

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY AND ST MICHAEL RC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

London E1

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 131936

Headteacher: Mrs Josephine Leamon

Reporting inspector: Carol Worthington
20609

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 230652

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sutton Street Commercial Road London
Postcode:	E1 0BD
Telephone number:	(0207) 790 4986
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Francis van Son
Date of previous inspection:	none

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20609	Carol Worthington	Registered inspector	Music Information and communication technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
14756	John Lovell	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?
20063	Gerard Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs	
15447	Christine Glenis	Team inspector	History Geography The Foundation Stage of Learning	
29063	Judy Keiner	Team inspector	English Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3242	Mike Newman	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary and St Michael is a large Catholic primary school formed in September 1999 from the infant and junior schools on the same site in East London. It has 424 pupils, 50 of whom are in the nursery where one child has been identified as having special educational needs; in the main school a further 17.1 per cent have special needs, which is below average; 3.3 per cent have statements, which is above average. Forty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is higher than average. Twenty six per cent of pupils are of African, Caribbean or Asian origin. Eighty six pupils have English as an additional language, 36 of whom are at an early stage of acquisition. Most of these are Portuguese. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average; to the main school it is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which has maintained and slightly improved its standards during the recent amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. The head teacher gives a strong lead in the promoting of Catholic values and beliefs, which are embodied in the school's aims and mission statement, and has built her staff into a cohesive team, giving a high proportion of good teaching. The school has good resources in many areas and there is a clear, shared commitment by staff and governors to move forward. Value for money is sound.

What the school does well

- It has a strong ethos based on Roman Catholic values and beliefs, which underpin all its work.
- It has maintained standards and slightly improved them during a difficult time of amalgamation and staff shortage.
- A high proportion of good teaching by specialist teachers that ensures that pupils learn well.
- It has very good provision for spiritual education and good provision for moral and social education.
- It promotes very good attitudes and behaviour, which makes a good contribution to learning.
- There are above average standards in music throughout the school.
- Standards in mathematics of infants and juniors are high compared with similar schools.
- Standards of juniors' English are high compared with similar schools.
- Nursery education is good.
- Financial planning is careful and efficient.

What could be improved

- The distribution of management responsibility to provide firm leadership in all curriculum areas.
- Assessment and its use in planning to provide good quality work to challenge all pupils, whatever their ability, in all subjects.
- Standards in ICT.
- Pupils' understanding and use of skills of enquiry in science.
- The range of children's reading and writing and the presentation of their work.
- Communication with parents, particularly about their children's progress, and daily contact.
- The governors' understanding of their statutory responsibilities for setting targets.
- Attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the first time the school has been inspected as St Mary and St Michael RC Primary.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	n/a	n/a	C	A
mathematics	n/a	n/a	C	A
science	n/a	n/a	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards in English, mathematics and science of eleven year-olds are in line with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, standards in English and mathematics are well above average, but remain average for science. In the tests for seven-year-olds, the standard of reading was well below the national average, and below that of similar schools; in writing, standards met the national average and were well above those of similar schools; in mathematics, they were in line with the national average and above that of similar schools. The school met or was close to all its targets. Standards seen during the inspection were in agreement with the test results for the most part, meeting the national average. Good progress is made in reading in the infants, particularly by boys, showing that the school's focus on this is having an effect. Standards observed in other subjects are as expected, except for music where they are above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and concentrate well in lessons which challenge their intellect, showing great interest and eagerness to complete the task. They persevere well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils have taken part in the formulation of the school and class rules; they understand them and respond positively. They value recognition of good behaviour, work or effort.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school from an early age, undertaking class responsibilities and whole-school duties with maturity, care and pride.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and below the national average. High levels of unauthorised absence are due mostly to holidays being taken during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
72 lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with a high proportion of good teaching in a minority of lessons. Of the 72 lessons observed, 12.5 per cent were very good, 37.5 per cent were good, 46 per cent were satisfactory and four per cent were unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy has noticeably improved over the year, owing to the impetus given by the literacy hour; the extra teaching of phonics and the booster classes are particularly valuable in enabling slower learners to achieve a satisfactory level. However, those of higher ability are not sufficiently encouraged to read widely from classical literature, for example, and are not always stimulated by suitably challenging work. Literacy is better used in other curriculum areas than numeracy. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall. The planning to the Early Learning Goals in the nursery ensures that work is better matched to the level of children's understanding than in reception, where work is more suited to the National Curriculum for infants than under-fives. Specialist teaching in music and for special educational needs at the end of the infant and the junior stages is good and yields good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It is broad and balanced with strengths in provision for music and physical education. Statutory requirements are not met in design and technology and in ICT in control and datalogging. The nursery curriculum is satisfactorily based on the Early Learning Goals for children under five, but the reception curriculum has been modified to prepare for the National Curriculum in Year 1; numeracy is planned at too high a level and the literacy and numeracy 'hours' are too long. Provision for extracurricular activities is unsatisfactory because of the limited range available to all children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Specialist teaching, particularly of phonics, is good. The co-ordinator, who is also the deputy head with temporary responsibility as a class teacher, has worked extremely hard to keep all paperwork up-to-date and maintain a satisfactory management of provision.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. There is no significant difference between the standards attained by these pupils and the rest, because there are such small numbers in each year
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual education in very good through assemblies, attendance at Mass and through the whole curriculum. Good provision is made for moral and social development. Cultural education is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory, overall. Pastoral care is very good. Assessment of the standards of work children achieve are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. There are some good assessment practices for the under-fives, but these are not consistently applied. Assessment is currently insufficient in science and the foundation subjects and it is not used as a whole to plan the next stage of the curriculum well enough.

The school's partnership with the parents is satisfactory and the school works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's education and the work and life of the school, for the benefit of the pupils. This partnership is reinforced by a home/school agreement about which parents were fully consulted. However, the overall quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is unsatisfactory. Reports only offer general comment and arrangements for day-to-day communication are unclear.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The head teacher exercises quiet authority in all areas of school life and has engendered a good corporate spirit amongst her staff. The deputy head is capable and supportive, but has had little time since her appointment to fulfil all her responsibilities since she has had to take full responsibility for a reception class owing to its teacher's maternity leave. Some staff are unwilling to accept responsibility. Consequently, these responsibilities are not shared equally causing some members of the senior management team to carry too heavy a load.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the head teacher and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are actively involved in the school and are linked with specific curriculum areas where they are beginning to develop a monitoring role. However, they do not fulfil all statutory duties in setting whole school targets and a drugs education policy. The pastoral role of the parish priest in the school is compromised by his position of authority as chairman of governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Identification of weaknesses in boys' achievement has resulted from evaluation of test results. The head teacher and senior management team regularly evaluate the progress of the school development plan, but this would be easier if it had clearer priorities, success criteria and methods by which it is to be monitored and evaluated.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources effectively to achieve its educational objectives and has a good understanding of best value and is improving processes to make sure that this is obtained.

Staffing and learning resources are adequate; accommodation is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are making good progress and are expected to achieve their best. • Very good behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for homework. • Communication with and information about the school. • Extra-curricular activities. • Inconsistency of work across year groups

The inspection team agrees with all parents' views, except that on homework, which is judged to be satisfactory in amount and content and that children are making satisfactory rather than good progress, on the whole. The range of extra-curricular activities is narrow and mostly additional to raise the attainment of selected groups. Very few parents help with activities outside school hours.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below that expected in most schools. They have a solid beginning to their education and this is satisfactorily continued in reception, so that, by the time they are five, their attainment matches the Early Learning Goal in most areas and is above expectation in personal, social and emotional development. They make satisfactory progress during infants and juniors and, by the age of eleven, standards are in line with the national average. There can be no judgement on trends in standards over the past three years since this is the first inspection of the amalgamated school.
2. The results achieved by eleven-year-olds in the national tests in English in 2000 show that standards were close to the national average and well above the average of similar schools. The results achieved by the seven-year-olds in reading were well below the national average and below the average of similar schools. In writing, they were broadly in line with national averages and well above those achieved in similar schools. The school's analysis of these test results shows that boys did much less well than girls in reading and the school is currently placing high priority on raising achievement by boys, which is having a marked effect on improving their reading, in particular.
3. Pupils' ability in speaking and listening in both infants and juniors is in line with the national average. They were observed to speak fluently, eleven-year-olds readily able to discuss their reasons for preferring an author or to describe the way a character in a book has been portrayed. Seven-year-olds speak clearly and articulately when, for example, they discuss literature in class. They listen to each other's opinions, although some do not wait for their turn.
4. Infants' and juniors' current attainment in reading is average, overall, and the school should meet its targets this year. This represents an improvement over last year for infants, when standards were well below average. Average eleven-year-olds read fluently and accurately and are skilled at recognising a writer's style. They identify words that are used to influence readers' opinions of characters and events. They have a good grasp of the plot of the books they read, but they are not encouraged to read widely enough from classic literature. Older infants eagerly read books, such as 'Little Bear' with their classmates; younger ones know letter sounds well and try to sound out words they do not know.
5. From the evidence of the inspection, pupils' writing reaches average national standards at ages eleven and seven. Eleven-year-olds write fiction about space creatures, and summaries of parts of books they have read together, such as 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'. They draft and develop stories, using word-processing software. Pupils aged seven satisfactorily write stories and poems and a range of non-fiction. They use computers to draft and improve stories. The most able pupils are achieving well above average standards in their non-fiction writing, for example in writing instructions and summarising the class shared story 'Little Bear'. Some of the least able infants, however, frequently fail to complete the set work, because it is too difficult for them and work is not always well matched to their needs by the use of assessment.
6. In mathematics, the standards achieved by eleven year-olds in the most recent national tests were close to the national average and well above the average of similar schools. Boys did not achieve as well as girls, but there was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The results in last year's national tests for seven-year olds were close to the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving standards above those expected for seven-year-olds was also close to the national average and above the average for similar schools.
7. Inspection evidence shows that standards pupils are currently achieving are average at the end of

both key stages. Eleven-year-olds have a sound grasp of the four rules of number and use them satisfactorily to work out problems. Because of the firm emphasis throughout the school on mental computation, by the time they are in Year 6, pupils work out answers quickly and explain their methods. They have satisfactory knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and identify faces and vertices. They measure with sufficient accuracy in metric units. Average pupils are reaching level 4, able, for example, to plot co-ordinates in the first quadrant. Above average pupils extend this to working in all quadrants. All gain a sound understanding of data handling. Seven-year-olds add, subtract and multiply, using numbers up to 100. They identify common two-dimensional shapes, draw bar charts and have a satisfactory understanding of measurement and capacity.

8. Standards of attainment in science are in line with national averages and those in similar schools. In the most recent tests for eleven year-olds, the school met the national average in the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 in tests and in the overall point score. The school was slightly below the average in the numbers attaining level 5. Girls scored comfortably above the national level on all criteria; boys were below average.
9. Standards of work seen in science during the inspection were judged to be similar to those expected for their age in both infant and junior years. In the infants, this was seen in children's ability to make predictions and to carry out and record a survey of animal life in different habitats in the school grounds. In the juniors, it was evident in their answers to revision questions and in their ability to use keys to identify organisms. Boys were not working to a lower standard than girls and the school is right in working to improve boys' literacy in the attempt to raise standards in written tests. In relation to their ability, both boys and girls are achieving satisfactory standards in science. Good importance is attached to vocabulary and the use of computers to process work and seek information.
10. Work seen in art was of a similar standard to that seen in most schools by children of this age. In Year 6, pupils responded to a project on the sense of place by producing detailed work on aspects of the church and the local environment. Infants showed their ability to make observational drawings of natural objects and pastel self-portraits. Work seen in design and technology was judged to meet expectations for their age, both in the infant and the junior years. In the juniors, Year 6 pupils have shown sustained interest in a project on hats, obtaining information via the internet, relating their designs to a literary theme (Alice in Wonderland) and making and evaluating them. Infants' work on designing, making and performing with glove puppets showed satisfactory development of skills. The wide range of designs indicates the individual nature and creativity of the children's work.
11. Based on a scrutiny of work and displays in geography and history, it is evident that pupils generally attain the expected standards for infants and juniors. In geography, Year 6 pupils have completed work on water-cycles, erosion, interpreting maps and marking routes on the river Thames. Year 2 pupils have followed an imaginary route to Nigeria and satisfactorily looked at aspects of that country. In history, eleven-year-olds have covered work on the Victorian era on such aspects as census information. Infants have satisfactorily studied the Great Fire of London and the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seole at the time of the Crimean War.
12. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are close to those seen in most schools, although there are some gaps, because the curriculum is not yet broad enough to cover control and datalogging. Eleven-year-old pupils evaluate a CD-ROM or internet home page, recognising the significance of size and colour of text in making this attractive and useful to the user. Although the school computer suite has only been in operation for a short time, most pupils can log on to the network and reach the area they require for their work. Seven-year-olds still need help with this, but show good control of the mouse, particularly when using a paint programme to create an image. Keyboard skills are weak for most pupils and there is at present no software to help develop typing.
13. Standards in music are above those found in many schools at both infant and junior level. The standard of singing by the school choir is well above average. Pupils in Year 6 play well-known

tunes accurately on pitched percussion instruments, using a variety of unpitched percussion as an accompaniment, and are able to compose simple variations. Pupils in Year 2 showed above average singing ability, able to follow the directions of a conductor with respect to dynamics.

14. In physical education, standards of attainment are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Most eleven-year-olds meet or exceed national expectation in swimming. By the end of Year 2, pupils perform a range of movements involving running and balancing and are gaining an appropriate awareness of space. Most remember, reproduce and explore simple actions with control and co-ordination.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning when they receive specific support. In most lessons, they make the same progress as other pupils, as do those with English as an additional language. Local authority figures show some past underachievement by Caribbean pupils and also by pupils from the Republic of Ireland. This analysis is complicated by the fact that the underachievement is concentrated among boys rather than girls, but with such small groups, attainment figures fluctuate wildly and are not always meaningful. This was not observed during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils enjoy school. Their very positive attitudes and behaviour, good relationships and personal development make a good contribution to their learning. When the pace of the lesson is fast and pupils are appropriately challenged, they show an interest in their work and an eagerness to complete it. They concentrate well, persevere with difficult tasks and work well in groups, creating an environment conducive to good learning in which the individual's right to learn is respected and valued. Year 4 pupils, for example, who were studying habitats that could be found around the school grounds, discussed their ideas well as a means to developing their knowledge. In Year 5, pupils collaborated very well when working in pairs to examine their understanding of the need to listen and the impact of their actions on others.
17. Pupils' conduct around the school and in most lessons is very good; the majority are self-disciplined, although, on occasions, when classroom management is unsatisfactory, a minority misbehave. Pupils have been involved in considering the school and class rules, as well as those affecting particular areas, such as the hall. They understand them and respond positively to the school's ethos, Catholic values and rules. They value recognition of their good behaviour, work or effort. Parents rightly believe that standards of behaviour are good. Respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs is good, and pupils are supportive of those with special educational needs.
18. During the previous year there have been three fixed period exclusions. There is no evidence of any systematic bullying; any concerns about such behaviour, physical or mental, are quickly and effectively addressed by staff. The school functions as a very orderly community, free from oppressive behaviour. Pupils understand the high standard of behaviour that is expected from them and respond accordingly. They are very conscious of the need to be considerate to others when they are trying to learn and move around the school during lessons in silence. This very high standard of behaviour assists in both learning and teaching. Relationships are very good; pupils show an appreciation of each other's success and are courteous and respectful to adults, to whom they listen attentively. They take good care of school equipment and resources and proudly keep their school clean and tidy.
19. The personal development of pupils is good, overall. They are involved in the daily routines of the school from an early age, undertaking class responsibilities and whole-school duties with a sense of maturity. Lunchtime is a social occasion and pupils undertake a range of tasks, such as ringing the bell, holding up the coloured 'lollipops' to call classes together, escorting pupils from the dining hall and maintaining the 'naughty books' in which Year 6 record the names of pupils who talk in the corridors or otherwise misbehave. Pupils support each other well. Those in a Year 3 music lesson, for example, very readily helped and supported a pupil with special education needs and fully involved him in the activity, praising his achievements and encouraging

his performance with great sensitivity and responsibility, displaying superb care. Pupils display responsibility and concern for the local environment and have a good understanding of the needs of others. They are involved in supporting local, national and international charities, such as the Catholic Children's Society, CAFOD and the Great Ormond Street Appeal.

20. Overall levels of attendance are unsatisfactory and below the national average. During the first year (1999/2000) of the new school, attendance levels of 93.7 per cent were recorded compared with a national figure of 94.4 per cent. Unauthorised absence levels of 2.1 per cent were well above the national figure of 0.5 per cent. However, although the figures for the first two terms of the current year indicate that there may be a small reduction in attendance levels, over 100 pupils during that period achieved very good or excellent attendance levels whilst 20 pupils had poor or very poor attendance. The very high levels of unauthorised absence appear to be attributable in part to the school having adopted a policy of not authorising any absence for holidays, other than in exceptional compassionate circumstances and to some inconsistencies in the completion of the registers, which have resulted in authorised absences being counted as unauthorised. The high levels of attendance of many pupils has a positive effect upon their learning and standards of attainment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Of the seventy-two lessons observed, 12.5 per cent were very good, 37.5 per cent were good, 46 per cent were satisfactory, and four per cent were unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is satisfactory, overall, with significant strengths in specialist areas, such as special educational needs and music. Pupils being withdrawn for extra phonics work in small groups are expected to work hard in short lessons which proceed at a brisk pace, because of the special needs teacher's good understanding of how children learn this basic literacy skill. Music expertise ensures that the standard of music is high, particularly that of singing. Recent training for the literacy hour has produced much good teaching and a clear improvement in the standards seen in pupils' books from the beginning of the year. However, some teachers reveal a lack of grammatical knowledge and consequently mislead their pupils, for example in the definition of verbs. Insecure knowledge and understanding of how skills of scientific enquiry should be taught affects the standard of science. There is no evidence of control, hydraulics and pneumatics being taught in design and technology. There is evidence of over-generalisation in geography where, for example, India's climate was summed up as being wet.
22. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of how to teach basic skills, although there are strengths and weaknesses. Literacy, for example, is generally well promoted across the curriculum with emphasis on correct vocabulary and terminology and displays to stress these in most classrooms, but the teaching of handwriting is weak, with no common style. Numeracy is satisfactorily used in such applications as the study of maps and weighing ingredients in cooking. However, the lack of the use of mathematical skills in drawing graphs in particular, together with the unsatisfactory teaching of scientific investigation skills leads, in many classes, to lower achievement in science than in English and mathematics. Teachers ICT skills are developing well and this is reflected in its growing use in the curriculum, but, at present, there is no provision for control or data logging.
23. Teachers' planning has been the focus for development and has improved. Parallel classes, for example, have the same planning with the same objectives. However, the way the plans are interpreted differs from teacher to teacher and there are marked discrepancies, for example, in the English and humanities' books of parallel classes in some years in the level at which the work is pitched and also the marking and presentation. This indicates that whilst the plans are being monitored for consistency, the outcome is not being checked for consistent quality. For the under-fives, planning in the nursery is to the Early Learning Goals, but, in reception, this is more towards the infant stage. Formal literacy and numeracy work is being introduced for both older and younger classes. Older children are ready for literacy at this level but, in both numeracy lessons seen, it was obvious that neither class is fully prepared for the more formal teaching for this length of time. The concentration spans of the younger pupils are particularly

short, and they learned best when focused for a short time on a specific task. Some daily plans are written before the previous day's activities have been taught, which hinders the process of evaluation and assessment.

24. On the whole, teachers' expectations of work are satisfactory, although better use of the assessment/planning cycle would improve them for some classes. Some good lessons were seen, proceeding at a brisk pace, with high expectation of the pupils. A good challenge was seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson where pupils were working out quick ways of calculation. The lesson began briskly and the pace and momentum were maintained with the result of some very good progress. Conversely, higher ability pupils were seen in some classes wasting time, because they were not sufficiently challenged or motivated by work that was too easy for them. Bright nine-year-olds in English, for example, set the task of joining sentences with conjunctions were asked to do more when they had finished, rather than work at something more challenging. Pupils of lower ability, when set the same task as others, often fail to complete it.
25. Teaching methods are satisfactory; pupils are given an adequate mix of practical and theory, direct teaching and independent learning. Good use is made of questioning, as seen in a Year 5 English lesson and a Year 6 mathematics lesson, to elicit alertness, involvement and motivation. Good humour and direct style also stimulate pupils, as seen in a Year 3 English lesson. Dull delivery inevitably hampers learning, as seen in a Year 1 English lesson where many in the class remained uninvolved. Teaching methods for the under-fives sometimes involve too much adult intervention.
26. Management of pupils is good, helped greatly by pupils' good behaviour and respect. In one Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were allowed to mark their own work, encouraging identification of their mistakes, which assisted their learning significantly. Good relationships in a Year 5 mathematics lesson made learning enjoyable and profitable. Where there is less respect in the class, behaviour management is tenuous and naturally impedes the learning process, as seen in a Year 4 mathematics lesson. Over-use of the same method of control becomes monotonous and meaningless.
27. Use of time and resources is generally good. Classroom assistants were usually well employed. Teachers also make good use of equipment, such as the overhead projector. Teachers are skilled at organising work, so that lessons start promptly and work is completed. They make good use of registration and 'wet play' by giving their pupils things to read in preparation for lessons. The use of ICT as a cross-curricular skill is growing, although the computer suite has only recently come into operation and teachers have not completed their training entitlement yet. The use of CD-ROMs and the internet for research is becoming more frequent, but some of the work is done at home because of the faulty internet connection. Good use is made of software to enhance knowledge. In science, for example, pupils used ICT to study the water cycle before starting an investigation of conditions needed for evaporation to take place. There is no use of ICT for datalogging and control work in science and design and technology, however, since the school has not yet purchased the necessary hardware and software.
28. The quality and use of assessment are unsatisfactory. Teachers' day-to-day marking and assessment is variable. In some classes, it is very thorough and books of older pupils contain very helpful comments. In others, only ticks and crosses are used; some books, such as in some juniors' history books, revealed unfinished, unmarked work, which clearly limited progress. Parents drew attention to the inconsistencies between classes, and the inspection team found this to be correct. There is also inconsistent use of assessment, especially noticeable in the under-fives where lesson plans written for the whole week showed no modification on the basis of assessment. Although some records are properly maintained, such as those in a Year 2 English class and assessment is included carefully in planning mathematics in Year 4, for instance, records are not kept consistently. This leads to difficulty in defining standards. In the juniors, target setting for national tests is satisfactorily done from information passed on by teachers to the senior management team, but assessment is not moderated. Governors are not involved in the process and they do not challenge the level of targets set by the local authority, either. Homework is satisfactory, set and marked once a week.

29. Teaching of small groups of pupils by the special educational needs teacher is good and this ensures good progress in their learning. Members of the support team are well trained and are effective in those lessons where they are well prepared and efficiently used by teachers. Teaching for the various groups of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The quality of some aspects of special educational needs provision, including phonetics awareness training, helps. There is a minor concern in some classes that practical subjects are taught with too much theory and insufficient practical work. Where this is the case, pupils with English as an additional language suffer and, in some cases, are over-represented in the lower ability groups. A compensatory advantage, however, is that they thereby gain good quality literacy support.

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

30. The school's curriculum is satisfactory, overall. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are regularly timetabled, but the school is not meeting the requirements for ICT in control and datalogging and for design and technology in control, hydraulics and pneumatics. The curriculum timetable broadly follows national recommendations, although a higher than average time allocation is given to the teaching of ICT and, in the upper years, physical education.
31. The curriculum is broad and balanced; although there are no schemes of work for some subjects, in practice, teachers satisfactorily use the nationally recommended Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes, or draw on guidelines provided by the local education authority advisory service. They follow the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies well, having adapted the planning format from the former as a planning and evaluation framework for other subjects. This is providing an improved base for all staff to develop consistent medium-term and weekly planning.
32. Most subjects provide at least satisfactory opportunities to develop pupils' literacy. It is well provided for in mathematics, science and design technology, where, for instance, pupils in the upper years write accurately about design processes they use and evaluate what they have made. The curriculum also provides specific opportunities for pupils to extend their numeracy development beyond their mathematics lessons. Pupils designing hats, for example, for their design technology project on the Mad Hatter's tea party calculated measurements and explored the way in which different shapes were joined to make their hats. Nevertheless, the school is not making full use of everyday school events, such as counting absences and dinner money at registration to extend pupils' mathematical awareness, especially in the early years and infants.
33. Provision for extracurricular activities is unsatisfactory. The school offers only football and netball for all-comers; the highly regarded school choir is the only other strictly extracurricular activity, but its members are selected. Other activities are also offered to certain pupils only, and are additional classes to extend the main curriculum. To this end, there are currently booster clubs for literacy and numeracy and an after school club for pupils with special needs.
34. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, including those with English as an Additional Language. The school has identified the need to tackle the underachievement of boys in reading as one of its priorities and it is successfully putting much energy into selecting and promoting ways of interesting them in a range of writers whose books feature boys in positive and intriguing roles. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but some with high levels of special need sometimes find it difficult to follow lessons or complete tasks where they do not have direct adult support. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for identifying such pupils and a register is kept up-to-date by the co-ordinator. As there are so many teachers new to the school, the co-ordinator has to train teachers in writing individual education plans, which more closely identify the specific needs of pupils on the register.
35. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' personal, social and health education through the

science curriculum and the pastoral programme, which forms part of their religious studies. The governors have opted to continue the policies of sex education from the previous infant and junior schools, although they have not yet formally agreed this. The school does not have a taught sex education programme, because of the belief that it is more appropriate coming from home. Nevertheless, pertinent references are made to the value of family life and mutual responsibility in relationships in its recognition of, for example, St Joseph's day. The school does not yet have a drugs education policy, but there are regular visits and teaching sessions for the pupils held by the school's liaison police officer. Pupils' awareness of personal and communal safety issues is raised through visits from the London Fire Brigade.

36. The school has well established and valued links with the local community through its involvement in the church. Evidence of the strength of these links is seen in the number of parents who choose to continue to send their children to this school, despite moving to other parts of London. Pupils take part in the joint annual parish-school Cantata and the Palm Sunday Church procession; they regularly visit the church for Mass and other services. The school arranges visits for pupils to the places of worship of other faiths, such as the Brick Lane Mosque and a local synagogue. Links with sponsorship through a variety of local trusts, such as the Education Business Partnership have enabled the school to enhance its library and educational facilities and, in the recent past, to publish pupils' writing in book form. However, there are few links with other community groups, such as local heritage or hobby groups. Liaison with Catholic secondary schools, which many pupils choose is well established; the range and distance of other schools is too great for close relationships to be made.
37. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. For moral and social development it is good and for cultural development satisfactory. The school embraces its Catholic mission throughout the school day and in its communal life. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good and is a strength of the school. The headteacher's personal commitment to promoting spirituality by creating a climate of profound respect and personal support for every individual is at the heart of the school's sensitive and moving provision. The weekly Mass sets a theme, which is carried through school and classroom assemblies during the week. Prayers are always said reverently and they visibly bring an atmosphere of calm and contemplation to the classroom after the bustle of lessons. In each classroom, there is a corner dedicated to the most recent religious events of the yearly cycle and to pupils' thoughts on 'Good News', which brings something special to people's lives.
38. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Through their religion and the consistency of all the staff's respectful treatment of pupils, they learn and follow a clear set of values which teach the difference between right and wrong and put fairness and respect for others at the heart of the school's life. Each classroom has a set of rules, which the teacher and the pupils have discussed and agreed. This is also underpinned by assemblies which praise moral awareness, selflessness and working and caring for others. Displays in the school help raise pupils' awareness of moral issues in the global context, such as that seen in the main foyer on the theme of the environment.
39. The school provides well for pupils' social development, with an emphasis on co-operation and self-discipline in the classroom. When pupils wait for registration, for example, they read or begin some work without being told. Teachers expect pupils to organise themselves to move when the lesson requires it and to set to work quickly. When younger pupils walk about the school or come in from break times, they are always reminded by quiet signals and gestures of the need to be calm and quiet in school. Group work rules ensure that pupils know they should be ready to help each other before they go to their teacher. All adults in the school set very high standards of courtesy and behaviour and they never raise their voices in anger. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility by leading prayers or tidying and carrying messages. Older pupils help with laying out the hall for assemblies and they contribute to serving in the church. However, there is no opportunity at present to take greater responsibility as a librarian or as a member of a school council, for example.
40. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' cultural development. A particular strength in this

area is the role played by the specialist music teacher in introducing pupils to a rich variety of composers and songs and to the understanding of how music is created. Displays around the school include a good range of reproductions of the work of famous artists, such as Matisse, Seurat and Dufy. Displays in and immediately outside classrooms evoke the worlds of literature, such as 'Alice in Wonderland', as well as the fascination of life in other periods, such as the Second World War. The school also ensures that visits are a major feature of curriculum studies: the eleven-year-old pupils are due to spend a residential field week at a centre in Dorset later in the summer term. Visiting groups add to pupils' appreciation of the depth of the topics they study; a theatre company has recently staged a play related to a science topic, for example. The school has also promoted pupils' awareness of other cultures through inviting a dance troupe to demonstrate Divali dance. However, the school is still doing relatively little to introduce pupils to the richly diverse range of cultural and artistic life in the local area and in the wider community. To some extent, this has been influenced by the priority the school has placed on establishing itself as a new community following the merger of the two former schools, but there is now an opportunity to extend the school's provision in this area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school's assessment procedures are not yet as effective as they should be and the senior management recognises that this is an area for development. Over the last year, much progress has been made on developing systems which ensure that the school knows its pupils' attainments and uses the information to plan lessons more efficiently. The school carries out the national tests in line with national requirements. With the assistance of the local authority advisory service, it has made an analysis of the results of the first year of national tests in the newly merged school, for the year 2000. The analysis enabled staff to pinpoint boys' much lower achievements in reading as a priority area for improvement. During the current year, this has enabled teachers to place a new and more effective emphasis on promoting books and reading tasks which engage boys.
42. The school is currently using a range of commercial tests to keep track of pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy and satisfactorily supplements them with optional national tests in the core subjects to judge progress by the end of each year. Teachers are beginning to make use of assessment information, particularly from their own marking, to improve lesson planning. Some teachers write evaluative notes on the back of their planning sheets, following teaching, and use this to note how they can help particular pupils make more progress. However, this good practice is not yet followed consistently across the school.
43. Not all teachers consistently record the National Curriculum levels pupils reach at the end of the year and pass them on to the next class teacher. They tend to refer to data such as a pupil's reading age rather than National Curriculum sub-levels – 2A, 2B and 2C, for example. This is weakening the focus on National Curriculum targets as they seek to raise achievement, as well as providing less clear information to staff new to the school. Teachers in some classes are setting individual targets for pupils, but there is not yet a consistent whole school system and there are inevitably differences between parallel classes in the same year. The school is not making much use of baseline assessment data on the pupils starting the National Curriculum and there is not yet an effective whole school system for tracking pupils' progress through their school life.
44. There are some good assessment practices in the under-fives, but they are not consistently used to guide planning for the next stage of learning. The levels of fluency of nursery and reception children who have English as an additional language are noted in records, but too often in reception classes these children are in groups with those who have learning difficulties, which hampers their progress. Reading records are up-to-date, but do not always include future learning targets. Marking is also up-to-date and staff generally add notes to give a context for the work, such as how much help was given, although they do not always distinguish satisfactorily between aided and unaided work.
45. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Staff

provide opportunities for pupils to undertake some responsibility within the classroom and throughout the school, but these are limited, as are those for independent learning and for the selection of resources. The school very successfully promotes pupils' caring and supportive attitudes to each other, based on religious teaching.

46. The school has an effective discipline policy, which is consistently applied by staff and well understood by pupils. Pupils have been fully involved in considering class rules and those applied to other particular areas. These rules are displayed in classrooms; they reflect a very good awareness of others and of the right of all to a good learning environment. Pupils value the praise of teachers and rewards they may earn through the award of stars. They recognise the importance of honesty and that sanctions are applied fairly. They are very confident that any concerns, which they bring to the attention of teachers, or other adults working in the school, will be listened to and resolved.
47. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs in meeting the targets in their individual education plans. There are satisfactory procedures for placing pupils on the register, keeping parents informed and reviewing progress regularly. The school meets the requirements outlined in pupils' statements of educational needs.
48. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and promote attendance; liaison with the Education Welfare Officer is very good. There are some inconsistencies in the completion of registers where, for example, written notes explaining absences are used instead of symbols. As a consequence, the unauthorised absence in a particular class had been grossly miscalculated. Pupils arriving late are expected to enter the school via the reception area where their lateness is properly recorded in the registers. However, this information is not transferred to the electronic registers. Parents are encouraged to take holidays outside term time and, other than in exceptional circumstances, all holidays taken during term time are classified as unauthorised. In cases of concern, staff work with parents, the education social worker and outside agencies to address the situation. Registration of children in the nursery is not always carried out early enough for the number of children to be recorded accurately, nor for staff to know how many and which children are present.
49. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The school uses the local authority protection committee procedures, which comply with requirements. The head teacher is responsible for child protection and has received basic training. Arrangements for deputising in her absence are good: two staff are named as deputies. Staff are reminded annually of the procedures, which are incorporated into the induction arrangements for new and supply staff. There is also good liaison with outside agencies and the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and sensitivity.
50. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory and teachers promote safe practice well in lessons. The school has an appropriate policy. Although formal risk assessments are already completed for visits and building work and regular, informal safety audits are undertaken, the school is currently developing a system of formal, documented risk assessments covering the use of the school buildings. Equipment and appliances are regularly tested.
51. The arrangements for providing first aid are satisfactory; three staff hold current first-aid certificates. Pupils are looked after well, both within the school and in the playground. First-aid supplies meet requirements and are accessible within the school. The recording of accidents is satisfactory, but, frequently, insufficiently detailed to enable accidents to be regularly reviewed to identify potential risks.
52. Outside agencies, including social services and education specialists provide good support and advice for pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school's partnership with parents is sound. The school works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's education and the life of the school. This partnership is reinforced by a

home/school agreement about which parents were fully consulted. The significant majority of parents support the school well, illustrated clearly by the comments in pupils' reading records and the very good attendance at consultation meetings. Parents also respond very well to any concerns expressed by the school and provide good encouragement and support for their children at school and at home. This has a very positive impact on progress in reading, for example.

54. A minority of parents made their views known about the school through attendance at the pre-inspection meeting and by responding to the questionnaire. They stated that their children like school and are making good progress, that behaviour in the school is good, that teaching is good and that the school expects children to work hard and to do their best. They also expressed a number of concerns. These related to the amount of homework that children are expected to do at home, the information which is provided to parents about children's progress, the way in which the school works with parents, the ease with which parents feel they can approach the school with a problem and the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors' judgements support the positive views, but they deem the extent and regularity of homework to be satisfactory. Inspectors agree with parents' comments on information about children's progress and the range of extra-curricular activities.
55. The overall quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is unsatisfactory. The form of annual reports is different from that which parents received in the former, separate infant and junior schools and now provides an indication of effort, progress and achievement, based on a tick list and a comment from the class teacher and support staff. The report is difficult to interpret, however. Besides general comment, it offers no observations and fails to identify targets or specific areas for improvement, which could assist parents in helping their children's progress.
56. The reports are supplemented by a consultation or open evening each term, at which the support of the parents is very good; over 90 per cent meet teachers at these times with alternative arrangements being offered to those parents who are unable to attend. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to be fully involved in the reviews of their children's progress. Newsletters and formal letters to parents are sent home frequently and contain good information, including key dates and details of activities. The school's development plan identifies the school's intention to extend its links with parents by increasing the current opportunities provided for them to attend workshops, which give parents the opportunity to find out more about national tests and curriculum areas such as literacy, numeracy and ICT. These workshops, topic sheets and homework timetables, provided termly for parents, assist them in supplementing their children's education at home and on family visits and outings. The school has planned a survey of parents to assist in evaluating the provision. The headteacher and staff are available to meet parents by appointment and are to be found in the playgrounds after school; some parents believe the informal opportunities to talk to staff are insufficient. Inspectors found that the school's communication on this matter is not always clear to parents.
57. The Friends of the School organise activities such as line dancing and quiz evenings to raise funds. Recently, they have bought books and contributed towards a new sound system. They also provide practical support in, for example, making the library and other facilities ready for the children to use. About 12 parents help regularly in classrooms with food technology and reading. Other parents assist with practical tasks such as covering books. In addition, parents provide very good support for specific activities, such as a sculptress who shows pupils how she works and parents who have added to history work by providing artefacts and talking about their memories of the 'sixties. Other parents readily volunteer to help with the supervision of pupils on visits. The good support of parents makes a positive contribution to the life of the school and is much appreciated by pupils and staff.
58. Nursery staff welcome parents and carers in a friendly manner in the mornings and there are generally good relationships between staff and the home. Parents and carers are satisfactorily involved in reading records in reception classes. In nursery records, the space for comments is not often completed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, overall. The head teacher gives good leadership through the principles of the Catholic faith which underpin all the school's work and create its strong religious ethos. She has also, over the past eighteen months, been successful in creating a unified team of teachers in the amalgamated school. During this time, she has had many obstacles to overcome. These have included difficulties in recruiting new teachers and the deputy head having to be class-based and unable to carry out her full managerial responsibilities. New administrative staff in the school office were unfamiliar with the systems in place and extensive building works were in progress to provide better facilities for the school. Despite this, standards of work have been maintained and slightly improved, as the year's work in children's books shows.
60. The deputy head has had little opportunity to carry out her full managerial role since appointment, because she has had to cover for maternity leave in a reception class due to teacher recruitment difficulties. Nevertheless, she has successfully managed to keep up with paperwork related to her role as special educational needs co-ordinator and given a good lead on assessment.
61. With the large number of new teachers, many of whom are newly qualified, a few key teachers have had to take on very heavy loads. The infant co-ordinator, for example, also has responsibility for Early years and science, which is far too much to do; consequently, the reception curriculum is based more on the National Curriculum than it should be in view of the recent guidance for the Early years. There are no co-ordinators for history, geography or design and technology since the inexperienced staff are only just coming to the stage where they can take up responsibility as co-ordinators and others are not so willing to do so. The management structure of the school is, therefore, not well defined and monitoring of the school's provision is inconsistent. It is good in mathematics; the co-ordinator has exemplary monitoring and evaluation records and has put many initiatives in place since the recent amalgamation to help ensure consistency of practice and to improve standards. Monitoring has also been successfully carried out in English; the co-ordinator has made very good progress in driving forward the improvements recommended by the local National Literacy Strategy support team, with whom she works closely. She has chosen a good range of new texts and has regularly monitored teaching. In science, the co-ordinator has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and is beginning to plan professional development to improve the understanding of investigation. However, she has too heavy a work load co-ordinating two other areas to be able to do more in science. In other subjects, criteria for evaluation and targets for improvement are not sufficiently rigorous. In geography, for example, within year groups, it is common for one class to have completed more work than the other due to lack of monitoring. Similarly, there is no policy for the under-fives and the monitoring of curriculum planning and teaching, both in the nursery and reception, is unsatisfactory.
62. The co-ordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs is not as effective as the school would like it to be. As the school has had problems appointing a special needs co-ordinator, the deputy head teacher has assumed responsibility for this area of the school's provision and has worked hard to keep everything up-to-date. Additional support for pupils with statements of special educational needs and others on the register is generally efficiently used and effective. Specific grants received by the school are being used prudently.
63. Staff have a shared commitment to provide good opportunities for pupils to learn and develop. The school's aims to provide a Catholic education of quality and worth and to work together with home, church and school, are beginning to be realised, although more effort needs to be put into improving the partnership with parents by improving day to day communications.
64. The governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily and carries out its responsibilities in strategic management. Governors are very supportive of the head teacher and challenge the senior management team very well in some areas. In others, such as target setting, they are lacking in information to be able to do this. Overall, governors have a sound understanding of the strengths

and weaknesses in the school; some further this understanding by, for example, completing their own detailed analysis of results, comparing them locally and nationally. Through their working practices, they are beginning to hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides. They are actively involved with the school, being linked with specific curriculum areas, assisting with assemblies and visiting classrooms, where they are beginning to develop a monitoring role. However, they do not fulfil all of their statutory duties and have not agreed a drugs education policy or been sufficiently involved in setting whole school targets.

65. The school development plan, to which governors and staff have contributed, is satisfactory, but has some weaknesses as a management tool. Priorities, success criteria and information as to how the plan is to be monitored and evaluated are not always sufficiently clear and some elements lack sufficient detail to assist the decision making process.
66. The school uses its resources satisfactorily to achieve its educational objectives by good financial management. The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, plays a key role in determining the educational direction of the work of the school and in seeking to raise standards of teaching and attainment. As the school has been created within the last two years, much of the management focus has been on developing a team. Overcoming staffing problems has, therefore, limited progress in some areas of management.
67. The management of the school's finances is good, although there are some weaknesses in the financial systems and controls, which have been identified by the school. Some have been addressed. Governors have sought a full audit from the local education authority to identify all control weaknesses and are in the process of preparing financial regulations to define clear procedures and responsibilities. The administration staff make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school and an external accountant gives very valuable advice to the head teacher and governing body in managing and monitoring the budget.
68. The governing body monitors expenditure very carefully. Summary financial reports with brief commentaries have been written to give all governors a clear view of the finances to assist them in making informed decisions, based on educational priorities and available resources. In the current year, through prudent budgeting and careful financial monitoring, governors are likely to achieve their target of approximately five per cent of the total core income being available to meet any contingencies.
69. In the current year, there have been over 30 changes to additional funding which the school receives through the Standards Fund and special grants to support areas of work. These include special education needs and raising the achievement of ethnic minority pupils and those with English as a second language. The school has monitored these changes carefully and has used the money effectively for its designated purposes. The school has a good understanding of best value and is improving its processes to ensure that this is obtained in the use of resources. Governors use data to compare the school's financial practices with those of other local schools and ensure fair competitive tendering. They take reasonable account of all known factors. The contract for the payroll services, for example, is evaluated for quality and level of ongoing support for the school.
70. The school's use of modern technology to support its administrative functions is unsatisfactory. There is no integration of administration systems, the school does not have a working e-mail facility and computerised systems, such as that used to maintain attendance data, are not always reliable.
71. Staffing is satisfactory in number, but duties are unevenly spread out owing to the number of new and inexperienced teachers recently employed. Nursery staff are not always well used, such as during outdoor activities. However, staffing in the reception classes was very good during the inspection, with at least three adults suitably employed in each class on several occasions.
72. The accommodation is good for the number of pupils and the demands of the curriculum. Recent work has enabled the school to provide a good computer suite and whole classes can use the

facilities. The school has two halls, one of which also serves as the dining room. This accommodation is used effectively for physical education, assemblies and, in the upper hall, to provide a very good facility for teaching music. The library provides good accommodation for independent learning. Good use is made of smaller areas such as the special education needs group room in which individual pupils or small groups can be taught. There is a small, enclosed environmental area with a pond and a small woodland area adjacent to the rear of the church. This is very useful for science work on wild life safaris, for instance, during which pupils develop an understanding of habitats, insects and organisms. There are adequate hard play areas, but the surface is poor in sections and potentially hazardous; there are no outdoor grassed areas. Children under five do not have access to a secure play area with large equipment. This impedes their physical development by limiting opportunities for them to move about with confidence, imagination, and in safety. Displays around the school are stimulating and relevant to work in the classroom. The accommodation is very well maintained by the caretaking staff. There are no graffiti, litter or signs of vandalism around the site.

73. The stock of learning resources is satisfactory and, in some areas, such as English, mathematics and ICT, they are good. Resources for music are very good; those for physical education are good and have benefited from sponsorship. In addition, a stimulating range of visits to places such as the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Mole Hall Wildlife Park, Mountfitchet Castle and residential visits in Year 6, enhances education and provides opportunities for pupils' social and personal development. There is no data logging equipment and resources in the library are unsatisfactory. The nursery is generally well resourced, although some outdoor equipment is old, well used and not very inviting. Reception classes are adequately resourced apart from unsatisfactory apparatus for outdoor activities.
74. The school is providing its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education and taking account of all factors, the school is effective and providing satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to raise standards further, the head teacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) rationalise the management structure to ensure that responsibility is shared more widely with a co-ordinator for every subject, so that provision can be monitored and evaluated and standards become consistent in parallel classes in particular (paragraphs 61, 119, 122, 125);
 - (2) improve the assessment of children's work in all National Curriculum subjects and in the under-fives and use the results to plan work to challenge the intellect of all children, whatever their ability (paragraphs 5, 23, 24, 28, 41, 42, 43, 44, 98, 113, 129, 136);
 - (3) improve provision in certain aspects of English, science and ICT across the school by:
 - widening the provision of classical literature and non-fiction books to improve the breadth of experience of all pupils, particularly older ones and those of higher ability, and improve library skills (paragraphs 4, 88, 100);
 - continuing to broaden the range of children's writing and develop a consistent style of handwriting across the school (paragraph 90);
 - placing due emphasis on the teaching of investigative and numeracy skills in science to raise standards to match those of English and mathematics (paragraphs 21, 22, 103, 110, 111);
 - ensuring there is enough hardware for control and monitoring and software to cover all aspects of the programme of study for ICT and that it is all in good working order (paragraphs 12, 22, 27, 30, 118, 119, 126, 130);

- continuing and extending the training of teachers in all areas of the ICT curriculum (paragraphs 27, 126, 127, 130);
 - ensuring that pupils' keyboard skills are improved (paragraphs 12, 126); and
 - improving pupils' research skills in using the internet (paragraphs 27, 119);
- (4) improve day to day communication with parents, and the information provided about their children's progress (paragraphs 54, 55, 56, 63, 142); and
- (5) ensure the governors undertake their statutory responsibility in setting targets for achievement (paragraph 64).

In drawing up their action plan, the governors should take these minor issues into account:

- continue to improve attendance and the accuracy with which school registers are filled in (paragraphs 20, 48, 70); and
- provide more opportunities for all children to take part in extra-curricular activities. (paragraphs 33, 54).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	38	47	4	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	374
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		150

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	16
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	64

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	86

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	11

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.2	School data	2.1
National comparative data	5.2	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
	2000	23	34	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	23
	Girls	31	29	31
	Total	45	47	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (n/a)	82 (n/a)	95 (n/a)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	21	22
	Girls	27	31	33
	Total	43	52	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (n/a)	91 (n/a)	96 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	31	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	29	26	30
	Total	41	39	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (n/a)	78 (n/a)	88 (n/a)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	15	11
	Girls	24	25	29
	Total	34	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (n/a)	83 (n/a)	88 (n/a)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	85 (78)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	31
Black – African heritage	40
Black – other	3
Indian	15
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	5
White	259
Any other minority ethnic group	17

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	294

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	Included in YR-Y6

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	1135290
Total expenditure	1135290
Expenditure per pupil	2,677
Balance brought forward from previous year	8172
Balance carried forward to next year	8172

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	424
Number of questionnaires returned	71

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	46	3	4	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	42	0	3	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	45	15	6	9
The teaching is good.	42	50	1	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	35	18	13	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	37	11	13	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	46	6	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	21	34	21	17	7
The school is well led and managed.	34	34	12	3	17
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	34	11	0	13
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	31	11	17	14

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

76. Children enter the nursery class when they are three years old and attend full-time for an average of three terms from September or January. Most move into the reception classes a year later, which they attend full-time. The nursery classes include older and younger children; reception classes separate the September and January entrants. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children on roll in both nursery classes and 30 children in both reception classes.
77. Children's attainment is below that expected for their age on entry to the nursery and they make good progress during this year. They have a solid beginning to their education and this is satisfactorily continued in reception so that, by the time they are five, their attainment matches the Early Learning Goal in all areas, except some aspects of physical development, and is above expectation in personal, social and emotional development.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Teachers' enthusiasm ensures that children's attitudes to the activities are good in almost all sessions in nursery and most sessions in reception classes. As a result, children reach above average standards. All staff expect children to behave properly and to work well together with adults and peers. Both nursery and reception children enjoy most activities and usually respond well to teaching and non-teaching staff. They are taught to distinguish right from wrong, to have respect for each other and to form constructive relationships with peers and adults. Most nursery children sit still during carpet times and settle quickly when working or playing independently. Reception children's attitudes and behaviour are generally good and very good in a minority of lessons. They know routines well, handle computer equipment with care and happily engage in games outdoors. They change for physical education independently and quickly. Reception staff do not always expect children to work or play independently, however; work is planned so that adult support is usually needed.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Children's attainment is below average on entry to the nursery and broadly average on entry to the reception class. Good progress is made in this area of learning in the nursery and consolidated in the reception classes, as a result of satisfactory teaching with many good features. Children are given frequent opportunities to listen, express themselves and extend their vocabulary during story telling, for example. Staff encourage good listening and speaking. Most children listen attentively to peers and adults, such as during stories and songs in the nursery and shared reading in reception. Most children listen to instructions and try to follow them. Most express their wants and needs and speak clearly and confidently to staff and to the class, for example when talking about letters and sounds in the nursery or about their investigations of 'mini-beasts' in reception class.
80. Children are satisfactorily developing their knowledge of stories and books through sound provision by staff. Those in the nursery are used to handling books. They enjoy stories, and talk with interest about the pictures. In one nursery class, individual children sang an alphabet song in sequence, making the sounds and a matching sentence of the initial letters of their names, in which they showed satisfactory phonic knowledge of these sounds. Reception children mostly read from memory, although some match words to their written form and follow a text closely. Nursery and reception children listen well to audio-taped stories and follow the print carefully. Reception children read books as a class, but there are few opportunities for them to choose books independently and read without an adult present.
81. Children in the nursery are being taught to recognise their names, for example in their places at lunch times; they carefully practise handwriting patterns and form letters, using various media

such as paint. They are developing pencil control satisfactorily. However, progress in writing in reception slows considerably; some children are forming letters to no better standard than those in the nursery and are doing similar activities for handwriting. Many children in reception write simple sentences given key words. Those of lower ability talk about stories such as 'Goldilocks', and draw and label characters. Brighter children form simple sentences, but they still mainly copy their work from teachers' prompts. Reception and nursery children suggest content and vocabulary well for shared writing with staff. Teachers handle whole class reading and writing sessions well, for example talking about characters and involving children's suggestions in shared writing. Group or individual writing activities are less challenging as staff give too much help to children, even when the writing prompts are available in the class.

Mathematical development

82. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory and children generally make correspondingly sound progress in acquiring mathematical knowledge. The majority are in line to reach the Early Learning Goal in this area by the age of five. Nursery children carefully use a wide range of measuring and capacity tools in cooking, water and sand play, count reliably to at least five and further, though objects need to be set in a row for them to do this accurately. Some, even the youngest children, count objects arranged randomly. In reception, teachers give reception children a satisfactory experience of the properties of shape and space through jigsaws and games. They also soundly teach the number system through a selection of games and songs. Children were seen learning to count objects to 20. Most reached ten and were learning to count in twos: two ladybirds, for example, have four legs. However, in attempting to learn counting on and pictorial addition in twos or more, children were unable to do the work expected, except with intense help from adults. The activity had been inappropriately matched to the children's current ability.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Provision for this area of learning is satisfactory and teachers offer a wide range of opportunity in both nursery and reception. Most children will meet or exceed the Early Learning Goal by the age of five. They successfully experiment with the properties of water and sand, paint and glue, and satisfactorily learn about people and places in and beyond their environment through the use of stories and role-play. A variety of small and large construction kits is available in the nursery, although the range is less varied in the reception class. In the nursery, children were fascinated by the changes in cooking while making dough with a nursery nurse; they were satisfactorily involved in the cooking activities such as stirring and rubbing ingredients. A scrutiny of reception work shows that children have satisfactorily completed work on topics such as 'myself', 'autumn leaves', 'properties of materials for different weathers', and used maps to record a walk to the park. In one class there are good 'Growing Books' which describe the sequence of seeds growing. Children confidently use computers frequently in pairs or small groups in nursery with or without adult help. Reception staff timetable lessons with interesting activities in the computer suite in the main school. The teaching in the computer lesson observed was very good, with the teacher and assistants using time well, ensuring a brisk pace, using questions effectively and using children's work to show what they have done and learned. However, even when teaching was very good, staff did not have sufficient knowledge to overcome technical problems. On a number of occasions, opportunity was missed to use computers in class. The use of 'listening centres' is good and teachers use these well for children to be independent in both nursery and reception. The religious aspect of this area of learning is well covered with work on baptism, birthdays, Advent and the 'Good News' of Christ. This is a strength of children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Physical development

84. Children develop and make good progress in manipulative skills, reaching standards in line with national expectation by the age of five. They use equipment such as pencils, crayons, scissors, paint, brushes and glue spreaders satisfactorily. Nursery children have frequent opportunities to enjoy and develop skills in running, climbing and riding wheeled vehicles. A good range of

activities is provided - sometimes too many - and children choose independently. Physical development is very popular and the number of children choosing to play outside is greater than that remaining indoors. Staff are not always flexible enough to follow children's choices nor do they plan directed activities for this area of learning in the way they plan such activities for others. Some climbing apparatus, such as the rope climbing-frame, provide harder challenges and staff provide specific guidance and good monitoring of this activity. Reception children enthusiastically join in physical education lessons. Children learn, for example, to move satisfactorily in different directions at different speeds and to bounce and catch balls outdoors. Indoor lessons include dances from around the world. These lessons are taught well by a knowledgeable teacher who uses children's work well to reinforce learning. However, the provision for the outdoor aspect of physical development in reception classes is unsatisfactory, because children have very limited access to an outside area. Opportunities to develop skills such as running, climbing and riding wheeled vehicles are too infrequent for satisfactory progress to be made in this aspect of learning.

Creative development

85. Children make satisfactory progress, overall, and are in line to match or exceed this Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception class. They draw, colour, paint, cut and glue. Nursery staff encourage independence in such skills as cutting. Children are developing increasing control in using different techniques such as printing or modelling, using recycled materials. Teachers encourage them to observe colours and shapes closely and recognise shades of colours, although they do not yet have the vocabulary to describe these differences. They are developing the ability to represent the world around them and to produce recognisable drawings and paintings. This continues in reception classes, where children used wool and straw to make a home for a 'mini-beast', although they found it hard to thread wool to make a spider's web. Nursery children sing rhymes and songs satisfactorily and are learning the words and to keep in tune. The specialist music teacher teaches reception children well and children's achievement is good. They were seen learning to shake and keep still a tambourine, even when passing it around the circle. They play instruments such as drums and tambours loudly and softly and listen to music with recognition. They do not yet always respond well physically to music, such as when attempting to move like animals. There is a range of good opportunities for structured and unstructured role-play to develop and stimulate children's imaginations, but the range of such activities in reception is limited. Staff teach pupils how to use materials and tools in a safe way and most children respond to this guidance well.

ENGLISH

86. Standards in English as shown by the results of the national tests for eleven-year olds in 2000 were close to the national average and well above those of schools with similar intake. Girls did better than boys, exceeding the national average; boys fell below it. Whilst the percentage of the expected level 4 was higher than average, that of level 5 was slightly lower. Standards reached by seven-year-olds, as shown by the national tests in 2000 were well below the national average and below that of similar schools in reading. In writing, they were in line with the national average and well above that of similar schools. Both boys and girls were below average in reading, but boys much more so. In writing, boys' performance was slightly below average, whilst that of girls exceeded it. The school's analysis agrees with the test results and it is currently placing high priority to raising boys' attainment.
87. Current attainment in reading is judged to be close to average by the end of both key stages and the school should meet its targets this year. This represents a considerable improvement in Key Stage 1, since last year's results were well below average. Older infants read books, such as 'Little Bear' readily with their classmates; younger ones know letter sounds well and try to sound out words they do not know. Brighter pupils explain the plot and express their interest in reading and writing poetry; most others express more simple likes and dislikes.
88. Average eleven-year-olds read fluently and accurately; they are skilled at recognising a writer's style and identify words that are used to influence readers' opinions of characters and events.

They have a good grasp of the plot of the books they read. They confidently use words like 'text' and 'genre' when discussing literature. Most pupils enjoy reading and do so at home. The work the school is currently doing to improve reading achievement by boys is having a noticeable effect; some boys are amongst the most able readers, but both boys and girls have limited access to a wide range of literature in the school and class libraries.

89. Many pupils spoken to regularly visit libraries with their families. They also use the school library to change reading books, but their knowledge of the library system and of non-fiction is not yet well developed because the school did not have a library until recently, when it was put into order by volunteer parents.
90. Pupils' writing reaches average national standards at the end of both key stages. Eleven-year-olds write fiction about space creatures, summaries of parts of books they have read together, such as C S Lewis' 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', and poems. They write in a range of non-fiction styles, including book reviews and explanations of design projects they develop, such as the designing of hats for a performance of the 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party'. They draft and develop stories, using word-processing software. The most able eleven-year-olds show increasing mastery of the different literary styles commonly used and generally present neat, well-formed handwriting, although some work is marred by variations in size, style and legibility. They check their work for punctuation and spelling. Their range of writing is widening, but could be broader to include letter writing, or play scripts, for example.
91. Seven-year-old pupils write stories and poems and a range of non-fiction. They write their own versions of dictionary definitions, dialogues and summaries and explanations about their reading. They use computers to draft and improve stories. The most able pupils are achieving well above average standards in their non-fiction writing, for example in writing instructions.
92. Speaking and listening is satisfactory at both key stages. Seven-year-olds speak clearly and articulately when, for example, they discuss literature in class, such as an extract from 'The Jungle Book'. They listen to each other's opinions, but some do not wait for their turn, calling out in classroom discussions. Pupils aged eleven confidently talk about different kinds of fiction texts, such as fantasy stories, adventures and science fiction. They listen carefully to their teachers, eager to learn. Although pupils are given some opportunities for drama, they are insufficient to enable pupils' confidence through role-play and extended improvised dialogues.
93. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, and is improving because of the current intensive training the school is receiving as part of their National Literacy Strategy entitlement. All teaching seen was satisfactory or better; just under half was good or very good. Scrutiny of pupils' work and the records of the local National Literacy Strategy advisers show that teachers are increasingly successful in targeting the learning needs of all the pupils in their classes. They use the recommended national planning format and are skilled at capturing and holding pupils' interest in extended studies of stories and text. The teacher of one Year 6 class, for example, intrigued pupils by demonstrating to them in a series of 'hands up' challenges that most of them had already come across the work of the current class author through adaptations of her work for television and films.
94. Teachers organise lessons well, so that their class sets to work very promptly and completes it on time. They involve all pupils by matching questions and group tasks well to pupils' differing abilities, enabling them to do interesting follow-up work, such as drafting a diary on their classroom computer. Easily understood written guides are used by teachers to provide a clear framework for pupils to structure their writing well.
95. Less successful teaching was characterised by follow-up tasks which were not targeted closely enough to the range of learning needs in the class. The most able pupils in some classes were given tasks too simple for them. Nine-year-old pupils, for example, were asked to join sets of sentences together with a range of conjunctions. The brighter pupils were simply asked to do more examples when their writing potential needed a more challenging task. Most pupils with special educational needs are set appropriate tasks and well supported where learning

assistants are available. However, some of these pupils and those of lowest ability have regularly been set the same task as the rest of the class and, in many cases, have failed to complete it. Some evidence was also seen of teachers offering incorrect explanations of grammar, such as describing a participle as a verb.

96. A consistent style of handwriting is not taught; there is variation between classes and no examples of the recommended school style on display in classrooms for pupils to follow. Teachers use a variety of styles in board work and hand-written worksheets and pupils' handwriting reflects this diversity. Although all workbooks showed some progress in writing and presentation over the current school year, pupils are still not developing them well enough. Some pupils are still using incorrect pencil grips and some are printing rather than joining their writing, well into the upper years.
97. Teachers are still working out the best way to make use of the new library and also the management of follow-up work in ICT from the computer suite to their classroom computers. Pupils with special educational needs, in particular, are not being given enough opportunity to use such tools as talking word processors to help them read and write independently.
98. Teachers' marking shows improvement over the past year in pupils' English books, notably in praising the best features and in making helpful comments for improvement. They mark work frequently and are using commercial and national tests to track achievement. The use of individual target setting is inconsistent in both writing and reading, which is made more difficult when pupils' reading records only contain the books covered or pages read, rather than specific advice about how to improve.
99. The majority of teachers encourage the use of literacy in other subjects and there are many examples of poetry and prayers displayed around the school. In ICT, pupils were seen writing amusing letters of complaint to fictional characters, for example Goldilocks to a porridge oats manufacturer about the quality of porridge in the three bears' house. Pupils' writing in science and design and technology follows a structured format. Little written work, however, was seen in history or geography.
100. The recently appointed English co-ordinator has made very good progress in driving forward the improvements recommended by the local National Literacy Strategy support team, with whom she works closely. She has chosen a good range of new texts and has regularly monitored teaching. However, she is aware that much remains to be done, particularly in improving the teaching of library skills, extended writing and handwriting, as well as the targeting of group work and assessment. The resources for English are now good, except for the range of classics and quality non-fiction and reference books in the library and the classrooms.

MATHEMATICS

101. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in the national tests in 2000 were in line with the national average and well above the average of similar schools. Boys did not achieve as well as girls and the school is developing strategies to redress the balance. There was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The results in last year's national tests for seven-year olds were close to the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving standards above those expected for seven-year-olds was also close to the national average and above the average for similar schools.
102. Inspection evidence shows that standards currently being achieved by pupils are average at the end of both key stages. Eleven-year-olds have a sound grasp of the four rules of number and use them satisfactorily to work out problems. Because of the firm emphasis throughout the school on mental computation, by the time they are in Year 6, pupils work out answers quickly and explain their methods. They have satisfactory knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes, and identify faces and vertices. They measure with sufficient accuracy in metric units. Average pupils reaching level 4, are able, for example, to plot co-ordinates in the first quadrant. Above average pupils extend this to working in all quadrants. All gain a sound understanding of data handling. Seven-year-olds add, subtract and multiply, using numbers up to 100. They identify

common two-dimensional shapes, draw bar charts and have a satisfactory understanding of measurement and capacity.

103. Lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work shows that all aspects of mathematics are given due attention. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' problem solving ability. There is not a consistent approach to presentation of work, however. As a result, when pupils reach Year 6 they do not all present their work in a sufficiently organised and intelligible way. The contribution that other subjects such as science, geography and design and technology can make to pupils' numeracy has yet to be fully explored.
104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. It is consistently good in Year 2 and Year 6. Of the lessons seen, teaching was very good in one, good in four, satisfactory in six and unsatisfactory in one. The co-ordinator continues to work hard to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and her well-kept monitoring records show she is being successful in this. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, and a good understanding of how pupils learn. There is a good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. Where teaching has shortcomings, lessons are not well structured and interesting and challenging activities are not well planned. In consequence, pupils lose interest and the pace of learning slows. The unsatisfactory lesson was the result of inadequate planning and the teacher being unclear about what she wanted pupils to learn. As a result, pupils were confused and did not make enough progress. Where teaching is good or better, pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and work with sustained concentration. Most pupils enjoy the subject and work hard. These good attitudes have a positive impact on their learning.
105. In the most successful lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved. They use a good range of resources, such as 'counting sticks', number cards and white boards to allow all pupils to answer, and to check each answer. Where teaching is good or better, teachers use carefully targeted questions to challenge all pupils, encouraging the reticent to play a full part, and mixing groups with girls and boys working together at all levels of attainment. In a very good mental mathematics session, pupils in a Year 5 class were highly motivated when counting in nines. They devised a simple method of adding ten and taking away one and used this effectively. In a few lessons seen, teachers failed to question those who did not volunteer to answer and some teachers did not give pupils enough time to consider their answers. In these lessons, pupils were observed copying other's answers when using white boards. This went unnoticed by the teachers or support staff and, as a result, some pupils were not being challenged to think for themselves. Most teachers understand the importance of asking pupils to explain their reasoning. Higher ability pupils in a Year 2 lesson, for example, learned methods for calculating 15×20 . They described their methods competently to the whole class and this enhanced the learning of all.
106. Most teachers speak clearly and they ensure that pupils understand new concepts and that they use new vocabulary correctly. This is of value to all pupils, but of great significance to those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.
107. Most teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work and to monitor learning. Individual targets are set and lesson objectives are shared so that pupils are aware of the progress they are making. The special needs teacher and learning support assistants give good quality support to pupils and make a significant contribution to learning. Higher ability pupils are also identified and are regularly assessed to ensure that they are making the progress of which they are capable. Teachers in Year 6 provide lunchtime lessons for them so that they may fulfil their full potential.
108. The leadership of mathematics is very good and ensures clear educational direction. The subject co-ordinator has put many initiatives in place since the recent amalgamation to help ensure consistency of practice and to improve standards. The structure and content of the National Numeracy Project are now firmly established in most classes. The co-ordinator, with help from the local authority's numeracy consultants, monitors teaching, guides planning and offers

colleagues very good advice. The school closely analyses its results to identify weaknesses in provision. These initiatives, together with a strong emphasis on mental computation and problem solving activities, are helping to raise standards. Good mathematics displays are a prominent feature in the classrooms. Resources are good, very well organised and generally well used in lessons. Teachers are making an increasing use of information technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Homework tasks are set weekly to enhance and consolidate what pupils have learned in class.

SCIENCE

109. Standards of attainment of eleven-year-olds, as shown by the National Curriculum tests in 2000 are in line with national averages and above those in similar schools in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 4. Girls did much better than boys, exceeding the national average, whilst boys fell below it. In the national teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, an average proportion of pupils reached the expected level 2.
110. Work seen during the inspection indicated that pupils meet national expectations by the end of the infant and the junior years. In the infants, this was seen in children's ability to make predictions and to carry out and record a survey of animal life in different habitats in the school grounds. In the juniors, it was evident in their answers to revision questions and in their ability to use keys to identify organisms. Boys were not working to a lower standard in the work seen and it seems that the school is correct in working to improve their literacy in its attempt to raise standards in the written tests. In relation to their ability, both boys and girls are achieving satisfactory standards in science. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as do those with English as an additional language. Although attempts are made to address the needs of the more able, these pupils are currently under-performing both at level 5 and in some aspects of investigation.
111. Teaching is satisfactory in both infant and junior classes. Much of the learning seen was related to the good behaviour, attitudes to the subject and harmonious personal relationships between pupils and teachers. Together with good management of pupils, this leads directly to their interest in the work and sustained periods of concentration. Teachers' knowledge of science is sound. This is reflected in the broadly accurate work seen in exercise books and lessons. Examples include infant work on physical characteristics of materials and such changes as melting and burning, and junior work on gravity, forces, electricity and, in particular, Year 6 work on magnetism. One weakness in teaching is the lack of emphasis on basic science skills, such as prediction, fair testing, tabulation and presenting data through graphs. This neglect of investigation and numeracy in science has led to lower achievement here and partly accounts for the under-performance of the more able. In spite of this, there is a wide range of learning opportunities in all the science areas, including a good emphasis on vocabulary and the use of computers to process work and seek information.
112. The curriculum is well organised, broad and balanced and addresses all statutory areas of the National Curriculum. Through practical work, co-operation and consideration of nature and the human place in it, science contributes satisfactorily to the social and cultural development of pupils. All pupils have access to and take interest and pleasure in the science curriculum.
113. At present, the assessment system has not yet been implemented and pupils are not sufficiently aware of the progress they are making and the standards they are achieving. However, subject leadership is satisfactory and science teaching has been monitored. The co-ordinator has an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and is starting to plan professional development to raise the understanding of science investigation. Priorities for development are appropriate and the school has the capacity to succeed by disseminating the good practice that exists in both infants and juniors. Accommodation and resources are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN

114. Standards of work seen at the end of each key stage were similar to those expected for children of this age. In the infants, this was evident from children's ability to make observational drawings of natural objects and pastel self-portraits. They also responded to photographic work on a sense of place. In Year 3, pupils made creative collages in response to observation of amethyst crystals and worked portraiture in charcoal and pastel, indicating progress since the infants. Year 4 made good use of wax resist techniques and colour computer graphics to show aesthetic responses to Earth in space. In Year 6, pupils responded to a project on a sense of place by producing detailed work on aspects of the church and the local environment.
115. In the lessons observed, teaching was imaginative and well directed. Teachers seek to create opportunities for sustained art projects and their teaching is characterised by attention to art techniques, research and response to art. Overall, teachers provide a satisfactory range of activities, including computer graphics and decorative work in design and make projects. Currently, teaching of juniors is stronger, with emphasis on observational work, collage and in research, although insufficient use is made of art from history or from other cultures. There is also a shortage in the provision of print, three-dimensional work and ceramics. Where these are available, pupils show great interest and they take pleasure in their experience of them.
116. Subject leadership is new, but a good start has been made in monitoring the work being done. The co-ordinator has an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and would like to raise its profile. In view of the limited time available, opportunities to raise awareness of the potential of art to illuminate other subjects, such as history, science and technology and religious education are limited. Resources are satisfactory and well used.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards of work seen in design and technology during the inspection were judged to be similar to those seen in many schools in both infant and junior years. In the infants, pupils showed satisfactory ability to design, make and perform with glove puppets. In the juniors, pupils in Year 4 satisfactorily researched historical artefacts and used their knowledge to design and make Tudor purses and chairs. In Year 5, pupils have made detailed plans of moveable toys to make working structures and mechanisms, embellishing them with their own decorations. In Year 6, pupils showed sustained interest in a project on hats, obtaining information via the internet, relating their designs to a literary theme ('Alice in Wonderland') and making and evaluating them. The wide range of designs reaches a satisfactory standard and indicates the individual nature and creativity of the children's work.
118. Design and technology teaching was not observed during the four days of inspection, yet the range of photographs, written work, plans and models on display is evidence that sound teaching and learning have taken place. There is a satisfactory range of activities in many of the areas of the subject with evidence that the design-make-evaluate cycle is in use, together with research into historical products and social uses of the products. Many materials, such as fabrics, wood and card, have been used with an appropriate range of tools. Structures have been made and tested with a variety of methods for joining and assembly. Different mechanisms have been studied (including axles and cams). There are sufficient named examples of children's work to indicate that all groups of pupils had access to the work.
119. At present, there is no co-ordinator and no evidence of subject monitoring or support. There is no evidence of control, hydraulics and pneumatics being part of the taught curriculum. Teachers' current level of skills is sufficient to maintain satisfactory teaching, but this will not remain so unless a co-ordinator is appointed to monitor the work, identify gaps in provision and support new teachers through training and the acquisition of resources. Currently, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

120. From work seen in books and displays, it is evident that pupils generally attain the expected

standards for infants and juniors by the end of each key stage. Eleven-year-olds have satisfactorily completed work on water-cycles, erosion, interpreting maps and marking routes to the River Thames and, in one Year 6 class, there was further work on avalanches and continents. A scrutiny of the work of infants completed this term shows that seven-year-olds have a satisfactory understanding of how to follow a route to Nigeria and have looked at various aspects of that country, but it was not possible to judge their acquisition of geographical skills.

121. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. In the one lesson seen in Year 4, the teacher reminded pupils of the need to show respect for foreign names and used good quality photographs, which gave a realistic impression of the country they were studying. She encouraged pupils to work independently by allowing them to identify the manmade features themselves from simple maps provided. They showed competence in this and quickly found India on a world map, knowing it is in the continent of Asia. In learning to distinguish between human and physical geographical features, they showed good discussion skills in pairs and a keen interest in their study. However, there is evidence in pupils' books that some simplistic or over-generalised information is given to pupils. In the infants, for example, they write that Nigerian houses are made of mud, while describing Lagos as a large, busy city. In the juniors, India's weather is summarised as wet. Work in books is frequently unfinished. Staff are encouraging the use of the internet to gain access to relevant facts, but this information is often just pasted into a book with little interpretation and this does not encourage the full development of research skills.
122. There is no co-ordinator for geography and no whole-school policy or overall scheme of work to give guidance to teachers' planning, which results in repetition of topics. Within year groups, teaching has not been monitored and assessment is unsatisfactory; it is common for one class to have completed more work than the other, revealing unequal opportunity. Visits take place to enhance the curriculum and there are some good links with history, such as the use of timelines to follow the introduction of water from Roman to Victorian eras.

HISTORY

123. Only one junior lesson was observed during the inspection, because of timetabling restraints. Based on this limited evidence, a scrutiny of work and displays, it is clear that pupils generally attain the standards expected for their age by the end of each key stage. By the age of 11, pupils have satisfactorily studied the Victorian era, learning about such aspects as the interpretation of census information and looking at the disadvantages and advantages of the introduction of railways. There is evidence of good extended writing in both Year 6 classes, but much is from given information and not as a result of research. By the end of the infants, pupils have satisfactorily covered aspects of Remembrance Day, the Great Fire of London and found out about Florence Nightingale and Mary Seole from the time of the Crimean War.
124. From the observation of one junior lesson and scrutiny of work, teaching is judged to be satisfactory, overall. Pupils in Year 5 were taught in an interesting way about the Ancient Greeks. The teacher involved them in reading aloud from information texts to the class and relating different statements to the cities of Athens and Sparta. However, she did not ensure that pupils were clear about the difference between primary and secondary historical sources and allowed very little discussion about the differences between life in the two cities; pupils only copied text. Marking is generally up to date, but there is unfinished work in books throughout the school, which limits progress.
125. There is no co-ordinator, whole school policy or scheme of work to guide staff in their planning and teaching of the subject. The lack of monitoring of planning and teaching sometimes leads to the repetition of work on particular periods of time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. Standards in ICT are close to those seen in most schools at the end of the Key Stage 2, although there are some gaps, because teachers are not able to cover the whole of the National

Curriculum programme of study. Eleven-year-old pupils evaluate a CD-ROM or internet home page, recognising the significance of size and colour of text in making this attractive and useful to the user. Although the school computer suite has been in operation only for a short time, most pupils can log on to the network and reach the area they require for their work. Seven-year-olds still need help with this, but show good control of the mouse in particular when using a paint programme to create an image. Keyboard skills are weak for most pupils and there is at present no software to help develop typing.

127. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory. Of the six lessons seen, one was good and the rest satisfactory. Two of these lessons were for infants and the others, including one science lesson with a large ICT bias, were for juniors. The standard of work on display also showed teaching to be satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally satisfactory in areas of the curriculum covered. Several have ICT training as one of their targets for performance management. They have made good progress in acquiring knowledge of how to use ICT in the curriculum since the new facilities have been available. This is evident from the progress noticeable in the quality of work seen in the classroom and ICT suite displays. These show that the youngest pupils are learning the names of various components, such as printer and screen, and are engaged in practising controlling the mouse; older ones are doing more sophisticated research into hats, using the internet for a design and technology project. This progress is satisfactory and teachers are teaching pupils at about the right level. The main weakness is that teachers' expertise is not as good as that of some of the more able pupils, particularly those who have computers at home. Consequently, they do not plan sufficient extension work to challenge these pupils, who waste time when they have finished the class activity. This was seen even at infant level where pupils using a paint programme in the computer suite wandered about when they had finished, despite being very well motivated by the task at the beginning.
128. In general, teachers have satisfactory expectations and a few expect more. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were asked to evaluate web pages with a view to designing their own. Teaching methods are satisfactory and some of the material used during the weekly intensive lesson in the ICT suite is stimulating. Pupils practise and consolidate, using classroom computers on a daily rota system, which ensures that all have regular access to computers during school time. There is no computer club for further practice or the chance to do homework.
129. Assessment at present is in its early stages; teachers keep tick sheets to show which pupils have completed the week's tasks. Teachers encourage even the youngest pupils to contribute to this. Reception children, for example, are encouraged to fill this in for themselves, using a very simple spreadsheet system. Assessment of National Curriculum levels, however, is at a very early stage. The curriculum is based on the QCA guidance, which includes assessment to be used, but lessons are not yet evaluated precisely enough to obtain levels of attainment. Consequently, teachers do not plan well enough to extend their brightest and most experienced pupils, although those of average and below average ability are generally receiving suitable work.
130. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory; the co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and newly in post since completing her probationary year. Her knowledge of the subject curriculum is developing through training, but control and datalogging are still missing. Her vision for the development of the subject is forming satisfactorily as she gains in knowledge herself, but this still needs to be enhanced by more training in the running of a network to ensure confidentiality and cross-curricular use. A great deal of money has been spent on creating the good ICT facilities, which include many new pieces of equipment as yet unused, because training has yet to take place. Although the school has some very good hardware and software, it is so new that teachers are still undergoing training and particular areas, such as datalogging and the use of spreadsheets to present graphs, are not yet adequately covered.

MUSIC

131. Standards in music for both infants and juniors by the end of both key stages are above those seen in most schools. The standard of singing by the school choir is well above average. Pupils in Year 6 play well-known tunes, such as 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?' accurately

on pitched percussion instruments, using a variety of unpitched percussion to accompany. Through careful direction from their teacher, they showed understanding of the terms 'theme and variation', though only the higher ability pupils and more accomplished musicians produced variations other than by playing the tune with different instruments each time. Pupils in Year 2 showed above average singing ability, able to follow the teacher's directions about when to come in so well that when a child conductor was chosen, they followed her directions easily.

132. The quality of teaching is good. A specialist teaches music, including singing, and all classes are taught music for an hour and a half per week. Hymn practice and preparation for festivals is in addition. This represents a generous investment of time, which is well used to maintain high standards. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and attaches great importance to correct technique. She trains pupils to watch, listen to each other and to pay attention to timing. Pupils know that singing strongly does not entail shouting but voice projection, and they reply to her question about how to succeed with 'practice makes perfect.' Lessons are well planned and structured to make the best use of the time available. In most lessons, the good control and management of the class creates an environment in which all children can learn and allows the naturally caring nature of the pupils towards those with special educational needs or disability to come to the fore; this was especially noticeable in the lower juniors. The teacher also holds sessions purely for pupils with special needs to ensure that they receive the maximum benefits from this more practical subject.
133. Singing is especially strong in the school and the choir from Years 4, 5 and 6 is valued for its contribution in the leading of liturgy for Mass. Their singing adds significantly to the spirituality of services both in church and in school. In singing lessons, techniques used are designed to improve musicality and performance skill. In every lesson there is a good vocal warm-up where pupils are encouraged to stand up and wriggle their bodies about to be aware of and improve posture. The emphasis on diction makes words very clear and rhythmic sense is enhanced by methods such as classes being divided into two halves, with one clapping the rhythm and the other keeping the pulse, whilst singing accurately.
134. Pupils listen to a wide variety of music, and the walls of the music room are decorated with good examples of children's work, showing the wide musical experiences offered. These include research into Vivaldi, written descriptions about playing the violin and reception children's images of the creatures in Saint Saens' 'Carnival of the Animals'.
135. Some children learn to play the violin with a peripatetic teacher and others the recorder. They are the only ones who are taught conventional notation. There is a little evidence of graphic notation being used in composition work; theory and formality of music are in their infancy.
136. The curriculum being followed is based on the QCA guidance, which is satisfactory, but there is no formal assessment of pupils' achievement. The teacher does her own monitoring of the curriculum from the Nursery to Year 6 and class teachers are not usually involved in their class's lessons. This is advantageous in giving them preparation and marking time, but does not allow them to gain expertise in music, so the school is highly dependent on the specialist teacher for all the children's experience.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Standards of attainment of eleven-year-olds are in line with what is expected for pupils this age. A broad curriculum is designed to promote pupils' physical and social development. All aspects of the subject are taught at different times of the year. However, not enough consideration has been given to organising the curriculum so that gymnastics, dance and games' skills can be more regularly taught to ensure a greater rate of progress in pupils' learning.
138. Lessons in games and swimming were seen during the inspection. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 attend swimming lessons at the local pool and make very good progress, guided by the instructors' knowledgeable teaching. Most eleven-year-old pupils meet - and many surpass - national expectations.

139. Pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment in physical education. By the end of Year 2, because of the satisfactory teaching they receive, pupils have increased their confidence in physical control and mobility. They perform a range of movements involving running and balancing and are gaining a satisfactory awareness of space. Pupils plan and perform simple skills safely, showing control in linking actions together. In games lessons, teachers help pupils to develop elements of play that include running, throwing, catching and control, using hands and feet. Pupils know the reasons for warming up before activities and the effects of exercise on their bodies. In dance, pupils explore moods and feelings and develop their response to music and other stimuli effectively. Most pupils, by the end of Year 2, remember, reproduce and explore simple actions with control and co-ordination.
140. Pupils enter Year 3 with a sound basis for further development and they make sound progress. Many are developing good ball skills, particularly in those lessons where teachers are conscious of the importance of giving them enough time to explore, practise and evaluate their own and other's performances. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were applying ball skills in a cricket session.
141. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory, overall; it was good in two lessons and satisfactory in three. Teachers generally have satisfactory knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons with clear learning intentions. Lessons begin with good warm-up sessions, but are not always structured well enough to keep pupils active in practising and improving skills at the level of which they are capable. Where teaching is good, effective use is made of pupils to demonstrate their techniques as a stimulus for improvement and there is a suitable emphasis on teaching the correct skills. In these lessons, teachers are aware of the needs of the less able and this ensures that they too make good progress.
142. Most teachers have developed positive relationships within their classes. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, behave well and work together safely and co-operatively. Teachers made good use of competition to motivate pupils' interest and to consolidate their learning. The pace of games lessons is generally good, ensuring that the benefits of the warm-up sessions are not diminished. Planning shows that pupils are taught to devise and perform dances, using a range of movement patterns, including some from different cultures and places. In gymnastics lessons, pupils learn to devise sequences for floor and on apparatus. The pace of pupils' learning is slow in lessons where teachers lack confidence. In these lessons, they stick too rigidly to the published scheme, stopping as they refer to lesson notes. Consequently, pupils are over-controlled and are not inspired to learn or to enjoy their lessons. A high number of pupils in one class did not take part in the lesson, because they had come to school without their PE kits. Teachers need to ensure, with parents' co-operation, that pupils have the correct kits for lessons so as not to be deprived of healthy exercise.
143. The subject co-ordinator provides knowledgeable leadership. She is a dance specialist and has provided workshops and model lessons for teachers. Since her recent appointment she has introduced sound assessment procedures to help teachers plan work for pupils of different attainment. She has a clear action plan for the future development of the subject. Extra-curricular activities such as football, netball and the 'Champions Club' enhance pupils' learning and their sense of achievement. Pupils in Year 6 are offered good opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities during their annual residential trip.