

INSPECTION REPORT

GASCOIGNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barking, Essex

LEA area: Barking

Unique reference number: 131775

Headteacher: Mr R H Garton

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock
21261

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th May 2001

Inspection number: 230653

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gascoigne Road Barking Essex
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Russell
Date of previous inspections:	The school was newly formed in January 1999 through the amalgamation of two schools on the site. Previous inspection reports are no longer valid.

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20523	Diana Bateman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	
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7084	Jack Haslam	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	
27061	Ian Stainton-James	Team inspector	Science Special educational needs	Leadership and management
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Gascoigne Primary School is in the heart of a residential area close to the centre of Barking. During the inspection week, 811 pupils aged between 3 and 11 were on roll - with slightly more boys than girls. Gender imbalances are marked in some classes. Currently, 111 children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. There is a high, rising pupil mobility (above 40 per cent, currently). The school is much bigger than others of its kind. Children start Nursery during the September following their third birthday, moving to Reception a year later. A significant number joins the school during the Reception year. On entry, most children are assessed as having poor skills in all areas of learning for children under five, but especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Approximately 32 per cent of the school population is of minority ethnic origin. Approximately 23 per cent are Refugees. Around 49 per cent of all pupils speak English as an additional language. Of these, around 23 per cent are in the early stages of acquiring English language skills and are supported through ethnic minority achievement grant funding. The main languages spoken in addition to English are Albanian, French Lingala, Urdu and Turkish. Altogether, 36 languages are represented in the school. Around 55 per cent of full-time pupils are eligible for free school meals, a fluctuating figure as pupils come and go. These statistics are much higher than in most Primary schools. Approximately 24 per cent of pupils from the Nursery to Year 6 have special educational needs with almost 2 per cent having Statements of special need. These figures are above the average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Gascoigne is a very effective school. Since opening as a new school in January 1999, standards have risen, especially in mathematics and science but also in English. Two thirds of all teaching is good or better, a fact which helps standards rise in classes throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 but especially in the later key stage. The school is a calm, caring, place where pupils from the Nursery upwards feel secure and valued for what they have to offer. The headteacher has done much to create this ethos, providing vigorous leadership, in close liaison with his deputy headteachers and other senior managers as well as with governors. The chair of governors contributes notably to the school. The school is rightly proud of its 'Investor in People' status. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are rising in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science across the school. Pupils reach high standards in mathematics and science, especially in Key Stage 2.
- A high proportion of teaching is of good or better quality and this positively affects standards achieved.
- From the Nursery to Year 6, pupils' positive attitudes towards school ensure their behaviour is most frequently good or better.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils learning English as an additional language is good with strengths evident in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The range and quality of extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- The headteacher and senior managers provide vigorous leadership in pursuit of common goals. In this, they are ably supported by all members of staff.
- Governors are good critical friends, fully committed to the school's values. They work hard on its behalf.
- There are very good procedures for the care and welfare of pupils. Pupils of all ages are respected and treated as important members of the school community.
- Parents have very positive views of the school. They are kept well informed of school matters.

What could be improved

- Standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development in the Foundation Stage.
- Teachers' planning for children's different learning needs in the Foundation Stage.
- Provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Standards in art in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The application of extended writing skills to subjects across the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Consistency in teaching information and communication technology across the school, and standards.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms throughout the school by co-ordinators.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was newly created in January 1999 from Infants and Junior schools already on the site (previous inspection findings about these schools are not, now, pertinent). However, the school has clearly made good strides since the amalgamation in improving its education and raising standards. It has concentrated well on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in statutory tests. A good management structure is now in place allowing the headteacher to work closely with key senior managers. Senior managers' monitoring activities have led to marked advances in the quality of teaching throughout the school. Governors make a good contribution to the school's strategic development. Commitment to shared goals evident amongst all staff is excellent and is owed to the headteacher's vision and governors' support. The school has a very good capacity to move forward.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. ¹

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/a	E	E	B
mathematics	N/a	C	D	B
science	N/a	C	A	A*

Key

Very high A*

Well above average A

Above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

Results for mathematics are below those for 1999, relative to national averages, although very good gains have been made in science. In English, results appear the same. In fact, results in all three subjects are better than last year's when pupils' achievements are studied relative to the nationally expected Level 4 or above. At the higher Level 5, pupils did not perform as well as their peers in all schools in English and mathematics. Consequently, overall results in these subjects are depressed when scores for Levels 4 and 5 are aggregated. Because of pupils' very good results at the higher Level 5 in science, aggregated scores give the positive picture seen in the table. Pupils do very well compared with peers in similar schools. Results in science put the school in the top 5 per cent of schools when this comparison is made. Strengths

¹ The table reflects revised results for 2000 in light of information received by the school from the Department for Education and Employment. The Secretary of State for Education deemed that recently-arrived pupils at an early stage in learning English and unfamiliar with the English education system were seriously disadvantaged in undertaking statutory tests and so should be excluded from the published results.

show in children's social, emotional and personal development and in physical development in the Foundation Stage, and most are in line to reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. Progress in the other four areas of learning, whilst evident, is not so secure, and most children are judged unlikely to reach levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception year. In Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in most subjects are satisfactory. Good singing is heard in music lessons and key stage assemblies, although standards in information and communication technology and in art drop below those expected at the end of each key stage.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils of all ages are often enthusiastic, with high levels of interest in tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, behaviour is usually good, with most pupils showing good levels of concentration and motivation.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities when opportunities arise. A significant number stay unaware of how their actions affect others.
Attendance	Poor.

Pupils of all ages respond well to teachers where high expectations of work and behaviour are made explicit. Pupils form positive relationships with adults and with one another. They mostly co-operate well. At times, however, the provocative behaviour of a few disrupts lessons, affecting classroom learning detrimentally. At such times, these pupils show little sensitivity to others' interests and feelings, being intent on their own pre-occupations. In spite of consistent efforts made by the school, attendance remains poor. It is adversely affected by high pupil mobility and by pupils taking extended holidays to visit relatives overseas. A significant number arrives late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

Teaching is a strength. It is mainly good, particularly in Key Stage 2. Overall, 96 per cent of teaching is satisfactory. Of this, 43 per cent is good, 20 per cent is very good and 3 per cent is excellent. That is, two-thirds of lessons seen were rated as good or better. In only a small number (representing 4 per cent) was teaching unsatisfactory. Teaching strengths are major contributors to the school's rising standards in English, mathematics and science in Key Stages 1 and 2. Allied to the good expertise of specialist teachers and classroom assistants, it also accounts for the commendable progress of pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, and pupils learning English as an additional language in these key stages. Nursery and Reception teachers have a sound knowledge of how very young children learn. Nursery Nurses bring good levels of expertise to their work and make a very good contribution to early years' provision. However, teachers' planning is not sufficiently rigorous in showing how the needs of particular groups or individuals will be met, for example, regarding children with special educational needs, those in the early stages of learning English and higher attaining children. All teachers have a good grasp of how to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have too few opportunities to apply extended writing skills to other subjects. The teaching of information and communication technology skills is rather insecure and, often, pupils have few opportunities to use these skills in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall throughout the school. Curricular provision is suitably broad in the Foundation Stage and the later key stages.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall, with some weaknesses identified in aspects of provision in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall, but there are weaknesses in aspects of provision in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with strengths evident in provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good provision is made. The care and welfare of pupils is a high priority throughout the school.

The school meets statutory requirements. In the Foundation Stage, all areas of learning are suitably planned with the exception of outdoor play. This does not form a natural part of teaching and learning available to all classes. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school's dedication to raising standards in core subjects has led to imbalance in time allocated to others. This hinders pupils' acquisition of key skills. They have little awareness of or confidence in applying such skills across the curriculum. For example, skills in art are insufficiently developed, depressing standards at seven and eleven years of age. Pupils' spiritual development is catered for through acts of collective worship both in classrooms and in key stage assemblies, although few lessons communicate a spontaneous sense of fun or joy in learning as a means of developing spirituality. Provision for extra-curricular activities in Key Stages 1 and 2 is excellent. Wide-ranging after-school clubs are well attended by both girls and boys. The school's partnership with parents is no more than satisfactory, although this judgement by no means reflects lack of effort on the school's part.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher and his two deputies are strong, effective leaders. They are well supported by other senior managers and by teaching and non-teaching staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	To good effect. Governors, especially key members with specified responsibilities, actively support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring activities systematically undertaken by senior managers give good quality information about strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school tightly controls budgetary matters and funding is properly allocated.

At the time of the inspection there were sufficient qualified teaching staff to meet curricular demands for the age ranges taught. Staffing pressures, however, do interrupt ongoing (planned) developments. For example, co-ordinators do not monitor classroom teaching and learning practices to see at first hand how subjects are delivered. This is because senior staff sometimes step in to cover teaching duties and so cannot take over co-ordinators' classes for agreed periods of time. Accommodation is adequate with some very good features, for example the purpose-built classroom block for children under five. Elsewhere, classrooms are cramped for the size of classes. Demountable 'huts' are stuffy and airless in hot weather. There is no hall of sufficient size for all members of the school community. Nevertheless, the school is an attractive learning environment because adults consistently use available space well and display pupils' work to very good advantage. Resources are generally sufficient to meet curricular demands. They are of good quality and are well used. However, resources for outdoor play (including for imaginative play) are insufficient in the Foundation Stage, notwithstanding the very good outdoor equipment in Reception classes. The school applies principles of best value well. It regularly checks that its contracts do give value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and enjoy going. • They make good progress, reaching good standards. • Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of children. • The school provides good information. • Parents are very well informed about their children's progress. • There is a good range of activities outside lessons. • Homework is sufficient and regular. • The school is well led and managed. • Teachers and the headteacher are very willing to talk about parents' concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is not set regularly enough. • More able children's needs are not as well catered for as those with difficulties in learning. • Insufficient information is given about standards children should be reaching.

Inspectors' findings support the positive views expressed by most parents. Homework is sufficient and it is set in line with the stated policy. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers plan effectively for different levels of learning need, including the needs of more able children. In the Foundation Stage, however, it is not always clear how children's different needs are being met through planned activities, although adults talk knowledgeably about each child's needs when assessing learning informally. Annual reports on children's progress are detailed and informative. Parents have good opportunities to meet teachers each term to discuss their children's progress and can informally arrange such meetings at any point during the school year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Although a full range of levels of attainment is found in children starting Nursery, most pupils' attainment is poor for their age in all areas of learning. These areas include: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Children's personal and social development as well as their language and number skills and general knowledge of the world are of particular concern to teachers. This concern is not confined to the significant number learning English as an additional language, since such children are one part of the full picture. Indeed, bilingual children² are able to communicate their needs and ideas in their home language while being at an early stage of expressing themselves in English. Some are able to communicate fluently in English and most show they understand what is said to them. Baseline assessment administered in line with requirements at the start of the Reception Year shows that children's attainments stay below levels expected for their age in all areas. It also shows that children are nonetheless broadly in line with peers in other local schools at this point. The significant number who start school in the Reception year (many after the school year starts) often begins with a level of attainment well below that usually expected for their age.
2. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and most are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. This is due to the consistent attention paid by adults to such developments as important ways of managing children's success across the curriculum. Children also make good progress in their physical development. They benefit, especially, from a stimulating range of equipment available in the Reception classes for outdoor play. Most are set to exceed the Early Learning Goals in physical development by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. However, whilst children make sound progress in the other four areas in both Nursery and Reception classes, most are unlikely to reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the end of the Reception year. Communication, language and literacy skills and those relating to mathematical and creative development and to knowledge and understanding of the world remain under-developed, overall.
3. In the 2000 statutory tests, the proportion of seven year-olds reaching the expected Level 2 and above in reading and writing was below national averages. In mathematics, pupils attained broadly in line with the national average at this level. In reading, results at the higher Level 3 were close to the national average but no pupil reached this higher level in writing, and their mathematics performance also fell well below the national average. Specifically, in all three tests, the high proportion of pupils achieving at the lower range of Level 2 and below – relative to the national picture - depressed results. Consequently, when scores for the higher range of Level 2 and for Level 3 are aggregated, they drop below the national average in each case. Generally, results in reading were better than in writing. This outcome follows expected patterns since a very high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language were still, at the time of testing, in the early stages of their English language-learning, and progress in writing skills frequently lags behind that of skills in reading. Yet it shows a downward trend from results in 1999. By comparison, pupils score well above the average gained by peers in similar schools in reading and above the average in writing and mathematics. Over a two-year period, boys do less well than girls in both reading and writing, in line with national trends. Again in line with national trends, boys do better than girls in mathematics. In teacher assessments, pupils were judged to be below average in speaking and listening at expected levels, although numbers reaching the higher Level 3 broadly matched up with the national average. Teacher assessments in science also show pupils' attainment at the expected Level 2 or above fell below the national average. At the higher Level 3, by contrast, it rose above this average overall. Teachers

² For ease of expression, pupils learning English as an additional language will sometimes be referred to as 'bilingual' throughout the Report. It is recognised these pupils may be familiar with more than one language both for literacy purposes as well as orally, in addition to acquiring English.

diagnosed weaknesses in all strands of science but especially in pupils' knowledge about 'life processes' and 'living things'.

4. In the 2000 statutory tests for English at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of eleven-year-olds reaching both the expected Level 4 and above and the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. In mathematics, too, results at these levels were below the national average but in science they rose well above pupils' results nationally. In fact, results improved on the previous year's in all three subjects in terms, solely, of the expected Level 4. The dramatic rise in science above the 1999 results is due to the high proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5. Performance at this level was much poorer in the other two subjects, especially in English. Consequently, when scores for Level 4 and Level 5 are aggregated, results overall are depressed. Over two years – in line with the national picture - girls out-performed boys in English but did less well than boys in mathematics. There were no gender-related differences found in science. When compared to the results of their peers in similar schools, pupils' results were above average in English and mathematics. In science, pupils' results were very high when such comparison is made, placing the school in the top five percent of schools on this criterion. Pupils did particularly well at the higher Level 5 in both mathematics and science when comparisons between similar schools are made.
5. Inspection evidence shows pupils in both key stages make good progress in all aspects of English as a result of current strategies for teaching literacy and the frequently good or better teaching. Teachers have a good grasp of the local education authority's scheme of work, which underlies approaches to teaching the National Literacy Strategy. So standards are rising. In Year 6, however, factors affecting all classes are exacerbated for pupils in their final year of primary schooling (see paragraph 7 below). Although pupils make good progress in acquiring crucial skills, attainment is judged below what might otherwise be expected for this age. Attainment for seven-year-olds is also judged to drop below national expectations for reasons similar to those affecting results in statutory tests. In mathematics, inspection evidence finds attainment in line with levels expected for pupils at the end of Year 2. It is above levels expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. For example, lower attaining pupils frequently achieve in line with national expectations for their age whilst those of average and higher attainment often do better. The school has successfully addressed problems in mathematics through careful target setting for each pupil and through continuing to improve teaching (and so learning.) Teachers have a thorough grasp of the local education authority's scheme of work, which is closely allied to the National Numeracy Strategy. This positively affects standards achieved. Inspection evidence upholds the good outcomes from statutory tests and assessments in science. It shows pupils reach good standards by seven and eleven years of age. Standards generally have risen steadily over the last two years as a result of the school's carefully analysing test and assessment information. A sharper focus on pupils' skills in experimental and investigative processes has also helped. The school sets realistic statutory targets in English and mathematics matched to its very good assessment information, gathered at the end of each school year from statutory tests and from optional tests administered in Years 3 to 5.
6. Inspectors found no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys in mathematics and science. However, such differences show in English. A significant minority of boys in each class has a notably short attention span. They find it hard to concentrate on tasks without adult support. Even with such support, some need constant reminders to attend to the matter in hand. Problems are exacerbated in literacy lessons since much work depends on pupils listening attentively and applying efforts to tasks that are not of a practical nature, unlike work in mathematics and (especially) in science. It is interesting, for instance, that Years 1 to 3 pupils thoroughly enjoy their speech and drama lessons because they can actively apply their imaginations and participate through talk in joint efforts. Good progress is seen in these lessons. Even so, some boys still need personal attention to remain on task. The school is suitably aware of the difficulties stated and continues to give priority to teachers' behaviour management strategies and to studying teaching and learning situations in order to decide how, for example, to deploy support staff to best effect.
7. The incidence of pupils starting school during the Reception year and throughout the later key stages has risen sharply since 1999 and continues to rise. At the time of the inspection, there had been in excess of 30 per cent pupil mobility since the start of the current school year and the figure rises each week. On the basis of past experience, the school predicts this figure will be above 40 per cent

by the end of term in July. In addition, the number of transient pupils has risen to such an extent that the school finds it has to delegate resources solely to dealing with the spin-offs from pupil movement. The problem is made worse by the number of pupils who move in and out of school during the course of their primary schooling. Such movement is occasionally rapid and difficult to track. For example, the current Year 6 contains only 25 per cent of children who started in the Nursery (albeit, prior to the amalgamation of the school in 1999) and have remained in school since. Of the remaining 75 per cent, a substantial number has attended a number of schools, some returning periodically to Gascoigne. Included in late entrants to the school are a growing number at the early stages of learning English as an additional language as well as pupils with special educational needs. All of these factors clearly affect results achieved by seven and eleven-year-olds in assessments and statutory tests.

8. In the Foundation Stage, children on the Code of Practice register of special needs get appropriate support from staff in Nursery and Reception classes. Such support is especially effective in helping children with 'challenging' behaviour join in activities alongside their peers. Overall during the Foundation Stage, however, children with special needs generally make unsatisfactory progress in their learning because available assessment information is not used well to plan for their identified learning needs. On the other hand, in Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make good progress and attain in line with their prior attainment. Specialist staff are well deployed to match pupils' known learning needs and teachers take good account of targets set in pupils' individual educational plans in their planning. Pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 because of the good quality support allotted to those in the early stages of learning English. Frequently, bilingual pupils attain at least in line with their peers, especially where English language skills are securely established. In the Nursery and Reception classes, however, support is somewhat diffuse. Therefore, particular needs are not pinpointed in planning although these may be well known through assessment procedures. Similarly, higher attaining children are not always sufficiently challenged in the Foundation Stage because their needs are not clearly related to teachers' intended learning outcomes. Again, however, such a relationship is often made explicit in the later key stages. Higher attaining pupils are suitably extended in their learning, especially (although not solely) regarding the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and most notably in Key Stage 2. In a small number of instances, these pupils were sometimes not well challenged by tasks set in mathematics in the earlier key stage.
9. Pupils apply literacy skills satisfactorily to other subjects across Key Stages 1 and 2 although opportunities for them to apply the good skills gained through writing stories are limited. Few instances of extended writing where pupils use their own words were seen in religious education, history and geography. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge well to tabulate information in geography and science. For example, they compile charts showing the effect of exercise on the body. Pupils were not observed using computers routinely in classrooms and, generally, have too few opportunities to apply skills acquired in information and communication technology lessons to other subjects.
10. Because the school is dedicated to raising standards in the three core subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2, time is not allocated to other subjects consistently throughout the year. Consequently, standards in these vary. In history, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in Key Stage 1, but pupils reach satisfactory standards in history by eleven. In design and technology, music and physical education, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards across all strands at the end of each key stage. In aspects seen, standards are judged satisfactory, with pupils acquiring necessary skills in ways that enable them to build on prior learning. Standards in singing are good throughout the school but especially in a Year 6 class because of high quality teaching. However, teachers' planning shows the delivery of subjects can be spasmodic, so pupils may experience quite long gaps of time before being able to build on their learning. Standards in geography match those expected at seven and eleven years of age. Similarly, pupils achieve standards in line with expectations at the end of each key stage as set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In both these subjects, however, as with history, the oldest pupils will more confidently talk about what they have learned than record their ideas. Standards in information and communication technology and in art are below what can be expected for seven and

eleven year olds. Information technology is a developing subject, highlighted as a priority in school improvement planning. As yet, pupils do not apply new learning in skills-based lessons to other subjects with any degree of regularity. In art, pupils have too few opportunities to acquire and exercise necessary skills in ways that give them confidence when applying these for other purposes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Attitudes to school are good for all pupils, including pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. A keen enthusiasm for school and enjoyment of lessons are frequently evident throughout the school. Pupils show a positive interest in the work they do and are eager to be involved in activities such as the discussions at the start and end of lessons. Whilst pupils in the main work well on their own, they also enjoy co-operating in shared tasks. However, although most respond well to teachers and are well motivated by tasks, a significant minority has difficulty concentrating quietly, both independently and within small groups. These pupils work well supported by specialist staff. They are also responsive to class teachers who make expectations clear and monitor progress consistently. On occasion, however, they adopt a provocative stance adults find difficult to manage. Otherwise, when they can, most pupils enjoy challenges and show good initiative. For example, in mathematics and science lessons, Key Stage 2 pupils, especially, often put forward good ideas when explaining how to solve mathematical problems or when setting up fair tests in science. Many pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 appreciate the wide-ranging opportunities presented by school clubs, which are well attended by both girls and boys. During one after-school session alone, over 80 pupils engaged in a range of activities taught by eight adults. Many pupils in these key stages also happily carry out routine jobs (for example, taking registers to the school office), although there are few opportunities for pupils to show initiative through such means.
12. The behaviour of all pupils throughout the school is generally satisfactory. Frequently, it is good, both in classrooms and around the school. However, the behaviour of a significant minority creates difficulties within lessons and outside. This has a marked impact on the quality of classroom life and on the amount of time teachers and other staff spend managing behaviour in and out of classrooms. For example, in two Year 3 classes, challenging behaviour from a small number in each class meant that the content of the lessons observed could not be delivered as planned. Too much time was spent dealing with a succession of incidents of social control. The pupils most concerned understood little, if anything, about how their behaviour affected others; mainly, they gave way to the impulse to cause trouble. In another Year 3 class, a pupil's request to take on responsibility as a group leader was queried in light of the problems caused by his lunchtime behaviour. On reflection, he thought he could still take on such responsibility, and this proved to be the case. More generally, pupils' good behaviour positively influences their progress during lessons and so helps them build on previous learning. Most realise how their behaviour affects others and take responsibility for their actions. Pupils are frequently kind and thoughtful to one another when working on shared tasks in lessons. They like to help visitors find their way around the school. Dining-room behaviour is very good at lunchtime, especially considering the large numbers using dining rooms during comparatively short periods of time. For example, a group of pupils from classes in Years 3 to 5 talked enthusiastically, looking forward to their first debate as members of the debating society while they ate together. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 are good ambassadors for the school on journeys to and from swimming and sailing lessons, respectively. Most pupils respond well to the school's code of conduct, being courteous, trustworthy and respectful. Instances of bullying and of aggressive, sexist and racist behaviour are rare. When they do occur, the school is quick to deal with such matters. Where deemed appropriate, staff members are prepared to operate procedures clearly set out in the exclusion policy and pupils understand the routines that will be followed. The number of exclusions reflects the high number of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties in the school population.
13. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults throughout the school are good on the whole. An element of respect for teachers and other adults, as well as for each other, often comes to the fore in pupils' behaviour. For example, they will spontaneously hold doors open for adults and ask whether help is needed in finding the way within a complex building with many doors and possible routes. Responding to good adult role models, pupils usually respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They listen attentively to others' views and sense the support needed, for example, by other pupils at an early stage in learning English as an additional language. A pleasant ethos in the dining rooms and friendly nature of playground behaviour at break times owe much to the generally good relationships within the school and pupils' respect for the adults in charge.
14. Attendance rates are poor. The level of authorised absence is well above the national average. Families making extended visits to their country of origin accounts for a large number of absences.

The proportion of unauthorised absences compared to the national average is also high. The major contributing factor is a very high incidence of transient families who frequently do not notify the school of their movements. As a result, technically, many pupils stay on the school roll even though in practice they have moved to another area. A significant number arrives late for morning lessons, but teachers' skilful handling of possible disruptions to the flow of class activity minimises these.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is mainly good with strengths in Key Stage 2. Overall, 96 per cent of teaching is satisfactory. Of this, 43 per cent is good, 20 per cent is very good and 3 per cent is excellent. That is, two-thirds of lessons seen were rated as good or better. In only a small number (representing 4 per cent) was teaching found to be unsatisfactory. Evident strengths in teaching are major contributors to the school's rising standards in English, mathematics and science in Key Stages 1 and 2. Strong teaching, allied to the good expertise of specialist teachers and classroom assistants, also accounts for the commendable progress of pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, and pupils learning English as an additional language in Key Stages 1 and 2. These pupils frequently do better than might be expected.
16. In the Foundation Stage, teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory but is mainly satisfactory (62 per cent). It is good in 24 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 5 per cent. In all, 10 per cent of teaching is judged unsatisfactory. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes have a sound knowledge of how very young children learn. Nursery Nurses bring good levels of expertise to their work and make a very good contribution to early years' provision. Teachers and support staff collaborate well as teams within each classroom. Good liaison across classes ensures important information is properly shared. Teams generally plan work to meet widely diverse needs of children in their care. However, planning is not rigorously explicit enough in showing how the needs of particular groups or individuals will be met, although these needs are well articulated when adults discuss each child. Their detailed knowledge is gained through assessment procedures sometimes undertaken by specialist colleagues (for example, related to identifying special educational needs) and through the regular, planned, observations of children in each area of learning by early years practitioners. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has a reasonably informed overview of teaching and learning in classrooms, although largely in the Reception classes. She provides good support to new members of staff, inducting them into the school's approach to early years education as a way of promoting agreed practices. The co-ordinator undertakes demonstration lessons and also team-teaches with colleagues to share good practice. Foundation Stage teachers have a sound insight into how to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, information and communication technology skills are not taught consistently in all classes. In Nursery classes, especially, children have too few opportunities to acquire and practise these.
17. In Key Stage 1, teaching is most frequently good (51 per cent). It is very good in a further 11 per cent of lessons with 2 per cent judged unsatisfactory and 36 per cent judged sound. Teaching in Key Stage 2 ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory (3 per cent). In the main, it is good (43 per cent) but a substantial proportion, representing 29 per cent, is very good and a further 5 per cent is excellent. In all, 20 per cent of teaching in the key stage is judged satisfactory. Teachers in these key stages frequently demonstrate sophisticated understanding of how to plan for the different learning needs of pupils to meet National Curriculum requirements. Strengths are evident in the planning and delivery of English, mathematics and science where the school is bent on raising standards to meet national expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds, and is increasingly successful. Planning is well aimed at meeting the needs of different groups of children, including higher attainers. In non-core subjects, suitable planning is somewhat hampered by the disjointed scheduling of programmes for some curriculum areas (for example, history) and the limited time given each week to others (for example, physical education). Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills. Some teachers' lack of confidence in teaching information and communication technology skills leads to inconsistency across classes in the way the subject is delivered.
18. Where teaching is good or better, teachers across the school manage pupils firmly and make their expectations in this regard quite clear. For example, in a Year 2 geography lesson a teacher

insisted everyone listened to others talking about maps, even though this took time because some found it hard to express their ideas. In such lessons, teachers consistently respect pupils, so modelling their own high expectations of classroom behaviour. In a very good religious education lesson in Year 5, a teacher confided in pupils about her own personal faith, thus opening up rich possibilities for discussion. In keeping with her open approach, she later called into question the rude manner adopted by a boy in addressing her. The pupil apologised and the lesson went on smoothly. Everyone took note, perhaps because exchanges had been conducted courteously. Where teaching is excellent, teachers set high demands through the pace of lessons and in their work at maintaining each lesson's focus. They also enthusiastically impart their very good subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 6 music lesson, pupils pitched and held low 'C' individually, building on prior learning and intent on getting the task right. Teachers and other adults working in classrooms make good relationship with pupils. Pupils are allowed to work actively as much as possible. In a Nursery class a teacher captured children's interest in a story partly through her voice and partly through the antics of a puppet character. During this session, Nursery Nurses helped to retain a busy classroom ethos where children made good gains in learning. Throughout the school, classrooms are organised attractively by teachers in preparation for welcoming pupils into each day's activities. This preparation adds considerably to the inviting atmosphere greeting pupils as they arrive.

19. In the few instances where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers sometimes find managing the behaviour of a few pupils difficult. At times, however, teachers direct work too tightly, not letting pupils put forward their own ideas even when expected to do so. For example, when sharing a book with a Year 2 class, a teacher's questions about its picture and events were pertinent enough. Pupils wanted to answer. But they were stopped by the teacher's own suggestions. Eventually, the children lost interest and became restless at the slow pace of the lesson, falling into inappropriate behaviour. In a Nursery session, too, its slow pace led to children running around the classroom and losing interest in an activity based on a familiar story that they initially found interesting.
20. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers make good use of ongoing assessments to adjust lesson content. They also use formal assessments made during each half-term period effectively. Teachers' marking in English, mathematics and science frequently helps them pin down strengths and weaknesses so pupils know where to make improvements. Homework reinforces classroom learning in line with the school's policy. Homework tasks widen in scope suitably as pupils move through Key Stage 2. During the inspection, many times, teachers in the later key stage reminded pupils to note homework tasks written on the board in their homework diaries, then waited until this was done. In the Foundation Stage, teachers and Nursery Nurses effectively determine children's learning needs during the course of lessons via ongoing informal assessments. The use of formal assessment information is, however, under-developed. Children are encouraged to take books home regularly as an important way of fostering a love of reading and building on classroom learning.

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

21. Curricular provision is satisfactory throughout the school. The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all areas of learning, in line with recent curricular guidance for children in Nursery and Reception classes. But there is an exception with provision for outdoor play. This is not integrated into curricular planning in ways extending children's learning into the outdoor environment as a natural part of classroom activities. The school rightly identifies the need to improve this aspect of provision in its development planning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, it provides a suitably broad curriculum in accordance with National Curriculum requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
22. Because of the good overview gained by senior managers in their monitoring of classroom teaching and learning practices, there is a consistency of approaches to curricular planning and delivery within and across each key stage (including the Foundation Stage). Monitoring is well aimed at evaluating what is seen and determining strategies for improving provision. Most subject co-ordinators (mainly but not only of non-core subjects) do not, yet, monitor the delivery of their subject in classrooms and so do not have first-hand knowledge of how planned content is taught, and where strengths and

weaknesses might lie. Some co-ordinators have only recently taken up their posts and so, necessarily, are finding their way in undertaking new responsibilities. Co-ordinators of the core subjects (English, mathematics and science) monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work consistently but this practice is not fully established in other subjects

23. The school deals pragmatically with the learning needs of its pupil-population, stressing a delivery of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Key Stages 1 and 2 in order to raise standards. The quality and range of its learning opportunities are satisfactory and the time allocated to all subjects during the school year broadly matches recommended levels. However, whilst a focus on core subjects is achieving desired results, it leads to an imbalance in the way time is allocated to other subjects. Consequently, pupils do not build on prior learning, regularly, by exercising important skills and applying new learning to increasingly demanding tasks. Therefore, for example, pupils' work lacks consistent evidence showing how they use artefacts or other historical sources, or record their own ideas as aids to an understanding of past times.
24. Plans used for the national literacy and numeracy strategies exploit the local educational authority's schemes of work designed for this purpose. The national literacy strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and basic skills are taught effectively, although the application of skills to other subjects is limited. So, in religious education, pupils read work sheets for meaning based on selected texts by the time they reach the later Key Stage 2 and write correct answers to questions using a structured format. But their application of extended writing skills is limited and few examples of such writing were seen during the inspection in subjects where one might have expected to see it, such as religious education, history and geography. The implementation of the national numeracy strategy is very good, as is the teaching of basic skills. By the upper Key Stage 2, pupils are very good at handling numbers and can, for instance, create tables when setting out statistical information in science.
25. Equality of access to the full curriculum is good throughout the school. It is included in planned provision. Strengths are evident in Key Stages 1 and 2. Here, support staff helps pupils with identified needs, such as those in the early stages of learning English as a second language in Key Stage 1, meet curricular goals effectively with a consequent impact on standards achieved. Where pertinent, planning takes good account of targets set in individual education plans for pupils on the Code of Practice register of special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need. In the Foundation Stage, however, curricular planning frequently lacks focus. It does not show plainly enough how the learning needs of different groups will be met either through the use of support staff or through planned activities. It is thus not possible to see, for example, how children at different stages of acquiring English language skills, those with special educational needs or higher attaining children whose learning may need extending, are catered for.
26. The curriculum satisfactorily provides for personal, social and health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse in line with requirements for each phase of schooling. Drama is very well used in Key Stages 1 and 2 to address matters relating to drug education and to explore issues about bullying. The school's inclusion of sailing as part of the physical education programme in Year 5 and of swimming for all pupils in Years 1 and 2 admirably meets its aim of improving pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. This has a spin-off in other areas of school life.
27. The school makes very good provision for skills learning in areas that continue to give cause for concern as pupils move through Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2. A speech and drama specialist works in all Year 1 to Year 3 classes where most pupils still have poor speaking and listening skills. Overall, these very good quality lessons positively affect pupils' abilities for listening attentively and speaking up clearly, including the abilities of those learning English as an additional language or with specific learning difficulties. Pupils with special educational need, including those with Statements of special need, respond well to provision and work happily alongside their peers.
28. In line with school development planning, information and communication technology has benefited recently from the setting up of a specialist computer room. Planning for its use generally matches curricular goals well to pupils' learning needs. However, pupils have few opportunities to apply skills to classroom learning, especially in Key Stage 1. Machines in classrooms are often switched on for

no purpose. In the Foundation Stage, insufficient use is also made of available computers in Nursery and Reception classes. At times, this is because machines are not working. On occasion, technical difficulties in the computer suite also affect the delivery of planned lesson content. Information and communication technology remains a priority in the school's development planning and both the use of machines and the application of skills across the curriculum are properly earmarked as matters for monitoring in order to raise standards.

29. The school has worked hard to ensure there are policies and suitable planning documents in place to support curriculum delivery for all subject areas. It uses local authority guidelines as well as the latest national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance and the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, sensibly taking from each what best meets its own needs. For example, national guidelines frame planning in history but a unit from the local education authority's scheme of work is the very good framework for a local Year 5 study.
30. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent and enhances the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2. Clubs observed during the inspection included 'Fit Kids', singing, recorder, athletics, rounders, netball, football, multi-cultural dance and expressive dance. A balance of competitive and collaborative activities extends pupils' learning opportunities and contributes markedly to pupils' personal development. Very good use is made of professional artists, for example the dancer working with over 30 pupils in the dance club.
31. A good range of visitors comes to the school for a variety of purposes linked to classroom learning. Study visits to local places of interest and beyond are also an important part of curricular provision. The school's involvement in the Education Action Zone project effectively promotes links with the local community and local schools. Links are made to local places of worship, including churches, the mosque and the 'Gurdwara'. The school has successfully bid to develop a sports hall to enhance curricular provision and strengthen community links through its wider use.
32. Taken as a whole, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Strengths are evident in provision for moral, social and cultural development.
33. Pupils' spiritual development is catered for through acts of collective worship both in classrooms and in key stage assemblies, although few lessons communicate a spontaneous sense of fun or joy in learning as a means of developing spirituality. For example, a good Key Stage 2 assembly given by Year 3 pupils, based on 'thankfulness' for the knowledge and skills we have or may acquire to help others, interwove various spiritual themes throughout its presentation. Periods of prayer and quiet reflection suitably end acts of collective worship although, on occasion, these are somewhat rushed and lose impact. Statutory requirements are met. Very few instances of a spiritual dimension to learning in classrooms were seen. However, in a religious education lesson (also in Year 3) a teacher generated a calm, pervasive spiritual ethos by insisting on quietness. An extremely high level of respect could be sensed in the subsequent group and whole-class discussions. Pupils felt able to speak their thoughts honestly, showing a remarkable sensitivity when exploring the lesson's theme of similarities and differences between faiths.
34. Provision for moral and social development is good. The school strongly emphasises the responsibilities attached to being in a community and how this affects one's daily actions towards others. This shows in classrooms throughout the school from the Nursery upwards and at play during break-times. Pupils are taught to respect others and to distinguish 'right' from 'wrong'. They are expected to live by the school's code of conduct at all times. Adults are good role models, dealing consistently with difficulties that arise. Assemblies are a very good focus for moral and social development. During the inspection, collective worship for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 followed themes such as 'being a member of a community', 'caring' and 'courage of friendship', usually illustrated by a story illustrating the theme in ways pupils could readily understand. Pupils gain a real insight into a quite different community from their own through charitable support (part of a 'foster friend' relationship) for a small girl in a village in Ecuador. Many pupils give a penny a week to the charity, which works in the little girl's village. This helps pay for school teachers, materials and medical aid from a doctor, amongst other things. A teacher leading one assembly shared a letter received from the girl's father but posted in January. Written in Spanish and translated into English,

the letter opened up important questions that intrigued pupils and kept their interest. How did the little girl get the money when she lives so far away? Does she get the money? If not, who does? Recalling previous discussions about their 'foster friend', pupils from across the age-range contrasted their own lives with that of someone their own age growing up in a less economically favourable and less materialistic society.

35. Provision for cultural development is good. The use of the letter from Ecuador illustrates, well, teachers' consistent approach to setting a 'difference' (in this case, in language) within a context personally meaningful for many pupils. It served to extend the understanding of others. During one Year 3 registration session, pupils replied with a 'good morning' in 30 different languages, each explaining the language of their choice. Teachers frequently make effective use of pupils' own knowledge and experience in lessons to draw on the range of cultures, languages and faiths found in each class. This was especially notable in upper Key Stage 2 religious education sessions where pupils in Years 5 and 6 classes proudly acted as 'expert witnesses' on a panel, explaining the beliefs and practices of their own faith as part of their studies. Panels of Christians, Muslims and Sikhs had (to date) been questioned. Music and stories carefully reflect distinct cultural traditions both within the school and the wider society beyond, including the majority white traditions. For example, drama lessons in Years 1 to 3 mainly centred on an African story during the inspection week, whilst Foundation Stage pupils sang traditional English Nursery Rhymes. Teachers' planning takes account of the full spectrum of pupils' cultural heritage through, for example, local history and geography lessons and through visiting different places of worship. Visits to theatres and museums and a diverse extra-curricular provision, including school visitors, add further dimensions to pupils' cultural awareness. Related events are planned as an integral part of pupils' school learning. Some displays are used deliberately to raise pupils' awareness of different lifestyles, as in photographs taken in countries outside the United Kingdom. Images reflecting pupils' own knowledge and experiences of a multi-cultural Britain were not, however, a part of this.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Child protection procedures and measures protecting the safety and welfare of pupils are well established and very good. Arrangements ensuring that all staff members understand relevant issues are in place. Teachers know their pupils well. They are sensitive to the personal circumstances of individuals and can decide realistically about pupils' academic, social and personal needs. Two staff members are designated child protection co-ordinators, collaborating closely with the headteacher. The school's procedures for liaising effectively with other agencies are very good.
37. The school's concerns for the personal care and welfare of pupils are to the fore when children start in the Nursery. Parents are invited to stay with their children initially in order to ensure that they feel safe and secure within the environment. On a few occasions during the inspection, children were observed to be reluctant to leave a parent or carer at the start of a session. At such times, Nursery staff are quick to offer comfort to help children to join in with activities so they soon forget their original reluctance.
38. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is good. However, although baseline assessment is administered appropriately at the start of the Reception year (in line with the local education authority's requirements), gathered information is not analysed to inform planning. Nursery and Reception teachers, together with their colleagues, regularly assess children's progress in all areas and keep detailed records of their observations. Again, information is not used for planning purposes. Rather, teachers rely on their good, day-to-day knowledge of children for judgements about learning needs. This is implicit in staff members' shared understanding, so the specific needs of individuals are not 'spelt out'. At later key stages, assessment procedures in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well established. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are assessed either through the statutory tests as required or through optional tests set by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Analysed assessment information determines where strengths and weaknesses lie in pupils' performance. This is then used to good effect for planning future targets. Through its involvement in a pilot scheme, the school has particularly detailed information about its mathematics results in tests for Years 2 to 6. It sets realistic English and mathematics targets based on assessment information in line with statutory requirements. Teachers set achievable

personal targets for pupils in these two subjects as well. These targets influence pupils' work generally, especially in Key Stage 2. They are periodically reviewed with pupils and adjusted where necessary. Key Stage 2 pupils know very well the targets set for them and what they have to do to achieve these.

39. An important aspect of assessment is the assessment of learners for whom English is an additional language on entry to school and of those pupils who, it is judged, may benefit from special needs support. Thorough and effective assessment procedures determine individuals' learning needs in both these groups. The school makes considerable efforts to assess bilingual pupils through their first language and is most frequently successful at this. Therefore teachers have good quality information about pupils' first language skills and where there are problems with these. Support for pupils learning English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Members of support teams are well deployed. In the Foundation Stage, there is no additional support for bilingual learners whose needs are allowed for within the structure of daily routines. Still, it is not obvious how identified needs are met through this approach. Pupils with individual educational plans on the Code of Practice register of special needs are stated to receive additional support from Nursery Nurses in the Foundation Stage. In practice, this support is not always easily discerned. All pupils with Statements of special need receive suitable one-to-one support in line with their needs in each phase of schooling. Review procedures for all pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, are rigorously pursued. These procedures involve outside agencies where appropriate.
40. Policies for the support and guidance of pupils are effective. Good personal achievement records are maintained. Up-to-date records are kept by teachers who make planned observations of children's activities during the Foundation Stage and assess progress through work done in the later key stages. Teachers regularly acknowledge pupils' achievements, however small, and this practice beneficially influences pupils' efforts and progress. A commendable number of teachers regularly give time to extra-curricular activities for Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils, positively aiding pupils' personal development.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour are good as are those relating to monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The behaviour policy is well established and implemented consistently across the school. Good records relating to behavioural matters are kept. The school's aim of promoting and maintaining good discipline and behaviour, especially in Key Stage 1, is largely achieved. Misbehaviour is handled well by teachers, though their task is made difficult by the high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties in some classes. The school keeps good records of bullying, harassment and anti-social behaviour. Bullying is not tolerated in any form. When required, remedial measures are quickly put into effect. Exclusion is used prudently.
42. The school has a well-established Health and Safety policy, and a designated member of staff oversees this aspect of school life. Good, professional guidance from a member of the governing body is a bonus. Day-to-day matters of health and safety are in the capable hands of the caretaker. Risk assessment procedures are reviewed regularly. The school has good procedures for recording and dealing with accidents and related practices are administered well.
43. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are outstanding. Statutory requirements for recording and reporting attendance are fully met. Improving attendance is a very high priority. To this end, the school funds a full-time attendance co-ordinator to collate and monitor attendance data and to implement follow-up procedures. These relate to unauthorised absences and lateness and are available in different languages. There is an extensive system of awards and rewards for punctuality and attendance. Yet despite these excellent measures attendance rates remain low because many transient families move on before steps taken begin to take effect. The school works closely with the education welfare service to improve attendance. There are also good arrangements for providing learning material for pupils taking prolonged leave to visit relatives abroad.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Positive questionnaire responses about the school, together with views expressed at the meeting prior to the inspection, show most parents to be strongly supportive. Almost all who responded believe children are happy and make good progress. They also believe teachers' high expectations help children become mature and responsible. Most approve of the amount of homework set in each year although a minority disagrees and thinks it is insufficient. The pre-inspection meeting showed how some parents may not always be aware of what homework is set for their children, since homework diaries may not reach home! But most approve of the way the school has improved in recent years. Some at the meeting said improvements had been substantial. All agreed improvements were directly attributable to the headteacher's vision and commitment to raising standards. A significant number of parents and carers returned their questionnaires and no serious issues were raised.
45. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall with strengths evident in the Foundation Stage. The school sees strong partnership between home and school as an important route to raising standards. However, some factors beyond the control of the school militate against the success of much that is attempted. For example, although comprehensive induction procedures for new pupils exist, their application has proved impractical because of the large number of short-term transient admissions throughout the school year. The quality of information provided for parents is good. It is especially helpful in the Early Years. For example, regular Nursery newsletters give general information about classroom learning and suggestions for activities children and their parents or carers could do together at home. It informs parents about the main areas of learning planned for each half term, including songs the children might sing at home. In the Reception classes, in addition to such information teachers also provide a home-school reading record. Teachers give positive feedback to parents at consultation meetings to let them know how home activities have increased their children's learning. Information deemed particularly important by the school is translated into the main languages used by pupils, in so far as practicable. Where this is not done, the school works at ensuring parents know what is happening. It makes extensive use of the local education authority's translation and interpretation service for such purposes as well as resources within its own community. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents comply with statutory requirements.
46. Annual reports on pupils' progress are informative and detailed. They explain what pupils have been taught, what they have learned, where improvements can be made and what parents should expect their children to attempt next. Parent-teacher consultation evenings held each term provide good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress, including progress recorded in annual reports. Importantly, teachers also use this time to discuss targets set for children and how parents might help at home. Parents state they believe such target-setting has helped raise standards, including those implicit in children's attitude to school and behaviour where these have been pinpointed for improvement. Parents like the way teachers are readily available for informal discussions before and after school each day. They are appreciative, too, of the headteacher's high profile at these times and his willingness to talk to them about matters of concern.
47. The school maintains close links with parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's learning and are given good, practical advice about what they might do. They frequently drop in to talk with the special needs co-ordinators about concerns they may have and this friendly arrangement aids good relationships between home and school. Parents of children with special needs are kept well in the picture from the outset about arrangements for supporting their children. They are involved in review processes as appropriate. Communication with parents of pupils with English as an additional language is also good. The school consistently ensures parents grasp its way of assessing their children's learning needs and provision for supporting these where such support is in place.
48. The involvement of parents in the learning of their children is satisfactory overall. The school knows it must gain the confidence and support of parents over the long term to reach its educational aims. So it has launched several initiatives to gain this support. For example, a workshop for parents introduced and explained the literacy hour and this was well supported. A similar evening to explain the school's more general approach to the curriculum was also well attended. Reading and homework diaries are used in Key Stages 1 and 2 in line with the school's policy. They are

beginning to make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Most parents sign up to the home-school agreement. The 'Friends of Gascoigne School' is generally successful in organising events to attract parents to take part in school life, although only a small number of dedicated parents together with members of school staff take responsibility for such organisation.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management of the school are good, with strengths evident in the leadership provided by the headteacher. The headteacher and his two deputy headteachers lead, manage and develop their school in a strong, effective manner. They are well supported by their senior management team and key members of the governing body, particularly the chair of governors. All staff members are fully committed to their school's work and its central values. They, too, give very good support to the headteacher and senior managers in aiming for important educational goals.
50. The headteacher's positive leadership gives his school clear educational direction. He manages people effectively and relates well to staff, pupils and parents. He is fully committed to principles of equality of opportunity as foundations for raising standards and for arranging worthwhile educational experiences for all pupils. The aims and values of the school are visible in all aspects of its work. Pupils and adults are expected to give of their best and strive to raise standards, while continuing to respect each other. The school is a warm and welcoming place where pupils feel safe and are held in high regard.
51. The school has made good improvements since its amalgamation in January 1999. It has moved purposefully towards ensuring pupils improve their attainments in statutory tests for 7 and 11 year olds. It now has a very efficient management structure. School development planning - a sound management tool - lists priorities plainly along with advice on how these can be realised and the time-scales involved. Much work has gone into helping staff members to manage pupils' behaviour positively. The commendable success of this effort shows in the quality of teaching and learning and in pupils' achievements during many lessons.
52. The school's management structure includes a clear delegation of responsibilities. The senior management team properly reflects all phases of schooling, including the key post of assessment co-ordinator as well as personnel responsible for special educational needs (strongly represented). All teachers, with the exception of those newly appointed, have appropriate responsibilities. The school is aware of the under-developed nature of subject co-ordinators' roles. Planned development has suffered because of staffing difficulties. These have diverted senior staff towards class-teaching for unspecified periods of time which, in turn, has left the senior staff unable to relieve co-ordinators of their teaching responsibilities to observe their subjects being taught. For example, during the inspection week, a deputy headteacher found herself unexpectedly having to step in to take a class.
53. The governors, especially key members with specified responsibilities, actively support the school by developing their roles. For example, named governors have responsibility for the oversight of literacy, numeracy, special educational needs, attendance, health and safety, and finance. They visit the school to meet relevant staff and check documentation and report back regularly to committees about their areas of interest. Reports are also presented to full governing body meetings. Reports on attendance, for example, give a detailed picture of the difficulties the school experiences and the measures taken to address these. The Chair works closely with the headteacher and has an in-depth grasp of the school's and local community's needs through his long involvement with both. Through its committees and related activities and through the headteacher's reports to governors, the governing body is kept well informed of school matters. A vision of improvement and excellent capacity to succeed are shared amongst all levels of staffing and governors. The school's successful striving toward Investor in People status played a major part in achieving this shared vision.
54. At the time of the inspection, there were sufficient, suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The school works hard at maintaining staffing levels despite increasing difficulties in appointing new teachers. There is a satisfactory gender balance amongst staff, which also reflects the make-up of the pupil-population. Support staff for bilingual

pupils and for those with special educational needs bring good levels of expertise to all their work. Temporary teachers often add appreciably to the life of the school through the background expertise they bring to classrooms and their commitment to the school's goals is frequently manifested.

55. Staff training needs are plainly set out. They link well both to the school's priorities for development and teachers' professional needs detected via performance assessment. Non-teaching staff have good access to regular professional development meetings. Good quality support for newly qualified teachers is by and large effective. Whilst procedures for such support for other teachers who are new to the school are of equally good quality, they are, at times, difficult to realise. This situation is attributable to the high turn-over of some temporary staff, which makes heavy demands on the school's resources for staff induction.
56. A strong team for special educational needs is led by a deputy headteacher with extensive experience in the field of special education. She is ably supported by two co-ordinators with defined areas of responsibility. The team carries out its statutory functions properly and conscientiously. It has a good overview of provision across the school and efficiently manages all aspects of this. The need to develop the Foundation Stage further so children with identified needs are consistently supported is suitably picked out as a matter to be addressed.
57. The school's taking responsibility for ethnic minority achievement grant funding works to very good effect. It supplements provision and so helps raise standards of bilingual pupils. The recently-formed team for supporting pupils with English as an additional language is well led by a specialist, full-time teacher with a good grasp of key principles relating to this area. She has a keen insight into how to reach crucial aims, gained through working with senior managers on whole-school approaches to teaching and learning.
58. The school's prudent financial planning supports its development priorities. Its development plan is a good working tool used to plan with foresight over the long term. Governors are suitably involved in reviewing and adjusting targets, including their own priorities. The plan is an important part of the school's efforts to improve. Because it is curriculum-led, co-ordinators are generally allocated suitable funds following consultations with senior staff and governors. The governing body and senior management team consistently monitor progress towards long and short-term development targets. They see that aspects of the Foundation Stage are, currently, under-funded and need an injection of cash - for example, more resources are needed to improve the quality of outdoor play.
59. Procedures for monitoring the budget are good. These are followed routinely by the headteacher and members of the finance committee to check that budgetary decisions have a desired effect on raising standards in classrooms. The chairman of the finance committee has a good understanding of the school and its central priorities, deploying his financial expertise to the school's advantage. The school applies principles of best value well. It regularly checks it is gaining value for money from contracts and compares standards and costs with other schools. The finance committee is very aware of the hard impact pupil mobility has on finances. For example, it accepts as expedient the recruitment of a full-time administrative assistant to oversee attendance, despite the considerable expense this incurs.
60. Governors have taken the considered decision to spend a comparatively sizeable amount of additional money on special educational needs. Linked in with this is the school's appointing of a large number of classroom assistants. The resulting good outcomes in terms of the progress of pupils with special needs suggest this is money well spent.
61. New technology, used well in the school office, takes administrative pressure off the teaching staff. The school's day-to-day administration is good. All members of the office staff provide a friendly and efficient first point of contact for parents and visitors. They know school routines and by checking these are followed properly ensure the smooth running of the school (as in matters relating to attendance and punctuality).
62. Mostly, resources for learning sufficiently meet curricular demands. They are generally of good quality and used well. However, as outlined above, resources for outdoor play in the Foundation

Stage fall short of what is required in the range and variety of learning opportunities they provide. Also, in spite of its new information and communication technology suite, the ratio of computers to pupils is below what might be expected. This fact slows down the pace of lessons in the suite and makes problematic pupils' access to machines in classrooms throughout the school.

63. Accommodation is adequate at Key Stages 1 and 2 although rooms are somewhat cramped for the size of classes, especially in the 'hatted' accommodation and in Key Stage 1 during whole-class teaching sessions. Additionally, the open nature of the units in this early key stage means that teachers' voices can be heard within adjacent classrooms and noise levels often rise noticeably. This situation should be improved when the units are redesigned as planned, which is well in hand. New building works are, also, forecast to improve accommodation for Years 5 and 6 classes and so lessen the use of demountable 'huts' for teaching purposes. These are stuffy and airless in hot weather. Nursery and Reception classes benefit from light and airy, purpose built accommodation, with classrooms organised well as attractive learning environments. The school makes good use of as many rooms as possible but, even in such a large building is hard-pressed for space. There is no hall large enough to contain the whole school together as a community. Neither is it practicable to have the entire school housed in classrooms under one roof, so its classrooms are spread out across the site, creating hardships for some classes in bad weather. The various playground spaces are very well used at break times and for physical education. Small grassed areas (especially around the Early Years block) and groups of trees dotted about add a welcome touch of natural colour to the outside environment. Outside areas are well cared for although they are not easy to maintain as litter frequently blows in from surrounding residential streets. Interior spaces are also well looked after by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Attractive displays of work enliven many classrooms and public areas.
64. The school provides good value for money. This judgement takes account of pupils' overall very low attainment on entry, including that of the many pupils who enter during the course of a year. When positive attitudes and achievements of pupils, the good or better quality of much teaching and the school's strong leadership are added to the picture, what crystallises is a very effective school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- Standards rise in the Foundation Stage in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, and in provision for outdoor play through
 - rigorous attention being paid to making children's different learning needs and means of meeting these explicit in teachers' planning;
 - improving teachers' planning so it takes proper account of outdoor spaces as an integral part of teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum; and
 - improving the range of resources for outdoor play.
- (1, 2, 8, 16, 19, 21, 25, 38, 39, 56, 58, 62, 71, 76, 79, 85, 87, 88)
- Provision for information and communication technology is improved throughout the school to reflect development planning so as to
 - increase teachers' subject confidence where this is insecure; and
 - raise standards by giving pupils better access to machines and ensuring they apply skills regularly to other subject areas.

(10, 17, 28, 62, 80, 81, 83, 110, 118, 139, 140, 141, 142, 159)

- Co-ordinators in all phases of the school monitor classroom teaching and learning practices in their areas of responsibility in order to
 - gain first-hand knowledge of these practices and improve teaching so it matches the 'best practice' seen;
 - raise standards where these are judged below what might be expected for pupils' ages;
 - determine how pupils can build successively on key skills in non-core subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2; and
 - ensure pupils apply writing skills more consistently for extended writing purposes in subjects across the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2.

(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 33, 52, 70, 71, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 83, 88, 104, 105, 112, 119, 120, 121, 122, 128, 132, 135, 137, 138, 139, 142, 143, 148, 149, 151, 153, 158, 159, 160, 161)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses* should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 3, 4, 5, 14, 91, 92, 95

- Standards in English in Key Stages 1 and 2 in line with development planning.
- Attendance and punctuality are improved in line with development planning.

*In fact, it is recognised these are not insignificant weaknesses. However, they are already well embedded both in school development planning and in school practices. Placing them here draws attention to the school's continuing need to address these matters.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

65. The school makes good provision for the many pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils make good progress with their learning, especially in Key Stages 1 and 2 where the deployment of additional support (either from specialist staff or through the level of planned work) is made clear in teachers' planning. Where pupils develop good levels of fluency in speaking English, this is frequently reflected in their own recording of work across all subjects. These pupils reach standards at least in line with their monolingual peers by the end of Key Stage 2. At times, they do better than this. Unsurprisingly, the written work of pupils still in the early stages of acquiring English language skills reflects their level of English rather than their underlying comprehension or intellectual capacity. All bilingual learners benefit from chances to engage in practical tasks and from work with a strong visual content. By such means they can gain in learning because of good 'clues' about contexts where the learning occurs, and because teachers use relevant subject vocabulary consistently to reinforce key ideas. Teachers also frequently use good strategies for checking pupils' understanding before deciding which teaching points to reinforce. Such strategies allied to practical work explain, for example pupils' good achievements in mathematics and science by the end of each key stage, and especially the later key stage. It is not surprising that English attainment lags behind these subjects, though the school is not complacent about this fact. It is determined to continue lifting standards here, too.
66. The school's recent move to take responsibility for managing the budget for Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant funding is instrumental in its developing practices that benefit bilingual pupils' learning. Although still in the early stages, significant advances are being made in establishing partnership practices in classrooms between three teachers who share responsibility for this area and class-teaching colleagues. In addition, good support provided by three language-support assistants is also judiciously deployed. Mostly, support work is targeted within classrooms, although pupils are removed from lessons for specific purposes where this is judged helpful, for example, in time-limited, daily, sessions for early stage learners in Year 2. The full-time teacher appointed last September brings very good expertise to classrooms. She also has a sound grasp of bilingual pupils' particular needs. She makes good judgements about when to intervene to support pupils and when to stand back, so as to give pupils time, for example, to put together a considered response to a question. She recognises the time pupils often need to complete tasks and realistically assesses this. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson she quietly continued with a small group rather than join in a whole-class session at the end of a lesson. The two class teachers who support bilingual learners in other classes for part of each week have, similarly, good knowledge and skills. Their expertise shows in their own class teaching, where pupils are well catered for alongside their peers in the way the content of all curricular tasks is structured. More generally, good practice is seen in classes when, for example, teachers encourage pupils with the same language backgrounds to work together. This policy consolidates progress in English through the sharing of a first language. Also, bilingual pupils' learning is greatly helped by the opportunities frequently afforded them to work with peers (monolingual as well as bilingual). Teachers' positive acceptance of a diversity of languages in their classes adds significantly to bilingual pupils' ease. They become willing participants in lessons, even anxious to express their ideas.
67. The leadership and management of provision for pupils learning English as an additional language are good. Responsibilities are shared amongst the three teachers directly involved in the work, but the full-time teacher, obviously, has most opportunities to oversee matters. For example, the gathering of important information, ensuring procedures are properly followed (as in assessing newly arrived pupils) and identifying strengths and weaknesses at classroom level. She effectively co-ordinates work and brings an analytical approach to solving problems. The headteacher is central to the high profile way in which bilingual learners' achievements are being raised. In partnership with his deputies, he keeps an informed overview of provision not least through his own and other senior managers' planned monitoring of classroom teaching and learning practices. All three teachers working in the area are set within the management structure of the school at 'middle management' level as a signal of the importance accorded to the work.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	140
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	20	43	31	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)	56	700
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	383

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	173

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	329

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	146
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	131

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.7
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	55	56	111

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	44	51
	Girls	46	49	49
	Total	85	93	100
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (79)	84 (83)	90 (89)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	48	47
	Girls	46	46	47
	Total	85	94	94
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (75)	85 (84)	85 (88)
	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	35	37	72

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	24	34
	Girls	27	24	35
	Total	47	48	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (57)	67 (63)	96 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	25	31
	Girls	25	25	32
	Total	45	50	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (53)	69 (64)	88 (79)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

The table for Key Stage 2 reflects revised results for 2000 in light of the information received by the school from the Department for Education and Employment, as noted earlier in the report.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	14
Black – African heritage	94
Black – other	34
Indian	12
Pakistani	32
Bangladeshi	16
Chinese	3
White	474
Any other minority ethnic group	16

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	1
Black – other	0	1
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	14	0
Other minority ethnic groups	10	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)	24
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.2
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	470

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1693224
Total expenditure	1762177
Expenditure per pupil	2334
Balance brought forward from previous year	22489
Balance carried forward to next year	-46464

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	812
Number of questionnaires returned	195

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	21	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	65	30	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	33	6	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	28	8	2	5
The teaching is good.	73	22	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	28	3	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	3	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	24	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	59	34	4	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	61	27	3	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	30	3	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	29	7	2	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Children make good progress with personal, social and emotional development in the Nursery and Reception classes. A majority is in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time children transfer to Key Stage 1. Their good progress reflects consistent behaviour-management strategies all teachers use and the generally good quality of teaching in this area. Children benefit from being regularly and persistently praised. For example, they are thanked for such small matters as not opening a door to the outdoor play resources. They attend closely to adults' instructions and are eager to please. Well-established routines help them feel safe in their environment. Social skills, such as co-operation, develop well through their learning to take turns. During 'circle times', they are expected to be polite, kind and helpful towards others, to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They gradually become able to distinguish between right and wrong. They tidy up after activities and know to take care when using equipment.
69. Adults are good role models, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect even when some children engage in negative behaviour. So trusting relationships grow, helping children to detect and empathise with each other's points of view. Teaching strategies are used to encourage this – for example, in the nursery children talk freely about those they would like to play with.
70. Whilst children's moral and social development is fostered, weaknesses show in provision for spiritual and cultural development. Children have few opportunities to respond freely – perhaps with spontaneous imagination and excitement - to adult-structured activities. So they lack opportunities to express their own ideas as a way of reaching towards some sort of spiritual awareness. Also, resources reflecting the diversity of children's own varied home experiences as well as of the wider society are limited. Children can seldom experiment in their play, (for example, by 'cooking' an Indian meal using correct equipment or by dressing up in different styles of clothing).

Communication, language and literacy

71. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, children's progress in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory. Nevertheless, overall, most are not in line to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1.
72. Nursery children enjoy the game, 'Mr. Bear Mr. Bear your honey's not there', aimed at developing their understanding of language and teaching them how to communicate with others. Reception children can predict and suggest sentences that have to be answered 'yes' or 'no'. All enjoy listening to stories during whole class or group teaching sessions. Nursery children know that an author writes books and that words on a page have meaning. Reception children discuss differences between fiction and non-fiction books. Most Nursery children can pick out their own names and use name stickers to label their work.
73. Higher attaining Nursery children know the initial sound of words such as 'ladder'. In Reception classes, most can name some alphabet sounds and read simple words such as 'yes' and 'no'. Some higher attainers talk knowledgeably about a familiar story and read simple sentences correctly. Nursery children, along with their parents, enjoy a weekly chance to choose books from the school library. The library contains books written in diverse languages. Most make marks resembling letters when writing a simple 'sentence'. They confidently record their own imaginary shopping lists in pencil. Most Reception year children write their names with some degree of correctness and combine marks with individual letter shapes when constructing a sentence about their favourite pets. Most also copy individual letters or sentences from an adult's script correctly, as when they write 'We love our Mum'. Each day, children are given good structured opportunities to share books with friends but they have limited access to books for their own enjoyment, for example,

when retelling a favourite story in their own words during play. Children have few opportunities to practise emergent writing skills, although adults provide good examples of clear handwriting styles and frequent handwriting activities support letter formation for more formal work.

74. Teaching across Nursery and Reception classes is at least satisfactory in this area. In almost a half of lessons it is good, with one lesson in the Reception year judged very good. Nursery Nurses make a good contribution to children's language development through both their direct teaching and their daily interactions with small groups and with individuals. The school uses the local education authority's scheme of work for the Foundation Stage, which contains elements of the framework for the literacy strategy. Children are helped to match letters to sounds by each day singing a song associated with an alphabet letter they have learnt. They thoroughly enjoy such sessions. New learning is reinforced in all classes through a carefully structured programme delivered during daily circle time. The teaching of correct pronunciation of individual sounds at such times is very good and the organisation of activities gives all children equal access to the same curriculum. However, activities are generally unimaginative and lack the sparkle usually needed to stimulate learning. Teaching does not always take sufficient account of children's different learning needs and this slows down progress for all at times, particularly for higher attaining children.
75. Although support staff are well deployed during literacy sessions to aid children's speaking and listening skills, there are occasions when adults do not fully take opportunities to extend these skills, especially during role-play. This is also the case for children in the early stages of acquiring English. They are not helped as much as they might be to use English as well as their home language, and so develop their general linguistic skills.

Mathematics

76. Children make sound progress in mathematics although most are not in line to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
77. In the Nursery, most children know a number sequence to five and can count such a sequence aloud. A minority counts up to five objects using fingers to point to each object. Some of the youngest children count the different fruits eaten by the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' as well as copying a repeating pattern of beads. Children in the Reception classes enjoy singing number rhymes to reinforce mathematical learning. They count to ten confidently. They use a dice to play a board game 'Give a dog a bone' and know how to count on from a starting point after throwing the dice. They count dots on the face of a die accurately (up to six) and recognise the number patterns made by the dots as well as the numerals. They are aware of the value of money and can distinguish between 5 and 10 pence coins. They are beginning to recognise 'number difference' when counting along a number line, although they show a degree of confusion about this. Children can use correct mathematical terms to compare size such as big, bigger and biggest. All use recyclable resources to create three-dimensional models, which they can name.
78. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers generally maintain a good pace and pitch questions appropriate to children's understanding. At times, however, chances to extend the understanding of average and higher attaining children are missed. For example, in a Nursery class a large group of children was included in a mathematical activity and, while this was well organised, the size of the group meant individuals had to wait for quite some time before being asked a question. Consequently, some were insufficiently engaged by the lesson and lost interest. Teachers use resources well to put across teaching points in their planned work but do not sufficiently vary materials set out each day for children to use. Curiosity and interest during mathematical activities pursued independently are thus not well fostered.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Children make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, most achieve below expected levels relative to stepping stones for the Early Learning Goals and so are not in line to reach these by the end of the Reception year.

80. Nursery children were engrossed finding out about 'mini beasts' during the inspection, whilst those in the Reception classes investigated 'pets'. Children enter the nursery with a limited general knowledge. They recognise some fruit and vegetables such as peppers and strawberries. They know technology is used in shopping (remembering a scanner is used to check the prices of items in the role-play greengrocer's shop). A real television in the home corner role-play area enhances imaginary play. Technology in school is not used consistently in ways that encourage children to be aware of technology out of school. Nursery computers, for example, were seldom used or prepared for the children to engage with during the inspection.
81. Reception children on the other hand make at least satisfactory progress in developing their information and communication technology skills. They benefit from fortnightly visits to the school's computer suite, although gaps between visits can dilute the impetus of new learning since there are limited opportunities to practise skills in classrooms. Children have a good vocabulary relating to computers. They can name parts of the equipment such as 'screen, keyboard and monitor'. They control the mouse with dexterity and have learnt the technique of 'drag and drop' to form a collage picture of pets. Children use a paint programme to create simple colour pictures and some children have started to use data handling programmes to form a simple bar graph of their work on pets.
82. Nursery children have enjoyed investigating where mini beasts live within the nursery garden. They have painted the 'beasts' they have found and used simple resources effectively to make a moveable caterpillar. Children in Reception classes have recorded things of interest to them seen on a local walk. Through their studies, they have a sound understanding of the many pets living in classrooms and record their observations carefully. As they move through the Nursery and Reception year, children develop a sense of time passing through talking about themselves and their families. They can explain their own life-story histories in very simple terms.
83. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Topic themes appropriately explore learning opportunities through a range of activities and good links are sometimes made across areas of learning. Themes cover basic information children need to learn. They do not usually, however, extend children's learning in ways providing opportunities for independent exploration, possibly thereby stimulating a love of learning. Teaching makes good use of children's information and communication technology skills for some activities but skills are not applied in support of the whole curriculum.

Physical development

84. Children make good progress in physical development. By the time they start Key Stage 1, most are in line to exceed expected levels in the Early Learning Goals.
85. In both Nursery and Reception classes, children use pencils and paintbrushes and carefully mix powder paint using a sponge to extract excess water. During outdoor play, Nursery children control bikes and trikes with increasing skill to move around the area. They advance their hand and eye co-ordination skills by throwing hoops over cones. However, the range of resources for outdoor play is limited for these youngest children.
86. By contrast, the outdoors area for Reception children is an exciting place for children to develop skills in climbing, balancing and swinging. Weekly hall periods further allow them to move and exercise with increasing control and skill. They co-operate well together when arranging equipment and returning it to its proper place after lessons. They count '1,2,3, lift', being mindful of toes and fingers!
87. Teaching and resources, especially for the Reception children during play and lunchtime, ensure all children make good progress. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. 'Physical education' lessons are carefully planned and managed well in the Reception year and are of good quality. But activities and the outdoor play area are not used daily to enrich other curricular subjects.

Creative development

88. Children make satisfactory progress in creative development. Most are judged unlikely to achieve

Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.

89. Children enter the Nursery with fairly poor skills. So, in both Nursery and Reception classes, a range of appropriate activities is offered daily including painting, model-making and role-play. Children paint colourful butterflies and are encouraged from the start, through many activities, to recognise basic colours. Reception children use a computer programme to create colour patterns. Nursery children sing many different songs, complete with actions, and confidently perform these in front of other Foundation Stage children as well as parents for an assembly. Some benefit from freely using percussion instruments each day, and Reception children know the names of different percussion instruments. Nursery children enjoy the role-play areas organised as a taxi-cab office and a greengrocer's shop. Reception children play in a 'pet shop', developing their imaginations as well as extending experiences and communicating ideas about their current theme of work.
90. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning takes suitable account of a range of possible activities, including music, model-making and making pictures from different materials. Reception children have weekly music lessons, which they enjoy.

ENGLISH

91. In the 2000 statutory tests, the proportion of seven year-olds reaching the expected Level 2 and above in reading and writing was below national averages. In reading, results at the higher Level 3 were close to the national average. In writing, no pupil reached this higher level. In both tests, the high proportion of pupils achieving at the lower range of Level 2 and below, relative to the national picture, depressed results. Generally, results in reading were better than in writing. This outcome follows expected patterns since a very high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language were still in the early stages of their English language-learning and the development of writing skills most frequently lags behind that of skills in reading. This picture overall presents a downward trend from results in 1999 (see paragraph 7). By comparison, pupils score well above the average gained by peers in similar schools in reading and above the average in writing. Over a two-year period, boys do less well than girls in both reading and writing, in line with national trends. In teacher-assessments, pupils were judged to be below average in speaking and listening skills at expected levels of attainment, although numbers reaching the higher Level 3 were broadly in line with the national average.
92. In the 2000 statutory tests for eleven-year-olds, the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected Level 4 or above and the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. But results are improved on the previous year's in terms, only, of expected levels. It is the poor results at the higher Level 5 that depress the overall picture. Over two years, again, in line with the national picture, girls out-performed boys. Pupils' results were above the average gained by their peers in similar schools at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5.
93. Inspection evidence shows all pupils in both key stages make good progress as a result of current strategies for teaching literacy and the frequently good or better teaching. So standards are rising. In Year 6, however, factors affecting all classes are exacerbated for pupils in their final year of primary schooling (see paragraph 7). Although pupils make good progress in acquiring crucial skills, attainment is below what might otherwise be expected for this age. Attainment for seven-year-olds is also judged to be below national expectations for reasons similar to those affecting results in statutory tests (see above).
94. Pupils' listening skills are broadly in line with national expectations by seven and eleven years of age. Most listen well to stories, explanations and instructions. By contrast, under-developed speaking skills stay below expectations. Many pupils (and not just those learning English as an additional language) still have difficulty expressing their ideas clearly as they grow older. Yet the school's decision to focus on speaking and listening skills throughout Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 is paying off. Pupils in all Years 1 to 3 enjoy weekly speech and drama sessions taken by a visiting specialist teacher. In most classes, they are well prepared for these lessons by prior classroom work. This factor, together with the evident expertise of the specialist, results in highly stimulating drama lessons and keen pupils. All benefit, markedly, including bilingual pupils and those with

special educational needs. Throughout the school, teachers make a point of modelling correct pronunciation and forms of speech, for example full sentences. Pupils are encouraged to speak out in assemblies, drama sessions and class and group discussions across the curriculum, which gradually develops their confidence and extends their vocabulary and capacity to talk for different purposes.

95. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupil attainment in reading is below expectations for seven-year-olds, notwithstanding that higher attainers read fluently and expressively. These latter use a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words as, for example, when they 'sound out' initial letters or use picture clues. The school rightly gives high priority to reading. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and set achievable targets for future learning in light of these assessments. Most pupils make good progress in necessary skills through whole-class lessons and group guided-reading sessions. Yet those of average or below average attainment apply skills, when working independently, rather insecurely. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, although pupils spent a considerable time discussing 'push' and 'pull' forces and looked at how these words were spelt, most could not distinguish between them in order to complete a very simple work sheet.
96. By eleven, average and higher attaining pupils, including some with English as an additional language, attain at least expected levels in reading. They read with fluency and accuracy. However, the high numbers working below expected levels lowers standards overall. Teachers across the key stage work hard to very good effect to address the learning needs of pupils still only beginning to learn English and those pupils with special educational needs. The systematic teaching of reading skills, provision of books, use of homework, procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and use of assessment to inform planning are good. Nevertheless, there is much inconsistency of achievement evident. For example, in one Year 6 class, whilst higher attaining pupils read suitably challenging fiction and non-fiction books with understanding, a significant number are at an early stage in acquiring English. One had joined the school only the previous week.
97. The development of writing skills for a range of literacy purposes is given appropriate emphasis. Pupils in all classes have good story writing skills. In Year 1, pupils write their own versions of 'The Gingerbread Man' and can readily discuss the story's setting, its characters and its ending. Their writing reveals a limited vocabulary expressed in very simple sentences. Teachers plan well. They mostly employ good open questions, as when they ask 'How can we improve this?' 'Can you use a better adjective to make it exciting?' They model the beginnings and endings of stories helpfully to show how to improve work. The use of writing 'frameworks' gives all pupils useful structures for planning their work, including bilingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs. In most lessons, as a result of teachers' clear explanations and good subject knowledge, higher attainers and some of average attainment use complex sentences, adventurous vocabulary and vivid adjectives by the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good knowledge of National Curriculum level-descriptors for English and work hard to improve standards in line with these. However, owing to a high number of pupils of lower attainment, overall standards remain well below expected levels for eleven-year-olds.
98. Pupils' handwriting skills are good throughout the school. Most in Key Stage 1 write neat, well-formed letters. By the end of the key stage, they use their good knowledge of letter sounds when spelling independently, frequently matching their spellings to the sound of a word. In tests, however, these pupils have difficulty spelling correctly, leading to a generally low success rate. Spelling is taught regularly and homework reinforces classroom learning. By eleven, pupils write in ink, in neat and legible script. Higher attaining pupils and those of average attainment manage good levels of accuracy in spelling across subjects.
99. Pupils' work is frequently well presented. It is marked and annotated by teachers consistently in ways pinpointing strengths and areas for development. Throughout the school, many displays illustrate how pupils' literacy skills benefit other subjects such as geography, history, religious education and science. However, few examples of extended writing are evident in such work. Pupils use information and communication technology skills appropriately for word-processing, as when they write stories or poems on computers. They write for a range of purposes and audiences. For example, in a week dedicated to literacy, pupils had made books for their stories as well as

information books on insects and animals, and compiled as a book the results of a survey about how exercise keeps bodies healthy.

100. Pupils with identified learning needs benefit from good quality support given during literacy lessons and for specific purposes outside the classroom. For example, a specialist teacher targets, for support, pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language in Year 2 classes. These pupils make good gains in learning in all aspects of literacy work as a result. Similarly, specialist classroom assistants working with pupils on the Code of Practice register of special needs across the key stages ensure pupils grasp lesson content and progress alongside their peers in literacy tasks. Classroom assistants support individual pupils within a 'reading recovery' programme delivered outside the classroom, well matched to individuals' identified needs.
101. The quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory but is almost always satisfactory or better. It is good in 47 per cent of lessons and very good in a further 30 per cent. This encouraging picture goes some way to explaining the good quality work seen in most classrooms. Particular strengths are seen in the later key stage where teaching is not less than satisfactory and is frequently good or very good in almost equal parts.
102. Two co-ordinators, one from each key stage, are effective joint leaders of the subject. They monitor teaching and learning and also monitor outcomes in pupils' books. They have a good insight into standards across the school. They identify areas for improvement, realistically giving priority to raising standard at the end of both key stages. They support colleagues through In-service sessions, occasionally modelling the teaching of a literacy lesson for new staff. They have successfully guided the implementing of the local education authority's English Project and oversee a proper buying in of resources. In identifying reasons for low standards, they are concerned to co-operate with colleagues through a jointly-managed working party. Importantly, this strategy will include specialist staff for pupils with English as an additional language, co-ordinators for special educational needs and the assessment co-ordinator. Since senior management is well represented within this structure, the strategy as a whole should retain a high profile and ensure goals are met.
103. Resources are good. Class fiction and non-fiction collections promote pupils' enjoyment of reading and they are encouraged to take books home regularly. There are two libraries for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Both are well managed and provide satisfactorily for the development of pupils' research skills.

MATHEMATICS

104. In 2000 statutory tests for seven-year-olds, pupils attained broadly in line with the national average but solely at the expected Level 2 and above. Their performance at the higher Level 3 was well below this average. Also a significantly higher proportion was restricted to the lower range of Level 2 or below than happened nationally. Consequently, when scores for the higher range of Level 2 and for Level 3 are aggregated, they fall below the national average. During two years, the trend has been downwards, a situation owed to a number of factors (see paragraph 7). Yet when pupils' results are compared with those of peers in similar schools, they rise above the average of these results. In line with national trends, boys do better than girls.
105. In the 2000 statutory tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' results fell below the national average at the expected Level 4 and above, and at the higher Level 5. Yet, once more, it is pupils' results at this higher level that affect the overall picture. In terms of expected levels only, results are better than those of the previous year. When pupils' results are compared with those of peers in similar schools, they rise above the average at both levels. As at Key Stage 1, a downward trend is discerned over two years. But, again as at the earlier key stage, a number of factors have affected this picture. Boys continue to do better than girls, as is the case nationally. The school rightly identifies the need to raise standards in mathematics. The present system of setting targets for individual pupils across key stages is positively influencing efforts towards this goal.
106. Inspection findings show attainment is in line with levels expected for pupils at the end of Year 2. It is above levels expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. In addition to gains made through target

setting, this good outcome is owed to frequently good or better teaching seen in lessons throughout the key stages. Teachers have a good grasp of the local education authority's 'Improving Mathematics Project', which underpins approaches to the delivery of the subject and is positively affecting pupils' learning.

107. Pupils in Year 6 have good calculation skills, quickly using a range of strategies to solve number problems about percentages of money, using a calculator to check their answers. For example, lower attainers quickly work out additions of fractions and decimals and have skills on a par with those expected for their age. Their knowledge of other aspects of the subject is currently growing through their measurement and calculation of angles. Pupils have a sound knowledge of place value and decimals. The work of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and most in Year 2 can recall numbers that make ten quickly. They understand the operations of addition, subtraction and multiplication and higher attaining pupils can count correctly to and from 200 in 2s, 3s, 5s, 10s and 20s. They can also mentally calculate solutions to problems such as $37 - 8$, using appropriate strategies. They can explain clearly how they do so. Pupils show a high level of number awareness but their present skills level is no greater than that expected for their age.
108. In both key stages, pupils' learning is good. All benefit from sessions of mental number work because oral questioning challenges them at several different levels. The frequently good or better teaching seen has a marked impact on pupils' progress and their capacity to build successfully on previous learning, especially in Key Stage 2. For example, higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 progress from completing sums such as doubling numbers to 20 to calculating two and three digit numbers. Their work is tidy. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils impressed in showing how to judge which information on a work sheet would help them answer mathematical problems; in another lesson, Year 6 pupils speedily applied their greater knowledge of estimation to make similar decisions. They came up with answers fairly straightforwardly, accompanying these with good explanations.
109. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. In fact, it is good in just over half of lessons (52 per cent), very good in a further 20 per cent and excellent in another 8 per cent. Particular strengths are evident in Key Stage 2 where almost all teaching is of good or better quality, with some excellent teaching seen in the upper key stage. At present teachers rigorously adhere to the 'Improving Mathematics Project'. But they do not always refer to the higher levels of the scheme in Key Stage 1 so as to take pupils further. This is especially true with higher attainers and in relation to the recording of work. So some pupils consolidate knowledge rather than extending it, and progress becomes inconsistent. In oral work, however, pupils' thinking is more effectively challenged. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject and can clearly explain aspects of it to pupils. In very good Year 6 lessons, for example, teachers showed great skill when giving examples of estimation. While subjecting pupils to some hard questioning, they kept very positive relationships, so pupils were not stressed or put under undue pressure. Teachers at both key stages have good questioning skills, provoking pupils to articulate their thoughts while making what are, at times, quite complex calculations. Time is well used, especially during mental mathematics sessions, helping pupils make good gains in learning. In mental number sessions, teachers attend carefully to different attainment levels. This usually means that all pupils are suitably challenged. Worksheets are well matched to ability. Teachers use ongoing assessment information to help match work to pupils' learning needs. For example, because Year 2 pupils could easily count in fives and tens, they were able to build on previous learning to complete the number calculations they had been given.
110. Teaching and learning objectives are clear. For example, a lesson for the youngest pupils was planned at three different levels of addition: 'counting on', 'counting two more' and 'counting numbers to 50'. Methods used are generally good and involve pupils well. For example, the use of overhead projectors frequently allows pupils to show how they solve problems, keenly capturing the attention of others ('is she right?' 'have you got a better way?'). Because pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported, they make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the teachers repeating key mathematical terms and tying these to practical examples when illustrating points. Teachers' good marking invariably indicates ways to improve. There are nonetheless insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning.
111. Key support staff are well trained and qualified. A good system charting pupils' progress, following

the results of statutory tests at age seven through Key Stage 2, is established. It is used diagnostically to discover the needs of groups of pupils of varied prior attainments.

112. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Two co-ordinators, one for each of the key stages, share responsibilities. They have generated a good team spirit across key stages so that all teachers feel they have a part to play in raising standards. Co-ordinators are well-informed about teachers' planning, and monitor learning outcomes through similar means. They have insufficient time to monitor teaching and learning actually in classrooms.

SCIENCE

113. According to 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments, seven-year-old pupils' attainment at the expected Level 2 or above fell below the national average. At the higher Level 3, it rose above this average overall. Teachers identified weaknesses in all strands of the subject but especially in pupils' knowledge about 'life processes' and 'living things'. Inspection evidence nevertheless shows considerable improvements in standards in all areas of science in this early key stage, with high standards found in relation to 'physical processes', 'materials and their properties' and 'experimental and investigative science'. Pupils make good progress and reach good standards in their work by the end of the key stage.
114. In the 2000 statutory tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils achieved results well above the national average at the expected Level 4 and above and at the higher Level 5. Pupils did particularly well at the higher Level 5, affecting results overall positively. Over two years, no difference is found between the attainment of boys and girls. When pupils' results are compared to those of their peers in similar schools, they are found to be much higher, putting the school in the top 5 percentile of schools at this level. Inspection evidence upholds this good outcome. It shows standards have steadily improved over the last two years. As in the earlier key stage, pupils make good progress and achieve good standards by the end of the key stage, with very little difference found in the performance of boys and girls.
115. By the age of seven, pupils can investigate materials using their own criteria to sort living things during their work on 'life processes and living things'. Good planning picks out teaching and learning objectives well. Sharing these with pupils helps direct their learning. Teachers' good organisation ensures a prompt start to activities, arousing concentration and sustaining interest. Good task preparation supports independent learning well, and thought-out introductions lead to productive discussions. For example, Year 1 pupils compared the difference between pushing and pulling objects when studying forces, refining their ideas while they talked. Pupils in the early key stage are establishing a secure grasp of the importance of using a fair test.
116. Good science experiences arranged for pupils excites and motivates them. They develop good attitudes to the subject, behaving well in lessons and making good progress. Year 6 pupils' past work reveals a good factual knowledge, suggesting they carried out some detailed investigations. Pupils build successfully on their prior understanding of all areas of the science curriculum. For example, they have a good knowledge of life processes and living things and can describe the main functions of the organs of the human body. They group and classify materials, pointing out difference between solids, liquids and gasses. They understand the everyday effects of light and sound. In their studies of electricity, they investigate good and poor conductors, accurately recording the results of their work in graphs and charts. Good use is made of worksheets designed to reinforce key points raised in lessons.
117. Thorough planning means lower attaining pupils, including those with identified learning needs, have equal access to science at the appropriate level. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language benefit, too, from the judicious deployment of good quality support staff. They are also helped by teachers' sensible trust in practical work, matched to a consistent use of relevant subject vocabulary. Both groups make good progress relative to their peers and to their prior attainment.
118. The quality of teaching is frequently good (38 per cent of lessons) or very good (also 38 per cent of

lessons) across the key stages. Special strengths are found in Key Stage 2. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is supported by thorough and detailed planning with very explicit intentions shared with pupils during lessons and reviewed at their conclusion. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and their confidence is growing under the supporting umbrella of the co-ordinator's effective leadership. Teachers keep continuous records of pupils' progress and regularly check attainment levels across the school. Good assessment information supports planning and pupils take part productively in self-evaluation. Lessons are well organised and resources are very well used. Pupils respond keenly to their teachers' efforts. Many pupils, because of their weak linguistic skills, do not find recording easy and have difficulty articulating outcomes of their investigations. Because teachers address this problem seriously, pupils are making good progress remedying it. Whenever possible links are made between subjects. For example, the work on flowering plants and their properties gave considerable opportunities for pupils to refine their observational drawing skills. Computer-assisted learning was not seen as supporting science work during the inspection, nor does it appear in teachers' planning. Homework well reflects school studies.

119. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership. The policy and scheme of work plainly and concisely guide staff planning. The policy is based in the local education authority's scheme, which works over time for a steady build up of pupils' scientific knowledge with allied skills. The co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work but has not, to date, been able to observe teaching and learning in action in classrooms. She analyses teachers' assessment and national test results and gives useful feedback to colleagues on information gained. Resources are sufficient for curricular delivery. Materials and equipment are of good quality and used effectively.

ART

120. The standard of pupils' work at the end of both key stages is below that expected for seven and eleven year olds. Achievement is held back by pupils not being able to develop and practise their skills systematically. Planning in art is still topic based, and, whilst this provides breadth in (for example) history studies, it is not clear how necessary skills in art are established prior to their being refined and applied for different purposes, with understanding. A scrutiny of work reveals less time given to art than might reasonably be expected. Most art work seen supports other subjects and, where it is taught well, this teaching stems from the teacher's own personal expertise. Therefore the quality of the artwork actually seen around the school reflects the individual teacher's expertise and interest rather than it being a result of deliberate policy. In short, a whole-school approach to the development of art is lacking.
121. By the end of Key Stage 1, specifically, the range and quality of artwork is below expected standards. There is a limited range of techniques and materials used. Art appreciation, centring on pupils' art as well as that of professional artists, figures insufficiently in curricula. So Year 1 pupils illustrate their writing about a bear with simple line drawings. When Year 2 pupils make Venetian carnival masks using a plaster-based material, their mask decorations and attention to detail are under-developed. Nevertheless, in one Year 2 class, pupils used a computer to create recognisable designs in the styles of Mondrian and Kandinsky.
122. Art is inconsistently experienced throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils begin designing a montage to aid their history studies. Generally speaking, Year 6 teaching is good, and pupils are encouraged to research ideas from books. However, the same pupils' ability to do line drawings needs further development and pupils noticeably lack confidence when sketching out ideas. Still-life flower drawings show some evidence of smudging and shading but, again, such techniques are not further practised in order that they might evolve as skills. There is a lack of artwork evident, even in Year 6. Pupils design posters to illustrate weather patterns, then cannot remember doing any painting. When they do engage with art, pupils enjoy and become absorbed in it. Because teachers in the upper Key Stage 2 are skilled, pupils make good progress during what lessons they have. But it is still clear from the quality of artwork around the school that pupils do not make noteworthy progress in their learning over time. When Year 3 pupils use black and white to lighten and darken colours, standards of outcome vary, even though the task is really a simple one. Some carefully paint strips of colour and achieve distinct tones. Many do not end up with a strip mostly of the same tone. Many find it hard to watch where paint runs and their ability to use paint is below

that expected. They have little idea how to handle brushes. Standards are better in Years 4 and 5. For example, Year 5 pupils design and make clay tiles using a relief design borrowed from their topic of the sea. Very good teaching and clear demonstration of techniques means pupils make very good progress during lessons. Pupils roll and shape the clay and cut shapes of fish and seashells around templates. In another lesson, the very good learning support teacher contributed to pupils' good attitudes and enjoyment. Some pupils use the charcoal technique of 'pouncing' in their portraits of Henry VIII. Again, Year 4 pupils imaginatively design their own duvet cover and crazy mug. In one Year 4 class, the relatively high standard of work reflects the teacher's enthusiasm and knowledge of art, which communicates to pupils. The work of famous artists is used well, here. For example, the Van Gogh painting of his yellow chair stimulates pastel drawings. The Magritte print called 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe' pushes back, further, the boundaries of pupils' knowledge of professional artists' work. They respond well to this. Pupils base designs for their masks on a selection of the teacher's ideas. They enjoy tracing their designs onto muslin and squeezing runny dough onto their outline. This type of good practice is insufficiently seen in the school.

123. Because of time-tabling arrangements, lessons were observed only in Key Stage 2. Teaching observed is good overall. Teachers are mostly well organised and lesson plans echo learning intentions. In the better lessons clear time targets are set for the completion of the work. Teachers demonstrate required techniques but it is obvious there is a general lack of skill development throughout the school. In some lessons, pupils are given very little responsibility for clearing up. This is mainly done by adults.
124. The co-ordinator has specialist knowledge but took up the post only shortly before the inspection. In this time, she has made good progress assembling planning documents and completing an audit of resources. She is suitably aware that art is an area for development and has started to select targets for improvement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. Only one lesson was observed in each key stage. Work on display suggests that a range of media has been used and design and technology skills are being taught appropriately. Discussions with pupils reveal they are expected to plan and evaluate their products. On the evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning is judged satisfactory overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards expected for their age in the work seen.
126. In the Year 1 lesson seen, pupils revealed sound skills in design and construction of structures and could channel their imaginations into quality products. Teaching suitably stressed how pupils might improve their designs. Most pupils completed their work successfully and talked about skills and techniques used with some assurance. Year 3 pupils testing buggy designs explained their choice of materials and how the finished product could be improved. Annotated designs for models were plainly labeled. Pupils knew that both the function and appearance of products matter and that consumers sometimes buy goods for their appearance rather than function. Pupils are aware of safety issues involved in using various tools and materials as these issues are highlighted in teaching. Pupils with special educational needs are offered extra help when this is needed and make progress in line with their prior attainment. Pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and frequently attain in line with peers. They are well supported in lessons because of the practical nature of the work.
127. A scrutiny of work reveals that pupils are taught specific skills, processes and knowledge based upon a consideration of consumer needs, for example, in the design of a plaster mask in Year 2 and in Year 5 where pupils have explored the use of mechanisms to create rotary and linear motion.
128. There is a draft policy and the school has adopted the local scheme of work outlining key elements and providing guidance for the subject. The coordinator has only recently been given subject responsibility. Work seen suggests that a very limited selection of topics within the subject has been covered. The school's good tools and materials enable an appropriate range of techniques to be taught.

GEOGRAPHY

129. Seven-year-olds reach standards broadly in line with expectations for their age. They make satisfactory progress in mapping skills. Year 1 pupils' maps of the route to a bear's house indicate a reasonable grasp of what maps are expected to show. They devised suitable symbols and included a key to interpret these. Year 2 pupils are learning the main features found at the seaside and can use key items of vocabulary such as 'cliffs', 'waves', 'sea', 'beach' and 'lighthouse'. In fact, teachers' good questioning, clear explanations and use of pictures and a storybook helped pupils identify features and usefully compare their own locality with a place near the sea.
130. The work of eleven-year-olds matches expectations for this age. Pupils reach satisfactory standards. In discussion, Year 6 pupils revealed good levels of knowledge about different types of weather. They could talk in some detail about types of wind, and measurements made on the Beaufort scale. They talked, too, about a need to measure wind speed and direction and the advantages of forecasting storms and hurricanes. They had gleaned information from books and the Internet. Connected with their study of a contrasting locality, Year 5 pupils had written about how location and climate greatly affect people's choice of jobs, the local industry and dress and food habits. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are satisfactory, and they closely follow local education authority guidance. Pupils' work is regularly marked, and annotations tell what is good about it and how it can be improved. Presentation of pupils' work is good and the handwriting is neat and legible.
131. Lessons were observed in Year 2 and in Years 3 and 4 in the later key stage. Teaching was never less than satisfactory, being most frequently good in both key stages. In a very good Year 3 lesson, a teacher's relevant vocabulary and questioning helped all pupils extend their understanding of maps and a globe when naming the different continents and oceans. Cross-curricular links are made with literacy, mathematics and science when pupils study 'Chambakolli', a 'contrasting' Indian locality, drawing tables and graphs about the weather. Good use is made of primary and secondary sources when visits are made to the nearby locality to contrast this with Chambakolli. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 use pictures, globes and maps with understanding. A Year 5 residential trip significantly enhances learning when pupils are helped to apply developing skills to work out the relevant features of localities visited.
132. The co-ordinator has had only one term in post. During that time, she has audited resources and suitably identified future purchases. Resources are adequate to teach current topics. The co-ordinator has not, yet, been able to check standards or the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms and so has no clear idea of how the curriculum is delivered to ensure pupils build successively on key skills and geographical knowledge. The local education authority's recommended schemes of work have been adopted and implemented.

HISTORY

133. Pupils attain standards in line with those expected for their age by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, with strengths evident when pupils talk about their studies. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, achieve in line with prior attainment. Bilingual pupils with good English language skills attain in line with monolingual peers. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards at the end of the earlier key stage.
134. Because of time-tabling, only two lessons were seen in the upper Key Stage 2 during the inspection. A scrutiny of subject planning shows elements match National Curriculum requirements across the school year in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with most concentration on the subject at the later key stage. Scrutiny of pupils' work supports this view of delivery. For example, some writing about the discoveries of Captain Cook was seen in Year 2 pupils' work, while a few samples of work (including drawings), on the theme 'are toys different to-day from those in the past?' were seen in Year 1 classes alongside displays of old and new toys and books. More work was seen in the later key stage, especially in Years 3 to 5. In Year 4 classes, for instance, a range of work on the theme 'Invaders and Settlers' was looked at, providing examples of different kinds of writing comparing past and present times in answer to historically framed questions.

135. In Year 6, pupils' work across all attainments showed reasonable coverage of Ancient Greek studies, such as the nature of democracy, the contrasting life-style of citizens living in Athens and Sparta and methods of trading. Pupils had located places on a map showing Greece in ancient times, making good links with geography. A start had been made on 'Victorian Britain'. Overall, written evidence points to standards generally below what might be expected of eleven-year-olds. Pieces of writing were, in the main, tightly structured responses to set questions. A few examples of more personal writing were very similar across different levels of attainment and classes, suggesting, again, responses to a structure supplied by adults, although pupils appeared to understand what they studied). Nevertheless, discussion with a small group of pupils showed a good grasp of work covered throughout Key Stage 2, including, for some, that covered in classes prior to amalgamation. Pupils recalled in detail themes of work from each year. They talked enthusiastically about the kinds of questions they had researched, for example, in Year 3: "we use an iron today, how did the Egyptians look after their clothes?" and visits organised to support work. They had good insights into how historical evidence can be collected by talking to people who recall past times, as in local residents remembering World War 2. They used terms such as "researching" for looking things up in books and on CD-ROMS. These pupils explained well work done on the Ancient Greeks during the Spring term and how, following imminent statutory tests, they would have much more time for their studies on Victorian Britain. They did, however, spontaneously comment on their lack of opportunities to offer their own ideas and the way writing is most often confined to answering questions briefly. One boy remembered "more able pupils" in Year 5 classes had been given extra tasks on the 17th century's Civil War after completing work on the Tudors. This work had included "writing a Civil War diary and an essay". He clearly approved of the idea. They had all enjoyed trying out "persuasive writing" in their Ancient Greek studies which had involved their compiling a piece enticing people to take a holiday there. In talking about this, they also reflected on the uneven way history lessons are delivered across the school year.
136. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers had secure subject knowledge and conveyed their enthusiasm to pupils. This helped maintain a high level of interest among pupils. Planning suitably took pupils' different learning needs into account. In a Year 6 lesson, a bilingual pupil at a relatively early stage of learning English was well supported in learning key words about Victorian Britain (such as "accession" and "monarch") by a peer fluent in both her first language and English. In a Year 5 class, work on a local study was underpinned by very good resources telling about Barking in 1839. This work made pupils think hard about life in their local area then compared to now.
137. The co-ordinator has been in post for only one term. She has good subject expertise and keeps an informative file on how history is delivered and resources available. She rightly notes concerns about the use of artefacts in lessons (little evidence of such use is reflected in pupils' work) and how time is allocated to history, especially in Key Stage 1 and in Year 6. Improving the time allocation is seen as vital to ensuring pupils develop skills systematically within practical, investigative contexts. Only by such an improvement will pupils develop a secure subject knowledge, to be recorded as well as talked about. This secure knowledge is not found at present in the written work in most classes. Teaching and learning in the subject are not monitored and assessment is based on teachers' formative judgements about pupils during lessons. However, teachers' marking is frequently of good quality and gives useful feedback to pupils about work done and how it might be improved. Comments about completing tasks appear somewhat redundant, however, in view of the time given to the subject and the difficulties many pupils experience with writing tasks.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Standards of attainment are below those expected at the end of both key stages for seven and eleven year olds.
139. Although an effective start has been made in using information and communication technology as an integral part of learning, in line with school development planning, there is no coherent approach in teachers' planning to guarantee its use. By Year 6, pupils have experienced all strands of the subject, but have not practised what they have learned in other areas of the curriculum. They can demonstrate satisfactory word processing skills. Most can load, save and retrieve information. They

can work from CD-ROMs and research further information from the Internet. They report how they have used data-handling programs, and have used some computer-control skills in adventure and simulation games. They are aware of how information technology has revolutionised communications in the wider world, for example, via e-mail and the Internet. Scrutiny of previous work included examples of word processing, data handling, spreadsheets and the use of art programs, but these were limited and did not approach the full potential of the programmes of study. There was very little evidence of information technology supporting other curriculum areas – at least during the period of the inspection.

140. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the function of various keys. They know how to enter, delete and change fonts. In one lesson, pupils explored the use of a database, entering information and producing tables and graphs. They were moderately successful with this and most made some progress, usually when in co-operation with higher attaining pupils. They can use a mouse to select, drag and drop. Although they have access to computers in each class these are not used as much as one would expect. There is very little work on display celebrating pupils' achievements in information technology.
141. When given the opportunity, pupils show interest in the subject and are very keen to use computers to assist their learning. They talk enthusiastically about computers and their uses. They also willingly help each other. However at present the school does not make full use of pupils' existing skills and, whilst pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, some could achieve much more than they do (some bring good levels of skill from home).
142. The teachers' own skills vary. The school is aware of the need for further training to increase some teachers' confidence so the whole of the programme of study is taught effectively. Teaching overall is, nonetheless, satisfactory with some good teaching seen in both key stages. For example, in Year 1, a teacher successfully introduced to pupils the use of a simple word processor. The co-ordinator does not currently monitor planning, classroom practice or pupils' work and so is unaware of standards reached in the school. The local scheme of work has been adopted but not fully implemented. This results in planning generally being unsatisfactory because teachers are insufficiently guided in how to match tasks to pupils' different learning needs. Planning does not demonstrate how pupils' skills are to be built on and practised across the whole curriculum. The level of resources in terms of the number of computers across the school is inadequate overall. The recently installed computer suite enables class teaching to be conducted successfully although the number of pupils sharing a machine can impede progress, as can unexpected problems with equipment. There is only one computer in each classroom. There is a good supply of software in school, including a CD library, but it is not all in use. Year 6 teachers use computers appropriately to support subjects such as history, but, as yet, the deployment of information and communication technology within the full range of subjects is limited.

MUSIC

143. During the inspection, no class lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 nor any composition or musical appreciation at Key Stage 2. Planning reveals that all strands of the music curriculum are taught but the school's attention to the core subjects reduces time spent on music. Consequently, it is not evident how pupils develop skills or build on previous learning systematically. The teaching of singing is good and pupils make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs and bilingual pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils reach above expected standards in singing.
144. During assembly and singing practice Key Stage 1 pupils sing with gusto because of the enthusiasm of their teacher. They also sing with clarity and a good sense of rhythm. All enjoy singing. They can hold a melody and remember verses. Their teacher prepares sessions by explaining songs helpfully. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils regularly learn a new song during assembly, memorising the words and accompanying melody. They also recall and perform previous songs very well. In an extra-curricular club, high attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress in learning to play recorders and reading simple notation.

145. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in singing are above average, partly because of excellent Year 6 teaching. Preparation for singing is very good in some lessons. For example, in a Year 5 and a Year 6 class, teachers paid very good attention to body posture and breathing and to the importance of clear diction. In the Year 6 lesson observed, pupils sang in C major with good control, while one group held low 'c' as a drone. The teacher motivated pupils superbly despite the hot stuffiness of a Friday afternoon. They sang 'Hello' as a chord. Because the teacher is an excellent role model, all pupils improved noticeably as they controlled their breathing to hold notes and sing chords. The teacher has very high expectations: pupils follow music notation projected on an overhead screen. Part-singing, too, is of a high quality because the teacher is so well organised. Pupils sing 'Good News' in rounds accompanied by percussion and rhythmic clapping. Her communication of her own love of music and singing inspires pupils to perform well. Singing shows good dynamics, rhythm, pitch and duration. Moreover, singing enhances cultural awareness as pupils sing an African song 'Tongo'. Year 5 pupils managed, credibly, to follow the pitch and duration of vocal work. They sang along to a tape, keeping good time and controlling dynamics. They confidently practised new songs such as 'May Day.' They manage a good musical sound both for known and new songs. They modulate their voices very well, showing a good sense of tempo and dynamics. Year 3 pupils make good progress picking out the accompaniment and melody from pieces of music. They use simple actions such as 'hands on heads' to indicate the melody and 'hands on hips' to point to the accompaniment. They sing a round successfully.
146. Although no music appraisal and composition work was evident during the inspection week, scrutiny of planning suggests it does take place. Year 5 pupils discuss classical music, describing the mood, atmosphere and story behind pieces, then 'defining' the waltz and the march. Year 3 pupils have worked at musical composition although this is rather under-developed throughout the school.
147. Teaching is good overall with instances of excellent teaching in Year 6. A singing club contributes significantly to standards and to fostering positive attitudes to music in pupils. Teachers give their time to it generously. This also helps forge good links with parents who listen appreciatively during singing club (for example, pupils sing 'Look over the hillside'). Teachers are excellent role models. In the better lessons, they build on pupils' ideas such as those generated by rhythmical accompaniments to songs. Posture matters during performances and teachers stressing this adds much to the resultant very good sound achieved. Teachers' very good subject knowledge, enthusiasm and excellent organisation inspire pupils to reach above average standards in singing.
148. Two co-ordinators share responsibilities across the key stages. They have very good levels of expertise and are responsible for much of the music teaching in the school. There are regular music performances for both key stages and some pupils benefit from peripatetic music tuition from visiting specialists in brass, violin and keyboard. There is a good range of readily accessible resources. A 'whole school approach' to planning is being adapted to better take into account pupils' different capabilities and learning needs. Co-ordinators do not monitor the delivery of the subject in classrooms and so have no clear view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, all pupils reach standards expected of seven and eleven year olds in those strands of the curriculum observed. They make good progress in their learning, including those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs (including pupils with Statements of special need). During the inspection, games, swimming and sailing lessons were observed. Due to time-tabling, no gymnastics or dance activities were seen although scrutinising planning suggests these occur during the school year. Coverage of the subject during a school day is limited, with most pupils taking one physical education lesson per week. This fact hampers skills' development in each strand of the curriculum. Pupils can, however, extend their learning during the excellent extra-curricular clubs on offer after school, and many pupils take up this option.
150. No Year 2 lessons were observed. Standards in Year 1 indicate that pupils are well on course to reach expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1. Spatial awareness is well developed in Year 1 because the teacher stresses careful use of the space. Pupils use the playground maze well,

changing direction on command. Pupils realise that exercise matters and can talk about the effect of exercise on the body, partly because they feel their heart beating faster after running. Pupils' own decision-making is encouraged – seen when they choose how to travel by hopping, side-stepping, running or skipping. Skipping is well developed - a 'special needs' pupil demonstrated how to skip while co-ordinating arms and legs well. Individual throwing and catching is, similarly, well developed because the teacher's clear teaching points guide pupils well. She watches that pupils throw and catch carefully. They can bounce and catch balls and are beginning to pass a ball to partners.

151. Throwing and catching skills are not consistently taught through the school. In some Year 3 classes, especially, these skills are very under-developed, even though good teaching was observed in some lessons. Ability to throw towards a partner is poor and many pupils place their hands in a defence position to shield themselves from an on-coming ball rather than stretching out to meet it. A few high attaining pupils throw and catch successfully but average and lower attaining pupils drop a ball, and do not judge how high to pitch it to ensure success. Many send balls too high, too short or too wide and many cannot throw accurately to a partner. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils can travel with a hockey ball dribbling competently, passing to their partners using a 'push-pass'. 'Attack and defence' strategies are developing well during small-sided games. High attaining pupils push-pass a ball to a partner using a correct grip, action and transference of body weight. They have a good sense of how to use space. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs use space in competitive situations less confidently. Learning is good because teaching points are clearly made and key points re-enforced. Pupils are given time to practice. Pupil-evaluation of their own and others performance is less well developed. Teachers guide 'warm up' activities clearly, making sure pupils stretch well before activities. Correspondingly, pupils can talk about the effects of exercise on their body and its value to health and fitness. Most swim twenty-five metres by the time they leave the school. Pupils progress well when learning to sail and their excellent instruction gives them good awareness of how to steer a boat while watching wind direction. They know about 'tacking' and the principles behind it. They respond to excellent teaching with very good learning
152. Teaching seen at both key stages is good because teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned. Teachers' clear teaching points improve performance. In weaker lessons, activity time is shortened because teachers' very tight control gives pupils too little time to practise skills. Teachers change for lessons, providing good role models for their pupils. Teachers' observation of pupils' performance is good. For example, in one Year 6 lesson a teacher recognised that pupils had not fully grasped a task, so she re-taught the activity until there was better understanding. The teacher's very good demonstration and plainly stated teaching points reminded pupils of a correct hand grip, how to bend the knees when hitting the ball and to have sticks 'on the ball' when pushing to their partners. Pupils are sometimes 'over-challenged'. For example, when Year 1 pupils are asked to travel with a ball, throwing and catching, most cannot exchange their ball with another while moving.
153. The school has strong links with the local community sports associations for cricket and soccer, and a professional dancer extends pupils' experiences after school as well as during lessons. In Year 4, pupils take soccer tuition from professional coaches who visit the school regularly. Pupils have good dribbling skills. Year 6 pupils attend an outdoor residential study visit for walking, canoeing and climbing. Resources for physical education are good. In spite of limited lesson time overall, the subject is strong throughout the school with provision considerably enhanced by extra-curricular tuition and stimulating activities such as sailing for Year 5 pupils. The co-ordinators for physical education are very enthusiastic and very good role models for pupils and staff, solidly enhancing the status of physical education through their own positive attitudes. As yet, however, they do not monitor teaching and learning in lessons and so do not have a picture of how the subject is delivered. Neither is assessment of pupils' learning undertaken systematically so as to inform planning.
154. The Years 5 and 6 athletics club helps pupils develop skills throwing a foam discus and javelin. Pupils practise ball skills and compete against other schools as part of football and netball club activities. In Years 3 and 4 games clubs, pupils respond to a pleasant, warm atmosphere developing social skills and learning to lose gracefully. The quality of teaching in all clubs is very high. In the multi-cultural dance club, Years 3 and 4 quickly learn steps of the Marengo dance from the Republic of Dominica, dancing confidently with partners.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Pupils' levels of attainment are in line with those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds as set out in the locally-agreed syllabus. They make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, attain in line with their prior attainment. Bilingual pupils with secure English language skills generally attain in line with their monolingual peers. Those still acquiring necessary skills in English achieve well, especially where they can express their understanding orally or through carefully structured worksheets matched to their English language competence.
156. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. They are good in the later key stage. Where teachers have a real interest in the subject and plan lessons to engage pupils, relative to their prior understanding, and illustrate lessons with relevant aids, the quality of learning is very good. For example, a Year 1 pupil pointed out a similarity between a Christian church altar in a photograph and a special table he had seen used during worship in his own faith. In an excellent Year 3 lesson, pupils tackled the complex question 'where did all religion begin?' Their teacher's structured attention to lessons objectives kept pupils intrigued. Her encouraging support further enabled them to formulate their own questions about the nature of God with a spontaneous "Where did God come from?" immediately capturing pupils' interest. A world map and symbols of the six major world religions on a display board gave good support to the lesson's exploring of beliefs associated with different faiths. In such lessons, pupils benefit from the good subject knowledge and enthusiasm of committed teachers.
157. In most lessons teachers know their subject matter. They bring work to life by using resources creatively and through (often very dramatic) story telling. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were introduced to parts of a local church through coloured photographs prior to a class visit. One pupil expressed his pleasure at the task by describing the stained glass windows as 'beautiful and colourful'. Year 4 pupils studied aspects of Judaism, learning about Pesach and the purpose of elements of the Seder (Passover) meal. In the week following the inspection, it is planned for pupils to receive expert teaching from a member of the Jewish faith. Such well-deployed expertise (both adult and pupil) helps to keep pupils' attention on matters that can, otherwise, be hard to grasp. Therefore, in Year 5 classes, pupils studied the Five Pillars of Islam using an expert panel – five Muslim pupils in each case – who thoughtfully answered questions posed by their peers. Note-taking by the audience for later reference exploited, well, skills learned in literacy lessons. Similarly, Year 6 pupils learned about the Sikh faith, with a teacher adding to advice from the 'expert panel' - in this instance - to explain the significance of different areas found within the 'Gurdwara'. Pupils sensibly discussed associated traditions, such as a distribution of a sweetmeat after gatherings. One pupil thoughtfully linked the sweetmeat with holy bread distributed at a Christian communion.
158. Displays in the Key Stage 2 library include books on Judaism and a menorah. Teachers adopt many approaches to lessons, in ways reinforcing well work in literacy and other subject areas such as science, geography and history. In Years 3 and 4 for example, a study of the symbolism of light in religion is linked to the physical nature and uses made of light. And choice of colour and design for Islamic prayer mats appeals to pupils' creative aesthetic senses. Pupils write suitable responses to different situations. Some responses (although not most) are extended in nature, showing some imaginative understanding, as when pupils write an account of the birth of Jesus from the perspective of Mary, Joseph or the Innkeeper. Pupils with special educational needs are set written or other tasks in line with their capabilities.
159. Teachers show considerable sensitivity to the beliefs of others and a feature of some lessons is the way pupils of many faiths, or none, are included without their beliefs or non-beliefs being compromised. Information and communication technology does not play a significant part in the teaching of religious education.
160. Pupils have positive attitudes to religious education. Their involvement during lessons is evident in their attitudes and the care with which they present work. However, at times the inappropriate behaviour of a few causes persistent problems, severely disrupting lessons and others' learning.

This was seen, for example, in some classes in Year 3.

161. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Little monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms has been undertaken. The programme for religious education is, occasionally, enriched by visiting speakers. There is a programme of visits to places of worship for the major world faiths in the locality, which also enhances provision. Visits help to broaden pupils' knowledge of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Two subject co-ordinators share responsibilities across the key stages. They rightly plan to review the current scheme of work since they realise that its success is variable. For example, some themes are difficult for pupils to grasp and insufficient attention is paid in some teachers' planning to organising practical activities to match pupils' learning needs. Assessment procedures remain under-developed. This prevents set work more closely matching the learning needs and abilities of individual pupils.