

INSPECTION REPORT

SEYMOUR COMBINED SCHOOL

Crawley

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125893

Headteacher: Louise Parsons

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd November 2001

Inspection number: 230438

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, First and Middle

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Seymour Road
Broadfield
Crawley
West Sussex

Postcode: RH11 9ES

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Mary Russell

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20893	Mr D J Curtis Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education Foundation Stage English as an additional language	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements) How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve?
9487	Mrs F Hurd Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, behaviour and relationships) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
21313	Mr H Galley Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
21992	Mrs J Newing Team inspector	Special educational needs; Art; History	
30438	Mr R Guest Team inspector	Mathematics; Geography	
20671	Mr J Palethorpe Team inspector	French; Music; Physical education; Equal opportunities	
2756	Mr M Barron Team inspector	Science; Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Seymour Combined School is situated in the Broadfield district within Crawley in West Sussex. It is a much larger than average sized primary school, with a total of 523 pupils on roll, including children who attend the nursery and reception on a part-time morning or afternoon basis. This is a multi-racial school, with over 20 languages spoken by its pupils. One hundred and forty pupils come from homes where English is an additional language, of whom 77 receive specialist funding for their learning; this is above the national average. There are 161 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, with seven pupils having statements of special educational need; this is above average. Ninety-nine pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. The number of pupils who enter or leave the school at times other than of normal admission or transfer is high. In the last two years, there has been a significant turnover of teaching staff. Children enter school with standards which are significantly below average, especially in speaking.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils, particularly when its contextual factors are taken into consideration. Although not high enough, standards are rising year-on-year and there is a clear determination to raise standards further. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, especially in racial harmony, are strengths. The school is effectively led and managed by a dedicated headteacher who is supported ably by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art and design are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- Provision for, and teaching of, children in the Foundation Stage¹ are good.
- The management of pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language is good.
- Provision for pupils' multicultural awareness is very good and is a significant strength.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards and curriculum provision in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made overall good progress since its last inspection in June 1998. Although not high enough, the trend shows that standards are rising year-on-year in English, mathematics and science. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully introduced. However, insufficient progress has been made in improving standards in information and communication technology. Considerable modifications to the building are enhancing the learning environment. The school is well placed to secure future improvement through its clear determination to raise standards.

¹ The Foundation Stage refers to children from entry to the nursery up to and including age six when they complete the reception year.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores² in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E*	E	E	E*
Mathematics	E*	E	E	E*
Science	E	E	E	E

Key	
well above	A
average above	B
average	
average	C
below average	D
well below	E
average	E*
very low	

By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average. In information and communication technology standards are below national expectations. In religious education standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design standards are good and exceed expectations for 12-year-olds. In design and technology and history standards meet expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in geography and music. In French and physical education standards are below expectations.

The results of the Year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 placed the school in the bottom five per cent of similar schools nationally. Current inspection findings judge that by the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well below average; in science standards are below average. Although not high enough, standards in English and mathematics are improving and reflect the trend of improvement from 1997. In science, good teaching contributes to slowly improving standards. However, in all three subjects, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations; pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their skills in all subjects. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, standards are good and exceed expectations for 11-year-olds. In design and technology, geography, history and music, standards meet expectations. In physical education, standards are below expectations.

By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are well below average. Standards in mathematics are below average. Improvement is the result of good teaching and the effective impact of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in science are well below average. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations. In religious education, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. In art and design and in design and technology standards exceed expectations. In geography and history standards meet expectations. Standards in music and physical education are below expectations.

By the end of the Foundation Stage children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals³ in all areas of learning, with the exception of communication, language and literacy where standards are below expectations.

² Average points scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

³ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils enjoy school and show positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; the vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, at breaks and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good; boys and girls relate well to each other; racial harmony is a significant strength of the school.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are poor and have a negative impact on learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and a strength of the school. It makes a significant contribution to the good progress children make in their learning. Teachers, learning support assistants and the nursery nurse plan an exciting and stimulating range of activities for children. Strengths of teaching in Years 1 to 7 include good relationships with pupils which contribute successfully to pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Teachers show good subject knowledge and the purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils. Lessons are well planned and meet the differing learning needs of pupils. In the few lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, teachers' subject knowledge was less secure and the organisation and management of work meant that pupils made insufficient progress in their learning.

Teaching of literacy is good. Teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively and this has a positive impact on the slowly improving standards. Teaching of numeracy is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 7. Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and as a result standards in mathematics are improving year-on-year. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and sometimes excellent, particularly in the small group sessions when pupils are taught away from their own classroom. Teaching is very focused and meets the needs of these pupils very well. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and has a positive impact on the good progress made by pupils, many of whom arrive at the school speaking no English. There is a very effective partnership between teachers and the EMTAG (Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant) team which means that planning and support for pupils' learning needs are very good.

There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school is not meeting National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of ICT. This is unsatisfactory. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and learning support assistant work effectively with pupils to support their learning. Individual education plans contain clear and detailed targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; the EMTAG team works effectively with teachers, learning support assistants and the MLA (Multi-Language Assistant) to support pupils in their learning, especially those at the very early stages of learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for cultural, especially multicultural, awareness is very good and contributes significantly to racial harmony in the school. Provision for social and moral development is good and has a positive impact on pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There are insufficient planned opportunities in this area.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, with strengths in day-to-day welfare and in procedures for supporting good behaviour and strong racial harmony. Procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress are satisfactory.

The school works hard to involve parents in its day-to-day life and to support their children's learning, but with limited success.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher supported ably by her deputy and senior management team has a clear vision for the future of the school. There is a determination to raise standards and improve the quality of education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governors are hard working and very supportive of the work of the school. Most statutory requirements are met, with the exception of the curriculum for information and communication technology.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school carries out good in-depth analysis of its results and achievements and uses the results of these to set future targets for improvement.
The strategic use of	Good; with particular strengths in the use of specialist funding to

resources	support pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language.
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With the exception of information and communication technology, the school has sufficient resources to support pupils' learning. The accommodation is good and there are sufficient well qualified staff to teach pupils. The significant strength of leadership and management is the determination to raise standards. The school applies most successfully the principles of best value when making 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. • Their children make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • More information on how well their children are getting on at school. • More activities outside of lessons.

Eleven parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 147 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents and, although judged satisfactory, there is a significant amount of good teaching. In relation to what needs to be improved, inspection findings show that the provision of homework and extracurricular activities is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with standards which are significantly below expectations for their age, particularly in language skills. At present, 30 per cent of children are supported by speech therapy. As the result of good teaching, children make good progress in the nursery as measured against the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum, with particularly good progress in their personal and social development. Children transfer to reception at the beginning of the year in which they reach the age of five. They are joined by other children, some of whom have attended playgroups or private nurseries. Those with September to December birthdays attend full time, with the rest attending part time until January when they all become full time.

2. Children are assessed early in their first term and the results show that standards are well below average for the local education authority. In reception, children build successfully on the stepping stones and by the time they start Year 1 they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals⁴ in all areas of learning, with the exception of communication, language and literacy, where standards are below expectations. Good teaching contributes significantly to children's progress. Children with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language are supported effectively and make good progress in their learning.

3. The results of the Year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools⁵ nationally, results in reading and writing were very low and placed the school in the

⁴ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

⁵ Schools with more than 8 per cent and up to 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

bottom five per cent of such schools. In mathematics, standards were well below average. Although not high enough, these results reflect the year-on-year trend of improvement since 1997. In addition, the significant gap between the standards achieved by boys and girls has narrowed, with boys now achieving at the same level as girls.

4. Current inspection findings are that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are well below average. Standards are low because pupils have very poor speaking skills and this has a negative impact on reading and writing. However, standards continue to improve as the result of effective teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Standards in mathematics are below average. Improvement is the result of good teaching and the effective impact of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in science are well below average.

5. By the end of Year 2, standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers to support their learning. In religious education standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. In art and design and in design and technology standards are good and exceed expectations. In geography and history standards meet expectations. Standards in music and physical education are below expectations.

6. The results of the Year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools nationally, results were very low in English and mathematics and placed the school in the bottom five per cent of such schools. In science, the results were well below average. These results went against the trend of year-on-year improvement from 1997 to 2000. The trend in Year 6 shows boys achieving higher standards than girls in all three subjects. However, this particular year group had a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

7. There are a number of key factors which impact on standards at the end of Year 6; these are:

- The high number of pupils who arrive at, or leave, the school at times other than of normal admission or transfer. In last year's Year 6 only 13 of the 57 pupils who took the National Curriculum tests had been in the school in Year 3;
- The high number of pupils with special educational needs;
- The high number of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition. Immediately prior to the inspection three pupils arrived at the school who could not speak English;
- The high turnover of teaching staff in the last two years. Of the 30 members of teaching staff only five were in the school at the previous inspection;
- The number of parents who do not support their children's learning;
- The school has no policy for the identification and teaching of more able pupils;
- Poor attendance and punctuality.

8. Current inspection findings judge that by the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well below average. In science standards are below average. Although not high enough, standards in English and mathematics are improving and reflect the trend of improvement from 1997. In science, good teaching contributes to slowly improving standards. In all three subjects, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

9. In information and communication technology standards are below national expectations. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their skills in all subjects. In religious education standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, standards are good and exceed expectations for 11-year-olds. In design and technology, geography, history and music, standards meet expectations. In physical education standards are below expectations.

10. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average. Standards are affected by the factors outlined in paragraph seven. In addition, a number of pupils transfer to secondary school at the end of Year 6. The

school identifies that the trend shows that these are usually more able pupils. In information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations; pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their skills in all subjects. In religious education standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design standards are good and exceed expectations for 12-year-olds. In design and technology and history, standards meet expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in geography and music. In French and physical education, standards are below expectations.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, although the standards they achieve are below those expected for pupils of their age. During the inspection, most pupils with special educational needs made good progress in many lessons. This progress is the result of teachers matching the work to pupils' prior learning and the effective support from well trained teaching assistants.

12. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning, with no significant difference in standards achieved by boys and girls. They show good attitudes to learning and are supported by good teaching and strong support from their peers. Teachers from the local education authority EMTAG (Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant) team and the MLA (Multi-Language Assistant) work effectively with class teachers to support pupils' learning.

13. The school is emerging from a significant period of change. Taking into consideration the factors impacting on standards, inspection evidence is consistent with the school setting sufficiently challenging targets. In addition, evidence indicates that the school now has the leadership and management and the quality of teaching that will enable it to meet its targets and secure continuing year-on-year improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have good attitudes towards their school. They are nearly always very enthusiastic about the activities they are asked to undertake. The youngest children, who have had less than a term in school, are already very confident in their classroom. They know exactly what they are meant to do on arrival, and where equipment is stored. In well managed classrooms, even when pupils were overwhelmingly excited, discipline remained good. This was impressively demonstrated in a Year 1 class, where the teacher, having first told the children to close their eyes, brought in a hamster for them to study and write about. There was a gasp of excitement, but every child remained seated quietly. However, many pupils have poor speaking and listening skills. They do not always listen to instructions fully, eagerly starting work without fully understanding what they have to do, and they find it hard to express what they want to say, particularly when trying to describe emotions. Many pupils find it hard to concentrate, especially when they have to sit still listening for long periods of time. Some find it difficult to remember work they did even a week ago, as in a Year 7 class where pupils had to struggle to remember any features of their visit to Rochester Cathedral.

15. Behaviour during the inspection was good overall. No oppressive or racist behaviour was observed. The pupils were extremely welcoming and courteous towards the inspection team, and very keen to talk about themselves and their school. Over 65 per cent of behaviour in lessons was good or better: standards were closely linked to teaching. The better the teaching, the better the behaviour. Outside the classroom, pupils moved sensibly around the school and treated their environment with respect. Behaviour during lunchtime was good. Pupils dealt with their food sensibly and put their lunchboxes on the service trolleys before asking to go out to play. Different areas of the playground are allocated for different age groups and activities. Although these are not indicated in any way, pupils clearly understand the system and keep to it. This is particularly advantageous for younger children, who run less risk of being knocked down by older ones. Pupils of different sexes, ages and ethnic backgrounds played together harmoniously. Behaviour in assemblies was good: pupils sat quietly and attentively. A minority of pupils sometimes displayed unsatisfactory behaviour. There were four fixed period exclusions last year, two of a white boy and two of a white girl. There was one permanent exclusion of a white girl.

16. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and show a good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. All pupils are well aware that others in their class have different religious and cultural beliefs and are completely tolerant of them. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson, English pupils listened with interest as their classmates explained why they were currently fasting for Ramadan, and fully understood why they were looking forward to the festival of Eid so much. Pupils know right from wrong, and understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Older pupils are capable of discussing important issues sensitively (for instance, during sessions of personal, social and health education) and listen to each other's views courteously.

17. Relationships in the school, particularly between adults and children, are very good. Younger children sometimes unselfconsciously come to give their teacher a kiss when they arrive in the mornings. Staff make every effort to treat pupils with respect and courtesy, and give them every encouragement to behave likewise. The headteacher provides a powerful role model in this respect. Although it is a big school, she knows the pupils well and they show obvious affection for her. She is always present in the lunch hall and on the playground, sometimes strolling arm in arm with groups of pupils deep in discussion. Pupils fulfil the limited opportunities for responsibility they are given to a satisfactory standard. There is no formal monitor system for classroom duties, but pupils do tasks such as tidying up and distributing equipment sensibly and quickly. The eight Year 7 pupils who make up the School Council take their duties extremely seriously and perform them to a high standard.

18. Attendance is poor: in 2000 - 2001 it was well below the national average (90.5 per cent as against 94.4 per cent). Unauthorised absence was at the national average (0.5 per cent) but authorised absence was well above (9 per cent as against 5.2 per cent). This high rate of authorised absence is due to a significant number of families taking holidays in term time (often to enable them to visit their countries of origin) and to high levels of pupils reported absent for reasons such as illness. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. Throughout the inspection a large proportion of the pupils arrived after the official start of school, at 8.50, and a few consistently arrived after 9.00. Poor attendance and punctuality has a negative impact on the standards pupils achieve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons, with 59 per cent good or better, including 18 per cent which were good or better. Eight per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and these were 'concentrated in two classes'. Weaknesses were identified in the teaching of the 'under fives' (now the Foundation Stage) where there was insufficient monitoring of children, with the result that they 'wasted time'.

20. Current inspection findings are that based on all inspection evidence the quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory. During the inspection in the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons, including 63 per cent which were good or better. Twenty-five per cent of lessons were very good, including two per cent which were excellent. Seven per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. In these lessons there were weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge or management and organisation of lessons. As a result, pupils made insufficient progress in their learning. Where teaching is good or better, pupils make good progress in lessons and this contributes to the year-on-year progress in standards achieved in the school.

21. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and is a strength of the school. The weaknesses identified in the previous report are no longer evident. Good teaching contributes significantly to the good progress that children make in their learning. The teachers, nursery nurse, learning support assistants and the MLA form an effective team that clearly knows and understands the needs of young children. There is a very strong awareness of the needs of the many children with speech problems, and those who are at the very early stage of speaking English. Planning is thorough and detailed and matches carefully to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage

curriculum. Children are given a rich range of activities which include a strong balance between those which are led by adults and those which children choose for themselves. The use of day-to-day assessment is good and contributes significantly to the future planning for the learning needs of individual children.

22. Teaching of literacy is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 7. Throughout the school, teaching has improved since the last inspection and is contributing successfully to standards improving year-on-year. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson. A particular strength in the teaching of writing is the detailed assessments that are made of each pupil's performance and the setting of group and individual targets to help pupils focus on exactly what they need to do to improve further. It is this strategy that underpins the improving progress that pupils across the school are making in developing skills in writing. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were observed in Years 1 to 6, the presence of certain weaknesses caused some lessons to be satisfactory rather than good. Time is not always rigorously managed. The opening class session of the literacy hour often lasts too long, sometimes taking up more than half the lesson and leaving insufficient time for group work and/or the plenary, where the evaluation of the lesson is sometimes too hurried.

23. Teaching of numeracy is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 7. Where teaching is good, pupils make good progress in lessons which contribute successfully to the slowly improving standards over time. In Years 3 to 7, pupils are taught in sets (ability groups); this is most effective in Year 5 where there is one more set than the number of classes in the year group. As a result, work is more carefully matched to the differing learning needs of pupils. In particular, more able pupils are challenged successfully and achieve well.

24. Teaching of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory because teachers give pupils too few opportunities to use computers to support their learning. Although the teaching in lessons taught in the school's 'ICT-Suites' is often good, pupils have no opportunities to apply the skills taught when working in their own classrooms, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

25. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and sometimes excellent, particularly in the small group sessions when pupils are taught away from their own classroom. Teaching is very focused and meets the needs of these pupils very well: for example in the lower mathematics set in Year 5, the lower spelling group in Year 7, and the speaking, listening and writing group for Year 6 pupils. In a Year 4 history lesson, a group were withdrawn to work at their own pace with a teaching assistant on the same activity as was going on in the main group. The progress that they made was greater than if they had remained in the classroom. Teachers work effectively with learning support assistants to support pupils and this contributes successfully to the good progress made.

26. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and has a positive impact on the good progress made by pupils, many of whom arrive at the school speaking no English. There is a very effective partnership between teachers and the EMTAG team which means that planning and support for pupils' learning needs are very good. In lessons, teachers involve pupils as much as possible, particularly in question and answer sessions. In addition, teachers use most successfully pupils who are bilingual to support other pupils who are still at the early stage of learning English by translating for them.

27. In the best lessons teachers share the learning objectives with pupils: for example in the top Year 5 numeracy set the objectives were: to understand, measure and calculate perimeter of regular polygons; and to use the four operations to solve missing number problems (mental arithmetic). As a result, pupils had a clear understanding of the purpose of the lesson and their learning was good. In lesson introductions, particularly in question and answer sessions, teachers expect all pupils to contribute, and they make determined efforts to involve boys and girls equally, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language.

28. Where teaching is good, lessons are planned well and take into account the differing learning needs of pupils within the class. For example in a Year 1 literacy lesson, more able and pupils of average ability were expected to write sentences independently to include correct punctuation and an adjective. Below average ability pupils had to complete a sentence started by the teacher: for example 'The rhinoceros is.....' Pupils with special educational needs, many of whom have poor speaking skills were expected to use the farm animals and to give a spoken sentence on each one at the end of the lesson. Because work was matched closely to pupils' learning needs, all pupils made good progress in the lesson.

29. Teachers make effective use of the final or plenary session in lessons where teaching is a strength. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment to check pupils' understanding of what was taught in the lesson. For example at the end of a Year 5 numeracy lesson the teacher asked, "What is the name of this shape (a hexagon) and what is its perimeter?" and, "Who found a quick way of doing it?" The teacher was able to identify who knew the answers and in particular which pupils could explain how they found them. In addition to assessing understanding this gave pupils the opportunity to apply their speaking and listening skills to their mathematical understanding.

30. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and a significant strength of most lessons. Pupils respond well because they are interested and want to learn. Teachers encourage pupils to work together in groups and a good example of this was seen in Year 4 where pupils worked in groups of five to discuss the 'Creation Story'. Groups were of mixed gender and represented the many cultures in the school and pupils worked confidently and successfully in their discussion.

31. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Whilst there are good examples of constructive marking to guide pupils forward in their learning, other examples show no more than a tick or are unmarked. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Where teaching is rigorous and thorough, teachers refer to this in lessons and amend their planning accordingly.

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

32. The school does not presently have an appropriate statutory curriculum in place as it does not provide adequate learning opportunities for pupils in the provision of information and communication technology. This affects the breadth and balance of the curriculum as a whole and therefore the quality and range of learning opportunities overall for pupils is unsatisfactory. In addition, the organisation of the timetable means that lessons in subjects, such as science in Years 1 and 2 are too long. Pupils are sometimes not engaged meaningfully on work for the full length of the session; their learning is negatively affected as a result.

33. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Planning is detailed and contributes to children making good progress in the stepping stones in all six areas of learning. Teachers, the nursery nurse and learning support assistants work and plan together effectively as a Foundation Stage team. Children with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language are supported very effectively in the quality of planning and support to meet their learning needs. The MLA provides very good support for children at the very early stages of speaking English.

34. The school's equal opportunities policy is good. The school sees inclusion for all as an educational priority and its curriculum statement pays particular attention to equality of access for pupils, regardless of their background, ability, gender or race. This is reflected in the ethos and work of the school. Equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils is satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice⁶. Pupils' special educational needs are clearly identified and individual

⁶ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

education plans have specific targets. These plans show in good detail how these targets will be addressed. Lessons in which pupils are taught in small groups away from their own classroom are planned carefully to ensure all pupils receive their full entitlement to the curriculum. This represents a maintaining of standards since the last inspection.

35. The school has worked hard to develop its present curriculum over the last two years with the main focus on ensuring that pupils make clear gains in knowledge, skills and understanding as they move up through the school. Recent high staff turnover does not seem to affect the delivery of the curriculum. Raising standards in English and mathematics is seen as the single most important priority area. The curriculum is reviewed on a frequent basis and staff review medium and long term planning regularly. The headteacher and senior management staff monitor implementation of the curriculum. In addition, all curriculum co-ordinators are empowered to check the delivery of their subject areas and usually do so through scrutiny of teachers' planning.

36. Provision for extracurricular activities is satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 7. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in the activities of a variety of school clubs, including football club and 'mystery guest club' and they seem keen to join in when possible. Discussions with a group of Year 7 pupils confirmed that most feel that the school provides an ample range of enjoyable and stimulating extracurricular activities.

37. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good and is a strength of the school. Pupils' progress is tracked closely throughout the school and all pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum in this subject. Targets include the raising of pupils' self esteem and their general learning about themselves. The subject is taught in all classes and one of the results of this policy is that the attitudes of pupils towards the school and each other are good overall.

38. Links between the school and the secondary establishment to which most pupils transfer are satisfactory overall. Good links have been developed with the state secondary school to which pupils transfer at the age of 12, but good working links with the church school to which pupils transfer at the age of 11 are not so well developed. Links between the school and the community are satisfactory overall. The school is seen as an integral part of the community it serves and encourages visits by, for instance, the local community police, the vicar and local leaders of different faiths.

39. The school made unsatisfactory provision for spiritual development of pupils during the period of inspection. Pupils had little opportunity to reflect in a manner that would develop spiritual awareness and a sense of the purpose of life. Teachers provide some useful opportunities to experience the belief systems of others but these are inconsistent and not planned for on a regular basis. The daily assemblies contained a short prayer but little celebration of faith. The exceptions being two acts of worship on the last day of inspection both of which allowed the pupils to reflect and gain insight into values of others. Pupils, with very few exceptions, entered the hall in a manner that would promote spiritual awareness. The school does have well planned themes for worship showing that it plans for reflection and worship for pupils. Lessons observed in religious education provided few opportunities for contributing to pupils' spiritual awareness. The exception being a very good lesson where pupils were learning about the Hindu 'Pilgrimage to the Ganges'. Here a real atmosphere was created, with a sense of awe, which was calm, peaceful and special.

40. The school makes good provision for the moral development of pupils. There is a strong ethos, which praises acceptable behaviour. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of what is right and what is wrong, in a positive manner. The school instils and supports attitudes of mutual tolerance and respect both within class groups and between adults and pupils. Pupils are clearly led into forms of acceptable behaviour, focused on respect for opinions, attitudes and feelings for others. The respect for property and the environment is taught in a systematic manner. Class rules are drawn up in a manner that includes each pupil and gives them a sense of ownership of the code of conduct. Staff are seen to deal with each other with care and concern and provide positive role models for pupils to which they respond. The certificates for 'Star of the

Week' promote moral understanding as well as academic achievement; being awarded for improving standards of behaviour, trying hard, not giving up, and being helpful.

41. The school makes good provision for the social development of pupils. Older pupils and members of the 'School Council' have jobs with responsibility throughout the school, especially helping with trolleys of lunchboxes and seating at lunchtime. Pupils are encouraged to welcome visitors and many asked the inspection team if they needed help finding a classroom. A display just outside the lower school hall reminds pupils not to leave anyone feeling lonely or upset in the playground. All these facts combine to foster a sense of belonging to a secure and supportive school community. The presence of many pupils with English as an additional language gives some the opportunity to support by acting as translators and helpers. Adults in the school provide good role models by the manner in which they work together co-operatively and plan for pupils to be provided with an environment that promotes good social behaviour.

42. The school makes very good provision to teach pupils to appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures as well as an appreciation of their own. The curriculum is planned to give a range of knowledge of other cultures. There was an excellent display in the lower school explaining customs surrounding Diwali. Similarly, there is a very good display on sacred texts of other religions. A geography field trip to a nearby local shopping centre included photos of special diet shops and mosques. There are displays of very good artwork linked to Ancient Egyptian culture, artists such as Kandinsky and Van Gogh, and facemasks in African style in the library. There is a small collection of books promoting knowledge of other cultures and many signs in other languages around the school. Pupils in Year 1 are asked to respond to the register in a language other than English. The school is genuinely inclusive with a mix of many cultures. These are known and respected by pupils. The sensitivity of teaching enhances this aspect of provision. Some lessons were slightly adapted to take account that a significant number of pupils had just started a period of fasting.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour, and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good. The detailed policy states that the school's aim is to create an orderly, caring environment where behaviour is managed consistently. Staff are given clear guidance on sanctions and rewards. The system is administered consistently by all staff, including lunchtime supervisors. The headteacher meets regularly with the lunchtime supervisors to discuss any issues they may wish to raise, and the deputy headteacher works closely with the classroom assistants and special educational needs assistants in her capacity as the special educational needs co-ordinator. Parents feel the school is good at eliminating bullying and bad behaviour.

44. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. There is a clear attendance policy which explains the legal framework and the various responsibilities of all concerned. Clear guidance on completing registers is given in the staff handbook, and statutory requirements are met. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently. Absences are followed up on the second day if no explanation has been received: in the case of pupils causing concern, response is immediate. Attendance and punctuality are monitored closely by the deputy headteacher. The importance of attendance and punctuality is strongly emphasised in the prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents, and is frequently repeated in the newsletters. There is a particular stress on the need for parents to think carefully before taking children out of school for long holidays. Parents now have to have a personal interview with the headteacher, where the importance of continued education is stressed. If parents cannot be dissuaded from taking their children out of school, the school provides work to take with them.

45. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupil welfare are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are both trained child protection liaison officers. The child protection policy follows local education authority guidelines. It gives very clear guidance to staff on signs of abuse and to whom these should be reported. The detailed health and safety policy shows responsibilities for various areas of health and safety in the school. The governors' premises

committee carries out an annual health and safety audit of the school. The school pays for a representative of the local education authority to visit every term and advise on health and safety issues. First aid provision is good.

46. The school's biggest health and safety problem is the traffic outside the main entrance at the beginning and end of the day. Parents park along the road in front of the school in the mornings and afternoons, on top of the speed bumps and zigzag lines. The road is a popular local commuter route and traffic quickly becomes snarled up. Parents with children, and unaccompanied children, have to pick their way through the cars. The school has been unable to recruit a crossing patrol person. It has approached every possible external agency for help and has found the presence of a policeman the only thing which improves the situation.

47. Reception children are assessed when they start school in October, and again in June. The results are used effectively to plan their future work. What each child knows, understands and can do is noted and children are placed in different working groupings accordingly. These procedures are clear and well planned, and intended to provide a detailed system for assessing pupils' progress. However, they are at an early stage of development and the use of the results of assessment information to plan pupils' future learning is only satisfactory at present. In a number of lessons during the inspection, pupils were given work which was either too complex or too easy for them, with the result that insufficient progress was made in their learning.

48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Most pupils are aware what their individual or group targets in writing are. In some classes, teachers ensure that groups and individuals understand when they have achieved targets in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' annual written reports include targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy, but do not give an indication of pupils' standards as measured against the requirements of the National Curriculum. In some classes, entries for subjects other than English and mathematics were exactly the same for several pupils. Annual reports for reception children are matched to the Early Learning Goals.

49. Marking is underdeveloped as a tool to spur progress and attainment. In many cases, there are no comments on the work to focus pupils' attention on particular areas for improvement. Although the school has identified whole school areas of weakness in mathematics, little assessment has been made of individuals and planning has not been refined to support their needs. This is particularly the case with more able pupils and this contributes to their underachievement.

50. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Staff make great efforts to get to know their pupils, and any concerns they have are shared with their colleagues. The distribution of rewards for good work and behaviour, whether by themselves or by other members of staff, is recorded by class teachers, as is the distribution of sanctions, which is recorded in class behaviour logs. These records are regularly monitored by the managers for the infant and junior sections of the school, and reported to the headteacher. This allows the school to track the personal development of individuals and groups. Overall support for the personal development of pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils whose first language is not English is good. Specialist visiting staff include a counsellor, a speech and language therapist, and an education psychologist as well as the various special educational needs staff in school. When pupils join the school who have little or no English, whenever possible they will be put in a class with other children who speak their native language. The school's MLA is very involved in the induction of these children, whatever their ages.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents' views of the school are good. Parents feel that their children like school, and that the school has high expectations of its pupils. They feel the school is approachable, and that their children make good progress with good teaching. Parents think the school offers an attractive environment for learning. The information about homework is appreciated. Most parents feel the school is good at identifying children's problems, and that it deals with matters like bullying quickly

and effectively. Some parents feel that there are not enough extracurricular activities, and others would like more information about the work their child is currently doing.

52. The school has very effective links with parents. Class teachers and the headteacher are available for informal discussion at the end of school, and it is made clear that parents can make an appointment at short notice for more prolonged discussion. The prospectus and the newsletters strongly encourage parents to help in school, and emphasise that there are many different ways in which to do so. There is a home-school agreement, although not all parents have returned it. Parents are invited to special assemblies and school productions. The homework policy clearly explains the reasons for having homework, and gives guidance on how parents can support it. If homework is not done a letter is sent to the pupil's parents. A record is kept of what homework has been returned. The school holds coffee mornings for parents of children in the nursery and reception classes, which are well attended. On these occasions, parents can chat informally with all members of staff involved with their children, and hear about the work they are doing. A similar exercise was staged for parents of older children, but virtually no parents attended.

53. The school's large proportion of families whose first language is not English is well supported by the multilingual assistant who speaks five Asian languages. She provides translation and visits families at home or assists during interviews when required. The school has a library of dual language books (such as Urdu and English) for loan to parents, so that they can read them with their children. The school ran classes for parents to help them support their children's literacy work at home, in conjunction with the local secondary school. However, the number of parents involved, never large, dwindled to two, at which point it became financially impossible to continue the classes.

54. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There are two prospectuses, including a separate one for children in the Foundation Stage. They are very informative and fulfil statutory requirements. The governors' report to parents is attractively presented, with children's drawings used as illustrations, and written in a friendly, accessible manner. There are at least two newsletters a term, which give dates and details of school activities. Pupils' annual written reports include targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy. The reports are sent out with a slip for parents and pupils to add their comments. Very few pupils did so, and only about a quarter of the parents. Curriculum information is given in advance only in a very brief form in newsletters, but work covered is described in some detail in pupils' annual reports. The school holds meetings for parents of pupils in Years 2 and 6 to talk about the importance of rest and regular attendance in the period leading up to, and during, the National Curriculum assessments.

55. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is unsatisfactory, with a few exceptions. The 'Home-School Association' committee consists of a small number of dedicated parents, who, working together with the school, mount fundraising events, including film shows, discos, and fairs. Recently, the association paid for the purchase of new playground benches. About four parents currently help in school, all at the lower end, and several parents help to run the football club.

56. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is unsatisfactory. Some parents regularly listen to their children read and ensure that they are given all the help they need to complete any homework they have been given, but many do not. Most parents, but not all, attend parent consultation evenings, but attendance at the annual governors' meeting is always very low.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, who has been appointed since the last inspection in 1998, has met the challenge of the new post with vision and energy. Despite the wide range of issues needing attention, the headteacher took the wise decision to focus on the need to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. She has been supported ably by skilled and conscientious key staff and a supportive governing body. The

headteacher's determination to raise standards is shared by all staff and the school is in a very good position to sustain and build on recent improvements in standards.

58. The monitoring of teaching is effective and the headteacher and key staff have developed a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers. Good practice is identified and shared and this has been instrumental in supporting teachers and, in particular, the several newly qualified teachers on the staff. A range of detailed policy documents gives useful guidance to teaching and non teaching staff.

59. Assessment data from a range of different sources is carefully analysed and used to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Performance targets have been set for individual pupils and these are used to assess whether pupils are making sufficient progress as they move through the school.

60. The monitoring of the curriculum is less effective, but satisfactory overall. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy, but has failed to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum are fully covered, with significant gaps in provision for information and communication technology and some underemphasis on physical education.

61. Subject co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science are effective. They have produced useful guidance policies and portfolios to support teachers in their planning of each subject. Co-ordinators are seen as subject specialists, supporting colleagues through rigorous monitoring of teaching and planning.

62. The management of special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps all the paper work neatly filed so that information is easily accessible and can be shared. She is an excellent role model as a teacher for pupils with special educational needs. She liaises very effectively with teaching assistants, teachers, parents, governors and outside agencies.

63. The management of pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Members of the local education authority EMTAG team work effectively in the school and in very close partnership with the headteacher and class teachers to support pupils.

64. The school has a clear set of aims that reflect a determination to improve standards. The school is successful in meeting its aim of ensuring a caring and supportive learning environment. The school recognises the importance of home-school links but has found it difficult to involve the majority of parents in their children's learning.

65. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and members of the various committees are kept well informed. The chair of governors, in particular, has a very clear picture of the school's weaknesses and shares the headteacher's commitment to raising standards. The governing body meets its statutory requirements in most respects, but does not ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. The governing body is successful in holding the school to account for the quality of education provided.

66. The school makes good use of specific grants. These have been used successfully to develop work in special educational needs. The appointment of two part-time teachers effectively supports pupils throughout the school. A large grant to support pupils who speak English as an additional language is put to good use, with three part-time teachers and a full time multilingual support assistant, all working effectively to support pupils.

67. Financial management is good and vastly improved since the last inspection. A key issue from the last inspection was to tackle a very large deficit in the budget and this has been achieved through a rigorous approach to handling the budget. Indeed, the school now has a significant carryforward figure, monies that have been carefully allocated to planned improvements in

provision for information and communication technology and library facilities. The principles of best value are suitably observed and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

68. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to match the demands of the curriculum, although in some subject areas, notably information and communication technology, music and physical education, there is a lack of knowledge and expertise for the subjects to be taught effectively. However, these issues are already being addressed, and have started to have some impact on the quality of teaching and learning, although it is too soon to impact on standards. Arrangements for the induction of new staff, including newly qualified teachers, are good. There are thorough policies indicating how new teachers are to be helped to settle into the school. There is a comprehensive staff handbook covering everything from behaviour management to volunteer helpers. The performance management process is being developed well. The first cycle of interviews has taken place, with short term targets being set for all teachers. Four team leaders have been trained and release time set aside for the next stage of development. Professional development is carefully managed to suit school and individual needs. The number and qualifications of support staff are good. They often work very effectively with groups of pupils, although the planning of the use of their time is not always efficient.

69. The accommodation is good. There are a number of specialist rooms, and a number of small group rooms where pupils are taught away from their own classrooms. These are all used effectively. The creation of a computer suite and a studio is well under way and should be ready for use this term. The building is very well maintained, being clean and tidy. Very good quality, and sometimes excellent, displays considerably enhance the learning environment. There are two halls, playgrounds and a field, which are adequate for physical activities.

70. Resources for art, history and special educational needs are good. However, in information and communication technology, resources are inadequate. There are no computers in some classrooms, and the lack of opportunity for pupils to use computers contributes to the low level of achievement. A new suite is planned, but this in itself does not solve the problems of pupil access to computers. In all other areas of the curriculum, there is an appropriate range of resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Improve** standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - Writing a policy for the identification, and teaching, of more able pupils;
 - In English, providing more planned opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, including the use of drama;
 - In mathematics by reviewing the arrangements for the number of mathematics sets, particularly in Year 6;
 - In science by improving the consistency of the quality of teaching.
- (Paragraphs: 3, 4, 6, 8, 23, 48, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, 100, 101, 102, 106, 107, 111, 124)
- **Improve** standards and curriculum provision in information and communication technology and physical education by:
 - In information and communication technology improving teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in planning for the use of computers to support pupils' learning in classrooms; and ensuring that teaching in the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum;

- In physical education by improving the consistency of the quality of teaching, particularly in gymnastics.

(Paragraphs: 5, 9, 10, 24, 32, 60, 65, 68, 70, 144, 146, 158, 160, 162)

- **Further develop** the existing procedures to work with parents and pupils to stress the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality to support their learning.

(Paragraphs: 18, 44)

- **Provide** more planned opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness.

(Paragraph: 39)

In addition the governing body may wish to include the following for possible consideration in its action plan:

- Improving the consistency of the quality of teachers' marking.

(Paragraphs: 31, 49, 94, 104)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	120
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	2	19	45	42	7	1	0
Percentage	2	23	38	35	6	1	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 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	497
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	99

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	161

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	140

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	52
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	59

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	46	45	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	41
	Girls	36	36	41
	Total	60	62	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (67)	68 (69)	90 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	34	32
	Girls	38	37	34
	Total	63	71	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (61)	78 (79)	73 (80)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	26	31	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	20
	Girls	16	13	24
	Total	26	22	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (57)	39 (68)	79 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	17
	Girls	13	10	18
	Total	21	18	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (34)	32 (55)	63 (62)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	4
Indian	41
Pakistani	82
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	1
White	279
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	24.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	320

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
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	£
Total income	1,117,458
Total expenditure	1,071,350
Expenditure per pupil	1,867
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,135
Balance carried forward to next year	86,243

Total aggregate hours worked per week	74
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	21
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	18.7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.7
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	549
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	46	6	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	38	13	3	1
The teaching is good.	69	28	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	36	16	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	1	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	30	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	48	43	3	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	58	31	1	1	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	38	1	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	37	13	3	14

Due to rounding percentages may not total 100.

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

Personal, social and emotional development

72. As the result of very effective teaching by the teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistant, children settle happily and quickly into the day-to-day routines of the nursery. Children organise themselves quickly in the morning or afternoon by matching their name card to the correct colour on the display board. They settle sensibly for registration and answer their names politely. Children show good concentration when they choose activities for themselves or when they are supported by an adult. They enjoy meeting visitors and despite poor speaking skills, many will initiate a conversation, for example, "Who are you? My name is What are you doing here?" In one session, a boy showed very politely the inspector to the chair and handed him the teacher's clipboard, as he knew the inspector would need it.

73. Children continue to make good progress in reception as they build successfully on the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Relationships are good and children work and play together very happily, including boys and girls and children from the many cultures represented in the school. Children change independently for physical education lessons. They are helpful and co-operative when they tidy up at the end of sessions. When asked by an inspector, "Are you helping to pack up?" a child firmly replied, "No! We tidy up!" As the result of good teaching, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Communication, language and literacy

74. Teaching in the nursery is very good and concentrates especially on developing children's speaking and listening skills which are often poor. The teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistant spend valuable time developing children's understanding, for example during the inspection the emphasis was on the use of 'short' and 'long'. In story time, for example when reading the story of 'The Rainbow Fish', the teacher develops speaking skills through questions, such as, "What can you see on the front cover?" Children's understanding of the story is developed successfully through questions, such as, "Why is the fish so beautiful?" and, "Why didn't he want to play with the other fish?" Children enjoy looking at books and begin to talk about the pictures; most know that books are 'read' from left to right. In writing, children make good attempts at tracing letters and their own names.

75. Good teaching in reception, particularly of phonics (letter sounds) means that children continue to make good progress and build successfully on the good work in the nursery. Children enjoy listening to the story, 'Kipper's Toy Box' and they know the sound of the initial letters of the toys, for example 'g' for giraffe. Children enjoy looking at books and a few are successful in linking their letter sounds to read words, particularly 'cvc' (consonant vowel consonant) words, for example 'cat' and 'dog'. Most make a very good attempt at writing their own name, with the teacher encouraging them to, "Write your letters slowly and carefully please". All children make marks to represent writing, with more able children making good attempts at writing the list of toys in the toybox. Although progress is good, children do not meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals because they start school with very low level language skills.

Mathematical development

76. In the nursery, children make good progress as the result of effective teaching. Children are encouraged to count and many are accurate in counting to 10. They are confident in naming two-dimensional shapes: for example circles, squares, rectangles and triangles, and in matching them by colour and size. Children develop a good understanding of comparing measures, for example through a good range of activities when they look at 'long' and 'short'.

77. Teaching in reception is good and makes a strong contribution to children meeting the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children build successfully on their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes by answering correctly questions, such as "How many sides has a square?" or "How many corners on a triangle?" Counting skills are reinforced well and children can count accurately the total number of each shape in the 'shape bag'. Many classify correctly shapes by 'small' and 'large' and they find square shapes in the classroom.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. As the result of good teaching children make good progress and meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. In the nursery, children use the computer to support their learning and they are confident in using the mouse to 'click and drag' objects across the screen: for example the parts to build a rocket. Children enjoy using the small and large construction kits: for example two boys had an enjoyable time using the large bricks to build a wall in the entrance hall of the nursery. Children develop an early understanding of food technology when they make cakes.

79. In reception, children build successfully on their computer skills. They show enthusiasm, excitement and confidence when they enter commands into a programmable toy. They apply their mathematical understanding well when they estimate the number to enter in order for the toy to cover a set distance. Pupils know how to print pages from the screen after looking at a CD-ROM to find pictures of toys linked to the story of 'Kipper's Toybox'. Children successfully use their making skills when they make finger puppets of animals from the same story. Geographical skills are reinforced when the teacher encourages pupils to look at the map of the route 'Kipper' takes back to his house. Through stories, such as 'The Cross-Withus-Rhinoceros' teachers develop children's knowledge and awareness of other places. Children know that in England you would only see a rhinoceros in a zoo.

Physical development

80. Children make good progress in this area of learning and meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is good. In the nursery, children have regular daily opportunities for outdoor play and they are confident in riding on the large wheeled toys. They walk confidently on small stilts and show satisfactory skills in throwing and catching. Skills in cutting and sticking are developed successfully.

81. Progress in reception continues to be good and in lessons in the hall children show a good awareness of space. To music, they perform imaginative sequences in which they represent toys: for example being a 'rag doll' or a 'toy soldier'. When choosing their own toys, many perform good sequences in which they are 'Woody' or 'Buzz Lightyear'⁷. Encouragement from the teacher, for example, "Think about how you are controlling your arms and legs," improves their performance. Children become more accurate and confident in cutting with scissors and in sticking and joining.

Creative development

82. Teaching is good and contributes successfully to children making good progress and meeting the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children enjoy working with paint, for example in making prints using the tyres of a toy lorry to create 'long' and 'short' patterns. In paintings of houses, children show an understanding of the parts of a house, including roof,

⁷ Characters from the film 'Toy Story'

window and door. Children enjoy using 'playdoh' and they apply their mathematical skills when they sell their 'blueberry ice creams', with a loud, "Two cones for a pound!" Clearly they are budding salesmen as when an inspector asked for a 'blueberry ice cream with a flake', he was told, "That will be forty pounds." Children enjoy role play, for example in preparing, serving, eating and washing up after 'breakfast'. They make a good effort at singing familiar songs and rhymes, for example 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star', with the accompanying actions, particularly well done.

83. Progress in reception continues to be good. Children paint good self portraits and use paint successfully in printing repeating patterns. They enjoy opportunities for role play and opportunities to sing familiar songs and rhymes, with appropriate actions.

ENGLISH

84. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below average in all aspects of English, with a particularly high proportion of pupils having very low standards in speaking and listening. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below the national average, as are standards in Year 7. However, given the low standards on entry to the school, these results represent satisfactory levels of achievement across the school. Test results have risen above the national trend over recent years and inspection evidence confirms this rising trend. In particular, the school's focus on improving standards in writing is having a positive impact in all year groups. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 6 are working at a higher level than in previous years and on course to maintain the rising standards seen over previous years. Throughout the school, girls perform better than boys, but the difference is not significantly different from the national picture.

85. Pupils have frequent opportunities across the curriculum to take part in discussions and to practise their speaking and listening skills. The range of opportunity, however, is limited because most discussions are closely controlled by adults and drama is not consistently used. Nevertheless, pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. They achieve the expected standards in listening at seven and eleven, but fall well short of these expectations in speaking skills. The teachers of five to seven-year-olds provide a good range of opportunities within the literacy hour. They patiently insist on the basic skills necessary for orderly discussions. All teachers offer very good role models of clear and expressive speech which enables all pupils, but particularly those who speak English as an additional language, to take a full part in class discussions. Pupils aged seven to eleven are provided with a good range of opportunities to increase their role in discussions and to explain their answers. Although the quality of these opportunities is good, their range is limited. For example, pupils have few opportunities to present their work to an audience through expressive performance or formal talk. This limited range is especially apparent in Year 7. Overall, however, most pupils develop speaking and listening skills which effectively support their learning across the school.

86. In reading, pupils aged five to seven have good quality opportunities to learn the basic skills and they achieve well. Within the literacy framework, pupils are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds, and the recent introduction of a specific phonics programme has been beneficial in this respect. In addition, the introduction of a graded reading scheme has contributed to the good match between the texts presented to pupils and their differing needs. In Years 1 and 2, teachers give a very high priority to reading, and pupils are expected to take their reading books home on a regular basis. This emphasis continues in Years 3 and 4, but declines as pupils move through Years 5, 6 and 7. A scrutiny of pupils' reading diaries confirms this trend and, by Year 7, few pupils use their diaries in any concerted or consistent fashion. This decline in sustained practice means that the good levels of achievement of younger pupils are not maintained and, by Years 6 and 7, progress in reading is only adequate. The school does not systematically promote the development and use of library and study skills. As a result, pupils, including more able readers, seldom read to learn. Interviews with pupils in Years 6 and 7 indicate that few pupils could identify the distinctive features of an information book or locate information in the library. The school does recognise the limitations of the present library facilities and has ambitious plans to improve this aspect of provision significantly later in this school year.

87. Although standards in writing are well below average, the standards observed during the inspection were higher than recent test results would indicate. This reflects the school's recent focus on this area of learning. Throughout the school, there is an effective range of opportunities for writing in literacy hour sessions as well as frequent sessions for more in-depth writing. Other subjects, such as history and religious education, are used well to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils' writing following visits to Rochester Castle and Cathedral and to the British Museum was of a particularly good standard. Pupils use different forms of writing well, as demonstrated by poems inspired by 'a wet day at the seaside' as well as by books, such as 'The Unicorn'. Although standards of writing are especially low in Year 7, when pupils are inspired by a subject they can produce quality work, as exemplified by written work on a project about slavery, as well as reports about their own achievements. A weakness in the development of writing skills across the school is the limited use of information and communication technology to support pupils' work. The school's impressive portfolio of work does contain examples of word processing and there are examples in displays of pupils' work around the school, but during the inspection there was only one example of computers being used in this way to support pupils' work during a lesson. Overall, levels of achievement in writing are satisfactory over time. In many lessons observed during the inspection, though, progress was good, reflecting the improving situation in writing across the school.

88. Standards of handwriting are good in pupils' handwriting books. Younger pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly and older pupils develop a more personal style. However, teachers do not expect the same good standards in pupils' written work in subjects across the curriculum. Spelling is weak throughout the school but improving. Pupils' knowledge of letter sounds is secure, and regular practice based on spelling patterns is having a positive impact on levels of achievement.

89. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. Pupils have detailed individual education plans with specific literacy targets that are well matched to pupils' differing needs. These plans are followed carefully and this results in good teaching which is well focused. Teaching assistants support pupils effectively throughout lessons.

90. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well throughout the school. Teachers' clear speech and easy-to-follow explanations enable pupils to follow lessons alongside their peers. Pupils are effectively supported by sensitive support assistants and a particularly skilled bilingual assistant, whose command of five minority languages is especially helpful to those pupils at the very early stages of acquiring English.

91. More able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and this is reflected in the low proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and writing at ages seven and eleven. Although their work is accurate and well presented, their tasks are not extended to push them to produce work of sufficient quantity and quality in the time available. During lessons observed, pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language were always well supported, but more able pupils were often left to their own devices.

92. Teaching is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 7. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, teaching was good in four lessons and very good in one other. For pupils in Years 3 to 6, just over half the lessons were good or better, with a significant minority of very good teaching in addition to one excellent lesson. In Year 7, there was no clear pattern to the handful of lessons observed, with teaching ranging from very good to unsatisfactory (in just one lesson). This related to the choice of a topic about subordinate clauses that was not well matched to the needs of a well below average group of pupils. Throughout the school, teaching has improved since the last inspection.

93. Several common strengths distinguish the good teaching and combine to promote good learning. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. Teachers have a warm rapport with their pupils and manage them well through the changing situations of the literacy hour. The approach is firm and good humoured, but alert and decisive in dealing with any behaviour that falls below the expected level of response. In

most lessons teachers have an up beat style of delivery that engages the interest of pupils. In the very good and excellent lessons, teachers maintain a lively pace that inspires pupils of all abilities. In these lessons, pupils approach their work with urgent and productive effort, recognising their opportunity to acquire new skills and understanding. A particular strength in the teaching of writing is the detailed assessments that are made of each pupil's performance and the setting of group and individual targets to help pupils focus on exactly what they need to do to improve further. It is this strategy that underpins the improving progress that pupils across the school are making in developing skills in writing.

94. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were observed in Years 1 to 6, the presence of certain weaknesses caused some lessons to be satisfactory rather than good. Time is not always rigorously managed. The opening class session of the literacy hour often lasts too long, sometimes taking up more than half the lesson and leaving insufficient time for group work and/or the plenary, where the evaluation of the lesson is sometimes too hurried. Teachers use questioning well to engage the interest of pupils but too often invite a brief or monosyllabic response. Examples of where teachers encourage pupils to speak at length and develop ideas are confined to the few very good lessons. Finally, the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and seldom complies fully with school policy. Marking focuses well on giving praise for effort but rarely makes clear to pupils the strengths and weakness of their work and what needs to be done to improve further.

95. Good teaching results in good quality learning. Pupils acquire knowledge and increase their understanding, particularly in reading and writing. In all classes, pupils apply effort, try hard and sustain concentration. In writing, pupils are developing an alert awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. This was exemplified by a group of pupils in Year 6 who were able to evaluate their performance by identifying features of their work that focused on their group targets as well as identifying aspects that needed to be improved.

96. Procedures for formal and informal day-to-day assessments are good. Teachers keep a range of useful records that track pupils' progress through the school. These are supported by targets for each pupil based on National Curriculum levels. The assessments of written work are especially detailed and enable teachers and pupils to develop a clear view of individual strengths and weaknesses.

97. Subject leadership is very good. The English co-ordinator works very hard and is effective. She recognises that standards have been well below average for some time and is determined to improve standards across the school. She works closely with colleagues and, although only appointed at the start of this school year, is already having a positive impact on the quality of provision. She monitors teaching as well as teachers' plans and gives detailed and evaluative feedback to help teachers improve their work in English.

98. The English curriculum is well resourced, with all classes having a good range of quality books for pupils to read. The school recognises that the library is inadequate and has plans in the very near future to improve this provision.

99. Provision for English has improved since the last inspection and the school is well placed to build on recent improvements across the school.

MATHEMATICS

100. By the end of Year 2, standards are below the national average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, and Year 7 when pupils leave the school, standards are well below average. However inspection evidence confirms the recent trend which shows year-on-year improvement in the standards being achieved. Effective teaching and learning demonstrates the capacity and willingness to continue to improve. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, with many achieving successfully in the higher mathematics sets (groups where pupils are taught by ability). However, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged because work

does not always meet their particular learning needs. Results over time show that boys and girls are now performing at a similar level by the age of seven. In Years 3 to 7, boys achieve better results than girls in mathematics and have done so since 1998.

101. The standard of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall and contributes successfully to the improving standards. In Year 1, pupils count reliably to 20 and understand mathematical vocabulary relating to differences, for example 'take away' and 'minus'. In Year 2, pupils count accurately to one hundred and they count in hundreds. In work on fractions, they recognise and explain halves and quarters. Good teaching and learning is characterised by clearly planned tasks, with work carefully matched to pupils' previous attainment. There are clear instructions from teachers, with a brisk pace to lessons and effective plenary sessions. Teachers' knowledge is secure and they have high expectations of good behaviour and responses, which are usually achieved.

102. Standards of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory overall. Pupils work in ability sets for mathematics. There is clear evidence that where this most effectively raises standards, is in Year 5; where the inclusion of the deputy headteacher to enable two classes to be taught as three sets raises the standards of all pupils. Pupils in Year 3 understand the inverse relationship between multiplication and division. In Year 4, pupils apply accurately the four rules of number in calculations to 100; they understand how to use tens and units. In Year 5, more able pupils find and use the formula for measuring the perimeter of regular polygons and solving simple problems. In Year 6, pupils understand the use of scale and area.

103. Lessons were well planned and the National Numeracy Strategy was closely followed, albeit a year or so behind expectations. Occasionally, information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning: for example in Year 5 where the class teacher used an overhead projector to demonstrate perimeter, using silhouettes of regular polygons. Pupils in Year 4 use computers effectively to write a simple program to draw two-dimensional shapes and this builds on their understanding of angles. For example, more able pupils knew the angles of an octagon.

104. From looking at pupils' previous work it is clear that the standard of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Work is marked regularly but there are insufficient written comments which suggest how pupils can improve their work. Work is usually well presented, with workings shown.

105. In most classrooms teachers have worked hard to create mathematical displays. Every class has some mathematics work on display. However, these displays focus almost exclusively on mathematics vocabulary and a 100 square. Classes which include a number line and 'Number of the Week' displays, add to educational experiences for pupils. However, insufficient thought is given to stimulating pupils' interest with a variety of displays which reflect more closely what is being taught, including the display of learning objectives.

106. The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing good leadership in the subject. Her plans and work achieved so far show a very good understanding of the need to raise standards and the means by which to do so. She has ensured the National Numeracy Strategy is secure in the school, undertaken good in-service training herself and has a record of that attended by other staff (showing over 50 per cent of staff have undertaken some training in mathematics teaching this year). The school has made a portfolio of pupils' work which staff have matched to the different levels of the National Curriculum. This assists teachers who lack some confidence in the subject, to have a greater understanding of standards pupils should achieve. With the support of local education authority advisers, the school has monitored the progress of individual year groups and assessed whole school weaknesses. The monitoring of individual pupils using assessment records to inform planning, especially for more able pupils, is not in place. The co-ordinator realises this and will work towards a school policy for it. She has monitored teaching in Years 2, 6 and 7 and has time allocated this year to do so in other year groups. She intends to organise opportunities for colleagues to look at pupils' exercise books in order to review pupils' progress in mathematics. The capability and leadership of the co-ordinator allied with observed good teaching

and learning especially in Years 1 and 2 leave the school well placed to achieve a continued improvement in standards in this subject. Resources in mathematics are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

107. Standards in science are well below the national average at the end of Year 2 and below the national average at the end of Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in standards at the end of Year 6 but a drop in standards at the end of Year 2. In Year 7, standards are well below average and this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Teachers, learning support assistants and pupils' peers, support both groups effectively in lessons.

108. From looking at pupils' previous work in Years 1 and 2, evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, particularly in scientific investigation and life processes and living things. Even though standards are well below average, many pupils made good overall progress from a low starting point. In Year 1, through the topic of 'Ourselves' pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the differences between individual people. They know the five senses and how to make sounds. In Year 2, pupils complete simple scientific investigations and have a good awareness of the animals and plants found in the school grounds.

109. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to increase their scientific knowledge as they move up through the school. There was ample evidence from the analysis of work that pupils had made at least satisfactory progress during this stage and that standards, although not high enough are improving consistently. This is a direct result of satisfactory teaching and good planning for science. Teachers place a strong emphasis on building up pupils' skills to carry out scientific enquiry. Year 3 pupils carry out several investigations in which they build successfully on their understanding of the importance of a 'fair test'. By Year 6, most pupils develop successfully their investigative skills. For example, they build and investigate electrical circuits in order to make light bulbs work. They draw circuit diagrams, some of which are quite complex. Through the study of the human body they show a satisfactory understanding of the skeleton, the digestive system and the body's vital organs. Most pupils develop a good understanding of puberty and the different stages of pregnancy.

110. In Year 7, work is of a variable standard. Pupils successfully investigate how and why flames burn. They carry out light experiments, investigate magnetic attraction and increase their knowledge of skills linked to prediction and full scientific investigations with observations of swinging pendulums. Analysis of pupils' work showed that many pupils had developed the skills necessary to evaluate evidence and make fair comparisons but there was further evidence to suggest that some pupils still found this difficult and had not fully developed their investigative skills. Work in both the year group classes covered similar topics but there was little sign of matching tasks to pupils' ability or taking the needs of differing groups of pupils into account. Average and above average pupils showed signs of good progress but there was only limited evidence of work being planned to extend and challenge the more able pupils.

111. The quality of teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good and was satisfactory overall. Overall, pupils seemed to enjoy science and displayed good attitudes to the subject. However some lessons in Years 1 and 2 were too long and, as a result, pupils were not meaningfully engaged on tasks for the full length of the sessions. Their concentration tended to lapse and pupils' attitudes and progress were sometimes adversely affected as a result.

112. When very good teaching was observed, there were some common elements; teachers' subject knowledge was secure, lessons were well structured and briskly paced, planning was detailed and precise and linked to previous work and practical tasks were matched to the different ability levels of pupils. Very good teaching featuring all these attributes was observed in a Year 2 lesson focusing on healthy eating. By the end of the lesson, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is a second language, could classify foods into

'healthy' and 'unhealthy'. Pupils learned enough about the idea of a balanced diet to be able to discuss it with meaning in the plenary or final session.

113. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the science co-ordinator, although relatively new to the position, has a well defined job description and a clear view of the direction the subject should take. Although the co-ordinator has attended several in-service courses, further training for the rest of the teaching staff is not included in the current school improvement plan.

114. The school's present science policy, now in the process of being updated, is comprehensive. All year groups and all classes follow the whole school scheme of work. Pupil progress in science is assessed and evaluated either termly or at the end of each completed unit of work and assessment is usually used to inform future planning.

115. The school's resources for teaching science are on the whole satisfactory and cover all areas of the science curriculum but are of variable quality. Resources for teaching science in Year 7 are plentiful but many are not relevant for any other age group and some are inadequate to meet the aims of the present programme of study in this year group. Resources for Years 3 to 6 are of mixed quality. Some are relatively new and very well used, for instance the materials for teaching electricity and magnetism, but others are now in need of replacement. Resources for Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory but some are now in need of replacement.

116. Few links between science and other subjects, including information and communication technology, were observed during the inspection. The exception to this was in Year 1 where science was linked well to music during one observed lesson.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Standards in art are above national expectations for pupils at seven, eleven and twelve. Due to very effective school based in-service training, teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence are high and pupils develop knowledge and skills systematically as they move through the school. Sketchbooks are very well used throughout the school so that progression in skills is clearly evident. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress as the result of the effective support of teachers.

118. This term pupils in Year 2 are experimenting with mark making, using pencils to shade and draw facial features. They look at pictures carefully and consider light and shade and practise producing this effect with a sketching pencil. In the lessons observed, pupils were given half a photocopied picture of a face and they were asked to complete the face. Pupils used the skills they had learnt, and the portraits they produced were of a higher standard than normally see for pupils in Year 2.

119. Pupils in Year 3 painted fantasy animals, combining the features of two animals into one. They created a very attractive brightly coloured display in the classroom. Year 4 pupils look at the work of Kandinsky and Paul Klee and try to produce abstract images in their style. They use intense bright colours, thin, thick, curved and zigzag lines and add other materials to their paintings: for example cellophane, pipe cleaners and feathers to create the desired effect. Year 5 pupils use watercolours to paint Greek mythical creatures. Year 6 pupils build on their portrait sketching skills and experiment with pastels to draw facial features. They practise various techniques including smudging, blending, and using different parts of the pastel. By the end of the lesson, every pupil had made a good attempt at a pastel portrait of which they were proud. Year 7 pupils learn to use mixed media techniques to create a portrait of 'Professor Dumbledore'⁸. Pupils make good progress in art.

120. Teaching in art is good and, often, very good. Lessons were seen for pupils of seven, eleven and twelve. Portfolios of work were analysed for pupils in other year groups. Lessons are planned in detail and show the teachers' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are very well

⁸ A character in the 'Harry Potter' books.

structured, have clear learning objectives and enable pupils to develop and practise their skills through interesting challenging activities. Teachers and teaching assistants interact with pupils very well giving encouragement and confidence, thus raising pupils' self esteem. Teachers give clear instructions and demonstrations. They allow pupils time to experiment before embarking on the task. Art lessons make a good contribution to pupils' social and personal development as pupils are given frequent opportunities to work with a partner and to choose the materials they wish to use.

121. Pupils really enjoy art lessons. They listen attentively and work with enthusiasm. They are keen to share their ideas and help each other. Pupils' work is very well displayed in classrooms and corridors and this values the effort that pupils make.

122. The co-ordinator has been in post for three years and ensures that there are good resources easily accessible for teachers to use. Her action plan for this year is to develop closer links with art across the curriculum. There is evidence that this is beginning. She monitors planning and pupils' work but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The portfolios give good guidance to teachers joining the school, of the standards expected for each year group.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in design and technology exceed national expectations at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7, standards meet expectations. These findings are similar to those reported by the previous inspection which found that standards met expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

124. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress. Most of their work consists of simple design and make projects. In lessons, Year 1 pupils use a range of appropriate tools effectively and are aware of safety factors when using them. They use scissors carefully and cut correctly and nearly all have developed skills at using a range of other tools properly, sometimes with assistance. Pupils in Year 1 show good designing skills and in one lesson, pupils designed and made models of playground equipment. They talk about their plans in detail and compare them to the finished product, noting good design points. One pupil, for instance, gave a good account of why a particular type of card had to be used to make a rigid model. In most lessons, work was of a good standard, although there was little evidence that the more able pupils were being stretched or given suitable challenges. Pupils' attitudes towards the subject were usually very good.

125. Analysis of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 confirms that pupils continue to develop both their investigative skills and their designing and making skills. By Year 3, most pupils refine their use of basic equipment and match tools and materials to tasks. Pupils follow ordered sequences, for instance, when making bread and working from recipes. In Year 4, pupils' previous work included good examples of designing and making moving models but did not contain suitable examples of challenges for the more able pupils. By Year 5 and Year 6, most pupils refine their measuring skills and produce more precise work in, for instance, constructing models using a variety of suitable materials.

126. No lessons were observed in Year 7 and judgements are made on the limited scrutiny of pupils' work. Most of the evidence presented consisted of examples of work in display areas and in a school portfolio. Pupils had covered a range of topics. They had designed, made and evaluated cereal boxes and different cereals to go in them. The work showed that pupils had been given opportunities to develop a good range of skills and knowledge and had experience of developing their own ideas in a structured situation.

127. The standard of teaching in observed lessons ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. A very good lesson was observed in Year 1 in which pupils constructed models of playground equipment. Because of the way the lesson was structured and tasks were matched to individual pupil ability, the pupils produced some very good models. Pupils were keen and

eager to join in the activities and worked well together. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, made good progress in their understanding of the design and make process.

128. The subject co-ordinator has only been in the post for a few weeks. Her job description is comprehensive and her areas of responsibility well defined. The delivery of the subject is monitored through planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and informal discussions with teachers. Assessment is built into planning and portfolios of work are used to record progress over time in the subject.

129. The school's policy for the subject is adequate and is presently being redrafted. Staff have recently been given the opportunity for in-service training in bookmaking. Resources for teaching design and technology are satisfactory. They are kept in classrooms and in an easily accessible central resource area.

130. Links between information and communication technology and design and technology were not evident during the inspection. There was no evidence of computer aided design being used and this had a negative impact on pupils' learning, especially in Years 3 to 7.

GEOGRAPHY

131. By the end of Year 2, standards meet national expectations. Through careful planning, teachers introduce pupils to their local environment and the world around them. Pupils in Year 1 have made a successful visit to a local area and brought photographs, which they had taken, back to the school to discuss the quality of the environment. In other classes, the travels of Barnaby Bear going around the world are discussed. There is a very good display with effective questions and information in the lower school hall to stimulate pupils' interest and learning. This includes aerial photographs of the area around the school. It places Crawley in a regional context and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding of the local area. However, there is little evidence of pupils' written work in geography and literacy skills are not applied consistently well.

132. By the end of Year 6, standards meet national expectations, although pupils' knowledge of significant places and environments is less secure. Pupils in Year 6 develop a satisfactory understanding of mountain topography and recreational land use. Through the visit to Putborough Brook, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the features and characteristics of rivers. Through their visit to Godstone, pupils in Year 4 develop a good understanding of contrasting life in a village locality with that of their own lives in Broadfield.

133. Pupils in Year 3 develop satisfactory skills in identifying physical and human features in the landscape. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' written work is of a satisfactory standard but planning to extend the knowledge of more able pupils: for example in the mountain theme, to consider glaciated landforms and human influences on the mountain landscape, is underdeveloped. Booklets that some pupils had prepared about the Himalayas were effective. One class had a good display about mountains and volcanoes, which stimulated pupils' interests. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in Year 7.

134. Teaching is satisfactory. Teaching of geographical skills is at its most effective through the provision of regular excursions into the environment, which is a strength of the provision for geography in the school. However, pupils' knowledge of places in the world at the end of Year 6 is below expectations. Pupils who study the Alps did not know their location. The presence of the same three maps in each year group reveals a lack of planning for progression in this aspect of geographical knowledge.

135. Resources are adequate to teach the subject. There is a good supply of atlases and a satisfactory supply of maps, globes and other textbooks. However, software to support the development of geographical skills with the aid of information and communication technology was not seen.

136. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks and has had little opportunity to develop his management role in the subject. He is not qualified in geography but has a real interest in the subject. He has monitored medium term planning but not teaching of the subject in school. He is aware of the need to spread good practice within the school and ensure progression in the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Time to monitor teaching standards and some in-service training to help colleagues effectively plan for progression, is a priority for him. The school has an agreed scheme and plans for progress in knowledge and understanding, and the development of skills.

HISTORY

137. Standards in history meet the national expectations for pupils at seven, eleven and twelve. History is promoted well in the school and portfolios of pupils' work show that they are gaining a wide knowledge in each of the topics studied and are acquiring and using enquiry skills well. There is a total absence of boring worksheets and literacy skills are developed well in history. Timelines are used effectively in many classrooms. Sometimes these focus around the period being studied, sometimes they cover a much longer period, which helps pupils to develop a sense of chronology. For example, in a Year 4 class, the timeline started with the Ancient Egyptians and progressed to the Ancient Greeks, invasions by the Romans, Vikings and Normans, and studies of Tudors and from Victorians up to the present day.

138. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the Fire of London. They explain where the fire started and why it spread so quickly. They understand the changes that have taken place over the last 400 years which would prevent a repetition of this event.

139. Pupils in Year 4 study the Roman invasion. During the inspection, a theatre group visited to lead a workshop on this period in which all the pupils participated. Pupils listened carefully and followed instructions. This was a highly motivating enjoyable experience for all. The activity was used very effectively by teachers to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils were prepared well the day before when they rehearsed what they already knew about life in Roman times. The following day teachers planned interesting lessons to enable pupils to discuss and record what they had learnt. Pupils in Year 5 develop useful research skills, such as note taking, as they learn about the tomb of Tutankhamun. Literacy skills are being developed well in this history topic.

140. Pupils in Year 7 study the medieval period and during the inspection were looking at crime and punishment. This aspect really captured their interest and imagination and although they demonstrate poor language and communications skills, pupils tried to participate in a class discussion. At the end of the lesson, several pupils explained what punishment would have been given to a nagging wife and a stable boy who stole bread from a rich man. Pupils were expected to finish the written task for homework – a good example of relevant homework enhancing the learning in the classroom.

141. Teaching in history is at least satisfactory and frequently good. High quality displays are evident in classrooms and around the school. Attractive collections of non fiction books are strategically placed to encourage pupils to learn independently. Information and communication technology is used effectively in history lessons. Teachers' planning is detailed, showing specific learning objectives, a clear focus on key vocabulary and skills to be developed as well as facts to be acquired. Interesting challenging activities, which cater for the needs of all pupils, enable everyone to be successful learners. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs.

142. History is managed effectively. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work and compiles up to date portfolios. She ensures that there are good quality resources that are accessible for teachers to use. However, as yet she has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

143. By the end of Years 2, 6 and 7, standards are below national expectations because pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers to support their learning. In addition, the school is not teaching to the full requirements of the National Curriculum for information and communication technology. Pupils are currently taught one lesson per week in one of the school's two 'ICT-Suites', but few have any opportunity to develop skills taught, back in their own classrooms. Progress in lessons is often good, including that for pupils with English as an additional language who show good application and concentration. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in lessons. However, they do not always concentrate as well as they should. Progress over time for all pupils is unsatisfactory.

144. When given the opportunity, pupils try hard to apply their literacy skills when using computers, for example in writing poems in Year 3, or writing about life in medieval times as part of history work in Year 7. In Year 4 and Year 6, pupils apply successfully their numeracy skills when writing a program to draw three-dimensional shapes on the screen. They know that the command 'Repeat 8 FD 100 RT 45' will draw an octagon. However, pupils have too few opportunities to support their learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons.

145. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to load, save and print their work. In Year 1, pupils apply their numeracy skills well when they create pictograms to show favourite fruits of pupils in their class. Pupils in Year 2 use a graphics program to create pictures in the style of famous artists. In Year 3 pupils show satisfactory skills in 'cutting and pasting' with 'clip art'. By Year 4 pupils develop their data handling skills when they create block graphs and pie charts to show the different religions represented in their community. In Year 6 pupils develop their data handling skills further when they plot graphs from spreadsheets to show their favourite television programmes. In Year 7 pupils use spreadsheets successfully to interpret information on rainfall. There is evidence that pupils in Year 3 have sent e-mails, and in Year 7 pupils have carried out an evaluation of websites. However, despite the evidence of pupils' previous work from the co-ordinator's portfolio, evidence from the inspection confirms pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers other than in the weekly lesson.

146. Although the quality of teaching in the lessons observed was good overall, teaching over time is unsatisfactory because teachers are not planning for the regular and systematic use of computers to support pupils' learning. In lessons in the 'ICT-Suites' teachers show good subject knowledge and are confident in demonstrating new skills, for example when using a computer linked to an overhead projector. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the skills being taught and, for example pupils in Year 7, made good progress in designing and creating a 'slide show' presentation. Teaching in one lesson observed was poor because the half of the class who were not being taught information and communication technology were given a very low level task and were not supported by an adult. As a result, they wasted time and achieved little. Pupils supported by the teacher made satisfactory progress in the lesson.

147. The co-ordinator is aware of the inadequacies in the teaching of the subject. Currently, the school is building a new 'ICT-Suite' through the use of its NGfL (National Grid for Learning) funding and this will allow for a whole class to be taught more effectively. In addition network points are being put into every classroom so that class based computers will be linked to the 'ICT-Suite'. The co-ordinator recognises that staff need training in the use of computers and the school will start its NOF (New Opportunities Funding) training in January 2002. The co-ordinator is aware that this training should include teachers planning for the teaching of the subject to support pupils' learning in the classroom, particularly in having opportunities to apply skills that are taught in lessons in the 'ICT-Suite'.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

148. Pupils have only been learning French since the start of Year 7 in September. During this time, they have made satisfactory progress, but their general low level of linguistic skills is preventing them from attaining the standards expected for their age.

149. Pupils understand simple questions and instructions given by the teacher or from the tape recorder. Many respond to questions by telling you their name, how they are, and how old they are. However, much of this is in one word answers as pupils find it more difficult to use phrases. For example, when asked, "Comment t'appelles-tu?", they are more likely to answer with just their name rather than 'Je m'appelle', and when asked, "Quel âge as-tu?" they are more likely to respond with 'onze' than 'J'ai onze ans'. Many pupils say numbers in French from one to twelve, and they are building a vocabulary of items found in the classroom. With these words, some pupils are beginning to understand that French nouns are masculine or feminine, and therefore require un or une. Many pupils show a sound understanding of their most recent work, such as members of the family, but have forgotten work done earlier in the term. Effective use of workbooks is enabling pupils to develop their reading and writing skills alongside their speaking and listening skills.

150. Both Year 7 classes are taken by the same teacher, who has a sound knowledge and understanding of the language. Only two lessons were observed, which is insufficient to make a well founded judgement on teaching. However, it is apparent that there are strengths and weaknesses. The teacher presents pupils with plenty of opportunities to hear the language, and is a good role model for them. Sometimes, there is a good variety of activities which stimulate and motivate pupils, enabling them to make good progress. However, there are occasions when not enough is done to involve pupils, and it is possible for a large minority to take no active part in the lesson whatsoever. On these occasions, pupils become bored and restless, and sometimes cause disruption to others in the class, thus limiting progress for everybody. Often, too little emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils can pronounce the French words correctly, and their poor pronunciation and intonation goes uncorrected.

151. Currently, there is insufficient emphasis on the 'fun' elements, such as playing games in French, and setting up a café or a market stall, are left out. These factors, together with pupils' low levels of English, are having a detrimental effect on attainment.

MUSIC

152. There is too little evidence to make a judgement on standards in music at the end of Year 7, but at the end of Year 2, standards are below expectations, with those in Year 6 meeting expectations. This is largely due to the limited experiences pupils have had in the past, particularly with singing and playing percussion instruments. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection. Two of the major factors: the lack of teacher confidence; and missed opportunities to strengthen the curriculum at assembly times, remain today. However, the whole staff is undergoing training in the use of a newly adopted scheme. The training and the scheme together have started to raise confidence, but much is still to be done.

153. Singing is being developed throughout the school, partly through singing assemblies, where hymns are practised. Singing in these is satisfactory, but in lessons, pupils sometimes have trouble in pitching the correct notes, particularly the higher ones, and teachers do not correct this. Other opportunities for singing are missed. For example, on Wednesday, pupils had a singing practice, but on Thursday, no hymns were sung in assembly. Not only was the singing opportunity missed, but in addition, the opportunity was missed to add a further spiritual dimension to the assembly.

154. In composing, pupils attempt to use sounds expressively to illustrate a story, and to use instruments to represent an animal. It is evident, from observing lessons and talking to teachers and pupils, that pupils have not had enough experience of experimenting with the instruments to understand what sounds they can make. This requires more confidence from teachers to allow pupils to experiment with sound, whilst still treating the instruments with care and sensitivity. In

one Year 1 lesson, pupils were told to look at the instruments to see which one they wanted for their sound. Looking did not really tell them what sound the instrument could make when played in a variety of ways.

155. Pupils are developing their understanding of musical elements. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson, pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of metre, culminating in creating their own rap which some performed well in assembly. Knowledge of other musical elements is less secure, with pupils getting confused: for example thinking that dynamics means high and low. Pupils have opportunities to appraise music from different times. Some expressed a liking for Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons'. They could name Beethoven as another composer and some orchestral instruments, but pupils' knowledge of classical music is weak. Pupils like a lot of current 'pop' music, but apart from 'the beat' and 'the rhythm', they could offer little reasoning. The opportunity to introduce pupils to a variety of music when they enter and leave the hall for assembly is not consistently used.

156. Observed teaching in Years 1 to 6 was satisfactory, and sometimes good. The better aspects of teaching included thorough planning, and interesting activities that motivated pupils, enabling them to make good progress. Areas that need development are to involve more pupils in the lesson, particularly when using instruments when many are sitting watching; increasing the pace of the lesson; and making teaching points which will help pupils to improve. In the better lessons, pupils were keen and interested and joined in enthusiastically, enabling them to make good progress. In some lessons, pupils were not well motivated, and they showed no real enthusiasm. On occasions, although pupils started well, the sixty minute lesson proved too long for them and their interest waned.

157. The co-ordinator is not a music specialist, although she has a good deal of musical knowledge, and can play the piano. Through teaching in Year 1, she is beginning to have an understanding of what is happening at the lower end of the school, and although she monitors planning, she has little idea of what is happening further up the school. For example, one would expect the co-ordinator to know whether or not pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 used exercise books to record any music work, and to know which instrument the peripatetic music teacher taught, which she did not. There are some occasions when musical experiences are used well. For example, there are Christmas and end of year performances to parents, and pupils take part in the Crawley Festival. Whilst pupils are always very well prepared for these events, the extracurricular clubs are only to prepare for these, and do not meet throughout the year. Resources are adequate, but with the present development of the studio, they will be better stored and more easily accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. The only area of physical education seen during the inspection was gymnastics. In this, standards are below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7. This is largely due to the fact that most teachers are not sufficiently confident to allow pupils to use gymnastic apparatus other than benches and mats. When talking to Year 7 pupils, they could only remember getting out the wall bars on one occasion during this term, and that was to show new teachers how to get them out! The school's own evidence that only 25 per cent of pupils at the end of Year 6 can swim the National Curriculum requirement of 25 metres, indicates that standards in swimming are significantly below national expectations.

159. In gymnastics, the younger pupils learn to control their movements and plan and perform sequences. They jump, showing appropriate control of their shape in the air, and of their landing. They use their initiative and imagination to show balances on various parts of their bodies. By Year 7, pupils are still jumping, rolling and balancing using mats and benches. Some pupils, through the encouragement of the teacher, are concentrating on the quality of their movements, and make good progress in this.

160. Teaching overall in physical education is satisfactory, although it does range from good to unsatisfactory. The best lessons were characterised by:

- Detailed planning;
- Good attention to correct kit and health and safety considerations;
- Good attention to warm-up exercises and the reason for them;
- Secure and confident subject knowledge;
- High expectations and challenging tasks set;
- A good pace with all pupils involved.

Where all or most of these factors were present, pupils showed enthusiasm for their work, tried very hard with the challenges, and made good progress. However, there were weaknesses that were apparent in some observed lessons. Amongst these were:

- Insufficient attention to health and safety considerations, such as wearing watches, rings and earrings, and long hair not tied back;
- Insufficient attention to warming up and the reasons for doing it;
- A lack of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- A lack of confidence in using the larger gymnastic apparatus;
- Pupils spending too much time being inactive. It is possible for more than six (and sometimes only three) pupils to be working on benches and mats in a hall this size in complete safety.

Where the last three factors were present, pupils made insufficient progress in their lessons.

161. The subject has a knowledgeable co-ordinator who is developing a sound scheme of work. This includes attention to pupils' cultural development, such as performing a dance for the festival of Diwali. There is a 'Pop music club' where pupils reproduce dances they see on television. Good use is made of the community, with a variety of coaches coming into school from local clubs. This enables some pupils to take part in tournaments against other schools. There are some good links with literacy, where, because of the school's focus on writing, pupils are sometimes asked to write rules for new games, or an evaluation of the work they have done. The areas most in need of development are:

- Time for the co-ordinator to monitor the subject, and to help develop staff confidence;
- Assessment, along the lines of that already started, for example for the tag rugby taken in the autumn term;
- More opportunities for pupils to develop their physical and social skills in extracurricular activities and competition against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. By the end of Years 2, 6 and 7, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills as teachers place a strong emphasis on discussion in lessons. A strength of the subject is the way in which pupils understand and respect the many different faiths represented in the school.

163. Pupils work hard at applying their literacy skills, although their spelling skills are not strong. In Year 4, pupils were successful in writing lists of similarities and differences in the 'Creation Story' of how God made the world and the story of 'The Garden of Eden'. Numeracy skills are used effectively and combined well with information and communication technology skills when pupils in Year 4 research and produce graphs to show the many different faiths represented in the community.

164. In Year 1, pupils talk confidently about Diwali and know that it is a 'Festival of Light', including the importance of candles and the divas. In a lesson during the inspection, the teacher darkened the room and then lit a candle; this was a moment that encouraged awe and wonder for pupils and made a good contribution to their spiritual development. By Year 2, pupils discuss and write accounts of the 'Harvest Festival'; they understand its important message of 'sharing'. They have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of the Mosque to Muslims and they are confident in retelling stories from the Bible, for example 'The Prodigal Son'.

165. By Year 6, pupils understand the key events surrounding the Christmas and Easter stories. They know about the 'Five Pillars of Islam' and enjoy writing parables in a modern style: for example their own versions of the 'Good Samaritan'. Pupils discuss their own 'personal treasures' and apply successfully their handwriting skills when they produce sacred writings on 'parchment', particularly examples of psalms. In Year 7, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of Christianity in the Middle Ages.

166. Teaching is good and contributes successfully to pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject and to their interest and respect for other faiths. In Years 3 to 7, lessons, at an hour, are occasionally too long to sustain pupils' interest. Lessons are planned well, with a strong emphasis on discussion. In Year 4, teachers read extracts from the 'Creation Story' and led a very good discussion in which pupils were confident to put forward their own beliefs and thoughts on creation. The level of mutual respect and understanding was impressive. In Year 1, the teacher developed pupils' spiritual awareness when, having lit a candle, asked, "How does it make you feel?" "How do you feel now that we have light from the candle?" Teachers use resources effectively to support pupils' learning, including imaginative displays of books and artefacts which capture pupils' interest.

167. The subject is effectively managed. Although she is the teacher in the nursery, the co-ordinator takes every opportunity to discuss with colleagues any concerns or needs in relation to the subject. Planning is monitored carefully, but the co-ordinator has no time to monitor teaching in other classes. Resources are adequate to support pupils' learning.