other subjects. For example, science observations were enhanced by detailed drawings of flowers and other objects studied. There are some great strengths in art in the school that contribute to the look of the building and its surroundings. A large project has produced excellent large-scale paintings to decorate the playground.

103. The co-ordinator has put together examples of the different art activities pupils will do within the programme, so that teachers know what should be expected from pupils in art lessons. She is aware of the need to give practical advice to staff when they plan each art activity to ensure they understand the techniques involved and therefore can help pupils learn new, and improve old skills. In addition, the co-ordinator sees every teacher's planning and offers help and guidance on how to organise and develop art work in their classes. Assessment of art is at an early stage of development but is planned to be addressed during the coming terms. This is a good start, which can be built on to help raise standards of achievement in the subject even further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. The last time the school was inspected standards in design and technology were generally below expectations at the end of both key stages. During the current inspection it was possible to observe only one design and technology lesson. Close scrutiny of pupils' previous work and photographic evidence showing the policy and scheme of work used, discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator provided most of the evidence. This shows that standards in the subject are now in line with those expected nationally for pupils by the end of both key stages.

105. Photographic evidence shows Year 2 pupils tasting soup they had made and using the computer to produce logos to go on the side of the vehicles they had made. Year 3 pupils could cut and measure accurately and use different methods to ensure stability for their free standing photograph frames. Year 5 pupils were able to use a drill and Jinx Jointers when producing their working Cam Toys. Pupils in Year 6 were able to explain the process of planning and evaluating their work. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They are interested and show a high level of enthusiasm. They take pride in their work, which is always well presented.

106. The quality of the teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory. The teacher introduced two different lights and asked the children to think about what materials had been used, how they worked, what was their purpose and what did they look like. The teacher used her good subject knowledge to guide the pupils through this product analysis lesson. The pupils were provided with a good range of resources to analyse and the help of two additional adults meant that pupils of all abilities were given appropriate support to complete the task.

107. There is a designated co-ordinator for the subject which is well managed. The policy was updated in 1999 and a nationally recognised scheme of work is used with some extra support materials as appropriate. Staff subject knowledge and confidence have improved through in-service and year group planning sessions with the co-ordinator on a termly basis. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has been able to complete some monitoring of teaching and learning in both key stages. At present assessment is by outcome only, but simple assessment sheets are to be introduced later this year. Resources, which are stored centrally, are of a good quality.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations for all pupils across the school. As geography is timetabled in a rotation with history it was not possible to observe lessons in all year groups. However, a sample of pupils' work from last year was scrutinised and together with interviews of pupils, lesson observations in some year groups and an examination of displays around the school, it is clear that geography plays an important part in children's learning experiences.

109. Pupils' knowledge of places, especially their locality, is sound. They are able to use local maps with skill and to locate places using simple grid references. In the Reception classes pupils used simple and local maps to very good effect and were able to shade a detailed map showing where they lived. They were also developing locational vocabulary including 'in between', 'through' and 'around' as well as making a study of the immediate school environment. In Year 3 pupils learned how to locate street names on a large-scale map of the locality near the school. Pupils were clearly pleased with their progress in this lesson and were proudly displaying their accurate work to each other and to adults. Some pupils were also able to create their own examples and test their peers. Pupils were able to comment on their locality with accuracy and understanding. In another Year 3 lesson pupils' began to describe their route from home to school giving details of some of the features they passed on the way. In Year 2 pupils were encouraged to consider features of their locality that they liked or disliked with one girl expressing very clearly her dislike for dumped cars locally. Pupils show a concern for their local environment and of environmental issues, generally. Pupils' understanding of the wider world was evident in their ability to identify all the main continents and to pinpoint the island of St Lucia in the Caribbean. In Year 6, pupils showed a good understanding of the water cycle and were able to identify the main features of a river system.

110. Pupils are less confident in carrying out geographical enquiry, applying questioning skills and analytical and presentational techniques – particularly in using a range of resources together for example, maps, photographs, atlases and ICT. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were able to locate the world's main desert areas alongside the main rain forests. This was very good practice and

some pupils, aided by a learning support assistant were able to retrieve appropriate information from a CD-ROM. This is not, however, a common experience for pupils. In interviews with Year 3 and Year 6 pupils it was clear that the use of ICT and research skills in geography is underdeveloped. Furthermore, pupils' access to the Internet, and ICT generally, is relatively limited and they expressed the concern about the lack of time to produce work of an appropriate quality. Pupils' written work is often brief and lacking in detail, often being limited to description and rarely were pupils asked to be more evaluative or critical about geographical issues.

111. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is generally good with a positive impact on learning. In only one lesson was teaching unsatisfactory. Teaching was particularly effective when the task was geared to the varying abilities of the class. Support staff were well informed and the learning activities were appropriately differentiated. In a Year 3 class pupils were able to use an A to Z of London very effectively, accessing the index and able to locate places quickly. The lesson was well resourced and other staff present were clearly aware of the aims of the lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language worked hard and achieved well as a result of the quality of the support provided. At the end of the lesson the teacher checked pupils' knowledge and understanding and provided positive feedback. However, in one lesson the teacher worked hard to keep pupils focused in her introduction session, but this led to 25 minutes of pupils sitting on the floor unnecessarily. When they returned to their tables to work on the set task they were motivated and showed good levels of concentration. However the lack of pace at the start of the lesson meant that pupils had insufficient time to complete the task satisfactorily and the behaviour of some pupils deteriorated so that they lost interest.

112. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and the scheme of work provides for continuity and progression across the school. Assessment in geography is underdeveloped and teachers' marking and written feedback to pupils is poor. More rigorous assessment procedures will inform curriculum planning and contribute to the raising of standards for all pupils. Monitoring and evaluation is not detailed and comprehensive enough, and does not provide constructive feedback to teachers about their work, pupil outcomes or how to raise standards further. Though more CD-ROMs have been purchased access to other software and the Internet is clearly an area for improvement. Curriculum planning is sound but the issue of ICT provision in the subject has yet to be addressed, as well as increasing pupils' opportunities to engage in enquiry based activities thus helping them to become more independent learners and less reliant on the teacher.

HISTORY

113. Throughout the school, pupil attainment in history was a key issue in the last inspection report. The findings of this inspection is that standards of attainment are now in line with expectations, reflecting the endeavour and commitment of the history team over the last four years. History is alive in the school and pupils speak favourably of their experiences in their lessons.

114. History is timetabled on a cycle with geography so, during the inspection, some year groups did not study aspects of the history curriculum. However, from a scrutiny of pupils' work from last year, interviews with pupils and lesson observations, it is clear that standards have significantly improved. In Year 2, pupils' work reflected an understanding of primary sources of evidence including contemporary etchings of the Great Fire of London and contemporary photographs of Hackney carriages. They were able to describe similarities and differences in the evidence before them. One pupil ably described how such a fire could not spread so quickly in modern day London as the building materials are very different today. The pupils' understanding was greatly enhanced by a visit to the Museum of London.

115. Pupils' understanding of chronology is in line with expectations, in contrast to the last inspection. Year 6 pupils, for example, were able to place historical events in correct sequence by arranging pictures from the Iron Age to the present day in correct order. Similarly, they were

beginning to show skills of interpretation and evaluation in an activity requiring them to place inventions since the 1930's into their own order of importance, supported by rational arguments for their decisions. Pupils show a growing confidence in the accurate use of historical vocabulary and are beginning to ask searching questions to interpret sources. In a Year 2 class, pupils interviewed a visitor about her childhood toys and then proceeded to examine closely toys from earlier times. The activity strengthened a wide range of vocabulary and introduced the pupils to simple methods of finding out information from artefacts and from human sources. In a Year 6 class, pupils examined contemporary images of Victorian children and used the pictures to describe whether the children came from particular backgrounds. They also briefly looked at contemporary photographs of working children from the same period and began to identify similarities and differences. By contrast, the pupils' experience of how the past can be interpreted is a weaker area of their work and this is an area for improvement for the future. This is exemplified further in two Year 4 lessons where pupils were comparing different representations of Boudicca as part of their study of Ancient Rome. They ably described the way Boudicca appeared but took the images at face value rather than asking questions about the reliability of the evidence presented to them.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory across the school. In one Year 2 class the teaching was very good and was characterised by excellent planning, use of good primary sources and the teacher's ability to ask challenging questions to enhance learning. Classroom management was also used to very good effect with one pupil visibly responding after receiving encouraging feedback on his ideas. Where teaching was less effective, resources were insufficient for the lesson resulting in pupils becoming distracted and inattentive. Furthermore some lessons did not cater for the broad range of ability present and though the learning support staff worked hard to encourage and keep pupils focused, the quality of learning decreased. The history co-ordinator will need to take further steps to ensure that various levels of challenge are included in their planning. This is equally the case for less and more able pupils. The assessment of pupils' learning is limited and teachers' marking was poor, rarely providing any real formative feedback to help the pupils progress further.

117. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported in lessons, generally, though greater differentiation will increase pupils' access to learning and raise their self-esteem even further.

118. Information and communication technology (ICT) was an area of concern at the last inspection. Though this has improved there is still much work to do to provide pupils with adequate time to research using the Internet, CD ROM, databases and Census data. In a Year 6 class pupils were accessing a web site on Queen Victoria to find out more about her children. Pupils knew how to log on, use search engines and to find relevant information to answer historical questions. This is good practice but pupils are given insufficient time in a lesson to maximise their learning. Consequently, work is often unfinished and pupils' ability to investigate in history is limited. More work needs to be done to develop pupils' skills in enquiry based activities and to help them to become effective independent learners. This will also help to improve their structured writing skills as these are underdeveloped in history.

119. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to raise standards of attainment in the school. As a result, history is well led in the school and the monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' and teachers' work is good. The co-ordinator has also developed a comprehensive scheme of work that provides continuity and progression across the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

120. Information and Communication Technology has progressed significantly since the last inspection when it was a specific key issue for action. Though the issue has not been fully addressed the ICT team has made appreciable efforts to bring about improvement.

121. Pupils' attainment in ICT is now in line with expectation in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Year 2, with particular strengths in both the nursery and Reception year groups. However, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their attainment in ICT is below expectations and therefore unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is well placed to respond to this and has plans in place that should bring considerable improvement in the next year.

122. Pupils in the nursery and Reception years perform well above expectation and this lays an important foundation for future progress through the school. One three year old pupil was able to use the mouse to click onto a paintbrush programme and paint a picture. He was then able to change colours, improve the image and then print his work. With assistance from the teacher, he was able to save his work to disk. In Year 1 pupils show good ICT skills in drawing landscapes with an animal (e.g. giraffe or camel) positioned correctly in the foreground. To achieve this they needed to use a range of tools, interpret desktop icons and edit their work. Pupils in a Year 4 ICT lesson were unable to achieve at this level, though the shortage of time available was a contributory factor. In a Reception class two pupils used software to work on their alphabet. This required them to match a picture with the correct initial letter using keyboard skills. In Year 2 photographic evidence shows that pupils have used word processing to support work in design and technology where they created a logo and title to go on the side of their bus. These high levels of achievement demonstrate the effectiveness of the teaching of ICT in some areas.

123. Standards in the upper end of Key Stage 2, Year 5 and 6, are less strong with several classes failing to take advantage of the improved equipment in the school. The co-ordinator has rightly introduced a published text to support the development of skills and understanding across the school. This helps address the concern regarding continuity and progress highlighted in the last inspection. In Year 4, for example, pupils were learning how to use a computer to draw repeated patterns to design personalised wrapping paper. The activity was very appropriate and pupils had some success. However, time was restricted with often only one computer to 25 children. Consequently, pupils are frustrated in achieving the task as a result of the limited access. Pupils did manage to create some intricate repeating patterns using pencil and paper methods and showed considerable inventiveness and motivation whilst two children worked on a computer.

124. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, reflecting teachers' increased confidence in using ICT. Most staff have received training through the New Opportunities Fund and the co-ordinator has undertaken a thorough audit of teachers' skills and training needs. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were interrogating sources of evidence related to Queen Victoria's children. Most worked from an undifferentiated printout of a website after the teacher ably demonstrated how to log on, access the Internet and use search engines to locate suitable websites. Only three pupils could have direct access to the Internet, select an appropriate website and seek answers to specific research questions about the Victorian royal family. Pupils, interviewed later, were clearly frustrated at the limited time available to undertake such research activities. They highlighted English and history as subjects that are using ICT more frequently – there is substantive evidence to support this. During the inspection there were notable occasions, in several subjects, where computers were standing idle yet the lesson objectives lent themselves to ICT applications. Pupils need extended time to create work, redraft and evaluate work as it progresses. They also need opportunities to create spreadsheets, exchange and share information from databases and use control software to program robots or on-screen turtles.

125. The school has Internet access and is developing an Internet policy. The system has adequate safeguards for Internet security, being linked through the local educational authority's Intranet. Pupils' use of ICT is still limited in most subjects reducing their opportunities to experience the full range of opportunities available to them including e-mail, undertaking

research, using sensors in science and recording evidence of their work with a digital camera or scanner. In mathematics the use of calculators is also underdeveloped.

126. ICT is well managed and the co-ordinator has worked hard to raise standards and to increase pupils' and teachers' competence in ICT applications across the curriculum. The school plans to create an ICT suite in this school year. This will go a long way to address the issues raised here and to provide more opportunity for the collective training of all staff and pupils. The co-ordinator has developed a comprehensive scheme of work that will ensure continuity and progression across the school and, as the ICT facilities are improved, he plans to support staff with targeted training to ensure equality of access and improved provision for all. This will be an appropriate time also to address issues regarding differentiation and assessment, as part of a co-ordinated approach to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2.

MUSIC

127. Only four music lessons in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6 were observed during the inspection. The standards attained by pupils in these lessons were similar to those expected nationally. Some aspects of the music curriculum, such as composing and listening to and appraising music, were not seen. However, by looking at teachers' planning and talking to pupils, it is clear that all aspects are taught over time. Standards in music have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of singing in lessons and assemblies is satisfactory with pupils singing tunefully and with reasonable diction. Around 20 pupils take the opportunity to learn to play the violin with a specialist teacher. These pupils reach a good standard of performance and increase their musical knowledge including how to read standard notation. Pupils can also join the school choir and, from Year 2, learn to play African drums. All of these pupils perform to the school and to wider audiences in concerts. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve standards similar to their classmates.

128. Pupils in Year 2 know the names of a range of percussion instruments such as cymbals, triangles, drums, hand bells and glockenspiels and how they are played. They can use their voices to make long and short sounds successfully. Some pupils, however, find it difficult to understand the difference between long and short sounds and loud and soft ones. The weekly singing assemblies give pupils further opportunities to learn new songs and improve their pitch and phrasing. Pupils in Year 3 are good at and enjoy following rhythmic patterns. For example, they clap out the syllables in their names and can replicate rhythms beaten out by their teacher using body parts. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy singing and are justifiably proud of their efforts. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 music lesson where the teacher taught the pupils Frere Jaques in a round and allowed the pupils to experiment with different points of entry to the round to decide which they felt was the most effective. Pupils were also permitted to conduct the class and devise suitable body percussion to accompany the song. The learning in this lesson was particularly good and pupils displayed high levels of concentration and maturity. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also have a singing assembly that is very well organised and gives pupils many good quality learning opportunities. The singing is of good quality with pupils giving a thoughtful and sensitive performance of songs such as 'Something Inside so Strong'.

129. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good and very good teaching observed. The good subject knowledge of some teachers helps them to give clear explanations to pupils and teach the correct musical vocabulary. For example, in a Year 3 class the teacher introduced staves and basic musical notation which the pupils found fascinating and the majority understood. Good relationships are a strong feature with pupils behaving well in lessons and singing assemblies and eager to be involved. Pupils' work is rarely recorded in lessons to help them evaluate their own performance and that of others and to enable them to suggest ways to improve. Such recordings would also prove useful to assess standards reached by individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school.

130. The co-ordinator is most enthusiastic and has worked hard to give pupils many opportunities to be involved in music. Year 5 pupils took part in a performance of Verdi's 'Rigoletto' with the Children's Music Workshop and the whole school took part in their own concert in a local sports centre with every class performing music and dance to the theme of 'Carnival'. These were both tremendous successes and much enjoyed by both the pupils who took part and the parents who went to watch. Pupils have been taken to concerts given by the London Symphony Orchestra and some of the orchestra visited the school to play for pupils. Other musicians such as a Samba band also visit the school to play to the pupils and extend their musical appreciation and knowledge. The school also participates in the local music festival each year. All of these planned opportunities interest pupils in music and encourage them to develop their own skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

131. During the inspection, only games and one gymnastics lesson were observed so the full range of PE was not seen. In addition, the inspection took place early in the school year when teachers and pupils were getting used to their new classes. Based on the limited evidence available and for these reasons it is only possible to state that standards attained in physical education are as expected for the age and ability of the pupils throughout the school.

132. In the lessons observed, by the end of Year 2 pupils are able to practise and repeat simple skills of catching and throwing with developing control and accuracy. They understand the need for warm-up activities at the start of the lesson. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to send and receive a ball using a hockey stick with reasonable accuracy. They are learning to refine and develop these skills and then transfer them into small-sided games. They understand the importance of rules and fair play for the game to be played successfully. Pupils have some opportunities to make decisions about their work but their evaluating skills are at an early stage of development. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

133. The attitudes of pupils in physical education lessons are mostly positive. They are interested in and enjoy what they do and remain fully engrossed during the lesson. They listen carefully to instructions and respond well. However, in a less than satisfactory lesson, a minority of pupils, usually boys, struggle to maintain their concentration, particularly when listening to instructions from their teacher. This results in a loss of focus to the lesson whilst behaviour problems are dealt with by the teacher.

134. The teaching of physical education in most lessons is satisfactory and occasionally good, with one unsatisfactory lesson. Where teaching is good, the teacher manages the pupils well and uses time effectively to keep them active throughout the lesson. Inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated and pupils are clear about what is expected of them. Teaching focuses on a particular skill and helps pupils to improve by highlighting key teaching points. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, the learning intentions are unclear and too few teaching points are made to help pupils improve their skills or understanding.

135. The school successfully participates in a large number of local sporting events each year. The school currently holds the area Athletics Shield. Pupils took part and were runners-up in the local Swimming Gala. The school has appropriate facilities both indoors and outside which are used to best effect.

136. The subject co-ordinator has a high level of expertise, supports his colleagues well and is proud of the way that pupils in the school respond to all the sporting events organised for them. The co-ordinator has introduced a very useful scheme of work, which provides comprehensive

units of work. It now needs to be developed to include practical guidance to staff on planning and assessing individual lessons in all aspects of the PE curriculum in order to ensure the development of skills throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Standards achieved in the religious education lessons observed were in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Very little written work was available from the previous year, although older pupils had completed a few pieces of writing in their literacy books. Although many pupils have limited recall of facts about different religions, they show respect for the values and beliefs of different faith communities, and are good at relating issues to their own lives.

138. The curriculum is planned carefully on a two-year cycle to ensure that pupils in the mixed age classes do not repeat some topics and miss others. Year 1 and 2 pupils talked about the Christian harvest festival. They were stimulated by the attractive basket of familiar fruits, and could readily identify with the concept of being “thankful”. Year 2 pupils showed a familiarity with the concept of prayer and readily settled to write “thank you” prayers, whilst Year 1 pupils chose items to draw and placed these on a “Thank you” tree.

139. Pupils are taught about the major world faiths. Last term, Year 2 pupils learned about important landmarks in Christian life, such as baptism, and wrote about growing up in a Christian family. Year 4 pupils showed a sound grasp of aspects of the Hindu Diwali story of Rama and Sita, and deepened their understanding as they discussed the attributes of the different characters. Skilful questioning by the teacher in one lesson challenged pupils to think hard about their answers, and the lesson included some good moral teaching as the pupils were encouraged to think about role models for behaviour. Year 5 and 6 pupils began to develop an understanding of some aspects of Buddhism. Again, in one lesson, good questioning by the teacher checked pupils understanding of the story of “Death and the Mustard seeds”, and its relevance to Buddhism and to their own lives. The pupils made good connections between the story and aspects of their own experience and produced some thoughtful writing. In another lesson questioning could have been more challenging to extend pupils’ learning.

140. The quality of teaching was good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use resources effectively to illustrate their teaching and to gain pupils’ interest. They speak very clearly, are careful to explain vocabulary, and to check understanding through questioning and as a result all pupils have full access to the lessons. Specific support for pupils with special educational needs, and for those with English as an additional language is well focused, and inclusion is good. In most lessons, pupils are interested and take part readily in all activities. Occasionally the pace of lessons is slowed by the challenging behaviour of one or two pupils and this slows learning for others.

141. The school has recently introduced the revised locally agreed syllabus and teachers have found this gives good guidance in their planning. Subject management is good: the recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and actively promotes the subject. She has introduced specific exercise books which will enable pupils and teachers to keep track of the subject more easily. Resources have been improved, and most classrooms have interesting displays of artefacts linked with the current religious education topic. Not enough use is made of information technology for research or for recording pupils’ work. The school has yet to establish systems for assessment, but plans to introduce assessment during the Spring Term assessment week.