

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southgate, London

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 131657

Headteacher: Mrs E Wilmot

Reporting inspector: Mr P B McAlpine
21552

Dates of inspection: 26-29 March 2001

Inspection number: 230544

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chase Road Southgate London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr H Gulrajani
Date of previous inspection:	None

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21552	Mr P B McAlpine	Registered inspector and lead inspector	English Pupils under five	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19320	Mrs B Attaway	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Finance and efficiency
25344	Mr J Peacock	Registered inspector	Information and communications technology Physical education French Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14706	Mrs B Knowles	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music Religious education Equal opportunities	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	Mathematics English as an additional language Geography History Art and design	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a new community school that opened in September 1998 with a nursery and reception class and which will grow each year until it contains the full primary age range in September 2005. The building is new and purpose designed. The school became two-form entry in September 1999. Currently, 134 pupils attend full-time; a further 60 pupils attend part-time in the nursery. The present number on roll is smaller than is typical for a school of this type. The full-time pupils are organised into five classes: two reception classes for pupils who will be five by the end of the school year, two classes for six-year-olds, and one class for seven-year-olds. The first national tests for seven-year-olds will be completed in summer 2001. There has been no previous inspection. Half of the teachers started their service at the school at the beginning of the present school year.

The ethnic backgrounds of the pupils are very mixed. Just over one third of the pupils are of white United Kingdom descent, which is very low in comparison with the typical school. European backgrounds include Greek, Greek and Turkish Cypriot, Irish, and Italian. In addition, there are pupils from African, Caribbean, Indian, and Pakistani backgrounds. About 10 per cent of the pupils who attend, both full-time and part-time, speak English as an additional language, which is well above average, but only two per cent are in the early stages of learning English. The most frequently spoken first languages are Turkish, Greek, and Somali.

Economically and socially, the backgrounds of the pupils are broadly typical. About 17 per cent of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is marginally below the national average. The proportion with special educational needs, 12 per cent, is well below average, though the proportion with statements of special needs, less than two per cent, is average. The range of difficulty faced by pupils with statements, and those on the higher special needs assessment stages, are varied and include emotional and behavioural difficulties; speech and language; hearing impairment; physical; and autism. Standards on entry to the reception year have increased annually. Children entering in 1998 did not have the opportunity to attend the nursery. While all of them had typical attainment for their age, fewer exceeded that benchmark compared to the typical local school in all aspects assessed apart from mathematical development and so attainment overall was below the local authority average. Subsequently, all pupils entering the reception year have attended the nursery and current attainment on entry to the reception year is above the local average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has had a successful start and much has been accomplished in the two and a half years since it opened. Pupils are very well motivated and show high levels of independence and willingness to learn. They attain typical or better standards for their age in most subjects and the proportion of seven-year-olds on course to attain the expected level in the forthcoming national tests is broadly average in English and mathematics. All of the teaching is satisfactory or better although the emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy skills is not as rigorous as it should be. Relationships with parents are very good. There is a strong sense of purpose among the staff and a clear educational direction to their work provided by the headteacher. The cost of educating a pupil is twice the national average; taking both the high costs and the range of standards into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Promotes very good levels of independence, enthusiasm for learning, and liking for school.
- Makes good provision in the foundation stage and standards there are high.
- Produces high standards of speaking and listening.
- Makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and excellent provision for pupils with statements.
- Promotes high standards of behaviour.
- A broad and interesting curriculum.
- Very good relationships with parents.
- The leadership and educational direction provided by the headteacher.

What could be improved

- Basic skills in phonics, spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and mental arithmetic.
- Standards in information and communications technology.
- Curricular continuity and progression in literacy and numeracy.
- The provision for science.
- The systems for tracking the progress of pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been no inspection previously.

STANDARDS

This is the first year that there have been seven-year-old pupils at the school and so there are no results of national tests available. The standard of current work among seven-year-olds in the core subjects is satisfactory in reading and mathematics. In reading, pupils are well motivated, showing high levels of enjoyment of stories and books; they recognise a good range of familiar words in print but their knowledge of phonics is narrow compared to national expectations. In writing, standards in compositional skills are satisfactory but basic skills of spelling, punctuation, and handwriting are not as developed as they should be. In mathematics, the pupils' application of knowledge to problem solving is good; as is their knowledge of shape, space, and measures, but the standard of mental arithmetic is low. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement about standards in science. Compared to their attainment in 1998 when entering the reception year, the overall achievements of the seven-year-olds are satisfactory in English and mathematics, albeit with the slower development in basic writing skills and mental arithmetic noted above.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their difficulties and are fully included in all lessons. Few pupils with English as an additional language are in the early stages of acquisition. Those that are make good progress in learning to speak English. The slower development in basic writing and mental arithmetic affects all pupils but the impact is greatest on those that are more able and few pupils are currently within striking distance of the higher national levels in English and mathematics. There are more boys with low attainment in writing than girls, which is similar to the national picture. It is not compulsory for the school to set targets for seven-year-olds. Nevertheless, the school has done so and that is good practice. The target of 90 per cent attaining or exceeding the expected national level in the coming national tests in reading and mathematics is ambitious but manageable; in writing, the target is over ambitious.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The willingness to come to school reported in the questionnaire is very high. Pupils are very well motivated to learn, concentrate well, and show good attentiveness in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Very good in the lessons and this contributes well to the pace of learning. Generally good outside lessons, although there are isolated instances of misbehaviour at midday. There have been no exclusions. A small amount of bullying occurs but teachers deal it with promptly and effectively. No racist or sexist behaviour is reported and none seen.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Almost all pupils show good levels of independence and initiative. Relationships are strong and appropriate.
Attendance	Well below average. The reasons are primarily to do with illness but lack of punctuality amongst a minority is a contributory factor.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The teaching is good overall and is similar in quality to the typical picture nationally. All of the teaching is satisfactory or better, including 62 per cent that is good or better. The teaching is good overall in English and mathematics, though not enough time or rigour is given to the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, which affects all pupils but especially the more able. The teaching is good in physical education and satisfactory in geography, music, religious education, and personal and social education. The very small amount seen in science is satisfactory. The evidence of teaching in all other subjects is limited. In most subjects and lessons, learning needs are well met for nearly all pupils and work is appropriately matched to their level of attainment. Teaching is good for pupils with English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs and the learning needs of these groups are well met.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is broad and relevant and is successfully designed to interest and motivate all pupils. In the foundation stage, the curriculum is firmly based on the nationally agreed areas of learning. In the infants, all National Curriculum subjects are taught through a broad topic approach. Statutory requirements are met except for information and communications technology, where elements of the programme of study are not taught. Extra-curricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, with excellent provision for pupils with statements. All pupils with special needs are well supported. Support for pupils with statements is to a particularly high standard. Documentation is up-to-date and satisfactorily maintained. Individual education plans for pupils without statements are in place but are variable in quality and sometimes lack specificity and measurability.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are well supported and the curriculum makes appropriate provision for enhanced speaking and listening opportunities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal development is very good. All pupils are encouraged to become independent, show initiative, and accept responsibility. This percolates all aspects of school life. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The provision for cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a socially inclusive school. Child protection procedures are very well developed. Teachers assess pupils regularly and use the detailed information to set relevant individual curricular targets. These, however, are inadequately linked to national expectations and, overall, the systems for monitoring the attainment and progress of the pupils are underdeveloped.

The partnership with parents is very good. Very good strategies are used to involve parents and keep them informed about the curriculum and school activities. Annual pupil reports are satisfactory but do not provide an indication of attainment compared to national expectations or state what pupils must do to improve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and her staff share a clear vision of what they want to achieve. Teamwork is well developed. Senior management is appropriately building a high-performing team of teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The business of the governing body is conducted appropriately and all relevant statutory requirements are met. Strategic planning for the current year is satisfactory but forward thinking beyond the present year is sketchy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. Appropriate systems are in place to observe the teaching and to sample pupils' work and to check the teachers' planning. The findings are leading to action and to school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The budget is managed appropriately. The school development plan is a satisfactory document. Income per pupil is very high because of the transitional arrangements for a new school. Staffing is generous. All teachers are appropriately qualified for the ages they teach. The accommodation is excellent. The quantity, quality, and range of learning resources are very good apart from information and communications technology, where they are unsatisfactory. Best value principles are applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teaching.• The emphasis place of creativity and independent thinking.• The leadership and management of the headteacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teaching of literacy and numeracy.• Homework.

The inspectors agree with both the positive and the negative views of parents. The teaching is good. The emphasis on creative and independent thinking is appropriate. The leadership and management are effective. The inspectors find that the teaching of literacy and numeracy is not as rigorous as it should be. The setting of homework is inconsistent, apart from reading, but is typical of most schools with pupils of this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school has not yet had pupils old enough to take statutory tests and so there is no national performance data available. The standard of current work among the seven-year-old pupils, who will take national tests at the end of the present school year, is satisfactory in reading and mathematics, though few pupils are currently within striking distance of attaining the higher national levels. In reading, levels of interest and enthusiasm for stories and books are high and pupils are becoming familiar with a wide range of words they can recognise in print. In mathematics, the pupils are developing good knowledge of shape, space, and measures, and appropriate knowledge of place value, but their recall of basic number facts is slow and often inaccurate. In writing, the standard of compositional skills is satisfactory but basic skills of spelling, punctuation, and handwriting are lower than they should be and not enough attention to these skills is given in the teaching. There are more boys with low attainment in writing than girls. In science, the evidence is very limited and is insufficient to make a secure judgement; this is unusual, as at this time of the school year a substantive range of evidence among seven-year-olds would be typically found.

2. In the non-core subjects, the standard of the seven-year-olds current work is good in art and in physical education; satisfactory in design and technology, geography, history, music and French; and unsatisfactory in information and communications technology. In art and design, the pupils have knowledge of a wide range of materials and techniques and their work shows good creativity and appropriate control, accuracy, and attention to detail. In design and technology, limited evidence shows pupils have appropriate skills in marking, cutting and joining but there is only a small amount of evidence of designing. Geographical learning makes good use of pupils' backgrounds and they are developing an appropriate knowledge of places. In history, pupils currently have in-depth knowledge of events and people involved in the Crimean war and appropriate knowledge of the Victorian period. A satisfactory start has been made to learning French. In music, the pupils can compose short pieces using percussion instruments and are confident when performing. In physical education, all of the pupils are acquiring a broad and appropriate knowledge across the full range of expected studies and levels of control, accuracy, and agility are good. In religious education, the pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions.

3. Information and communications technology is an undeveloped subject and a full range of resources are not yet in place. Standards vary between pupils because some have access to computers at home. Pupils have adequate knowledge of word processing. They can produce pictures and designs and are familiar with programmable robotic toys but have little knowledge of collecting and using information from different sources or in accessing data bases via the internet. The available resources are underused.

4. All of the seven-year-old pupils entered the reception year with typical or better levels of knowledge for their age. Few of them exceeded the typical level in reading and writing when aged four but about two thirds did so in mathematics. Using this baseline information as a guide, it indicates that achievement in English and mathematics is just satisfactory by the age of seven but that there is underachievement in aspects of writing and mental arithmetic. Nearly all of the seven-year-olds are underachieving in basic writing skills and in mental arithmetic but the impact is greatest on pupils that are more able.

5. Standards in the foundation stage are very good in personal, social and emotional development and good in each of the other nationally agreed areas of learning. Almost all four-year-old children are on course to attain or exceed the relevant goals by the end of the school year. Attitudes to learning are good and levels of independence in learning are very high. Almost all pupils in the reception classes listen attentively and are very confident speakers. They have appropriate knowledge of letters and sounds and are beginning to expand the range of words they are familiar with by sight. High attaining four-year-olds can write and spell several familiar words independently. Almost all reception-age pupils can count to five and many can do this to ten. They are able to explore, investigate, design, and make appropriately using a range of tools and materials, and very few four-year-olds lack the physical or creative skills expected for their age.

6. Nearly all of the six-year-olds are attaining a level in reading, writing, and mathematics that is broadly consistent with national expectations, a picture that reflects the above average proportion of pupils who entered the reception year in 1999 with typical or better attainment for their age. Most of the six-year-olds recognise familiar words in books and have positive attitudes to reading. They enjoy writing and are well motivated but, like the seven-year-olds, do not have enough knowledge of spelling and punctuation, or skill in forming letters accurately and uniformly in size. In mathematics, the pupils have appropriate knowledge but their skills of manipulating and recalling numbers are lower than they should be.

7. Nearly all pupils with English as an additional language are fluent English speakers and do not need extra support. The few at earlier stages of learning English make good progress, particularly where opportunities such as role-play are planned so that they can participate in speaking and listening activities alongside more fluent English-speaking friends. Such activities encouraged pupils to talk together, helping to extend vocabulary and grammatical awareness.

8. Pupils with all types of special educational need achieve well. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment due to the careful planning by class teachers and the close support they receive from staff with special needs responsibilities and classroom assistants. The level of inclusion of pupils with special needs into work in lessons and all aspects of school life is very good. In most classes, those with recognised behavioural difficulties achieve particularly well due to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and good discipline. Any pupil with both English as an additional language and special needs is supported well, and this enables them fully to take part in lessons. Their acquisition of English is rapid and they are able to make good progress. The school makes good provision for the few pupils who are gifted or talented in areas outside the core subjects by planning additional work in lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have a very good attitude to school, demonstrated by their eagerness to arrive. Many do so ten minutes early, making good use of the playground equipment and watched over by parents. The recently formed breakfast club offers parents the opportunity for their children to arrive half an hour early, socialise with pupils of all ages and share indoor equipment; as pupils arrive they promptly join in. The after school club is well supported and pupils' education is being enhanced, for example, through a current making and construction project suggested by the children.

10. Behaviour overall is good and there have been no exclusions. In lessons, behaviour is mostly very good, resulting in efficient use of teaching time. At lunchtime, supervision is sometimes less rigorous and, while the vast majority behave well, a small number of pupils do not have a clear understanding of taking turns, talk across others' conversation and run into and out of the hall without regard for the safety of others. In one instance of poor behaviour, adult response was too slow and it was five minutes before a supervisor spoke quietly to the pupil concerned. Bullying is not usually a problem; one such occasion was observed during the inspection but was dealt with efficiently and appropriately.

11. Personal development and relationships are very good. Harmony is strong between pupils from the many different ethnic backgrounds. The ethos of encouraging pupil independence, motivation, and evaluation of success is preparing the children well for the next stage of education. Pupils sometimes initiate the tidying up in classrooms and the playground and will always participate in clearing away when the class routine requires it. The formation of, and elections to, the new school council have helped infant pupils to understanding principles of democracy and to know that they have a right to be heard. The elected representatives take turns to chair the meetings. Because of this council, safety in the playground has improved through zoning of areas to prevent overlap of activities, for example football and quiet areas. From nursery onwards, pupils are expected to know where to find resources, collect them when needed and return them safely, which is good practice, and they are encouraged to use the library as and when required. The 'friendly bench' in the playground, together with training of monitors, gives older infants the opportunity to learn how to listen to others and to understand that problems can be resolved through discussion. The playground is treated as a learning resource and there is a strong emphasis on occupying the pupils constructively and on developing play.

12. The rate of attendance is well below the national average but is improving. In the year to date, attendance has risen above the 90 per cent level but is still 3 percentage points below the national average. Following advice from the educational welfare officer, closing of registers now allows slightly more time for stragglers, which was one reason why attendance was poor during the first year of opening. The main reasons for absences are illness, such as chicken pox. Efforts, however, need to be made to improve attendance to a level more in line with the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The teaching throughout the school is good overall. All of it is satisfactory or better, including 56 per cent that is good and a further six per cent that is very good. The range and distribution of teaching quality is close to the typical national picture. There is good teaching in every year group and class. The very good teaching is in mathematics in Year 1. The teaching is good overall in English and mathematics, though not enough time or rigour is given to the teaching of basic phonic, spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and mental arithmetic skills. The teaching is good in physical education and satisfactory in geography, music, religious education, and personal and social education. The very small amount seen in science is satisfactory. No direct teaching was seen in art and design, design and technology, history, or information and communications technology. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in all

of the nationally agreed areas of learning. The teaching is good for pupils with English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs.

14. Where teaching is very good, learning objectives are shared with all pupils at the start of the lesson and used regularly to remind pupils of the purpose of the lesson and help them evaluate their progress. Good questioning skills are used to check pupils' understanding before the main teaching begins. Explanations are very clear and further questioning challenges pupils to think hard and learn new ideas step by step during the lesson. The teacher generates high levels of enthusiasm, a brisk pace to learning, and uses resources very well. Levels of intellectual effort by pupils are high and sustained by all; and all of them, by the end of the lesson, know how well they have done. Most of these characteristics are present in lessons where teaching is good.

15. An integrated approach to organising the content of lessons has been adopted and this means that very few lessons are devoted entirely to one subject. This organisational strategy is working effectively in the nursery and reception years but is less effective and less efficient with the oldest pupils, where increasing curricular complexity places greater demands on the teacher. Although a variety of very interesting and intellectually challenging tasks are provided using the integrated approach, the impact in classes where pupils are older is to distract the learning of the majority, who often do unrelated things, away from basic literacy and numeracy skills. Direct teaching to a whole class occurs in short doses in all classes, is effective, and well managed, and basic skills on these occasions are adequately taught. The direct teaching methods are similar to those employed by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The amount of time devoted to direct teaching in lessons for the oldest pupils, however, is too short for basic skills in literacy and numeracy to be taught efficiently in the depth necessary for national expectations to be met. Teachers throughout the school frequently use direct teaching to small groups of pupils, referred to as guided teaching in the national literacy and numeracy strategies, and on such occasions their teaching is very well managed and very effective. Well-trained teaching assistants use the same method very effectively.

16. The use of time, support staff, and resources is very good and these are significant strengths of the teaching. Lessons start and finish on time. Support staff are deployed to good effect. They are usually very well prepared, show good levels of initiative, and forward thinking. Resources are well used and there were several instances when teachers directed individual pupils towards just the right resources to further their learning. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is satisfactory, apart from information and communications technology. Day-to-day and curricular assessments are generally detailed and tailored to meet learning and planning needs, especially in the nursery and reception age groups. Work is marked and comments are positive and indicate that corrections should be made. It is not clear, however, whether pupils act on the need for corrections, for example, to learn words that they spell wrong. The fact that pupils repeat the same spelling errors over long periods of time, even though the teacher has marked them as wrong on several occasions, shows that the marking is ineffective as a tool for improvement. The arrangements for homework are inconsistent, apart from reading, but are typical of most schools with pupils in the four to seven age-range.

17. There is a good pace to learning in most lessons. In most subjects, learning needs are appropriately met for nearly all pupils and work is matched satisfactorily to prior attainment. On occasions, teachers' expectations are not high enough in literacy and numeracy and this is leading to a lack of emphasis on basic skills that affects all pupils but especially those that are more able. In the main, however, the lack of emphasis on basic skills is a curriculum planning issue rather than one emanating solely from teaching quality. The pupils' intellectual, physical, and creative efforts are very good overall, as is their productivity and pace of working. Pupils' levels of interest, concentration, and independence in the majority of lessons are very high and all pupils have a good idea of how well they are doing.

18. Teachers organise work well for pupils with English as an additional language, allowing them to work at tasks that are challenging and well matched to their level of attainment. The work is practically based, enabling learning to occur through doing and making as well as through talking. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on role-play and drama as a learning tool, which increases the frequency with which bilingual pupils talk and listen. Bilingual pupils in the early stages of English acquisition constantly work alongside more fluent English speakers and this helps with the use of language as well as vocabulary extension. Teachers' explanations are very clear, tasks are explained well, and there is good checking of pupils to see that they have understood; and these are good practices in a multilingual class context.

19. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout. However, the targets set in some pupils' individual education plans are not specific enough, making it difficult for teachers to plan work which is relevant to their pupils' individual needs and so help them to make more rapid progress. Very effective classroom support assistants are used efficiently to direct group activities. For example, they ensure that all pupils are included and supported in physical education lessons. High expectations of behaviour of all pupils and very good classroom management skills mean that pupils with special educational needs learn effectively in a supportive and orderly environment.

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

20. The curricular provision is based on the strong belief that children learn in different ways. The teachers are trying to maximise children's potential by tailoring their education to their individual learning styles. The stated aim is to enable all pupils to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others, and the achievement of personal excellence. The curriculum is organised through broad topics which, over the course of a year, are planned to include all subjects. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met in broad terms through these topics but at the detailed level of medium term planning, gaps are occurring. It is the policy of the school to teach literacy and numeracy skills separately if they are not naturally part of a topic. The medium term planning is satisfactory in the context of a new school. It is still relatively superficial, particularly in terms of guiding the teaching of basic phonic and mental number skills, and this is a major reason why standards in these aspects are not as high as they should be.

21. Against this background, a curriculum is provided that is broad and relevant. It meets statutory requirements for all subjects, except information and communication technology, where a shortage of up-to-date resources and lack of planned opportunities for pupils to use computers in most lessons means that elements of the curriculum such as using different sources to research information are not adequately covered. The curriculum for religious education is in accordance with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum for pupils' personal, social, and health education is a strength of the school and, in addition, all pupils have the opportunity to learn French. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is firmly based on the nationally agreed early learning goals for all six areas of learning for children in the nursery and reception class.

22. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The school uses the expertise of specialist staff well to broaden the curriculum and provide valuable experiences for pupils. In art and design, and physical education, staff with a high degree of specialist knowledge promote their subject very effectively and this is one of the reasons why standards in these subjects are better than those normally seen. Specialists from the local education authority's music service provide tuition in piano and keyboard skills and the headteacher shares her expertise in guitar playing with a group of pupils. All teachers and staff with responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs know pupils well and provide work which is well-matched to pupils' capabilities.

23. Responsibilities for subjects have not been fully delegated because the school is so new. The headteacher and governors are aware that this is limiting subject specific leadership, especially in identifying and communicating methods that constitute good, effective practice, and have built increased delegation into their staffing and appointments policy. The curriculum is not organised as distinct subjects on the weekly timetable, as it is in most other schools. Instead, work in different subjects is integrated into most lessons and into the broad topics that underpin the teaching. This is manageable in the Foundation Stage and younger infants, and is being made to work very effectively in these age groups. It is, however, already showing signs of becoming unmanageable in the older infants, especially in respect of rigorous planning to promote continuity and progression in learning basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher and staff, with the approval of the governing body, have not implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The structured guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy skills afforded by these strategies has not been replaced with clear guidance for teachers to make sure that all the necessary skills in these two areas are taught rigorously and effectively and this should be remedied. Teachers are instructed to "dip into" the national strategies and utilise the Frameworks, and they already incorporate shared and guided work into their teaching, albeit in short bursts.

24. Extra-curricular provision is good. A range of experiences is offered outside normal lesson times. All pupils are able to enjoy taking part in a choir, art, and guitar clubs, as well as sessions to improve their sports and gymnastic skills. School visits to local churches, museums and places of interest in the locality such as a supermarket bakery are carefully designed to widen pupils' learning experiences and broaden their understanding of the world around them.

25. This is a socially inclusive school, where all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have full and equal access to the curriculum. Achievement and effort are recognised and valued within lessons and within the school as a whole through sharing and achievement assemblies. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils are well supported in lessons and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The support for those with a statement is of a particularly high standard, enabling pupils to take part in all lessons, including physical education. However, pupils' individual education plans are variable in quality. In some, the targets set are not specific enough, making progress against them difficult to measure over time. The curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. All are supported well in lessons. No additional lessons are provided for pupils who are identified as being gifted or talented as teachers expect pupils of all abilities to try hard and achieve their full potential in all they do.

26. The curriculum for religious education is satisfactory. Pupils are given an insight into the beliefs of others through the celebration of events that are important to particular faiths including Christianity. Pupils are given a clear understanding of right and wrong, with assemblies making a strong contribution to this. During the inspection, for example, children in the reception class led an assembly about being selfish to which parents were invited. Pupils, staff and inspectors were asked their views during the assembly and all replies were acknowledged with the singular reply, "well done, good thinking!" by the five-year-old with the microphone, which was a good display of confidence by one so young.

27. Only a handful of policies and schemes of work have been written and most subjects do not have either. In music, science, physical education, and design and technology, there is no clear guidance for staff. In science in particular, the documented planning in topics and in medium term plans suggests that the subject is covered in only a superficial way.

28. Collective worship is broadly Christian in character and statutory requirements are met. No one is excluded from the assembly for religious reasons and there has been no application in this multi-racial school for anything other than the normal expectations of more than 60 per cent of worship being Christian.

29. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, though opportunities for spiritual development in lessons are limited. Religious education lessons provide knowledge and insight into major world religions and into the beliefs of others, enabling reflection on experience in a way that appropriately develops self-knowledge. The provision for moral behaviour is very good. Moral issues are promoted well through the school's behaviour policy and the high expectations of the staff. Pupils are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong. Rules and acceptable behaviour are well communicated through written and verbal means and through the 'golden rules' and pupils are involved constructively in the process of forming the rules and procedures. The school council, for example, has requested that the rules be displayed in the playground to remind children about behaviour outside. Assemblies provide recognition of good behaviour and moral values. Independence and responsibility for one's own behaviour is central to the ethos of the school. The provision for social development is very good and well promoted through good relations and the strong emphasis on collaborative effort and teamwork. The introduction of personal, social and health education within circle time has had a good impact on pupils' ability to think positively about themselves and others and to explore moral issues. Provision for cultural development is good. Very good value is placed on the wide range of cultures represented in the school and in the community and there is a natural acceptance of each other and respect for differences. Culture in its broadest sense is well developed through literature, art, and music and good use is made of the museums in London and elsewhere.

30. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. All pupils are encouraged to become independent, show initiative, and accept responsibility. They invariably respond in a mature way when given a job to do such as arranging apparatus to a set pattern in physical education lessons. There is a clear policy statement for sex education and although the policy for pupils' drugs education is not yet written, all know through their science lessons about the dangers of drugs and other harmful substances. Lessons in first aid, including resuscitation, are provided, and this is good practice. Special lessons called 'circle time' effectively help pupils to explore their behaviour towards others and emotions such as selfishness, love or greed. 'Golden time', which is a 20 minutes reward in recognition for special effort or achievement, enables pupils to do a favourite activity and is yet another way that pupils' personal development is effectively promoted.

31. There are good links with the community. Visitors such as the police, fire service, local clergy and Postman Pat have a regular input into the curriculum, adding breadth and interest. Pupils also visit places of interest to see bread or pizzas being baked, for example, as well as being involved in fund-raising for local and national charities. The school has, in the two years since it opened, developed a good relationship with partner institutions such as the local secondary school who hold dance and drama sessions on the premises. Links with other schools for music and physical education are also being successfully developed. The expertise of certain teachers in physical education, for example, is shared through training sessions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Child protection procedures are very good, training is up to date, and two other trained staff members are available in case of the coordinator's absence. At the start of each school year, all staff are reminded about the procedures. Eight members of staff are first aid trained. Seven-year-old pupils are receiving training from the Red Cross. Pupils have been asked to train their parents. Pupil welfare is very good. In an effort to reduce the number of children arriving by car and to promote a healthier lifestyle, a walking route is being organised from the beginning of the summer term in conjunction with another local school and supported by a multiple retailer; parents are to receive training. Arrival and home-time arrangements are appropriate.

33. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The computerisation of attendance records now enables the school to monitor absence thoroughly. Newsletters regularly continue to remind parents of the importance of attendance. At the end of the summer term, certificates are awarded to pupils with 100 per cent attendance. As the school grows and older children go to school on their own, absenteeism monitoring will need to be more rigorous. Where no reason has been given for a pupil's absence and to ensure that those pupils are safe, it will be necessary to contact parents immediately, rather than within the week as at present.

34. Golden time is both valued and effective in promoting good behaviour. In discussions with pupils, they expressed enthusiasm for the scheme and their disappointment if their time was lost or reduced for poor behaviour. The 'golden time' initiative not only encourages good behaviour but also enables pupils to gain wider skills and gives insights into the world of work. Praise and rewards are seen as an integral part of school life and many instances of praise were observed. Pupil scrapbooks are maintained and negotiating skills are developed through pupils discussing with an adult which pieces of work or photographs they would like included.

35. Induction of new pupils is good, with opportunities created for young children to accompany their parent to school events, for example attending assembly when a sibling is performing. Before a child begins school, staff already know the pupil well through home visits, when starting school booklets are handed out; also through invitations to join in school activities such as a picnic and singing sessions. Links with local playgroups have reinforced further their contact, enabling pupils to start school with more confidence. Links with a new local secondary school have been created and these will need to be developed to include some six secondary schools to which it is expected West Grove pupils will transfer.

36. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and receive good support in lessons. They are set appropriate work, which is relevant to their targets in their individual educational plans. Pupils with a statement of special educational need receive excellent support from special needs staff enabling them to take a full and active part in all lessons.

37. The arrangements for assessing attainment and progress are underdeveloped. Detailed curricular assessment and target setting is a strong feature of much of the teaching and a wealth of information is collected after lessons and topics and used appropriately to identify what pupils have been successful at and what they might do next. This detailed information, however, is not adequately linked to the criteria that describe national expectations or to National Curriculum attainment levels and this is leading to teachers' expectations not always being appropriate, especially in respect of basic literacy and numeracy skills. Portfolios of moderated pupils' work have not yet been compiled and this is hindering teachers reaching consensus on standards. Standards are not summarised often enough using National Curriculum levels and this is preventing the progress of pupils being adequately monitored at a managerial level and is limiting accountability to parents and others. The current numerical data is stored using manual systems when the use of electronic systems would aid manageability and analysis and increase efficiency. Senior management has analysed the numerical data that is available so far and presented the information to governors, which is good practice. Nevertheless, the inconsistencies and omissions in the systems overall make them an ineffective tool with which to check rigorously and frequently the progress of all pupils against national expectations and this should be remedied quickly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Partnership with parents is very good and has enabled parents to have a good understanding of how the curriculum is taught. Curriculum workshops enable content, teaching and expectations to be explained and are reinforced by activities related to their child's age, plus activities to give some knowledge of junior work; this is very good practice. These events are held each half term with English and mathematics workshops every year and other subjects by rotation. History and geography are the only subjects that have not yet been covered by these arrangements. Records show that workshops are well attended; on some evenings 40 parents have taken part. A good structure for meeting and involving parents has been created that can be developed as the number of pupils and parents

increase.

39. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and its impact are very good. Parental help in school is positively encouraged and they receive training to enable them to understand the strategies used to teach their children. Some 60 parents have received training and many have opted to take the additional course offered. Parents work closely with teachers helping in a variety of ways, for example in cookery. This support allows pupils to develop wider skills.

40. Very good quality newsletters are regularly issued and their content enables parents to be well informed. Areas covered recently include school events, invitations to train as parent helper, absenteeism and the biennial parental survey to ascertain their views on the school. Because of this survey, notices are now displayed in the breakfast club as well as on classroom doors to ensure that all parents see them. Almost 100 per cent of parents have signed the home-school agreement.

41. The quality of information provided for parents, including information about pupils' progress, is satisfactory. The open door policy enables parents to discuss regularly any problems and is reinforced further by the headteacher's presence at the gate at the start of the school day. Parents have received advice on the use of the reading diary to enable good feedback. In the nursery and reception classes, use of observation diaries allows the school to understand better the learning behaviour seen at home. Pupils' annual reports clearly identify the individual child and what they have achieved and parents have an opportunity to discuss them with class teachers. There is, however, no information in the reports that tells parents how well their children have achieved and at what level they are working. Although target setting is discussed with parents, no targets are included in the annual pupil reports. It is, appropriately, policy to inform parents immediately if there are any concerns over pupils' performance in class. Once pupils are identified as having special educational needs, parents are given frequent opportunities to meet staff and they are invited to all the review meetings. A clear statement in the school prospectus informs all parents about the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs.

42. There is no school association, although this has been suggested in the past by parents. The school organises events, for example a summer fair, with parent volunteers acting as a focal point for enquiries. Parents say that they will readily help at these events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and other key staff is good and nearly all aspects of school life are well run and managed. Parents are very supportive of the senior management. The headteacher and her staff share a strong, appropriate vision of what they want to achieve and this is fully reflected in the work of the school. Much has been accomplished in the short time that it has been open and the broad educational direction to the work of the school is clear. All of the teachers and the support staff share the headteacher's commitment to the school's aims. The headteacher and her deputy have identified most of the main strengths and weaknesses and are acting effectively to remedy the shortcomings. The senior management is building a high-performing team and inspiring, motivating, and influencing the staff as it should. Strategic planning and thinking is satisfactory. Very good use is made of the teachers and non-teaching staff. Delegation of management responsibilities to key staff is appropriate given the current development stage of the school.

44. The current delegation of subject leadership and management is limited because of the newness of the school and the rapid growth of teaching staff. Until recently, all subjects were led and managed by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher and this is a big workload for two people. The direction in which this will change has not yet been finally decided. Given the newness of the school, subject management is satisfactory in each subject. All subjects have long term plans and medium term plans of satisfactory quality, although the detailed planning necessary to ensure continuity and progression in learning is not yet in place in the core subjects.

45. The written aims are appropriate; sufficient emphasis is placed in them on high standards. The range of documented policies relating to the general organisation and administration of the school is satisfactory and nearly all required aspects are covered. Documented policies to guide the teaching and planning have been produced for only two subjects, English, and mathematics. There are no plans to write other subject policies in the immediate future. The written policies relating to general organisation and to the teaching of English and mathematics contain broad, appropriate statements of principle but do not always provide the tight detail that is necessary to make them fully useful as practical guides for the staff implementing them. Review dates are not always included.

46. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. The roles and responsibilities of governors are clearly established and there is a well thought out annual cycle of activities for the full governing body and the four

committees. Detailed and appropriate terms of reference are available for each of the committees. Minutes and reports to the governors fulfil the basic requirements for accountability. Forward thinking is satisfactory, especially in terms of creating a school with high standards, but projections of pupil numbers, staffing requirements, and budget implications for various policy decisions beyond the current year are only sketchy and insufficient to inform substantive long-term decisions. It is, however, early days.

47. The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school and taking effective action are good overall. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher regularly observe the teaching and feedback their findings to teachers and to year group teams. This is creating a good climate of openness among the teachers and a willingness to improve. Appropriate records are maintained and these lead to formal and informal targets for improvement where necessary. Follow-up monitoring occurs, often of an informal nature, to check that action has been taken. Samples of pupils' work are scrutinised and the teachers' planning is checked. These arrangements are helping to keep the senior management well informed about strengths and areas for improvement. The small amount of performance data that exists has been analysed and the conclusions have been incorporated into the school development plan. The principle of using data in this way is correct but the practice is let down by the policy for assessment, which is underdeveloped, and handicapped to date by the absence of national test results.

48. The school development plan includes an evaluation of standards, which is appropriate. The aspects of school life and work that form part of self-evaluation are taken from the Framework for inspection and this is good practice. Ambitious targets have been set although it is not a statutory requirement to do so. There is a written policy guiding the arrangements for school self-review, produced in the summer of 1999. Its aim, appropriately, is to improve the quality of education provided. The written policy for performance management is detailed and appropriate, with roles and responsibilities of all staff included; it suitably provides for an annual written report to governors by the headteacher; this is good accountability.

49. The statutory requirements for the special educational needs code of practice are met in full. Information relating to arrangements for pupils with disabilities is included in the most recent governors annual report to parents

50. Income and expenditure per pupil are very high and double the national average. This reflects the transitional arrangements for a new school. The protection will continue until there are 10.5 teachers, excluding the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Budget projections are limited to the current year and not enough is being done to calculate the likely growth of the budget or sustainable staffing levels in the coming years. Financial planning for the current year is satisfactory and best value principles are applied by actively seeking discounts.

51. Staffing is generous. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are without class teaching responsibilities. The staff are appropriately qualified for the ages they teach. The induction of new teachers into the school is very good. New staff are welcomed and able to settle in quickly. Training opportunities are always available and are identified through regular professional development interviews. Support staff are also interviewed at least once a year. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported through a mentor and year partner. Teaching skills are developed through observation each half term. Working with a partner allows joint planning, comparing, contrasting, and evaluating. Non-contact time enables teachers, in areas where they feel less confident, the opportunity to observe more experienced teachers. Targets are set using career entry profiles and termly action plans evaluate progress.

52. The newly built school provides very good facilities and a spacious environment in which pupils can learn. The playground has a good range of equipment to develop various skills. There is a separate play area for nursery pupils with an attractive range of play equipment and a quiet area with benches. The enclosed field is not yet suitable for use and discussions are taking place with the sub-contractor in an effort to rectify surface problems; it is planned to use this area for football and summer sports. A landscape architect is preparing plans to improve the grounds. This will enable curriculum development through the introduction of colours and textures in a contemplation area, together with an auditorium and a low climbing wall. The secured pond requires cleaning before it can be used.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. A successful start has been made to teaching and the curriculum and, in broad terms, the achievements of the pupils are satisfactory. All pupils, however, especially those that are more able, are underachieving in relation to basic literacy and numeracy skills. Standards in information and communications technology are lower than they should be. Curricular continuity and progression in literacy and numeracy are inconsistent. There is less recorded work in science than is typically found. The systems for tracking the progress of pupils are underdeveloped. To improve the school further, the headteacher and her staff, with the support of the governing body, should:

- ❑ **key issue 1:** increase the pupils' knowledge of phonics, spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and mental arithmetic to levels that are consistent with national expectations, or to levels that properly reflect each pupil's attainment on entry, whichever is the higher, by:
 - using more effective methods for the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy;
 - achieving a consensus of understanding among the teachers and support staff about national expectations and how they are applied in the assessment of attainment in literacy and numeracy;
(Discussed in paragraphs 1, 4, 6, 13, 15, 17, 20, 23, 66-75, and 76-86)
 - ❑ **key issue 2:** raise standards in information and communications technology by:
 - writing and implementing a policy that clearly sets out the teaching methods and organisational strategies to be used with the equipment that is presently available; and then updating the policy as new resources become available;
 - specifying the time that each pupil is to spend using computers each week, or half term; and what they are to learn over the course of each half term and year; and then check that the policy is implemented;
 - establishing a manageable purchasing policy to bring resources up to a level that is sufficient for the National Curriculum programme of study to be taught effectively;
(Discussed in paragraphs 3, 20, 21, and 106-111)
 - ❑ **key issue 3:** increase curricular continuity and progression in literacy and numeracy by providing detailed and specific guidance for teachers about what should be taught each year and each term; (Discussed in paragraphs 20, 23, 73-75, and 85)
 - ❑ **key issue 4:** improve the provision for science by:
 - increasing the frequency with which the subject is taught;
 - providing detailed and specific guidance for teachers about what should be taught each year and each term;
 - achieving a consensus of understanding among the teachers about national expectations and how they are applied in the assessment of attainment in science;
 - raising the teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve;
(Discussed in paragraphs 1 and 87-91)
 - ❑ **key issue 5:** improve the systems for tracking the progress of pupils by:
 - matching the assessments already carried out to National Curriculum levels;
 - periodically summarising each pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics, and science using National Curriculum levels and sub-levels; the minimum should be once at the end of each school year;
 - periodically measuring each pupils' progress by comparing current attainment with prior attainment and checking that the amount of progress is consistent with national expectations;
 - taking full advantage of information and communication technology to collate and analyse the data in manageable formats.
(Discussed in paragraph 37)
54. In addition to the key issues, the governors should consider including the following in their action plan:
- ❑ the well below average rate of attendance (paragraphs 12 and 33);
 - ❑ the correction of work by pupils after marking (paragraph 16);
 - ❑ the consistency of homework (paragraph 16);
 - ❑ the delegation of subject responsibilities (paragraph 23 and 44);
 - ❑ the writing of subject policies and schemes of work in subjects that currently do not have them (paragraphs 27 and 45);
 - ❑ information in reports to parents about the level their child is working at and what they should do to improve (paragraph 41);
 - ❑ detailed projections of pupil numbers, staffing requirements and budget implications beyond the current financial year (paragraph 46).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	56	38	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	134
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	17

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	20

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	11
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	N/A	N/A	N/A

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	N/A	N/A	N/A

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	7
Indian	6
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	60
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.58
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR-Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	170

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	378368
Total expenditure	382938
Expenditure per pupil (based on 113 on roll)	3389
Balance brought forward from previous year	15500
Balance carried forward to next year	10930

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	194
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	17	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	37	4	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	35	16	10	13
The teaching is good.	67	26	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	34	7	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	30	4	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	66	24	6	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	71	25	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	27	1	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	17	3	0	15

Other issues raised by parents

Parents raised no other issues other than those listed in the summary.

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

55. The nursery and one reception class opened in 1998. The second reception class opened in 1999. The nursery has a thirty-place capacity. The normal admission time for pupils is September. Pupils attend the nursery part-time and the reception classes full time although summer born pupils have a phased-entry start to the reception year that involves a period of part-time schooling in the autumn term. The part-time nursery provision is divided between morning and afternoon sessions.

56. Baseline assessments conducted since 1998 show that almost all pupils entered the reception year with typical or better levels of attainment. The proportion of pupils who had better than typical attainment increased in 1999 and 2000. The pupils in these latter year groups had all attended the nursery at the school whereas the pupils entering in 1998 had not had that opportunity. Compared to the local authority average, the proportion in 1998 with higher than typical attainment in reading and writing on entry to the reception year was only half that of the local authority, whereas the proportion in mathematics was double. When all of the variations are taken into account, the overall standard of attainment on entry in 1998 was below that of the local authority average. Since then, in 1999 and 2000, the overall standard of attainment on entry to reception has increased and been above the local authority average; indeed, in 2000 it was well above average in reading.

57. The teaching in the nursery and in the reception year is good in all of the nationally agreed areas of learning. There is an appropriate balance between direct teaching, directed work, and work selected out of interest by the pupils. Teachers and their assistants show good knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn and place strong emphasis on practical first-hand experiences. They have satisfactory understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy even though the school has not adopted them. The weekly and daily planning in the nursery and in the reception classes is effective. Very good use is made of resources. Support staff and volunteers are deployed efficiently and appropriately. Support staff are well trained, very well briefed, and participate fully in planning and in assessment work. Volunteers are usually briefed in advance of working with pupils, although there are occasional exceptions when more preparation is necessary. Long term curricular planning is appropriate and meets requirements. The arrangements for assessment are satisfactory and based, appropriately, on close observation of what the children do when engaged in normal activities. There is a very good level of detailed curricular assessment and individual target setting, especially in the reception year, and this is helping the teaching to concentrate purposefully on identified learning needs. This high quality information, however, is not summarised sufficiently or compared with national expectations for it to provide the over view of progress that is necessary for use at a managerial and parent accountability level.

58. Resources are good and the accommodation is excellent. The nursery and reception pupils are accommodated in purpose-built teaching areas and have very good access to outdoor provision, to wet and dry areas, and to cloakrooms and toilets. The quantity and range of resources are good, although there is a preponderance of plastic simulations of every-day objects when the real thing could be used safely, and this restricts some of their educational value.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Standards are very good throughout the nursery and reception classes. This reflects good quality teaching that places very strong emphasis on independent, logical thinking and on pupils' sharing and taking decisions for themselves. When engaged in model making, for example, one girl experienced considerable difficulty and asked her four-year-old friend to help. The prompt reply, "yes, but let me go and wipe my hands first", showed good personal decision making in a social context, very good awareness of her friends plight and that her messy hands might damage her friends work, and assertive, logical thinking to organise the help appropriately. This was a far from isolated example. All pupils show an interest in learning and are quickly developing confidence and independence. Relationships are very good and no pupil was seen who was unwilling to share or take turns. Reception pupils are developing knowledge of right and wrong and beginning to understand the consequences of their action on others. Levels of self-care, such as putting on coats and shoes, are good and most pupils do these things unassisted.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Standards are good in the nursery and very good in the reception class. Well over 90 per cent of the four-year-olds are on course to attain or exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, pupils readily talk to each other. In role-play situations, for example, they use language to direct their own play and that of

others and to negotiate their plans and activities. Nearly all of the pupils in the reception year are able to listen attentively in the different settings that are normally found in the classroom, respond appropriately, and can organise their thoughts and words well when talking. They are very confident speakers and use language imaginatively in play and story situations. In an excellent session in the library with a visiting story teller, the pupils were excitedly attentive throughout, responded appropriately to the range of emotions and events in the stories they heard, and made relevant comments that showed very good understanding of the plots. The majority of the reception pupils are able to hear and say the initial sounds of words. They recognise words in labels and some of the more familiar words in stories. Nearly all of them can write their name and can recognise and write most of the letters of the alphabet. The teaching appropriately places a strong emphasis on independence in writing and this is leading to high levels of confidence and willingness to write. Higher attaining pupils can confidently write and spell a good range of key words and their attainment in writing has already surpassed the nationally agreed goals for the end of the year.

61. The teaching is good in the nursery and in both reception classes. The pace of learning is quick for nearly all pupils and comparisons of current work in the reception classes with baseline assessments from the start of the school year indicate that the pupils' achievements in just two terms are good. The direct teaching methods to the whole class and to groups, used in the nursery and, more frequently, in reception, are helping pupils to acquire basic literacy skills. When adults work with pupils individually or when grouped, primarily when supporting tasks and practical activities chosen by the pupils, their effectiveness in promoting listening skills, and a language rich environment, is very good. Effectiveness in promoting the use of a wide, technical vocabulary, in helping pupils to hear sounds within words, and in consolidating basic literacy skills, including writing correctly formed letters, is broadly satisfactory. However, there are times when opportunities are missed and this should be remedied.

Mathematical development

62. Standards are good throughout the Foundation Stage. All but a few pupils are on course to attain or exceed the nationally agreed goals by the end of the reception year. Nursery pupils are showing appropriate awareness of numbers and the beginnings of number recognition and counting skills. Nearly all of the reception age pupils are well on their way to being able to say and use number names in the correct order to 10 or beyond. The majority can count numbers to five reliably and the higher attaining pupils can already do this to 10. Four-year-olds are already beginning to understand 'more' or 'less' than and higher attaining pupils can work out in their heads what one more than four is or what is one less than five. Knowledge of shape, space, and measures is good. Reception pupils can describe two-dimensional shapes in term of properties, such as the number of sides, have appropriate understanding of heavy and light, and can say which objects are the heaviest or lightest. The teaching is good, comprises an appropriate mix of direct teaching to class groups, and directed teaching in small groups. Opportunities that present themselves at registration, for example, are appropriately used to extend understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Standards are good and it is likely that almost all children will attain the national goals by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, children have good observational skills and good knowledge of their environment and locality. A group using the outdoor area, for example, developed role-play involving a journey on a bus. They showed good knowledge of common street features, such as traffic lights and crossings, and of the events encountered on a bus journey and the roles of different people involved. They have experienced sowing seeds and observing the plants grow, an activity that has helped them learn some of the features of plants and know similarities and differences between flowers. In the reception classes, the pupils are able to build and construct with card, paper, tape and glue, as well as use construction kits and malleable materials such as clay. They are able to select materials, tools, and techniques appropriately. Pupils show the ability to adapt their work in the light of experience and high attaining four-year-olds are beginning to see the purpose of evaluation. One child, for example, commented "when we make mistakes, that's how we learn". Pupils have access to computers and robotic toys and this is leading to all of them knowing that switches control machines and that machines can be used for drawing and design. The teaching is good and a wide range of activities to develop this area of learning forms part of the daily programme.

Physical development

64. Standards are good and all pupils are on course to attain the nationally agreed goals on time. Nursery pupils, in a good lesson in the hall, demonstrated the levels of confidence, control, and coordination that are expected in the reception year. They followed the teacher's directions quickly, moved to the rhythm of the music, and showed good awareness of space and their own abilities. Reception-age pupils have an increased range of ways they can move and use their imaginations effectively. In a lesson in the hall, the four-year-olds showed that they could tiptoe, gallop, jump, move like a crab or frog, and take long strides, depending on the challenge set before them. Such attainment is already consistent with the goals for the end of the school year. Awareness of space and levels of control and coordination are good, reflecting the regular opportunities that they have for such planned activities. The teaching is good, makes full use

of available resources, and leads to lessons that are motivating and enjoyable.

Creative development

65. All pupils are on course to attain the relevant goals by the appropriate time and standards overall are good. Nursery pupils can create charcoal drawings of spider plants with appropriate attention to shape and detail for their age. They are familiar with an adequate range of media and two and three-dimensional techniques. Reception pupils are very willing to explore the broad range of media available for them to use and show satisfactory knowledge of colour, shape, and space, for example. They are able to sing a range of songs from memory, can sing loudly or quietly when asked, and tap out the rhythms of simple melodies. They like music and participate with enthusiasm. Standards of artwork, such as patterns on clay tiles, are good and displayed work shows imaginative self-expression. The teaching is mainly through activities set out for pupils to choose when interested and is of good overall quality.

ENGLISH

66. Standards in speaking and listening attained by the oldest pupils are better than is typical; standards in reading are satisfactory; standards in writing are not as high as they should be. There is no national performance data available. The first statutory tests will take place at the end of the present school year. Baseline assessments showed that all of the seven-year-old pupils entered the reception year with typical attainment for their age in language and literacy. The current achievement of the seven-year-olds, compared to that starting point, is good in speaking and listening, and satisfactory in reading. In writing, however, a significant minority of pupils are underachieving. There are more boys in the lower attaining group in writing than girls and more girls are in the higher attaining group than boys. The small number of pupils with special educational needs have trouble with reading and writing. They are very well supported and make good progress in relation to their difficulties.

67. There is no significant difference in attainment or progress between pupils from different backgrounds. About two-thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, many are bilingual. Nearly all of the bilingual pupils speak English fluently, do not need extra support with spoken English, and are making the progress they should in speaking and listening. A small number of bilingual pupils have trouble with written English, particularly spelling and grammar, and their progress in these basic skills is, like those who speak English fluently and those who only speak English, slower than it should be.

68. Standards of speaking and listening are relatively high. Nearly all seven-year-olds are confident talkers and listen carefully. They are well practised in developing and explaining ideas, speak clearly, and use a broad vocabulary. Quite a few are assured speakers and show good understanding of the main points in discussion. Standards in the other age groups are equally good and the promotion of self-expression through language is a strong feature of the teaching.

69. The proportion of seven-year-old pupils who are reading at the expected level for their age, about 70 per cent, is broadly in line with that usually found at this time of year. The school is on course to achieve its target of 90 per cent by the end of the year. However, very few pupils currently attain a higher level, which is unusual, and if this remains the case at the end of the year then overall standards would be lower than typically found. Levels of enthusiasm for reading are high, pupils are well motivated, and they have acquired a good range of words they are familiar with in print and recognise quickly. Although most pupils are able to read text with familiar words, their ability to tackle unfamiliar words using phonic and other strategies is not as developed as it should be. Most pupils recognise the different letters and sounds, and break down words into separate letters, but their ability to blend consonants and vowels is not as fluent as is expected for their age. Standards in reading in the six-year-old age group are higher, reflecting the higher overall standard of these pupils on entry to reception and the progress made when in the Foundation Stage.

70. Currently, about 60 per cent of the seven-year-old pupils have levels of knowledge and understanding in writing that are consistent with the national expectations for that age group. The proportion is smaller than is usually found at this time of year. No pupil exceeds the national expectation, and this is unusual. The school has set a target of 90 per cent of pupils to attain the expected national level by the end of the school year. Given the time that is left before the statutory tests, and a skill gap between current levels and national expectations that is greater in writing than in reading, this target appears very ambitious. If the school were to attain its target, then standards would be in line with the national average. About 70 per cent of the pupils can write stories with the content organised logically, the vocabulary apt, and this is consistent with both the expectations and the school target. Very few pupils, however, spell the simple, familiar words accurately, demonstrate sufficient understanding of full stops or capital letters, use upper or lower case appropriately, or shape letters correctly or uniformly in size; the general standard of such basic communication skills is unsatisfactory. Standards in writing in the six-year-old age group are broadly satisfactory but show comparable weaknesses to those of the seven-year-olds.

71. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in extending their spoken English, particularly where opportunities are planned for pupils to participate in activities alongside fluent English-speaking friends. Role-play in the nursery, for example, involved a coach journey that encouraged pupils to talk together, negotiate their roles and where they were going, and allowed them to use language creatively as the drama unfolded. One pupil, who had been reluctant to join in other groups, was persuaded to take a seat in the carriage and contribute to the discussion. Other children in the nursery were given the opportunity to experience the language of early counting by setting out a picnic table with cutlery and a plate for everyone. The inevitable repetition of a limited range of language in providing the place-setting for everyone gave good support to bilingual pupils while clearly also providing mathematical language of classification for all. Seven-year-old bilingual pupils had good opportunities to extend their vocabularies in their role-play about a field hospital during the Crimea. They were able to talk with confidence about how Florence Nightingale improved conditions for the soldiers and about the discomforts of war, including rats, germs, wounds, and infection. In a mathematics lesson, one bilingual pupil was able to describe the difference between a cuboid and a cube, using appropriate mathematical language, and demonstrating good subject knowledge by comparing the dimensions of the faces and edges.

72. Forty per cent of the teaching is satisfactory in quality and a further 60 per cent is good; this means that the quality overall is good, though not fully as strong as the typical picture nationally. Where teaching is good, the purpose of the lesson is clear to the pupils and essential knowledge is taught directly to them as a class. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, all the pupils were taught about onomatopoeic words and their awareness of alliteration and rhyme was enhanced through the use of a big book. The teaching concentrated on words that began with particular sounds and this method was efficiently used to increase pupils' phonic knowledge. Sharing the big book led to all pupils extending their range of the familiar words that they could recognise in print and to them having a common, exciting experience that they could talk about and use to improve comprehension skills and knowledge of story structures.

73. Learning is good overall, as is productivity and pace of working. Pupils' intellectual and creative effort when writing is very good. In lessons for the oldest pupils, however, the integrated teaching methods often lead to greater emphasis and time being given to historical knowledge and understanding, for example, than to basic writing skills and this slows the pace of learning in the latter. When working independently, pupils concentrate for long periods and have a good grasp of what they must achieve; this is a strong feature of the teaching. In all lessons, group work is well managed and effective at a satisfactory level, although the adults supporting the pupils do not always make the most of opportunities for expanding pupils' vocabularies, or extending their ability to hear individual sounds in words or spell the common words accurately. Teachers use very effectively the guided group work methods that form part of the National Literacy Strategy, especially to develop comprehension skills in reading and compositional skills in writing. Teachers also incorporate plenary sessions into lessons and these generally help pupils to see what they have learnt and what they must learn next. Plenaries are used effectively to enhance pupils' self esteem.

74. Weekly planning is satisfactory. Learning objectives are usually specific and work at various levels is provided for pupils of different attainment. Weekly planning is implemented appropriately. The governing body has decided that the National Literacy Strategy will not be implemented. The teachers dip into the national Framework for literacy but do so inconsistently and this is affecting continuity and progress in the teaching of basic skills. What the school is good at is motivating pupils and engendering a love of literacy. Nearly all pupils turn readily to books, see them as a source of pleasure or information, and enjoy writing independently. The school's strategy for teaching literacy, however, is not fully effective in the teaching of basic phonic, spelling, and writing skills. The contribution of other subjects to the teaching of English is mixed. It is good in reading, where opportunities to read for information, for example, are regularly found. In writing, the advantages of opportunities to write at length in other subjects are offset on such occasions by a lack of priority being given to basic literacy skills.

75. The long-term curricular planning is appropriately based on the National Curriculum programme of study. The medium term planning, however, lacks the detail necessary to guide the teaching of basic skills and promote continuity and progression in their acquisition and this is the main reason for the pupils not knowing enough about phonics, spelling, punctuation, letter formation, and grammar. The teachers know the pupils well and regularly set individual curricular targets for improvement and these are helping with motivation. The formal assessment of pupils in relation to national targets, however, is underdeveloped and insufficiently frequent; and this is making it difficult for the long-term progress of pupils to be adequately monitored against national expectations. Resources are good and the large, self-contained library is very well equipped and a very valuable asset for the subject.

MATHEMATICS

76. Overall, standards are satisfactory but there is underachievement in mental arithmetic, where pupils, especially those that are more able, are not always achieving the standards of which they are capable. This is the first year that the school has had pupils aged seven and there are no results from national test available. The current seven-year-olds' early baseline assessment in 1998 indicated attainment in the subject was above the local authority average and predicted better than average standards in the national tests they will take next term. While the school is working hard to achieve its ambitious target of 90 per cent of pupils reaching the expected national level, there is very little evidence of attainment higher than the expected level. This is due in part to the lack of opportunity children have to work at the higher level in lessons, especially in oral and mental mathematics.

77. Seven-year-olds are able to work with numbers to a hundred, know their three, five, and ten times tables and understand that multiplication is repeated addition. They are not yet confident enough to recall the number fact $7 \times 3 = 21$ in isolation from the tables, which high attaining seven-year-olds should be able to do. Number knowledge is appropriate although pupils are still using their fingers to assist them with simple calculations and have not developed the speed of recall of number facts or the mental agility with numbers that are expected. During one lesson, pupils demonstrated satisfactory standards using the hundred number square to calculate numbers 'more' or 'less' than, though later, without the support of the number grid, they were unable to do so. In another lesson, pupils demonstrated their knowledge of properties of three-dimensional shapes and were able to complete a written inventory on shapes used when making a model. They took ideas from the view of a local swimming pool, seen from their window, and were confident that their building satisfied the relevant criteria. This was good work.

78. Six-year-old pupils are able to add and subtract numbers to ten, which are appropriate skills for their age and standards generally in this younger age group are higher than expected. They can recognise and count tens and units, knowing the value of each. They are beginning to record work covered in a range of different ways and are learning to understand the function of tallying, for example, in their investigation of traffic frequency on the road outside the school gates. They are able to describe properties of two-dimensional shapes and sort objects by particular variables; can fold paper into halves and quarters; and demonstrate their awareness of a half being one of two equal parts.

79. Pupils with English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Where progress is good, it is due to the good teaching methodology, which provides strong visual and practical approaches which give good access to pupils who might not be able to understand the task through written or spoken English. The teachers and classroom assistants exploit this approach well, using real objects where possible. In this way, pupils are given the opportunity to work practically as the meaning unfolds in tasks. Staff give effective support to all pupils by raising questions to help them think and gain understanding and by focusing pupils' attention on resources which will help them.

80. Overall, standards of numeracy are satisfactory and some focus in the teaching is on oral and mental mathematics and on the learning of tables. These oral and mental sessions, however, are insufficiently regular or sustained features of lessons and there is insufficient emphasis on the quick mental recall of basic number facts; on oral and mental calculations; and on explaining the different methods that are used in mental work.

81. Pupils' attitudes are generally good and, in some lessons, very good. They are well behaved and settle quickly into tasks, remaining focused on work even when working independently. When tasks are set to provide challenge at the appropriate attainment level, they respond well and produce good work. In a maths lesson on three-dimensional shapes, for example, pupils challenged classmates who claimed a cylinder had no edges to prove they were right. One child, during the discussion, appropriately drew the other pupils' attention to the difference between a cylinder and a sphere. In another class, younger pupils understood that a hexagon was similar to a circle though not the same, demonstrating what they meant by reference to the properties of the two shapes. Their warm relationships with each other and with members of staff make a significant contribution to the learning achieved. Pupils are willing to build on each other's contribution to the learning and are happy to have their misunderstandings or errors used to help other pupils make progress.

82. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound. Work at different levels is provided but it is not always sufficient to stretch the more able. Where teaching is good, appropriate models of ways of working are provided. In a lesson on fractions, the teacher was very responsive when pupils moved away from the more orthodox folding of a square into four equal smaller squares to folding the paper vertically to achieve four equal rectangles, each demonstrably a quarter of the given whole. The teacher was also able to use the two ways of working to consolidate pupils' learning about equal parts of a whole. Pupils are required to use appropriate terminology, for example, in three-dimensional work, 'faces', 'edges' and 'vertices' are used by pupils with great confidence. Pupils are able to refer to three-dimensional models they have made to justify the labels they have written on model buildings. This link between writing and mathematics is a good development, bringing cohesion to the learning with good effect. Pupils

developed this further by bringing their three-dimensional models to be used as the foundation for the fever hospital work they were doing in their Florence Nightingale topic.

83. Teachers' questioning is well targeted at different levels of attainment and this helps pupils to make progress. Teachers and classroom assistants know when to hold back to allow pupils thinking time to formulate an answer, which also helps staff assess individual progress within a topic. In some cases, teachers check pupils' understanding by asking how they arrive at their answers. In one example, pupils were asked how they could show that their paper folding had produced four equal quarters or that different quartering of paper represented the same fraction of the whole. Children in this example were able to apply this learning when thinking about quartering bars of chocolate. High attaining pupils, misunderstanding how to count squares when some of them were halved diagonally, gave the teacher a good opportunity to focus on different ways to check that the portions were equal.

84. Pupils' learning is broadly satisfactory, with particular strengths in shape, space, and measures, and in applying knowledge to problem solving. There is strong emphasis on independence in learning and on making mathematics interesting and relevant. Learning mental calculation strategies, however, is not as good as it should be and this is due in part to teachers' low expectations. Little number work, for example, is drawn from the higher levels of National Curriculum. Work in books is poorly presented, with poorly formed numbers and untidy layout. Too much work remains unfinished and corrections are not always completed. Much of the marking fails to indicate the expectation to correct unsatisfactory work and the amount of written work for two terms is fairly limited.

85. Record keeping is weak and ongoing assessment is by annotation of pupils' work and knowledge of children's progress held in teachers' heads. This is unsatisfactory. With this informal way of charting pupils' progress, it would be hard to check whether the three-dimensional work covered in the reception year was significantly different from the work covered in Year 2. The teachers' over-simplified planning, which represents a record of work covered, would not always give enough detail for management to monitor the extent to which the curriculum has been taught in full, or the extent of pupils' progress against national expectations. The current records are insufficient to be sure that continuity and progression in learning is maintained.

86. The headteacher temporarily manages the subject until the school expands sufficiently for a subject coordinator to be appointed. Together with her deputy, she monitors the planning and work in books as well as observing some lessons, and this is good practice. The school has made a start in developing portfolios of pupils' work to help teachers moderate standards and monitor pupils' progress over time. A policy has been produced together with information for parents and carers to help them support pupils' learning. Parent volunteers are welcomed into the classroom. The policy refers to the National Curriculum in a limited way and teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy's teaching Framework where it helps them plan the work. Homework is not set regularly by teachers to support work in lessons.

SCIENCE

87. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the standards. Only one lesson was seen, which was not taken by the pupils' usual teacher. Two groups of seven-year-old children were spoken to but their knowledge is limited. There is little work in the pupils' books because the current topic is not science based and there is very little written and recorded work from previous topics. This is unusual and different to the typical picture of substantive recorded work being produced.

88. The aims of the teaching are that the subject should permeate daily life and that opportunities for observing, predicting, relating cause and effect, problem solving, and evaluation of the evidence should be regularly provided. Progress towards these aims is not sufficiently apparent in the knowledge of the few pupils spoken to, in the teachers' previous planning, or in the limited recorded work available. Work linked to the subject was seen in a display about the environment, which indicated that pupils had investigated what would happen if rubbish was not collected. Planning for the subject is interwoven into a broad topic approach and appears in the long-term topic web, where the time allocated is organised in blocks throughout the year. The subject, however, is only taught for half of the year and this is not often enough. The National Curriculum attainment targets are incorporated into the planning but at a generalised level. Elements of the National Curriculum programme of study, especially the skills of scientific inquiry, are not developed in sufficient detail and there are apparent omissions from each of the nationally required attainment targets. Many of the aspects of physical processes, for example, have been omitted from the documented planning.

89. In the lesson seen, which was satisfactory, the seven-year-olds had positive attitudes to the subject. The lesson tested the waterproof qualities of different materials, which is appropriate for the age, but did not clearly define what waterproof meant. Pupils worked collaboratively in small groups, which is a good strategy, and using a pipette fascinated them. Many aspects of the lesson provided good experiential learning, which made it worthwhile, but insufficiently emphasised the rigour of scientific enquiry. Not enough time was allowed for prediction and insufficient

emphasis was placed on accurate measurement, such as counting the drops or quantifying the amount of water applied to different materials, which is a necessary challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Another lesson was happening in the same room, with children making collages of rainbows, and this was a distraction for the young scientists.

90. In the last two terms, the seven-year-old children have studied various materials and their properties, the same work also being taught to the six year-olds, but the pupils' recordings from these studies have been lost. They have studied light and colour. Some recorded work shows light passing through some materials but not others, and the making of a shadow clock. There is evidence of an experiment into evaporation, and what makes ice melt but, in discussion, the pupils had little recollection of these studies. The pupils have visited places such as the Millennium dome; this has effectively helped them to learn about the parts of the body, and they know, for example, about the heart and the increase in heart rate caused by exercise.

91. The medium and short term planning lacks detail. The planning, together with the pupils recorded work, indicates that expectations are not high enough. The long-term topic approach to planning is making it difficult to maintain continuity and progression in learning. The headteacher is managing the subject until a coordinator can be appointed. She oversees plans and evaluations of each week's teaching. There is no policy or scheme of work and all of the planning is incorporated into the broad topic plans. The arrangements for assessment are underdeveloped. Assessment is informal and does not inform planning. Resources are good. A very well-equipped specialist room is available and will be used as a shared resource by 2004. The library is well equipped with science books. There has been a curriculum workshop in science for parents and teachers and this is reported by parents to have been worthwhile.

ART AND DESIGN

92. Overall, standards and achievement are good by age seven. This judgement is based on the ample artwork on display and in pupils' books. The excellent standard of displayed work greatly enhances the school environment. No lessons involving a whole class were seen taught but groups and individuals were regularly seen engaged in artwork in lessons where work was linked to topics. Pupils are developing an appreciation of colour, pattern, and technique. There are no significant variations in standards or learning between pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

93. In lessons, pupils demonstrate a broad knowledge of the subject and can use appropriately a range of materials and techniques, for example plaster relief work of soles of shoes, printing with polystyrene tiles, and embroidery with coloured threads on binka. Opportunities to explore ideas with different media are built into topics and into the displays. This half term, for example, every class has produced work to celebrate the arrival of spring, using a range of media and techniques. This work shows that pupils can produce finely crafted still life drawings of bouquets of spring flowers and contribute with appropriate skill to flamboyant collages of pond life in spring. The latter using crushed cellophane for the reed beds and different materials like feathers to suggest the arrival of new life.

94. Pupils are becoming aware of the work of different artists, which they investigate and review to extend their own skills. Pupils used El Greco's painting of "Toledo" as an inspiration, experimenting with chalk and dark blue paint-wash to reproduce the artist's muted and glowering sky colours. This was a good choice as the children were also exploring weather in their topic work, bringing together different threads of their geography and art work to respond in very personal ways in their painting.

95. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to describe what they have done, showing great pride in the work on display. A large fresco of geoboard designs, based on the work of a famous artist which every class contributed to, and the seven-year-olds' fine drawings of the school building, show very careful attention to shape and detail. With the expert support of the site manager, pupils are learning how to execute models on a large scale. They have made a magnificent "story man" from guitar packaging and newspapers and a willow-man sculpture made from garden prunings. The story man, which is over one and a half metres tall when seated, will eventually be covered with children's stories and hold a collection of their best work.

96. Teachers have a good knowledge of National Curriculum requirements, have high expectation, and set demanding tasks for pupils, allowing them to investigate the possibilities of a range of materials and processes in their creative work. The coordinator provides good leadership and has produced a scheme of work based on the topic framework and on National Curriculum requirements. This allows teachers to include appropriate skills development in painting and drawing, printing, collage, three-dimensional work, and textiles within the six half-termly topics planned. This approach provides adequate continuity and progression through the school and reduces the possibility of unplanned repetition. The coordinator has drawn up a list of artists and their work to help pupils develop artistic appreciation and knowledge. Currently there are no systems for assessing and recording progress in art. Resources are

excellent and well organised. Pupils understand the importance of using resources appropriately and economically, returning tops to felt-tips and using oil pastels with appropriate pressure and technique.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Standards and achievement are satisfactory, though the evidence is limited. A small number of pupils were seen making products but no directed teaching or whole-class lessons were seen. The pupils are able to make models using an appropriate range of marking, cutting and joining skills. They can produce simple plans and use these as a basis for their model making. Knowledge, skills, and understanding of a range of materials are satisfactory among the groups seen working. There is photograph evidence of a good range of past projects, which are often on a large scale. A challenge given to seven-year-olds, for example, which they completed successfully, was to create a large, stable tent from cardboard tubes and fabric that was big enough for them to sit inside. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and able to produce models of good quality. Class assistants run an after-school club that enables pupils to pursue particular interests in designing and making. Evidence is limited in respect of the attainment and learning of pupils from different backgrounds.

98. The subject is taught through topics but there is no policy or scheme of work. The assessment arrangements are underdeveloped. The headteacher has temporary oversight of the subject until a coordinator can be appointed. Facilities are good and there is a purpose built technology area, although this is underused at present. There is a good range of tools and resources.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Standards are satisfactory. Current work and performance in lessons shows that the substantial majority of pupils have knowledge and skills broadly in line with national expectations. Progress is hard to track since there is no detailed scheme of work, only limited planning in the topic grid, and no substantive assessments. Teachers draw on the National Curriculum in their medium and short-term planning but this does not provide full coverage of all aspects of the programme of study. There are no significant variations in attainment or learning between pupils of different background. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

100. During the inspection, pupils learnt about catastrophic natural events and their impact on the environment. They used a range of resources, including books, photographs, and newspaper articles to research and prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. They demonstrated good knowledge of how to use indexes and contents pages when researching specific aspects of the topic and were able to make notes about key features of floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, and typhoons. Pupils learnt how and why different phenomena occur, about the impact on the environment and effects on people's lives. They drew from their own family and cultural knowledge to contribute to the learning, one child sharing the fact that some people grew food in the flood plains, and another how her house was flooded when she lived in Trinidad. Some children talked with good knowledge about earthquakes in Turkey and the impact on community life, stating "there are often earthquakes in Turkey". Pupils were able to describe events using appropriate vocabulary, for example the movement of earth plates in earthquakes and the lethal combination of hot sun and dry fuel in bush and other ground fires. Pupils are becoming familiar with the purpose of maps and plans and understand that there are places outside their own locality. This is due, no doubt, in part to pupils' knowledge of countries where relatives live.

101. The teaching is satisfactory, with clear learning objectives, a brisk pace and interest maintained through a range of collaborative group activities. Pupils' response to the teaching is good, and they are keen to contribute what they know to what the class is learning. Teachers integrate these contributions into the learning well and raise good questions to help the class make progress.

102. Coordination of the subject is part of the headteacher's portfolio of curriculum responsibilities until it can be delegated. There is no policy. Resources are satisfactory and topic boxes are being built up. A good range of books is currently available for topic work, though there are limited information and communications technology programs to support the subject. The pupils have good role-play opportunities built into their topics through which they can consolidate learning. The amount of time devoted to geography is low compared to national recommendations. Teachers do not have sufficient documented guidance. Long-term and medium-term planning do not give enough attention to continuity and progress and are not adequately informed by assessment. The monitoring concentrates on coverage of the topic objectives rather than on an evaluation of standards or teaching quality.

HISTORY

103. Standards are satisfactory. No subject teaching was seen, though historical studies formed a significant part of the content of English lessons. The pupils' work was examined and they and their teachers were spoken to. In the English lessons, all of the seven-year-old pupils knew some of the major events and people involved in the Crimean War and showed well developed understanding of the impact this war had on the people caught up in the conflict. The standard of displayed work is broadly in line with national expectations. Work on family trees, for example, produced by parents and pupils together, indicates good standards of historical enquiry. Through this work, pupils are developing a sound sense of chronology and how life has changed since the nineteenth century. They are beginning to understand the importance of reliable evidence. A child's family heirloom of a photograph of a great, great grandparent, whose dates were recorded on the family tree, allowed pupils to compare and contrast the clothes worn today with Victorian times. Pupils were keen to talk about the Victorian artefacts from the school's topic resources and had set up a Victorian shop in the classroom from which they learnt the difference in the goods available as well as their cost. Within this topic, they were able to understand the difficulties faced by servant children and drew on their historical knowledge in letters that they composed, as if they were servant children writing home. This task gave pupils plenty of ideas to write about but did not extend their knowledge of basic spelling and writing skills enough. There are no significant variations in attainment or learning between pupils of different background. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

104. Seven-year-old pupils have studied Florence Nightingale and her work during the Crimean War. They talk with authority about conditions on the battlefield and, through role-play, are able to demonstrate vividly their understanding of the horrors of the field hospital. They know how rats had to be killed and that rat-bites were evident on Florence Nightingale's hands. Pupils used appropriate sources of evidence to investigate work about domestic differences past and present and the life of Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to understand how to find out about the past from a range of sources and information and are looking forward to their visit to a Victorian school in a local museum at the beginning of next term.

105. Pupils work well and enjoy the historical content in English lessons. No subject specific teaching was seen but the teaching in English developed historical knowledge and skills effectively. Most work in books and on display indicates sustained interest and application. Currently the coordination of the subject is undertaken by the deputy headteacher. There is no scheme of work and planning is through the topic grid. The long-term and short-term planning do not pay sufficient attention to continuity and progress, nor does assessment inform the planning. Resources are being built up systematically into topic boxes, along with book resources in the library. Information and communications technology resources, such as CD-ROM and videos, are limited for the subject. There are gaps in the resources to inform pupils about the contribution of black and minority ethnic groups in the topics studied, for example, that of Mary Seacole, a Jamaican nurse working, like Florence Nightingale, during the Crimean War. Good opportunity was taken by the Year 2 teacher to link geography and history by showing children where the Crimean War took place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

106. The subject is under-developed, making evidence of pupils completed work difficult to find and inspect. Standards of attainment for seven-year-olds are below the level expected nationally. The subject does not meet all statutory requirements due to a lack of the resources needed to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study, particularly using images and sound, using sensors and collecting information from different sources. The school recognises this but is unable to improve matters without the government grants that are being made available to all schools to obtain modern computers and establish a connection to the Internet; the school has applied for a grant. In spite of limited resources, a number of pupils show satisfactory skills gained from using computers at home when using the school computers for activities such as word-processing or creating pictures. There are no significant variations in attainment or learning between pupils of different background.

107. Word-processing is well used to communicate information, copy and edit stories, but a lack of computers means that this is insufficient to develop satisfactory standards. Pupils have a sound knowledge of fonts and are able to cut and paste. Computers are used effectively to produce a variety of pictures and designs. A programmable toy is used to teach pupils how to give clear instructions and to introduce an understanding of direction. In some classes, pupils access information from CD-ROMs, to find the answer to a simple enquiry. However, as the school is not linked to the Internet. Pupils who wish to research from this must do so, where possible, from home. During the inspection, computers were switched on daily but were rarely used, showing that not enough is made of existing resources.

108. Pupils aged six can, with help, produce graphs to show the amount of rain measured in a day or how many teddies each can hold in one hand. Most seven-year-olds demonstrate good control when using the mouse to fill in colours or create line drawings on the screen. A group working independently of their teacher successfully produced pictures about Florence Nightingale for a history topic. In other classes, they word-process, design posters about recycling as part of their science studies and write poems or create weather pictures for their topic about the seasons.

109. There are very few displays around the school, indicating limited use of information and communication technology. There were instances of word-processed labels, copies of recipes, and some of the weather pictures produced. Digital photographs are increasingly used to record work done and standards achieved, which shows good use of modern technology. There are very few examples of information and communication technology used within other subjects, mainly due to a shortage of suitable programs.

110. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory in those areas that are covered but, overall, most aspects are unsatisfactory due to the lack of resources. Pupils are keen and interested in the subject and this has a positive effect on their learning. They generally cooperate well when working in pairs and take turns, concentrating and persevering on the tasks set. Although efforts are made in some lessons, teachers generally do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers effectively in most subjects.

111. The coordinator is totally committed to the subject and is very enthusiastic but the overall management of the subject is unsatisfactory. A suitable development plan, which sets out the priorities necessary to raise standards, has been prepared and a new policy statement and detailed programmes of work have been written. However, there are no consistent procedures in place to assess pupils' progress and the role of the coordinator is under-developed as there is no opportunity provided to monitor teachers' planning, the quality of teaching or standards of work. As well as lacking essential equipment and a range of programs to cover all areas of the curriculum, the overall number and quality of computers within the school is poor. Reports to parents do not contain a section on information and communications technology, which is a legal requirement. Improving standards, the quality of teaching and the curriculum along with the level of resources are identified as priorities by the school and the inspection team.

FRENCH

112. A satisfactory start has been made. There are no national expectations relevant to this age group. A classroom support assistant, who speaks French as a first language, helps teach pupils aged six and seven for a half-hour session each week. Six-year-olds can count in French to 29 confidently, know the days of the week and most are able to say the names of the first four months of the year as well as yellow, red, and blue, all in French. They enthusiastically join in with songs such as 'Les Epaulés' and 'Onze douze treize', which involve pupils remembering the names for parts of the body and numbers. All listen carefully to the story, read in French, about 'The Seasons', which links effectively with the topic they are studying this term. All try hard to repeat accurately key words or phrases. The lessons are conducted at a good pace and supported very well with visual materials such as pictures and Jean Paul, a French puppet, who is very popular, particularly when the teacher uses her deepest voice! Pupils were given homework to complete, reinforcing their knowledge of the names of the four seasons in French. These lessons add breadth to the curriculum and introduce pupils effectively to a modern foreign language.

MUSIC

113. Standards are satisfactory. One lesson was seen in each year group. Satisfactory progress is made. Seven-year-olds can listen to taped music, such as sad and happy music by Greig, discuss their feelings, and communicate them in writing. Working in mixed ability groups, they are able to experiment in writing happy and sad tunes using percussion instruments. These they can interpret into stories, with the writing indicating the mood appropriately. The six-year-olds can create sound effects to reflect different weather. In one lesson, for example, they were able to create a storm sequence with beginning, middle and end; choose appropriate percussion instruments; and then perform their compositions to each other. Singing in assembly is enthusiastic. There are no significant variations in attainment or learning between pupils of different background. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

114. The teaching is satisfactory. An appropriate range of work is covered, with good emphasis on composing and performing, though the use of technical vocabulary is limited. Teachers are enthusiastic non-specialists and have participated in recent training. There is good support from classroom assistants and a very well equipped specialist area. In addition to lessons, music occurs in assemblies, there is a choir, and a small amount of instrumental tuition. This is a typical picture and the provision overall is consistent with national guidelines. Management of the subject is presently in temporary hands. The coordinator arranges the promotion of the subject, for example, the visit of African drummers who held a successful workshop in school. The headteacher is a music specialist and she monitors music in school giving confidence and support. A choir has been set up this year and has an enthusiastic following of a dozen pupils who compose and present items regularly. The headteacher takes a guitar club for a few children and they are learning music theory. A peripatetic teacher provides keyboard tuition for interested children. There is no policy or scheme of work. Assessment arrangements are underdeveloped. Resources are excellent with a wide-ranging of instruments, books, tapes, and CDs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards are above those found in most schools and all pupils make good progress. This is largely because of the very good level of expertise of the subject coordinator, which is shared effectively with staff in regular training sessions. The curriculum programmes for each year group in gymnastics and games are particularly helpful, giving teachers clear guidance, but those for dance have not yet been finalised. The excellent accommodation and very good resources are additional key factors, which are responsible for the good and, on one occasion, very good quality of teaching.

116. All seven-year-old pupils know the importance of warming up before exercise and the effect of exercise on their heart and muscles. Pupils are confident in their movement and demonstrate a satisfactory level of control and coordination in gymnastics when performing rolls or balancing, using apparatus. They listen carefully to instructions and take good care of their own safety and that of others when, for example, lifting out or putting away large items such as benches. In lessons, such as gymnastics with six-year-olds, pupils are clearly enthusiastic and willingly demonstrate their skills to all the class. All pupils successfully create a sequence of movements, incorporating high, and low, movements on the floor or when using apparatus. In games, both boys and girls are keen to do well and demonstrate a strong determination to improve their accuracy when aiming, throwing, or catching a ball. They work together well in pairs or small groups, for example, showing maturity when inventing rules or scoring systems to determine how accurate they have been. Pupils readily evaluate the performance of one another and skills are generally better than those normally seen for pupils of their age. All pupils, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, are very effectively supported and able to enjoy taking part fully in activities. They work hard, achieving skills that are better than those normally expected.

117. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge for all aspects of the subject is good and they plan lessons carefully so that the basic skills, as defined in the National Curriculum, are covered well. Very good use is made of support staff and the readily accessible resources. Modern technology, such as compact disc players for warm-up music, digital, and video cameras to record and evaluate pupils' performance, is used satisfactorily by teachers as part of lessons. The organisation of lessons and plentiful resources provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to develop physical skills working either individually or in groups. Health and safety issues are fully complied with. During a lesson with six-year-olds, for example, pupils were provided with appropriate skills training to help them to lift heavy equipment properly. All pupils and their teachers wear appropriate clothing and footwear in all lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and discipline and control in all lessons is very good. In one lesson with seven-year-olds, the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher motivated the pupils well, set challenging tasks and maintained a good pace throughout. The enjoyable activities in this lesson and probing questions, which encouraged pupils to reflect on the quality of their performance, showed the teacher had a very good knowledge of the subject. Because of the effective teaching in all lessons, pupils show much interest and high levels of concentration. All behave very well throughout, responding to their teachers' effective use of praise by giving 100 per cent effort.

118. Subject management is good overall. The knowledgeable subject coordinator provides very effective leadership for all staff and, as a result, there is a very good capacity for success in physical education. The latest Curriculum 2000 guidelines are being fully incorporated into the clear guidance for teachers provided by commercial schemes, which are used to good effect in school. However, the policy statement is not yet finalised, as better guidance for dance is to be added. The coordinator's role in monitoring and evaluating the subject's performance is good. Teachers' planning is carefully monitored by the headteacher and coordinator each half term and the coordinator regularly monitors the quality of teaching. Any identified weaknesses are quickly resolved through effective training. The assessment of pupils' progress is currently unsatisfactory, as there is not a consistent approach throughout the school. Moreover, assessment opportunities are not clearly identified in teachers' medium term planning and consequently, teachers are unable to reliably use any assessment information to guide their planning. However, all statutory requirements for the curriculum are met and there is a very strong commitment to improve any areas of weakness. Staff expertise is good, with classroom support assistants and special educational needs staff playing a particularly effective role in ensuring that all pupils have equality of opportunity to take part in all activities. The spacious and well-equipped hall, along with the stimulating playground and playing field, provides an excellent resource. Resources in this new school are very good for all aspects of the subject. The purpose built storage area in the hall means that resources can be stored tidily and that they are readily accessible to pupils.

119. The provision of extra-curricular sporting activities is good, with boys and girls regularly taking part in games-skills training and gymnastics. The very good provision of outdoor climbing frames and the availability of hoops, bats, balls and skipping ropes at playtimes gives all pupils valuable opportunities to practise, improve and refine their skills, helping them to achieve better than average standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Standards are satisfactory and pupils are developing knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions. Lessons are based on the locally agreed syllabus, which provides a course for teaching in the infants but not the reception or nursery, where the subject is non-compulsory. The syllabus is based on festivals of the six religions studied and stories. Displays in the entrance hall this term have been on Islam, Hinduism, and now the Christian festival of Easter. There are no significant variations in attainment or learning between pupils of different background. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

121. Learning is satisfactory but variable. No lessons were seen where learning was less than satisfactory but links with spirituality and religion are occasionally tenuous. In a lesson for six-year-olds, for example, the pupils reflected on what they might find at the end of the rainbow. This work built on the amazement generated by studies of light being split by raindrops but did not link common human aspirations, such as a wish to come true or a better world, to the beliefs and hopes of different faith communities. Children were asked to reflect on their own views and the views of others, which was appropriate, with the scene set by using lights and soft music. It was, however, less of a religious education lesson linked to the agreed syllabus than a lesson that fitted in with a broad topic. Learning in a lesson for seven-year-olds was good. The children had experienced the death last year of a much-loved person connected with the school. They recalled that memories of a person make that person live on. This was then linked to the Easter story and the death of Jesus.

122. Attitudes are satisfactory. The seven-year olds show appropriate feeling of respect and interest in, for example, the Easter story and when pupils from different faith communities express what they think happens when somebody dies. Teaching is satisfactory and, in lessons such as that for the seven-year-olds, is sometimes good, with expectations being at the right level for the pupils.

123. Management of the subject has not yet been delegated. There is no policy, the time allocated in the long-term plans for teaching is scarcely met in practice, and it is not on the timetable in all classes. Resources are good, including library resources. Artefacts of different religions are adequate. Interesting visits are made. Photographic evidence, for example, showed that pupils had visited a nearby synagogue when studying Hanukkah.