

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST AGNES RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cricklewood London

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101332

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Jordan

Reporting inspector: Dr T Simpson  
10428

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 230719

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Thorverton Road  
Cricklewood  
London

Postcode: NW2 1RG

Telephone number: 020 8452 4565

Fax number: 020 8830 6709

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Judith Bona

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10428	Dr T Simpson	Registered inspector	History Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well is the school led and managed?
9646	G Osment	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How good does the school work in partnership with parents?
22837	G Crew	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography The foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14997	V Emery	Team inspector	English Physical education Special educational needs	How well are the pupils taught?
18638	C Shaw	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Agnes is a large Roman Catholic primary school serving an urban community in Cricklewood, London. There are 343 pupils on roll, including 94 who are in reception or nursery classes. This latter group is described as being in the foundation stage. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with twenty per cent coming from homes where English is not the first language – which is high compared with national figures. Attainment on entry varies, but overall it is below expected levels. About twenty-six per cent of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This is slightly above average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school. In comparison with similar schools, assessment results are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, results in comparison with similar schools are well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English – although the latter result disguises the above average numbers of pupils gaining both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Pupils' rates of learning are good and most make good progress in most subjects as they proceed through the school. They are very well supported by staff, have very positive attitudes and mostly behave very well. Teaching is good or better in over seventy per cent of lessons. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good, while provision for their spiritual development is excellent. The headteacher and staff have a strong vision for taking the school forward and a series of strategies for even further improving standards have been put in place. The governing body is very supportive and fulfils its statutory duties well. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Income is around average and the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils' attainment in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science is above average.
- Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and the ethnic diversity of the school is celebrated well.
- Provision for spiritual development is excellent.
- Teaching and provision in the foundation stage is very good and has a very positive effect on the quality of the children's learning.
- Pupils are well cared for and child protection arrangements are very good.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher has a significant impact on the school's excellent ethos.
- The reflection of the school's aims and values in its work is excellent.

#### **What could be improved**

- There are weaknesses in information and communication technology at Key Stage 2.
- In some lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

*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 last inspected in February 1997. Since then it has made good progress in addressing most of the issues raised. Standards in English, mathematics and science are now higher throughout the school. Both higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are now achieving better. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and there are now no unsatisfactory lessons. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are even better. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved overall. Assessment information is now used effectively to inform planning. The school continues to be well managed and pupils continue to be very well cared for. However, largely

owing to the school's appropriate focus on raising standards in the key areas of literacy, numeracy and science, standards are not now as high in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology as they were judged to be at the time of the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	A	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	A	B	B	
Science	E	A	B	A	

In English, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was above the national average, while the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. The reason for the relatively lower average points score was that a significant number of pupils in Year 6 had statements of special educational need and did not sit the tests, although their numbers were counted when making the calculation. The findings of the inspection are that current standards in all three subjects are above average throughout the school. Over the past four years, the trend in improvement in the school's average scores was close to the national trend in English and mathematics, but above this in science. The school has set appropriate targets for further improving numeracy and literacy and is on course to meeting these. In the key subjects of English, mathematics and science the pupils are achieving well. In most other subjects, their achievement is satisfactory. Reading is a particular strength. In geography, history, music and physical education, standards are at the expected levels throughout the school. Within music, singing is a particular strength. Standards in art and design and information and communication technology are at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1, but below this at the end of Key Stage 2, while standards in design and technology are below the expected level at the end of both key stages.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good – pupils are enthusiastic about school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good overall.
Personal development and relationships	Very good – relationships are very good and pupils enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Most pupils throughout the school respond very well in lessons and want to learn. They are trustworthy and polite to one another and to adults. They have a high level of tolerance for the work, ideas, beliefs and values of others. They respond well to the good role models provided by staff in the way that they conduct themselves.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation Stage	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. In seventy-two per cent it is good or better, and in twenty-six per cent it is very good or excellent. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are taught well across the school and as a result make good progress in their learning. Teaching is slightly more effective at Key Stage 2 than it is at Key Stage 1. Teaching in the foundation stage is a particular strength and the young children learn well. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well, with the teaching of mathematics being a particular strength at Key Stage 2. The very good subject knowledge of teachers in English and science also makes a strong contribution to the good learning and high standards achieved throughout the school. Much of the teaching is challenging and exciting, and as a result pupils are motivated and their pace of learning is good. Skilful questioning is used to good effect in forcing the pupils to think deeply about what they are doing. Methods are generally very effective. Frequently they involve the pupils well and have a positive effect on their acquisition of new knowledge and skills. In some lessons – particularly those involving investigations – pupils are over directed and they do not have enough opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. Overall, however, teaching at the school meets the needs of the pupils well and contributes successfully to the standards being achieved.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The overall curriculum is good at the foundation stage and satisfactory at both the other two key stages. Planning is sound and the overall curriculum is enhanced by a good number of visits out of school and by visitors to the school. Extra-curricular provision is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good – and as a result most of these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good – and as a result these pupils also make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good, while provision for their spiritual development is excellent. The school successfully celebrates the ethnic diversity of its pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a very good range of assessment procedures in place and assessment data is used well to inform strategic planning. Staff know and care for the pupils very well.

The school works well with parents and most are very satisfied with the provision it makes. A broad curriculum is provided which satisfies statutory requirements except for some aspects of information and communication technology at Key Stage 2. There is some imbalance between the time allocated to different subjects. The pupils are cared for very well and child protection arrangements are very good. This is an inclusive school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is a major force behind the school's excellent ethos. Other members of the senior management team have a clear role in the forward development of the school, while subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive and fulfil most of their statutory duties very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good – the school has effectively evaluated its strengths and areas for further development and taken appropriate action.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the resources available to it, the budget is constructed in relation to the school's analysis of its needs and outcomes are effectively monitored.

Resources are sufficient overall. There are strengths in the resources available for the foundation stage and for mathematics. The school is well staffed. The accommodation is well looked after and has strengths but the space available for the nursery children is inadequate and some problems with structural movement are affecting the school's ability to plan forward in some areas. The school is well managed. It successfully analyses its cost effectiveness and makes purchases in relation to the best value it can get.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve of their best.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• There are not enough interesting activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• They are not kept well enough informed about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

There were a number of positive comments on the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. There was praise for the teaching and the management and for the help provided by the staff. There were also a number of concerns. The main ones related to lack of provision for physical activity during physical education lessons and at playtimes. Some parents felt that there was a lack of consistency between classes in the provision of homework. The current organisation of the curriculum was regarded by some as preventing parents from attending school assemblies. The inspection team agreed with the positive comments. It judged that not enough time was allocated to physical education. It could find no evidence to support the other concerns.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. In the most recent (Year 2000) tests of seven year olds, results were well above the national average overall in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, they were well above average in all three subjects. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3, however, was below the national average in writing. In the teacher assessments of science, results were close to the national average. Averaged over the past three years, standards at Key Stage 1 have been above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the tests of eleven year olds (SATs), results were above the national average in mathematics and science. In English, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was above average, while the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was well above average. However, because of the significant number of pupils in last year's Year 6 who had statements of special educational need and did not sit the tests – but who were counted in the overall total – the overall points score for this subject was only average. In comparison with similar schools, results were average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Over the past four years, the trend in improvement in the school's average scores was close to the national trend in English and mathematics, but above this in science. Current standards in all three subjects are now higher at the end of both key stages than they were at the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be average. St Agnes' was recently presented with an Achievement Award by the Department for Education and Employment for the substantial improvement in results achieved by its pupils between 1997 and 2000. The school has carefully analysed its assessment results and put in place a number of strategies for even further improvement. These include 'booster' classes and extra focused support for specific groups of pupils. These have had the desired effect and there has been a particular improvement in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. The findings of the inspection concur with the statutory assessment results, with current standards being above average in all three subjects at the end of both key stages. Within English, reading is a particular strength, and here, standards are well above average. Children in the foundation stage will meet the early learning goals in all areas by the time they enter Year 1.
2. The majority of pupils enter the school with below average academic skills and leave with above average standards. This indicates that most achieve well. The overall progress of last year's Year 6 between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2 was above average, again an indicator of good achievement. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language learn and achieve well. This is because the teachers know the pupils well and the pupils, themselves, have good attitudes towards their learning. The school has set suitably challenging targets for improving standards further in literacy and numeracy and these are on course to being met. Standards in history, geography, music and physical education meet the expected levels throughout the school. The national expectation is also met in information and communication technology and art at Key Stage 1. However, the expected levels are not reached in information and communication technology or art at Key Stage 2, or in design and technology at either key stage and in these subjects, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
3. Speaking and listening skills are above average at the end of both key stages. Key Stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic about joining in lesson discussions and are able to make sensible contributions to these. At Key Stage 2, pupils almost always listen well to each other and to their teachers. By the time they reach the end of the key stage most are confident and articulate speakers who use Standard English well in formal situations. The school is successful not only in teaching pupils to read, but also developing them well as critical and discerning readers who enjoy reading and are able to discuss a range of authors and styles. By the end of Key Stage 1, reading skills are well established and pupils' reading is mainly fluent and expressive. By the age of eleven, almost all pupils read clearly, confidently and with good expression. They have a good understanding of a variety of texts, and select key points and phrases when discussing characters and plot. By the

end of Key Stage 1, pupils' writing is well structured and ideas are developed logically with good punctuation. At Key Stage 2, pupils produce thoughtful and reflective writing. They start sentences in a variety of ways and use exclamation marks and paragraphs. Their awareness of their audience is well developed and they are confident in writing in different styles. There are weaknesses in handwriting, however, at both key stages – although by the time they leave the school it is generally well formed.

4. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils can rapidly add mentally up to 10, with some going beyond this number. In Year 2, pupils are confident to use several strategies when working with multiplication. They understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and some appreciate that division is the inverse of multiplication. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils know the importance of estimating. They can fix a point on a number line and use their knowledge of fractions and rounding up or down to help them do this. In Years 5 and 6 pupils work successfully on data handling. They know a variety of ways to display data. They use their knowledge of tables to change fractions to percentages and vice versa. More able pupils work with increasingly difficult problems by applying their knowledge, which is secure. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are able to conduct a simple experiment to discover what 'minibeasts' are found in different habitats and record their findings well in pictures, words and tables. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a very good understanding of forces and can explain the pollination of flowers and the earth's seasons. Their ability to devise and conduct their own experiments, however, is less secure.
5. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can use computers to write text, and higher attaining ones can, with help, save and print out their work. They can enter data they have collected into a graphing program. At Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in using a word processor. However, they have not used a spreadsheet to explore simple situations or collected a range of data to enter into their own database. In Key Stage 1 pupils produce life drawings well and successfully learn how to handle poster colours. At Key Stage 2, pupils work on simple collages, collect ideas in a sketch book and explore different ways of using line and tone. However, their finished work depends heavily on their teachers. In design and technology at Key Stage 1, pupils make a fruit salad or a sculpture. At Key Stage 2, pupils make designs for a trophy stand and a new school uniform. However, their designs are often superficial and unrealistic. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have learned many elements of geography – including people in other countries. Key Stage 2 pupils have a good recall of previously learned facts about India and are knowledgeable about features of different physical environments. Key Stage 1 pupils are able to discriminate between aspects of life now and in the past, while older pupils have a good knowledge of many aspects of different eras. Many have the ability to analyse written historical evidence and successfully distinguish between fact and opinion before reaching valid conclusions. Younger pupils sing a range of hymns with enthusiasm and with a good control of tempo and dynamics. Key Stage 2 pupils successfully interpret extracts from a familiar piece of music. By the end of this key stage, pupils effectively discuss the social and cultural significance of various well-known lyrics and also sing well. At Key Stage 1, pupils throw and bounce a ball with appropriate accuracy, while by Year 6 they are competent in playing a range of games. Standards in swimming are good.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

6. The pupils come to school with very good attitudes and this partly accounts for the good standards in literacy and numeracy across the school. One hundred per cent of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children like school. In conversations with pupils they confirm that they enjoy coming to school, they want to learn and they settle promptly to set tasks. For example, the pupils in the Year 3/4 class were responsive to the teachers' calm and purposeful method of delivery during a numeracy lesson.
7. The pre-inspection questionnaire indicates that ninety two per cent of parents feel that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team supports this view and judges the pupils' behaviour to be very good overall. Teachers have clear expectations of behaviour and many lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all, which ensures good behaviour in the classrooms. The pupils move around the school sensibly and respond readily to the requests and instructions of

teachers, classroom and welfare assistants and lunchtime supervisors. The pupils are polite to each other, to teachers and other staff, as well as to visitors. They are trustworthy and treat the resources they use with care. There have been two exclusions from the school during the current school year; both for physical violence, which the school will not tolerate. This number of exclusions is an improvement since the last inspection. The school expects the children to work hard and to behave themselves, and this is certainly reflected in the very good behaviour throughout the school.

8. Children's attitudes to school in the foundation stage are very good. They respond very positively to everything they do and really enjoy being at school. They show a high level of independence in choosing the activities they want to work at when they have the opportunity within the sessions. The relationships between the staff and the children in this stage of education are very special and children really 'love' the staff that work with them. Because of this the children are always ready to do as they are asked and give of their best.
9. The personal development of the pupils is very good. The pupils form very good relationships with fellow pupils and adults, built on tolerance for the work, ideas, beliefs and values of others. All staff in the school are good role models for the pupils in the way that they conduct themselves. Pupils work well as individuals or in pairs or small groups. This was clearly illustrated in a Year 5 numeracy lesson when the pupils worked together sharing their ideas. They are kind to each other, take turns and help their classmates. The pupils have participated successfully in football, netball and music competitions, and many extend their interests through attending after school activities including the drama club. In Year 6 pupils are invited to become prefects. They write letters of application to the headteacher and selections are made after interviews with her. The prefects take their responsibilities seriously and are good role models for the younger pupils. There are also various other opportunities provided for all pupils to be involved in the daily life of the school.
10. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Punctuality was a concern of the last inspection but this has improved. Parents are reminded of their responsibility for their children's punctuality and attendance in the prospectus and newsletters, but do not always ensure that their children's learning is not interrupted by absence.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

11. The quality of teaching is good overall and as a result of this pupils learn well. A particular strength is the teaching in the foundation stage and teaching is slightly stronger at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. The teaching of mathematics is also a strength at Key Stage 2 but there is some weakness in the teaching of information and communication technology at Key Stage 2. Teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory overall with some good, but with twenty two per cent less than satisfactory. During the current inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons, with none that was unsatisfactory. Seventy two per cent was good or better, twenty three per cent was very good and three per cent was excellent. Teaching is good in history and music, and satisfactory in physical education. It was not possible to make a judgement in the other subjects as not enough was seen during the inspection
12. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are taught well across the school and as a result, most make good progress. Support staff work closely under the direction of the class teacher and provide a detailed written record of the gains and responses made by pupils. When support is within the classroom, there is careful consideration for adapting the lesson to meet the particular needs of these pupils. For example, they have extra resources for counting and visual aids to help them. A task set to complete word problems using division and linked to knowledge of shapes, was successful because pupils could use counting apparatus and had labelled models of tables with various numbers of legs. They could therefore complete tasks such as 'How many pentagon tables can I make if I have ten legs?' It is because of these careful adaptations that the pupils learn well. Support is often within the classroom, but pupils are also withdrawn for targeted teaching of specific support to meet the

targets in their individual education plans. The quality of teaching at these times is also good and as a result pupils again make good progress.

13. Teaching in the foundation stage is very good overall. The strength of teaching here is that all staff working in this stage have a very good knowledge of how young children learn and they present all activities at a level to ensure the children are building on what they know and can do. As a result, they achieve well. When excellent teaching was seen children were totally enthralled by the way in which a story was presented to them and consequently their learning in this session could not be bettered.
14. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of subjects is good overall and it is very good in English, mathematics and science. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well and the very good knowledge of teachers in English, mathematics and science makes a strong contribution to the good learning and high standards reached throughout the school. Teachers have high expectation of the pupils and use their knowledge well to plan challenging activities. They have a clear idea of what is to be taught, make this clear to the pupils at the start of the lesson and refer back to it as the lesson progresses. As a result of this, pupils have a clear understanding of what the aims of the lesson are and can evaluate for themselves what they are learning. A mathematics lesson was a good example of this where there was frequent reinforcement of the main teaching points of rounding up first before estimating. Planning is most effective when it takes into account the needs of all pupils as was seen in the best lessons. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson where carefully planned work introduced the concept of multiplication with money, different levels of challenge were carefully prepared in written problems. In less successful lessons, different tasks are planned, but over time they are rotated and, therefore, do not always match the needs of different groups of pupils. In some lessons, other than mathematics and English, different work is not planned for, and learning becomes merely satisfactory.
15. The very best teaching in the school motivates interest and fully involves pupils. The pace and challenge are high and there is constant reinforcement of the teaching through skilled questioning, with extra challenge provided through open-ended questions. The methods and organisation used by the teacher are very efficient and positive support from the teacher lets the pupils know 'it is alright to make a mistake – we build on it!' In a mathematics lesson in Year 3 / 4 for example, this was evident. A challenging mental starter session establishes a high work ethic early in the lesson. The final plenary to the lesson reinforced and consolidated the teaching points and let the pupils know how today's work will lead on to tomorrow's. Although no teaching was unsatisfactory, there are some common weaker elements in the teaching. The most significant of these is the lack of opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. In a science lesson for example, the investigation being undertaken was too directed by the teacher and higher attaining pupils had no extra challenge or opportunity to work independently when they were investigating 'Do people with the longest legs jump the furthest?' In this case, the gains in knowledge and understanding made by these pupils could have been better. Another weakness is the pace of lessons dropping during group activities, which sometimes happens in English and Mathematics lessons. Additionally, teachers sometimes concentrate exclusively on their focus group and not enough regard is taken of pupils working independently, which leads to a drop in their pace of learning. Pupils generally know how well they are progressing because work is marked regularly and they are told if they are achieving well or under performing. However, marking is inconsistent. In English, for example, marking provides pupils with clear and useful targets for improvement, but in mathematics and science these are sometimes missing.
16. The management of pupils is generally very good and this has a positive effect on the very good behaviour seen in the school and enables good learning to take place. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and this is based on mutual respect and a quiet and friendly approach. Teachers use genuinely positive remarks very well to build the self-esteem of the pupils. Consequently, even when behaviour sometimes slips, the good relationships and respect for the teacher results in the positive ethos of the school being restored quickly. In one games lesson for example, although making clear to the pupils that they did not always meet the

teacher's high expectations of behaviour, the positive elements of the lesson were skilfully drawn out and the good relationships restored. The very good use of homework contributes very well to the standards achieved by the pupils. From the start of their school life, pupils have regular homework, which increases as they go through the school. Work is relevant and is carefully marked by the teachers. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at eleven years.

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

17. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the foundation stage, is good. The staff have given good consideration to the curriculum needs of the children when they begin school in the nursery and when they move into the reception classes. They have established a broad and balanced curriculum, which focuses very clearly on the key priorities of language and literacy, mathematical development and pupils' personal and social development. This is very relevant to pupils' needs and is the building block for their future learning. As the pupils move into Key Stages 1 and 2, the learning opportunities presented to them continue to be good and the National Curriculum is enhanced by many activities, visits and visitors that enrich the pupils' experiences. All pupils have the equal opportunity to participate in everything that the school offers at sometime during their school career. This reflects the school's aims as set out in the prospectus and other school documents. When pupils move into Key Stages 1 and 2, the priorities established in the foundation stage continue to be of great importance and reflect the ethos of the school. The curriculum overall is satisfactory in both key stages. Due to the focus placed on developing literacy, numeracy and personal development, the school has not yet established a satisfactory balance between some subjects. Some lessons, such as numeracy, are too long and could be covered in less time than that allocated. Others, such as history, geography and physical education in Key Stage 2, are planned in blocks and although the time allocation is satisfactory over a school year, the school timetable does not allow for more creativity in teaching these subjects. This has a negative impact on standards – as these are only satisfactory at present. The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, which includes lessons on citizenship and drugs education. These two factors combine to reduce the time available for other subjects, such as design and technology and art and technology, which are consequently given just sufficient time over the whole year.
18. The quality of curriculum planning for pupils in the foundation stage is good. New teaching and curriculum requirements have been successfully addressed, including provision for the early learning goals. Planning is thorough and the next stage that staff have planned is to link these even more closely to the stepping stones children need to achieve to reach these goals. This will improve planning further. Medium term and weekly plans address the needs of all pupils and state the learning objectives to be achieved. They are less clear as to how this will be achieved. The quality of planning in this stage is contributing well to the achievements and good progress that pupils make in the time they have been in the school.
19. The school has addressed weaknesses in planning in Key Stage 1 and 2 identified in the last report. The overall quality of teachers' long and medium term plans is at least satisfactory, and sometimes good. The medium term planning frameworks set out in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are closely followed, and teachers set out good weekly plans. In other subjects, the school is using national guidance to guide planning. Half-termly plans give general detail about what is to be taught, activities to be undertaken and how learning is to be assessed. Plans ensure that pupils build on what they know, understand and can do as they progress through the school. Statutory requirements are being met with regard to curriculum requirements, except in the control and modelling strand of information and communication technology. A new scheme of work provides satisfactory provision for information and communication technology as an individual subject, but arrangements to teach all aspects of the subject in association with other curriculum areas are not yet well established and control and monitoring are not taught adequately in Key Stage 2 contributing to standards which are below

the expected levels. The school is aware of this weakness, which has been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

20. Both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been very successfully implemented and have contributed well to the rising standards seen in English and mathematics. Some aspects of the strategies have already been reviewed and changes have been made to remedy weaknesses found. For example, the school places increased attention on written calculations in mathematics and writing in English following reviews of these aspects of pupils' work. These additional foci are already proving to be of benefit and standards continue to rise.
21. The school is inclusive in what it offers pupils. Staff ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of aptitude, language or gender. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Good arrangements are made to support pupils with special educational needs. They receive additional specific guidance from teachers and assistants, when that support is available, through a combination in-class support and withdrawal in small groups or as individuals. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The individual education plans provide targets for the pupils to work toward, but the quality of these is variable. As a result, planning in both class and withdrawal sessions is not always closely enough linked to pupils' needs. There are a few pupils who require additional support in mathematics. However, it is not common practice to identify targets in order to provide them with this support. The school has also identified pupils who are gifted or talented and provides the opportunities for these pupils to work in groups to extend their learning.
22. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. It is firmly established at the heart of the school's curriculum and aims, and permeates all that it strives for. It includes good provision for health, sex education and drug awareness. Programmes such as 'circle time' are used very effectively for discussion and to link work in subjects such as science and citizenship. Pupils are given the opportunity to voice their opinion within a 'safe audience' and to be praised for exceptional efforts. For instance, during the inspection lessons with the local police focused on dangers that may present themselves to the pupils. Their understanding of the need to be aware of how they might be affected was discussed in a mature and thorough way. As part of the personal and social development curriculum older pupils take part in residential visits to Devon where they learn how to live sociably together as well as taking part in challenging outdoor pursuits, adventurous activities and geographical studies. Pupils have very good opportunities to take on responsibilities in school. One example is prefect duties, which help them to take part in democratic decision-making. Many pupils undertake daily responsibilities in the classrooms and often carry out a job around the school if they see something needs to be done. The school is about to embark on developing a 'school council', so that the pupils can be more involved in the day to day running of the school, and is working towards gaining the 'Healthy Schools Award'. Both of these initiatives build on the programme for personal development well. The provision for pupils' personal development is reflected very well in the high standards of behaviour and very positive attitudes which pupils bring to school.
23. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which cover a wide range of interests. This is an improvement from the last inspection when there was an adequate range. These include, for example, writing, as in the 'young authors' club and science, as in the 'first investigators' club. There is a focus on a wide range of sports and music. For example, there are regular coaching sessions for cricket that are available for both boys and girls. The pupils benefit from links with organisations such as Hendon Football Club, and pupils regularly participate in local competitive activities. The school enters local events, such as the Barnet Music Festival, so pupils can share their successes with other youngsters locally. All pupils have the opportunity to participate at in an activity at some time. A particular strength is that some activities are available to pupils in Key Stage 1. Overall, the quality and range of activities outside lessons contribute very well to the quality of learning experiences for pupils.
24. The school has very good links with the local community. There are good links with local businesses and other primary and secondary schools and training institutions. All links have been



systematically developed in recent years, and play an important part in the life of the school. The school is involved in supporting several local and national charities, and in this way the pupils are encouraged to give something back to the community. Sponsorship, for example from local businesses like Eddie's Shop or larger organisations such as the Allied Irish Bank, has been important to the school in relation to building links and increasing finances, and these are used well to support developments. The school makes very good use of visits to local places and further afield. For example, the pupils visited Westminster Cathedral for the Jubilee Faith celebration. Visitors and visits out of school are important to enhancing the curriculum that is available in school and the range is very good. For example, the group 'Dramatic Attic' provides theatrical experiences for the pupils, which bring the history curriculum to life.

25. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good overall and has been improved overall since the previous inspection report. The mission statement 'each human being is created in God's image. He/she has a life to lead and a soul to save', gives the school a very strong identity and creates a superb ethos in which the provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Acts of collective worship meet requirements and they provide excellent opportunities to develop spiritual awareness. Well-chosen music creates a calm and quiet atmosphere in assembly and the use of a candle is a signal for the pupils to engage in quiet reflection and prayer. Very good community spirit is created through close links with St. Agnes' Church, Father Anthony regularly attends assemblies and parents are also invited. The school visits St. Agnes' Church to celebrate various festivals including the Stations of the Cross at Easter. In many lessons pupils learn to appreciate and understand what is special and worthy of respect, for example, during a storytime in the nursery.
26. The provision for both pupils' moral development and social development are very good, as reported at the last inspection. Pupils develop an understanding of the wider community by raising money for various charities including the Catholic Children's Society and Dr. Barnardo's. They also send Christmas boxes to Eastern Europe. The pupils perform their Christmas concert to senior citizens at Candle Court. The pupils are set a very good example by all staff and they have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The code of behaviour is displayed prominently around the school and all pupils and staff adhere to it. Displays throughout the school celebrate the work the pupils have been doing on 'Choices'. Year 2 pupils performed very well in an assembly during the inspection, when they showed the work they had completed on choosing how to be a good friend. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, where they are helpful and supportive to each other. As a result they show good levels of tolerance and respect. Educational visits and the school journey help pupils to relate well to others in a less formal context.
27. The schools' provision for cultural development is very good. The good range of visitors and visits increases pupils' knowledge of their own culture. The school celebrates the cultural diversity of its pupils across all areas of the curriculum, to the benefit of all pupils. Pupils have performed a play in Italian, sing songs in French, and during a celebration of Pentecost the pupils spoke in their mother tongues. Multicultural images and resources celebrate and reflect the cultural diversity of the pupils' neighbouring locality. Notices are displayed in a number of languages; for example, a number line and welcome posters in classrooms.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

28. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. In addition to the statutory requirements to assess pupils at the end of each key stage, the strategy provides for assessment of each pupil in the core subjects at key points in the year and for all subjects at the end of each module of work. Teachers record these systematically and, along with classroom observations and the marks given to classwork and homework, keep careful records. Extremely detailed and extensive records from the foundation stage provide a baseline against which pupils' continuing progress may be measured. Teachers have a good understanding of the levels at which pupils should be working, because these are incorporated into the schemes of work, based on national guidelines.

29. The school uses data well to provide information on the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum. The head teacher uses this information along with national and local statistics to see which aspects of the core subjects need strengthening. This is fed back to the teachers and incorporated into the termly and weekly planning and the development of teaching. In this way, for instance, the school has been able to boost the performance of high attainers, improve writing at Level 3 and to develop experimental and investigative science. The head teacher also regularly monitors the progress of these changes and reports to the staff and governors on how effective they have been. The pupil records are also used to develop individual education programmes for pupils with special educational needs and to plan for the extra teachers and classrooms assistants they will need.
30. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good overall. The detailed record keeping provides information for setting targets for improvement, which are part of a yearly cycle. Beginning with an analysis of past and present achievement in the core subjects the teachers decide what each pupil should aim for at the end of the year or at the end of the key stage. These are recorded in the form of attainment levels. Meetings with parents early in the year provide an opportunity for teachers to share this information, as well as listen to any concerns. Later, progress is reported and the reports at the end of the year give a clear indication of how well pupils are doing and, in the core subjects, some useful pointers to what pupils need to do to improve. In the foundation subjects, only in history, geography and information and communication technology do teachers formally assess and record attainment.
31. The procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of children in the foundation stage are good. In the foundation stage, staff use the information gathered to inform planning and target learning for the specific age group or for individual children to make sure they have covered all the areas of learning at a level appropriate to their needs. Staff make very good notes of individuals' performance and these build up to provide a good profile of children's achievements. The procedures for monitoring academic and personal performance in the foundation stage are good and contribute to the progress children make as their prior knowledge and skills are built on systematically. Good assessment procedures are in operation for pupils with special educational needs. This information is used effectively to prepare individual education plans and the progress each pupil makes is monitored regularly. Individual education plans vary in quality. While some are specific, helpful and achievable, others are too general and the pupils would not know when they have achieved them. An example of this is 'continue with mathematics progress'. The targets set for individual plans are designed for personal development and literacy support and are increasingly including mathematics. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvements to its assessment and monitoring processes. The tracking of progress and the use of the information to guide curriculum planning were then unsatisfactory, but now these aspects are good and have made a major contribution to the school's academic success.
32. The school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. There are very good relationships throughout the school and all staff work hard to maintain positive relationships, they know the pupils well and monitor personal development formally in their assessment files. The personal comments that teachers make on the annual reports to parents show that they have good knowledge of the pupils in their classes. This has a very positive effect on the standards being achieved. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy and, together with the caretaker, the co-ordinator for health and safety ensures that daily health and safety checks take place. There are very good arrangements in place for first aid and medical support, and record keeping for reporting accidents and injuries have improved since the last inspection. The welfare assistants have the required first aid qualifications. The pupils are appropriately supervised at break and lunchtimes and playground games are provided, which the pupils enjoy. The school has very good arrangements in place for child protection issues. The deputy headteacher is the named responsible person and together with the headteacher has been trained for this role. All staff are aware of the procedures in place.
33. There are very good procedures in place for the monitoring and improving of attendance. The deputy headteacher checks the attendance registers every week and instances of unexplained absence or lateness are quickly followed up. The school receives visits from the Education

Welfare Service. Registers are marked correctly and legal requirements are met. Pupils appreciate the certificates they receive for good punctuality. There are very good procedures for monitoring and encouraging good behaviour. The school has a clear behaviour and discipline policy, which includes a system of rewards and sanctions and is implemented consistently by all staff to ensure that pupils behave well. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded through praise and stickers and certificates are awarded during assemblies. No incidents of bullying or racism were observed during the inspection. Eighty six per cent of parents feel that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

34. As reported at the last inspection, the school has a very good partnership with parents. The pre-inspection questionnaire was very positive. Eighty-six per cent of parents feel that the school works closely with them and eighty nine per cent feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. The replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that the parents have more positive views of the school now than they did at the time of the last inspection.
35. The quality of information provided for parents about the progress their children are making is very good. There are three formal parent/teacher consultations during the year and the teachers are willing to meet parents at other times. Annual reports to parents are of a very good quality, they provide very good information about the skills the pupils have acquired, areas for development, effort and attainment. There is a consistency in the report writing that means parents can gauge the progress of their children as they go through the school. A number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire do not feel that their children get the right amount of work to do at home. However, the inspection team does not agree with this view, as appropriate amounts of homework are set regularly in all year groups to support the curriculum and prepare the oldest pupils for secondary education. The good help that many parents give to their children with homework is a valuable asset to the school.
36. Regular bulletins keep parents up to date with events in school. The school prospectus is informative and attractive and contains all of the required information. However, the annual governors report does not meet all of the statutory requirements as it does not report on arrangements for disabled pupils. The home/school agreement has been signed and returned by most of the parents and is a useful tool to reinforce the home/school partnership. Termly letters inform parents of assembly dates and of the topics their children will be studying. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and this relationship is important in making sure that young children are happy to come to school. This is built on through the key stages and, although there is less parental involvement as children move through the school, they continue to be supportive of what the school strives to achieve. Parents are also invited to assemblies and school productions, the book fair, a multicultural evening and numeracy and literacy information evenings. Many help in school and on visits and make resources for teachers. The school has a thriving 'Friends of St. Agnes Association' and parents are supportive of the school through the organised fund raising and social events. All of these factors show that the school has a very good partnership with parents that is having a positive impact on standards of learning.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

37. Overall management at the school is good, and aspects such as the monitoring of teaching have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has a firm commitment to raising standards further. She is a very good motivator, empowering her staff to perform well. She is also a very good role model who is very clear about the school's many strengths and its potential areas for further development, and who is a major force behind the school's excellent ethos. She is well supported by the deputy head, who has a distinct complementary role. This includes being responsible for oversight of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, monitoring the quality of teaching and the mentorship of newly qualified teachers. The key areas of literacy and numeracy are very effectively co-ordinated with standards and provision being carefully monitored. The co-ordinators of other subjects are enthusiastic and have a good understanding of the strengths and developmental needs in their

areas of responsibility. They also have a shared commitment to further raising standards. However, several are new to their posts and their roles are still not fully developed. The senior management team fulfils a significant role, meeting regularly to discuss strategic developments and emergent issues. Appropriate strategies for performance management are fully in place. Routine administration is effective.

38. The chair and other governors are very supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties very well in most areas. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of its strengths and appreciate well where it could be further improved. The only relative weaknesses relate to the school's failure to deliver the full National Curriculum for information and communication technology at Key Stage 2 and to some minor omissions in the annual report to parents. A number of active committees contribute well to the overall efficiency of the governing body, while a number of individual governors – including those with responsibility for literacy and numeracy - visit the school to meet staff and to observe lessons. The governing body is also kept well informed through detailed reports from the headteacher and from presentations by other members of the teaching staff. Leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. Appropriate systems have been set up and there are satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring. There is a good level of liaison between all the staff concerned and regular meetings take place. The co-ordinator for the foundation stage is currently on maternity leave and the deputy head is 'caretaking' this role in her absence. The staff working in this stage are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and determined, and they are continuing to improve provision without the guidance of a permanent co-ordinator. Management of the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is thorough and the standards achieved by these pupils are carefully monitored against local and national data.
39. Clearly defined strategies for monitoring planning and teaching are in place. These are very good and involve the headteacher, deputy and other teachers with management responsibility at different levels. The headteacher, for example, regularly examines planning documents, record books and assessment files. She also systematically observes teaching and monitors all areas of school life including behaviour, standards and finance. Members of the senior management team all have regular release from class to monitor various aspects of school life and use this time effectively, from time to time, for example, analysing samples of pupils' work to assess standards, progress and coverage. The school development plan is a substantial and practical working document whose construction involves staff and governors at appropriate stages. The school buys into the local authority scheme for financial administration and both financial planning and monitoring are very efficient. A recent audit report was very positive about the school's financial management. There is an above average carry forward of money from the last financial year to this one. The reasons for this are appropriate and relate to the high turn over of staff and to current uncertainty about the future of part of the building. The school makes good use of the resources available to it, including money available to provide training for staff and to support pupils with special educational needs, and links this well to its developmental priorities. It applies the principles of best value very well by, for example, ensuring that all purchases are made after competitive tendering, by obtaining grants from local agencies and businesses and by carefully comparing its academic standards with those of other schools locally and nationally and taking effective action where this is appropriate. The school is well staffed, which means that the pupil/teacher ratio is good and that all pupils are well supported. There is a number of recently qualified and overseas trained teachers. Induction procedures for these are very good and their contribution to all aspects of school life - including the standards being achieved - is high. There are sufficient resources overall for the full delivery of the National Curriculum. There are strengths in resources for mathematics and the foundation stage. The accommodation is very well looked after and has many strengths, including two well-stocked libraries. However, the space available to the children in the nursery is inadequate, while structural movement is currently affecting the school's ability to plan forward in some areas. For example, until the problem is resolved there is no space to create a computer suite or extend the nursery accommodation.
40. The school has improved well since the last inspection. It operates very effectively and provides good value for money. All staff are highly committed, and the school has the capacity to improve even further. The reflection of its aims and values in its work is excellent.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. The governors and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes yet further:

- (1) Raise standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 2 by:
  - a) Ensuring that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are met;
  - b) Further raising staff confidence in the delivery of the subject.  
(paragraphs 2, 19, 88, 89 and 90 )
- (2) Develop strategies within lessons to encourage pupils to be more directly involved in the planning of their own learning.  
(paragraphs 15, 67 and 75)

In addition to these key issues there are some less important weaknesses, which the school should consider for inclusion in the action plan. These involve raising standards in art and design at the end of Key Stage 2 and in design and technology at the end of both key stages.

(The school has already identified information and communication technology as a priority area for development)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	23	46	28	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	293
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	83

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	65

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.2

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	19	24	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	40	41	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	95 (90)	98 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	40	41	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	95 (95)	93 (90)
	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	17	20	37



National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	16	14	17
	Total	31	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (86)	81 (79)	89 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	31	31	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (79)	84 (86)	89 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

#### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	29
Black – other	8
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	170
Any other minority ethnic group	8

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

#### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

#### ***Teachers and classes***

#### ***Financial information***

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26.6

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	88.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	698353
Total expenditure	685721
Expenditure per pupil	2084
Balance brought forward from previous year	38260
Balance carried forward to next year	50892

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	340
Number of questionnaires returned	58

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	47	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	52	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	33	17	3	6
The teaching is good.	52	38	5	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	40	12	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	36	7	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	36	3	3	5
The school works closely with parents.	45	41	9	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	26	3	3	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	33	6	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	33	17	3	13

### Other issues raised by parents

There were a number of positive comments on the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. There was praise for the teaching and the management and for the help provided by the staff. There were also a number of concerns. The major of these related to lack of provision for physical activity during PE lessons and at playtimes. Some parents felt that there was a lack of consistency between classes in the provision of homework. The current organisation of the curriculum was regarded by some as preventing parents from attending school assemblies. The inspection team agreed with the positive comments. It judged that not enough time was allocated to physical education. It could find no evidence to support the other concerns.

## **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**

#### **Context**

42. Provision for children in the earliest stage of their education is very good and a strength of the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The most significant features are the staff's knowledge of how young children learn and the emphasis placed on developing key language skills and personal development. The strength of the relationship between the staff and the children, and the ability of all the staff to work as a team and plan a curriculum that builds on children's achievements as they move through the key stage, are also key factors. All staff give a strong message to the children that learning is fun and as a result, the children are all happy at school and give of their best.
43. Children begin school in the nursery when they are three or four. They transfer to the reception classes at the beginning of the autumn term in the year that they will be five. The nursery and reception classes are the foundation stage of learning. The results of initial assessments of what children can do, that occur soon after they have settled into nursery, indicate that children's attainment covers a wide range of ability. However, it is generally below the expected level for children of this age in language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. This is confirmed by inspection evidence. A very good emphasis is placed on developing personal and social development and language skills while children are in the nursery, and they are well prepared for the reception classes. By the time children move into the reception stage they have built on what they knew and achievement is good. However, standards in language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development continue to be below expected levels when they enter the reception classes, as time in the nursery has not yet compensated for the low levels on entry.
44. The curriculum for the reception-aged children continues to be good and covers all the appropriate stepping-stones towards the early learning goals for pupils of this age. Work seen during the inspection and scrutiny of past work shows that children achieve well in the first stage of their education and most attain the nationally expected levels by the end of the foundation stage. Children who are experiencing difficulties in learning are quickly identified and careful observations are made of their progress. If appropriate, they are identified as being at the first stage on the school's register of special educational needs. Staff monitor all children closely and identify those who may require additional learning support and support for English as an additional language as they progress through the foundation stage.

#### **Personal social and emotional development**

45. Children make good progress in personal and social development because the nursery and reception classes provide a welcoming environment that helps young children to settle in quickly and feel part of the school. Children observed were quick to respond to class routines and, as a result of this, even the youngest in the nursery are able to organise themselves and work independently of the staff. They show confidence and relate to adults, with each other and with older pupils in the school well. Children in the nursery are frequently unable to contribute well to discussions about activities due to their low level of language, but by the time they are five they are confident to try new activities and initiate ideas. Children are developing a good level of independence in choosing activities at the end of the foundation stage. They take care in dressing themselves and in their personal hygiene. They take on class responsibilities quickly and undertake jobs, such as tidying up, efficiently. The staff and adults who help in the foundation stage sensitively encourage children to participate in activities when they are required to sit and listen to others. In the reception classes the children's confidence has grown so much that they are very eager to participate in activities and are sometimes keener to contribute than listen. However from the time they begin school in the nursery, they are learning the rules for classroom

behaviour and an understanding that they need to take turns. Children in the nursery have outdoor sessions with the reception classes, and those in reception attend acts of collective worship with the rest of the school. This helps them all to get to know pupils in other classes as well as developing the understanding of the different needs of other people. Children in the reception classes have the opportunity to mix with their friends or brothers and sisters at break-times. This helps them to develop their social skills in a range of different situations and to consider the needs of others as well as their own. By the time they leave the foundation stage, most have achieved the expected levels in this area.

46. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. The teachers, nursery nurses and assistants provide a broad range of activities that successfully promote children's development in a variety of settings throughout the day. For example, there are opportunities for children to work alone with construction resources to build structures, or in groups when they use similar resources to construct the railways. Opportunities for children to share their knowledge of books and develop turn taking, and the very high level of interaction and humour from the staff encourages them to share their knowledge. Children's self-esteem is developed as staff value each child's contribution. Activities, such as role-play in 'the travel agency' or the 'African village', or sand and water, help the children to develop their imagination at the same time as encouraging them to play together co-operatively. Staff set very good examples for children to follow. They work together well as a team and children can see the value of co-operating with each other as a result. All staff have high expectations for good behaviour and this encourages the children to behave well from the time they are in the nursery. All children are taught to be independent, as they are given regular opportunities to select from a range of activities on offer. Some children are quite dependent and reliant on staff choosing for them initially in the nursery, but they begin to understand that they can choose from the range of activities on offer. In the nursery and reception classes children know that they are encouraged to make their own choice at certain times during the day, and can change their activities when they are ready to. They also know that there are times when they are expected to work with the teacher or independently on a given task, and they do this confidently. Good examples of this were seen during the inspection when children moved with ease from their writing activity to the water area when they had completed their tasks.

### **Language and literacy**

47. The foundation stage provides a language rich environment in which the children can develop their oral and written language skills. Initially, in the nursery, all the activities that the staff provide give the children the opportunity to practise and develop their language and learn new vocabulary. Over time nursery children become more competent in the key literacy skills together with gaining confidence in speaking and listening. They begin to use their language more effectively to express their thoughts and needs. In the reception classes they begin to recognise the names and sounds of letters, and also that writing can serve a range of purposes. Their achievement in this area of learning is good. By the time they are five, children contribute to discussions positively and share their ideas and experiences. They acquire new vocabulary from listening to the staff and each other and their speech improves in fluency and expression. Children's ability to use a developing range of vocabulary is demonstrated by their ability to describe their work on the seaside linked to scientific and geographical study. They use specific words to give a better description of what they might see there. All children, including those of lower ability, quickly learn to recognise and link individual letters by name and sound, due to good teaching of a programme designed to promote learning in this area. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Before long children recognise their own names in written form. The middle ability children know their friends' names and can read familiar words around the room. The higher ability read sentences that they or their friends have written. Children listen with enjoyment to stories and poems and they retell parts of familiar stories. The higher attaining children know that print carries meaning and understand about the importance of the beginning and end of stories. In the nursery, early writing skills are promoted through children learning to write their own names, labels and captions. When they are in the reception classes, they use their knowledge of letter sounds and the alphabet to write common words and begin to construct sentences, sometimes using capital letters and full stops correctly. Work shows that, at the end of the foundation stage, children write for a range of

purposes and in different ways. By the time they reach Year 1 the majority of the children attain standards of language and literacy in line with expected levels.

48. The quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning. The staff provide a language rich environment for the children and every activity or interaction that occurs promotes an area of language and literacy development. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are linked to all structured learning tasks and play activities from the time the children begin nursery. Teachers model the use of language well. For example, in numeracy sessions in the reception classes the teachers use terms such as 'take away' and 'subtract' correctly and ensure the children understand this in more simple terms if they need to. Children are always asked questions that allow them to answer using as much language as they are able to, and this develops their confidence and vocabulary. For example, while baking, children in the nursery were asked 'what do you think will happen when we add the milk?' In the reception classes the organisation of literacy lessons provides all children with opportunities to share in the whole class element of the session and skilful questioning involves them all. A very good focus is given to developing language and on the sounds of letters, so that the children understand that these make up words. Focused questions aimed at the younger or less able children during these times encourage them to respond and give them confidence to participate. This results in good achievement. At other times, children are taught to share rhymes, stories and non-fiction books that help them to learn to use and read familiar words for themselves. From the nursery the children have lots of opportunities for hearing stories that they have chosen themselves or that staff have selected. Staff use this time to promote an enjoyment of words and pictures and develop good reading habits. In an excellent lesson in the nursery children joined in the words they recognised in 'Mrs. Wishy Washy'. Once they had heard the story, some of the children were encouraged to act it out for the others. This reinforced the story for those who were recognising familiar words and gave the less able children the opportunity to hear it again in a simple way that helped them to understand. The more able children were able to put their own words into the story without losing the meaning. Children are enthusiastic to participate, and good management of lessons quickly teaches them to take turns. Children are encouraged by staff to 'write' for themselves from the time that they start school in the nursery. For example, 'waitresses' took orders and wrote them on their pads and children 'wrote' out tickets at the railway station. Gradually, they learn to form letters and spell simple words correctly. In the reception classes there are specific time slots that are allocated to teaching these skills during the week. Children are subsequently provided with many and varied opportunities to practise the skills they have learned either independently, or with adult support, to extend them onto the next stage of learning, and they make good progress in communicating their ideas and knowledge through writing.

### **Mathematical development**

49. In the nursery class children learn about mathematical concepts through every day activities like playing in the sand and water, jigsaws and matching games. They make comparisons between size, shape, pattern and weight. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of number, initially by learning about numbers around the classroom. Early in the reception class children match objects, and as their skills develop they sort and match objects to re-order them depending on a range of criteria, such as size or shape. Water and sand activities continue to give children lots of opportunity to experiment with volume, when they fill and empty containers of different sizes and weight, and when they compare how heavy objects that are buried in the sand are. Children enjoy joining in number rhymes and these help them to talk about and recreate patterns and use mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than', 'bigger' and 'smaller'. Discussion with children indicate that by the end of the foundation stage, they can count from 0 to 10 and back in order, and recognise the numerals associated with the numbers. They talk about 'sums', adding to and taking away, the characteristics of shapes and they solve simple problems. For example, reception children worked with the small play figures and counted how many there were before they buried them in the sand and then counted again to see how many were left. As a result of all the experiences the children encounter, they achieve levels of attainment appropriate for their age by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage.

50. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. A range of mathematical experiences is provided through the structured play activities that are available on a daily basis and the chance children have to participate in a focused activity to promote number skills in both the nursery and reception classes. For example, guessing how many bears are left in a bag when some have been taken away, and then counting the ones left to establish a one to one correspondence. The management and organisation of lessons, or parts of lessons, is very good and staff are used to the best effect to support children's learning. In a similar way to literacy, children are encouraged to participate in the whole class aspect of these sessions at an individual level appropriate to their abilities. Following this, the children take part in group activities that build on their previous experiences at an appropriate level so their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts is taught through practical activities, daily routines, speaking and listening activities and opportunities for structured play. When it is appropriate, particularly as the children move into the reception classes, they are taught to record their observations or findings in a range of ways, for example as 'sums' or in a graphical form. Whenever it is appropriate in the nursery and the reception classes, all aspects of numeracy work are linked to other subjects and there are planned opportunities for children to explore, think and develop as mathematicians. Particularly good opportunities are made at the beginning or end of a session when there may be five minutes to spare. Staff use the time to very good effect to teach children number rhymes and counting skills. The children in the nursery enjoyed singing 'Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day' and the more able children put down a finger each time a duck went. In the reception classes the children really enjoyed the 'monster' that ate play people and estimated or counted how many it had swallowed with glee.

#### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

51. Children learn about how to make sense of the world around them from the time they enter the nursery. This lays a good foundation for later work in science, history, geography and technology in its various forms when they move into the reception classes and into Key Stage 1. Children are presented with appropriate activities and consequently progress in learning is good. Most of the activities that contribute to this area of learning are based on practical experiences, which encourage the children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding that are appropriate to their age and individual ability - both in the nursery and in the reception classes. Children develop a sense of place when they talk about the close world around them and the seaside. For example, in the nursery they understand that they need to travel to get to the seaside and enact this out by going there on the train or by car. In the reception classes they understand some of the different features of the seaside, for example different shops. They also learn about places far away, and talk with good knowledge about what it is like to live in an African village. Children's understanding of the past is developed as they study their own lives and how they have changed since they were babies. Children find out about and use technology. For example, from the nursery they use construction equipment to build models and design layouts, and in the reception classes they are given particular briefs about what they have to make. Children have the opportunities to use audio equipment independently. The higher attaining children can operate the control buttons effectively. For example, in the nursery they know which buttons on the tape that they have to press to listen to a recording. Children are confident to use the computers, either as a choice activity or when opportunities are planned to enhance learning in other subject areas. They use the control keys and the mouse to carry out operations, and in the reception classes they know how to click onto an icon to change an effect. In the nursery, children have thought about the mini-beasts they may find in the garden and this contributes to their scientific development. They also consider how heat will change the way something looks when they are cooking scones. Children have been learning about healthy living. Those in the nursery have discussed what foods might be good from them, and those that are not. In the reception class the role-play area gives children the opportunity to enact why it is important to go to the dentist, and they are quite graphic when they are the dentists pulling out someone's bad teeth! By the time they leave the foundation stage, children have made good progress and generally attain the expected levels.
52. The quality of teaching is very good. Within this area of learning a full range of enjoyable opportunities is made available both in the nursery and the reception classes. For the most part,

activities are based on first-hand experiences, so that exploration, observation, problem solving and discussion are promoted. Children in the nursery are given many opportunities to express their knowledge and understanding, for example in model making, drawing and by talking about what they know with their friends or staff. In the reception classes historical, geographical and scientific learning is developed through the study of different topics through the year. Teachers choose topics that will promote learning in all the areas simultaneously. For example, during the inspection a group of children learnt about the potential hazards to be found at the seaside, and another used the computer to place features on an island map. The group that was working with the teacher constructed a model landscape and very good interaction from the teacher encouraged the children to talk about their reasons for placing features, such as sun beds, in particular places. Whenever possible, staff encourage children to use information and communication technology to help them practise skills or to use their knowledge of other areas of learning to solve problems that are associated with learning in that area. For example, children use the computer independently to practise matching skills that promote mathematical learning. Children are encouraged to think about their culture and beliefs, for example when hearing stories in the nursery and working on the whole school theme of 'choices' in the reception class. Teachers encourage pupils to think about different types of choices they make through discussion, and they record their ideas in a variety of pictorial and written ways. The children in the reception classes also join their friends in Years 1 and 2 in acts of worship. They begin to develop an awareness of the wide world through the good use of literature and illustrations in all aspects of work.

### **Physical development**

53. Within the classrooms, children move around with confidence, as the rooms are organised well and there are distinct areas that are dedicated to promoting learning in particular aspects of the curriculum. From the time children begin their schooling in the nursery they are taught to handle pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors with control and safety. They have satisfactory control when manipulating these tools. This was seen in the inspection when children in the nursery decorated fish and manipulated the glue brushes carefully so as not to make a mess. In the reception class children used hammers, tacks and pins with care. In the reception classes, children are helped to understand the importance of exercise through lessons in the hall, playground and at break-times. During the inspection they practised making pathways, balancing, throwing, catching and rolling a ball at a target and showed increasing accuracy as the lesson progressed. Throughout the foundation stage children have the opportunity to use small and large apparatus to practise and improve their skills. The daily outdoor sessions gives nursery children the chance to try out the use of wheeled toys such as trikes and trolleys and climbing apparatus. On two occasions during the week the reception classes join the nursery outside, and they also have the opportunity to develop their physical skills. Observation shows that over time children develop the skills necessary to practise different ways of moving, for example walking, running, jumping and hopping, and they do this well. As a result of this they develop a good knowledge of moving, using different body parts. They demonstrate imagination and creativity when doing this, and this is frequently linked to their imaginative play. Standards of attainment in this area of learning are in line with those expected by the time they leave the foundation stage.
54. The quality of teaching is always good or better. There are suitable daily opportunities for children to use and practise their fine motor skills and teachers intervene appropriately to enhance these. For example, many children hold their pencil incorrectly when they start school, but intervention from staff teaches them the correct way and helps the quality to improve. As pupils move through the foundation stage staff correct letter formation and this develops during sessions focused on writing skills. The daily opportunities provided for the nursery children to work outside and develop a full range of physical skills are always supported by at least one adult. Because of this, the quality of children's work is enhanced, as staff give them points for improvement or encourage them to try something new or more difficult. The children love these sessions and frequently choose them above other activities. In the reception classes the more formal physical education lessons are used to teach children particular skills. The lessons are planned carefully so that the learning objective of the lesson is targeted on improving skills. This leads to good progress overall, for example in balancing, throwing, catching and moving around a space in different pathways,



and is achieved through the use of good explanation and demonstration. Teachers give the children time to experiment before giving them ideas about how they can develop what they are doing, or try something harder. Children are given the opportunity to work in pairs, which helps them to listen to each other and co-operate. A real strength of the foundation stage is the opportunity that has been developed for all children to share in an outdoor session. At this time the contents of the indoor classroom are taken outside. All children have the opportunity to practise their physical skills in open spaces where they can truly experiment with movement from drawing and writing to climbing or crawling. Children in the nursery and reception work together on activities in the play areas that not only promote physical development, but all other areas of learning.

### **Creative development**

55. Evidence available indicates that children make good progress from the levels they are at on entry to those attained by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage. The highest attaining children, and some in the middle ability group, reach levels appropriate for their age by the time they are five which means that they have built appropriately on the standards they were at when they came into the school. Their creative development is frequently inhibited in the early stage of the key stage due to their low level of language and personal development. Children have good opportunities to enact situations out in the home-play area in the nursery. They are often seen copying the things they see their mothers do at home, and begin to use the appropriate language associated with this. Most often children in the nursery play alongside each other, rather than together, at these times. Further opportunities are created for developing creativity and imagination associated with different topics the children are studying. Good examples of this were seen in the 'travel agents' in the nursery and the 'African village' or 'the dentist' in the reception classes. For example, children encouraged each other to 'go somewhere on holiday' in the nursery or 'lie back and be comfortable' in the dentist's chair in a reception class. This enhances many other areas of learning, for example writing when the children make out tickets to travel to the 'beach' and number when they count the number of teeth they are extracting! When the children all work together outdoors it is clear to see how their language and social skills have improved by the time they are in the reception classes and they are much more articulate, resourceful and creative. Examples of children's painting and modelling work show that they have been encouraged to consider style and presentation when doing their own work following the study of creating colours by mixing. Creative development is also fostered through the music curriculum. Children learn about rhythm, through clapping and tapping, and by using percussion instruments. They participate in singing by joining in the words they are familiar with initially and by learning songs in the reception classes. In the role-play area in the reception class children composed and created their own music in an 'African' style and put their own words to this.
56. The quality of teaching is good overall. Art activities are matched well to children's interests and stage of development. Demonstration by staff is planned if it is required. This contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Following this, they are provided with more opportunities to consolidate learning, and they have the chance to experiment. During the inspection, children were provided with many opportunities on a daily basis for pupils to 'act out' either make believe or real scenarios that contributed to their creative, and frequently social, development and this was due to good planning. Examples of this include going to the seaside in the nursery, when the children pack their cases and decide how they are going to travel to Brighton, and to the dentist in the reception class when children act as the patient, the assistant and the dentist. Staff are careful not to dominate pupils' work when they are acting out, but they are very good at participating to improve the quality of work if it is appropriate. Even when a creative activity may be a choice by the children, a good level of interaction from staff is always provided to further promote learning and develop children's ideas.

### **ENGLISH**

57. Inspection judgements are that standards are above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils enter the school with below average literacy skills, consequently these judgements represent

good achievement throughout the school. In the most recent tests for seven year olds (Year 2000), results were well above the national average in reading and above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, they were well above average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 however, was below the national average in writing. Averaged out over the past three years, standards at Key Stage 1 have been above average in reading and writing. Between 1996 and 2000, there has been good improvement in English for pupils aged seven. In the tests for eleven year olds (SATS) 84 per cent of pupils attained level 4 or above, which is an above average result, whilst 41 per cent reached the higher level 5 which is well above average. When these results are calculated in average points, they are close to average both in relation to schools nationally and similar schools. The reason for this relatively lower overall score in English was related to a significant number of pupils in last year's Year 6 who had statements of special educational need but whose results were included when calculating these average points. Analysis of the pupils' attainment in their national tests at seven and their performance aged eleven, shows that they made good progress in English over this time. Standards have risen consistently since the last inspection. The school has exceeded its target for English in 2000 and has set a more challenging target for year 2001. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress.

58. Speaking and listening skills are above average at both ages seven and eleven. At Key Stage 1, in lessons and assemblies, there is a consistent picture of good attentive listening skills. Additionally, during assemblies, pupils make thoughtful contributions when invited to do so, reflecting well for example, on topics such as the current one of 'choices'. In lessons pupils are enthusiastic about joining in discussions and are able, for example, to make sensible suggestions about how notes will be written when reading non-fiction text to gather information. They learn to listen carefully to each other and take account of other's views. At Key Stage 2, pupils almost always listen well to each other and to the teacher, and it is only in a small number of instances that pupils are heard to shout out or speak when the teacher is speaking. Plenary sessions at the end of the Literacy Hour provide good opportunities for pupils to present their work independently to the class. A good example of this is older pupils independently introducing their work to the class, and reporting back what they have learned. Older pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills through the provision of a drama club and debating competitions, such as participation in the 'Children's Parliament' and the 'Global Citizens' action plan. By the time pupils are eleven, they are confident and articulate, and use Standard English well in formal situations. The Year 6 assembly was a good example of this, based on the school current theme of 'Choices'. Pupils' performance was interesting and clear, and ideas were developed with confidence.
59. Reading across the school is very good and the school is successful not only in teaching pupils to read, but developing them well as critical and discerning readers who enjoy reading and are able to discuss a range of authors and styles. At Key Stage 1, the skills of early reading are acquired systematically through regular practice, both at school and with the good support of parents, who hear them read regularly at home. All pupils learn their letter sounds thoroughly and learn to both sound out words and to recognise whole words. By the end of Year 1, almost all pupils are reading simple books confidently, using a good range of reading strategies. By the end of Year 2, reading skills are well established and pupils' reading is mainly fluent and expressive. Pupils regularly use both the school and local libraries and can discuss differences between fiction and non-fiction books, being able to research for information. Their ability to recognise authors and make choices about favourite types of books, is in early stages of development. At Key Stage 2, most pupils read accurately and confidently and pupils begin to read widely for pleasure, both at school and at home. By the time they are eleven, almost all pupils read clearly, confidently and with good expression. They have a good understanding of a variety of texts and select key points and phrases when discussing characters and plot. All read for pleasure and express preferences, the current favourites being the 'Harry Potter' books and the author Jacqueline Wilson. Pupils are confident in using the library and use it regularly to choose fiction books and research for information. At both key stages, reading records are kept in which both parents and teachers write comments. Most of these record coverage and are encouraging, but few contain targets, or points for development, and they do not record where pupils are in the National Curriculum.

60. Standards in writing at both key stages are above average. Writing at Key Stage 1 has been a school focus for development in order to raise the numbers of pupils gaining the higher Level 3, and a number of strategies have been put in place that are proving to be successful. For example, there are regular writing sessions and monitoring work. In Year 1, the use of capital letters and full stops is established and higher attaining pupils use speech marks. Pupils' writing is in a sequential form and they write for a variety of purposes; for example in explanatory style they write about ' what happens when we don't eat!' One of the strategies that has been particularly successfully established, and is very helpful in raising standards, is the very good level of marking. This is evident in Key Stage 1, where pupils' achievements are celebrated and there are also clear and helpful targets written for the next stage. By the end of Year 2, good numbers of pupils are writing at the higher Level 3. Their writing is well structured, and ideas are developed logically with good punctuation. Although regular and rigorous handwriting practice is undertaken, as yet insufficient numbers of pupils transfer the good standards of handwriting seen in their hand writing practice books to other everyday work. At Key Stage 2, the good development of writing continues and examples of thoughtful and reflective writing are evident, for example, 'my future' poems written by eight year olds. Pupils learn to start sentences in a variety of ways and use exclamation marks and paragraphs. By the time pupils are eleven, a good number of pupils are writing at the higher Level 5. Their awareness of their audience is well developed and they are confident in writing in different styles. Persuasive writing is used, for example, when writing letters concerning points of view about fox hunting and accounts relating to Ellen McArthur's 'Yacht Race'. The handwriting of the older pupils is generally well formed, but it is more variable through the key stage and is frequently not consistently joined. Teachers' handwriting does not always present a good role model, and is also often not consistently joined when modelling writing on white boards for the class.
61. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good. They generally settle quickly to their work and are hard working and very well behaved. They are enthusiastic and responsive to questions and keen to contribute to discussions, both as a whole class and with a partner, when asked to do so. On the small number of occasions when class management is weaker, pupils are slower to settle and a few of the pupils talk when the teacher is speaking. Teaching at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good overall, and there is some very good teaching at Key Stage 2. It has improved substantially since the last inspection. Planning is good throughout the school, and lessons are conducted according to the National Literacy Strategy and teachers have good technical knowledge of the subject matter. They match the tasks to the pupils' levels of need and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, Management of the pupils' behaviour is generally very good. In a very small number of lessons, there was not enough attention given to the management of other groups whilst the teacher focused on one group. Similarly, in one lesson where management was weaker, the pupils' behaviour did not match the school's high standards. Pupils were slower to settle to group work and did not achieve as much as they could. The pace dropping, when group work starts, features in some other literacy lessons. Most teachers have a quiet pleasant manner and have very good supportive relationships with pupils. They frequently make genuine and positive remarks about behaviour and work. A good feature of all lessons is the sharing of the learning objectives for the lesson and in the very best lessons, these are frequently referred to as the lesson progresses. Particular features of the very good teaching are the use of pupils' good work, which is demonstrated to the class to help raise standards, and the way in which pupils are asked to evaluate what they particularly liked about it. The use of literacy in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and features strongly in religious education and science.
62. The co-ordinator is new to the post, but is already providing good leadership to English. In particular, the school's focus on increasing the number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 at seven has been addressed very well. Good monitoring procedures have been set up and a good range of in-service training is planned. Target setting has also been implemented and the good level of marking, which includes these targets, reflects the success of this and makes a strong contribution to raising standards. The policy for English has recently been written and covers all aspects of the subject. The school's guidance for handwriting is included in general, but not in specific terms. It tells teachers what is to be taught, but there is little specific guidance as to

when. The school's two libraries are well stocked and provide an attractive and inviting environment in which to browse and research books. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy using these libraries and visit them regularly. Assessment procedures are very good and pupils' progress is tracked systematically through the school by regular assessments and careful recording, giving all involved a very clear picture of progress through the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

63. When compared to national data available, pupils aged 7 do well in national tests and assessments. The standards they attained in the Year 2000 assessments were well above the national average. The number of pupils who attained the higher level, Level 3, was also above the national average. When compared to other similar schools the pupils again attained well above average levels. By the age of 11, at the end of key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in the year 2000 tests was above the national average and that for similar schools. The number attaining the higher level, Level 5, was also above average. The school has analysed results and found that the aspect of written calculations is an area of relative weakness. Due to this a greater emphasis has been placed on this area during this school year. Overall, the standards pupils attain have improved since the last inspection.
64. Following a generally low standard on entry to the school, pupils are currently working above the expected levels of attainment at the end of both key stages. This represents good progress in Key Stage 1 and 2. The higher ability pupils are now achieving at a good level, which is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. The lower attaining pupils are also achieving well, as the lessons are planned to give them tasks that are different from other ability groups and pitched at the appropriate level of understanding. This is also an improvement since the last inspection.
65. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and their achievements are in line with their potential. In Key Stage 1, the younger pupils have the ability to rapidly add mentally up to 10, with the higher attaining pupils going beyond this number. They recognise subtraction patterns and accurately record their work using the correct symbols. A significant number of pupils in Year 1 count in 10s comfortably. Lower attaining pupils use the 2 times table to work out addition sums, while the higher attaining pupils work on multiplication sums using the 10 times table. In Year 2, pupils are confident to use several strategies when working with multiplication. They have quick mental recall and double or halve numbers rapidly. They understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and the higher attaining pupils begin to understand that division is the inverse of multiplication. Pupils, including the lower attaining, are comfortable in making mistakes, as they know they can learn from these. This was seen when pupils were counting back in multiples and they made errors in completing a number square. They quickly realised that there was a pattern and then understood that they could use a completed square to help them solve problems quickly. Work in the pupils' books shows that over time in Key Stage 1 they cover all aspects of the required syllabus including work on shape, measure and data handling. They were confident to answer questions about their previous work, which showed a good level of understanding. However, there was less evidence of the pupils having a range of opportunities for investigative maths or for the higher attaining pupils to work independently and really discover the properties of number for themselves.
66. Progress in Key Stage 2 is also good. Pupils achieve well and build on the knowledge they have gained in Key Stage 1. In the lower key stage, approximately half the class quickly answers questions about the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. The lower attaining pupils need more time to think and sometimes use repeated addition to find out the answer. When carrying out addition sums using different amounts of money, the more able pupils carry this out accurately while the less able are more confident only when working with lower numbers. However, all are able to use information given to them to solve money problems because the questions are given at a different level for the range of abilities in the class. Pupils in Year 4 know the importance of estimating and they use their knowledge of 10s, 100s and 1000s to work in pence, litres and kilometres. They can fix a point on a number line rapidly and use their knowledge of fractions and rounding up or down to help them do this. Pupils have a good understanding of place value. The majority of pupils

can use the column multiplication method to work out the product of numbers by partitioning. As pupils become confident and understand this method they are introduced to a shorter way to work out the answer. The pupils work at a level that is substantially better than the younger year group and this demonstrates that pupils make good progress over a year. In Years 5 and 6, pupils work on data handling. They understand that the first stage is to gather the information and that this then needs to be organised. They know a variety of ways in which they can display data. For example, the lower attaining pupils are confident to use bar or line graphs and the higher attaining pupils choose pie-charts. They confidently estimate the fractions of a whole that segments in the graph represent, and know they can be accurate by using a protractor. Pupils use the graphs they have completed to interpret the data and hypothesise about what might have influenced the information gathered in the first place. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are using their knowledge of tables to change fractions to percentages, and vice versa. The more able pupils do this quickly. For example they convert  $\frac{4}{5}$  to 0.8 in a matter of seconds. The success of pupils in the lower ability group is more inconsistent and they require more practice to be familiar with the strategies they need to use. More able pupils however, can work out problems such as 20 per cent off two pairs of jeans at £4 each quickly. They work with increasingly difficult problems by applying their knowledge, which is secure.

67. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy since the time of the last inspection has provided a very good spurt to teaching basic skills consistently, and learning is very good as a result. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Lessons are well organised into three parts, and teachers explain what the objective of the lesson is, what it is the children should know, before it begins. Lessons follow a good routine that starts with a mental mathematics session. Group work is generally planned to meet the needs of the pupils in the class and not merely levelled at a particular year or ability group. As a result, achievement the majority of pupils in the class is good, as they are building on what they know and can do successfully. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate the properties of number independently and use their knowledge and understanding of the skills they have to the full. The final part of each lesson is used to revise what the pupils have done in the lesson. Teachers generally present the pupils with a good range of questions during this session, and this helps them to assess what the pupils know. However, they do not consistently involve the pupils in self-evaluation of their work, for example by asking them what they know that they didn't before or whether they have achieved the learning objective, and this is a missed opportunity for promoting the pupils' understanding of their own learning. The consistency of teaching mathematics has given a better focus to work, although staff now need to assess whether they are giving pupils sufficient experience in written calculations and investigative work in order to improve progress further.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1. Teachers begin lessons with a mental mathematical exercise that stimulates the pupils' thinking. When teaching is very good, rapid-fire questions keep the pupils alert and challenged and they use their knowledge and understanding very well in their responses. Teachers generally provide activities that match the pupils' needs, although there is evidence of pupils of all abilities doing the same work at times. Teachers usually have a focus group that they work most closely with, but they monitor the other pupils' achievements well as the lessons go along. This ensures that the pupils are learning the right things. The use of support assistants helps to ensure that the lower attaining pupils are coping with the task set and that they have a good understanding of the mathematical concept being practised. Teachers frequently reinforce what it is the pupils are trying to do as the lesson progress so that they are kept on task and concentrate well. Skilful questioning challenges the pupils to think for themselves and use the skills they have and apply effort to their work. In the best lessons, pupils were reminded what it was they were trying to achieve in the lesson so they understood why they were doing particular tasks and also informed how the work they had done could be applied in future lessons. Pupils really enjoy the numeracy sessions and their attitudes to the subject are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and contributes to good learning.
69. A very good numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 2 was very well planned and had a good structure throughout. In the first part of the lesson, the teacher involved all the pupils through her focused

questioning, and this prompted them to think about what they already knew before they answered. The teacher gave a clear explanation of the strategies that the pupils could use, for example by 'holding the numbers in your head', and pupils were actively doing this, sometimes half-aloud, while she spoke. The teacher was able to see that pupils were clearly picking up the right ideas and putting them into practice. The teacher's positive interactions with pupils were encouraging and pupils kept to the task well. Organisation during the group work element of the lesson was good and allowed the less able pupils to be taught separately. The support assistant concentrated on teaching these pupils and this was done well. The level of interaction with the pupils was good and this reinforced pupils' learning and maintained their concentration. Meanwhile, the teacher was able to focus her attention on the higher and middle attaining pupils in the class and all pupils had the benefit of a high level of adult support. This contributed to a very good pace being maintained, and all pupils put a great deal of effort into their work. The lesson was a stimulating learning experience for pupils because the activities were well matched to the aims of the lesson and for the differing abilities of the pupils.

70. In Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is very good and this is a strength. The effect of the high quality teaching is very good learning as pupils are motivated and challenged, and the majority rise to the expectations the teachers have of them. In all Key Stage 2 classes the objective of the lesson is clearly displayed so that pupils know what they have to achieve. Well-devised and challenging mental starters set the pace of the lessons and pupils are quickly involved, drawing on their knowledge to help them respond. Carefully levelled tasks ensure that pupils, whatever their ability, make progress although there is evidence that at some times all the pupils do cover the same work at the same level of difficulty. Lessons generally occur at a brisk pace and time targets are often given that encourage the pupils to put just a bit more effort into the work. There is very good teaching of basic skills so those pupils can get on with the tasks at their own rate of progress. In the majority of lessons pupils are provided with an extension activity, so that they can continue to develop intellectually when they have completed the set task. The majority of pupils in the key stage make good progress because of careful lesson planning, clear explanations and challenging tasks that build on what they know or can do. Pupils' enjoyment in lessons is evident and they are developing enquiring minds as a result.
71. An example of an excellent lesson was seen in Year 3/4. This was a powerful lesson, which clearly gave the message to the pupils that they were mathematicians and that working with numbers was an experiment and fun. The lesson was very well prepared and the mental activity focused the pupils and prepared them for work. The use of individual white boards and number lines for the pupils to show their answers in this aspect of the lesson gave the teacher the opportunity to assess the pupils' understanding and modify her questions as the session progressed. In addition, the pupils' interest was maintained and their attention was kept firmly on the task. Pupils were confident to make a mistake, as they knew there was the opportunity to put it right immediately. During the group work part of the lesson, very high levels of encouragement were given to all pupils and they were determined to please the teacher and give of their best. As a result, the levels of concentration and the effort put into the work were very high. The teacher's ability to challenge the pupils through the use of questions was evident throughout the lesson and her responses to the pupils' answers only served to make them think even more deeply. At the end of the lesson the teacher revisited the learning objective and pupils were able to say if they had achieved it or not. They demonstrated a very good understanding of their own learning in their responses.
72. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good, and the co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented very successfully and is closely adapted to the school's needs. It has helped to ensure progression of learning and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Numeracy is used well to support learning across the curriculum. Examples seen during the inspection included a science lesson where Key Stage 2 pupils measured the length of their jumps and a music lesson where young Key Stage 1 pupils measured the rate of their pulses. There are very good priorities for developing the subject further, which includes a review of how information and communication technology is used within the teaching of mathematics. Resources have been built up well and there are good resources available to allow pupils to have

first-hand experiences when developing mathematical skills. A very good system is in place for assessing pupils' progress. This is carried out consistently through the school and is being used to inform future planning and set targets. Information gathered from assessment is very helpful in writing end of year reports to parents. The co-ordinator has been given time to monitor and evaluate current procedures in order to help her to target areas for improvement, but the time allocated to, and spent on, lessons needs to be reviewed as some sessions are over long. She has a good knowledge of the levels pupils' achieve at the end of both key stages as she samples pupils' work and has monitored teaching. The co-ordinator has noted the improvement in standards since the implementation of the numeracy strategy, particularly in provision of work for the pupils of differing abilities. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The use of a homework scheme is used through the school. The work pupils do at home is regularly marked and used to support pupils' learning in the class. In addition, the introduction of homework clubs and booster classes has also helped to raise levels of attainment.

## SCIENCE

73. The results of the 2000 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment was close to the national average in terms of the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above average. The published statistics also show that the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 did well in the experimental and investigative aspects of science as well as in the other areas. (Most schools do less well in this area). In the tests of eleven year olds in 2000, standards were above the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was also well above average. As many children enter the nursery with below average knowledge and understanding, this indicates that achievement is good.
74. The inspection finds that pupils' attainment is above average at the end of Year 2. Most pupils are able to conduct a simple experiment to discover what 'minibeasts' are found in different habitats and record their findings very well in pictures, word and tables. Higher attaining pupils talk confidently about their findings and give explanations which show how well they understand. Their scientific knowledge is also above average. By the time they leave the school, at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is still above average. They have a very good understanding of forces and can explain the pollination of flowers and the earth's seasons, writing well in their own words. The pupils' ability to devise and conduct their own experiments is less secure.
75. The majority of teaching is good and never less than satisfactory, enabling pupils to achieve high standards and to make good progress. In a very good lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher set clear objectives and rigorous targets. She expected students to use knowledge and understanding gained earlier, introduced new concepts and challenged the pupils to conduct accurate experiments, recording their results as they went along. The mutual confidence and respect, coupled with good behaviour and great enthusiasm, resulted in rapid learning. Pupils consolidated and extended their understanding of electrical circuits as well as their scientific skills. Not all lessons are as successful as this. Some teachers are less clear about what they want the pupils to achieve or do not take care to set tasks at different levels for pupils of different ability. In some lessons, there is too much theory developed through over-directed questioning, with not enough visual stimulus or exploration by the pupils. Because of this approach, one teacher had difficulty in gaining the pupils' full attention and they became noisy and fidgety. In nearly all the lessons, however, pupils are very well behaved, work well together and when given appropriate opportunities, collaborate with each other effectively in groups. Pupils whom the school identify as having special educational needs make good progress. Teachers give extra support and help to these pupils and sometimes make use of the school's generous provision of learning support assistants or additional teachers in the classroom.
76. Since the last inspection the school has raised the levels of pupil attainment and progress by improving the quality of teaching and the process of assessment. The school has introduced a new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, which covers the National Curriculum effectively and offers the pupils a good quality and range of learning opportunities. Teachers

assess the pupils regularly and the information provided, along with the results of national tests, is used to plan lessons, set targets for the pupils and develop aspects of the teaching or curriculum where these need improvement. Pupils have a good idea of how well they are doing, although in some books, marking is not always helpful in this way. The co-ordinator for science has only been in post for 2 terms, but she has received training and support and has begun to monitor pupils' work. Now, her findings, along with her knowledge and skills, need to be shared and discussed with colleagues at both key stages as a way of developing teaching and learning. All the teachers are enthusiastic and committed. The school has a very good capacity to raise attainment even further.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

77. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' attainment in art and design is as expected, and in design and technology it is below average. In both these subjects, pupils leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 with below average attainment and they have made unsatisfactory progress overall. In both subjects the pupils' ability to design and make things using a range and variety of materials is under developed. Their ability to evaluate and compare their work with that of others is also below average.
78. In art at Key Stage 1 there are good examples of drawing from life, with detailed observation of flowers. Pupils also learn how to handle poster colour well and paint colourful and expressive seaside scenes after looking at the work of artists such as Derain, Hockney and O'Keefe. At Key Stage 2 pupils work on simple collages, collect ideas in a sketchbook and explore different ways of using line and tone. Finished work depends heavily on the teacher, or using prepared shapes. In design and technology at Key Stage 1, pupils make a fruit salad or a sculpture. However, their ability to measure, mark out, cut and shape materials is limited. There are no examples of planning or drawing for the things they are going to make. At Key Stage 2, pupils do learn the design process. They make designs for a trophy stand or a new school uniform. However, the designs are often superficial and unrealistic in concept. Pupils carry out few of these designs. Where there are examples, such as levers or torches, they often lack the qualities of discovery and refinement.
79. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching as only two lessons, both in design and technology, were seen during the inspection. The evidence of these lessons, the work on display and discussions with the pupils indicates that teachers do not develop pupils' skills' and understanding progressively and systematically. Teachers offer too many ready-made solutions, often providing an outline for pupils to colour in or cut out. The school does not have a consistent approach to sketchbooks, with some pupils using them effectively to record ideas and observations and others not at all.
80. Due to the many staff changes recently, the school does not have curriculum co-ordinators for art and design or design and technology and there has been little development since the last inspection. Teachers lack the expertise to plan their lessons effectively and the scheme of work is insufficiently detailed to provide the guidance needed. Since the emphasis on the core curriculum, teachers have tended to give art and technology a low priority, and the below average amount of time allocated is sometimes eroded by other lessons. Teachers do not use information and communication technology effectively in these subjects although the curriculum is enriched with 'art and design week' each summer. The school does not have a formal assessment system in these areas. Development decisions, such as the recent purchase of new sketchbooks, have been taken without a clear idea of how to raise attainment. However, the planned in-service training for teachers on progression and continuity in art should prove useful, when a new co-ordinator is appointed.
81. At the time of the last inspection standards in art and design were similar to what they are now, whilst attainment in design and technology was judged to be broadly average. Improvement since then has therefore been unsatisfactory. This is mainly because the school has been focusing on literacy and numeracy. Teachers are committed and hard working. Providing that the school can re-establish these potentially exciting and creative subjects within the overall curriculum, there is



no reason why it should not be enriched by high achievement in these areas as well as in the others.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

82. It was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work and displays was carried out. In addition, teachers' planning and the policy for teaching geography were also examined. On the basis of this evidence it is judged that pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and that they have made satisfactory progress.
83. In Key Stage 1, pupils' work is based on their previous learning and when talking to pupils they are well motivated to think for themselves and to try hard. Lessons are carefully planned and pupils could discuss work they had done. This matched the teachers' plans. Pupils talked about the things they like about the area they live in, and things that were less wonderful to them. By the end of the key stage pupils have learned about people who help us, their different jobs and the places where they work. They also have learned about people in other countries, especially in very hot places. The pupils' books showed that recording of their findings are often in pictures or involve cutting out and pasting worksheets. This indicates that insufficient attention is given to recording pupils' knowledge and understanding. In Key Stage 2, only one lesson was observed, but in this teaching and learning were good. The lesson was carefully planned and a good variety of methods were used to focus the pupils on their task. The children were clear about what it was they were trying to achieve because they were told what the objective of the lesson was at the beginning. Pupils had a good recall of previously learned facts about life in India. For example, the pupils knew about diet, schooling and housing. Pupils used this knowledge to decide whether a child in the United Kingdom or India would have made a particular statement. The teacher's knowledge and understanding was good and she brought the discussion to life for the pupils. As a result, they were able to make informed deductions to draw a conclusion and explain this, giving valid reasons. Pupils were attentive and keen to contribute. The high level of concentration and interest in what they were doing contributed to good learning. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 talk quite knowledgeably about the different features of different environments, for example mountainous areas. They can discuss the effects of leisure activities and tourism with confidence. By the end of the key stage, work seen shows that pupils have studied the appropriate curriculum. However, throughout the key stage, recording of work, and the degree of effort put into this, does not reflect the good level of literacy skills that pupils have.
84. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has developed the subject, beginning with the policy and scheme of work. The allocation of time for teaching the subject is adequate across the year and this is an improvement since the last inspection. However, at present, there is insufficient balance within the subject, particularly to the practical and investigative approach to geography, and this limits pupils' independent learning opportunities and the achievement of higher levels of attainment. The teaching of geography and history in alternate terms could well contribute to this. The co-ordinator has built up the resources to a satisfactory level and has plans to improve these further. Assessment of pupils' progress is just beginning to be carried out in a formal way by checking to see how well pupils have progressed against the objectives they were expected to learn when a topic began.

## **HISTORY**

85. Standards in history reach the expected levels at the end of both key stages. This is a similar finding to that of the previous report. Only one history lesson was seen at Key Stage 2. Evidence, therefore, is also drawn from discussions and previous work. Key Stage 1 pupils are able to discriminate between aspects of life now and in the past. They identify features of photographs that provide relevant historical evidence, for example correctly noting similarities and differences between seaside activities now and in the time of their grandparents. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils understand some of the motives of early invaders. They appreciate that the study of artefacts such as tombstones provides valuable information about the past. Older pupils at this key stage have a good knowledge of many aspects of Victorian life, including the school system, and some of the well-known characters of that era such as Florence Nightingale and Sir James Young Simpson, the pioneer of chloroform. Many have the ability to analyse written historical evidence and successfully distinguish between fact and opinion before reaching valid conclusions.
86. Pupils' attitudes towards history lessons are good overall, and sometimes very good. They are generally very interested in the aspect that they are studying and keen to contribute their own ideas to discussions. They settle quickly to tasks and concentrate well on these. They co-operate well with one another when working in pairs or groups. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is good overall. Discipline is invariably positive and effective, contributing to good behaviour and positive relationships in lessons. Searching questions frequently require the pupils to think deeply about issues and serve to re-enforce the pace of their learning. Methods are appropriate and provide variety to lessons.
87. Planning for history is appropriately based on national guidelines and relevant assessments of pupils' progress are made and recorded. However, the subject is planned for in blocks of time which – although ensuring that the full National Curriculum is delivered – does mean that pupils are sometimes not taught history in depth for significant periods of time. As a result teachers are restricted in the amount of creativity they can use in teaching the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear view of areas for further developing the subject – but his role in monitoring standards and coverage is still limited, which impacts negatively on standards and achievement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

88. The pupils' attainment in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 is as expected. The majority of pupils can write text and the higher attaining pupils can, with help, save and print out their work. They can enter data they have collected into a graphing program and higher attaining pupils explain what the graph means. Pupils explore journeys using a simulation program. However, too few pupils using information and communication technology know how to develop work further, or plan sequences of instructions to direct a floor robot. Pupils leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 with below the expected levels of attainment. Pupils are confident in using a word processor to produce a recipe, a poem or a story and can add clip-art to make a poster. Most know how to retrieve information from a CD-ROM and pupils have used the Internet to search for information about the NSPCA. However, they have not used a spreadsheet to explore simple situations such as planning a party or a holiday, or collected a range of data to enter into their own database.
89. It was not possible during the inspection to see sufficient lessons to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Where a teacher uses information and communication technology to support a particular curriculum area, for example music or English, this is usually done well. The teacher will plan to make the best use of the single classroom computer to develop subject skills as well as skills in information and communication technology. Usually over a period of several lessons, pupils will work collaboratively in pairs or with the teacher in a larger group. In other instances, pupils will work to the information and communication technology scheme, based on national guidelines, alongside other pupils working on unrelated tasks. Teachers generally have a good understanding of the level at which pupils are working because the planning and assessment clearly shows this. However, many of the teachers are new to the school, as is much of the equipment and software. The result is that tasks are often being tackled for the first

time and pupils are working at a much lower level than that expected for their age. In one instance, Year 5 pupils were attempting to use a simple graphing program, designed for Key Stage 1 pupils, as a database. This was not suitable for the task. At Key Stage 1, teachers have integrated the use of information and communication technology effectively into their planning and teaching so that pupils make sound progress. The reception classes provide a good introduction to the computer operating system and during Years 1 and 2 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils develop skills in using the mouse, for instance, and can draw pictures or 'drag and drop' screen icons. During Key Stage 2, the teachers provide insufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology, and the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.

90. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology has worked hard to improve the facilities and develop the curriculum since the previous inspection. She has a good knowledge of the subject requirements and sets a good example in her own work. The software and other tools are now sufficient to deliver the National Curriculum. However, at present the school is not meeting the statutory requirement to provide sensing and monitoring. Aspects of modelling and control are also under-developed and pupils are not taught these yet. The above average ratio of pupils to computers is also slowing developments. The subject's development plans are good. All teachers will receive nationally funded training next term and a computer suite is planned for when other urgent building problems are solved.
91. Given the commitment and enthusiasm of all the teachers, and providing the expertise of the co-ordinator is shared effectively, the school is well placed to improve the pupils' achievement and raise attainment levels in the near future.

## **MUSIC**

92. Standards in music meet expected levels throughout the school, and there are strengths in singing at both key stages. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory and sometimes good. The current standards in music at Key Stage 2 are an improvement on the findings of the previous report. Key Stage 1 pupils sing a range of hymns enthusiastically and with a good control of tempo and dynamics. In lessons, they are able to keep to a steady pulse and can associate different types of music – such as marches – with different rates of pulse. At Key Stage 2, pupils also sing hymns with enthusiasm and joy and are developing the ability to harmonise. Early in this key stage, pupils are able to interpret extracts from familiar pieces of music such as 'Peter and the Wolf' and can describe specific sounds that reflect particular movements. Older Key Stage 2 pupils appreciate that music can have a social or cultural purpose while they carefully analyse the lyrics from Cat Stevens' 'Where do the children play'. Others effectively discuss the significance of John Lennon's 'Imagine' and have a growing awareness of the potential influence of the composer on people's attitudes. A recent popular song is adapted to give it school relevance and sung well in assembly by a group of pupils from Year 6. Over thirty pupils are benefiting from specialist brass or string lessons and this is having a positive effect on the overall standards being reached in music. The performance of a number of Key Stage 2 pupils in events such the Barnet Primary Music Festival also contributes to overall provision.
93. Pupils' attitudes towards music lessons are always at least good, and are often very good. Even the youngest listen carefully to music that is played to them and make sensible contributions to discussions. During hymn practice, they behave very well and try hard to improve their performance. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils co-operate well while composing in pairs. Pupils throughout the school behave well in music lessons because most enjoy the tasks that are given to them. At the end of Key Stage 2, in particular, the pupils are very interested in the content of lessons and respond very well to it. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is good overall. Tasks are usually challenging, with questioning being a particular strength. This encourages the pupils to think about what they are doing and has a positive effect on the rate of their learning. Pupil management is usually very good, and this ensures that behaviour and relationships are also very good. There is frequently a high level of respect between teachers and pupils. Methods are suitably varied, keeping the pupils interested in what they are doing. Occasionally, however, the very enthusiasm of the pupils is allowed to dominate a lesson – which leads to inappropriate noise and minor misbehaviour.

94. Planning for music is currently based on national guidelines, but the school is also appropriately looking at adding to this from commercial schemes. Assessment of pupils' progress is, however, still only informal which has a negative impact on standards. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and areas for development, and has a number of strategies planned to further raise its profile in the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

95. There were limited opportunities to observe physical education during the inspection. Standards have improved since the last inspection and in the lessons observed, standards were in line with what is expected nationally by the ages of seven and eleven. Progress is satisfactory.
96. Lack of physical education was a concern raised by parents. During the inspection week, one afternoon was set aside for games, which were undertaken at a field some distance from the school and allowed approximately 50 minutes of physical activity. The school has difficulty in delivering its games curriculum, and this results in there being no physical education on other days of the week for Years 3, 5 and 6, which is unsatisfactory as it negatively affects standards. Pupils at Key Stage 1 also have one lesson a week, which varies between 30 and 50 minutes – with the same impact on standards.
97. At Key Stage 1, standards in games activities are appropriate for the age of the pupils, and most have suitable basic control and co-ordination to throw and bounce a ball with appropriate accuracy. They are learning to co-operate with a partner in basic ball games. Pupils in Year 4, in an athletics activity, demonstrated that their ability to complete a standing jump forward was developed appropriately for their age. In Year 6, pupils are competent in playing a range of games, for example, cricket and rounders. School records indicate that the school achieves well in local football and netball tournaments. Swimming records also show good attainment. Good numbers of pupils reach the nationally required standard of 25 metres in Year 4 and a good percentage are swimming well in excess of this.
98. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, but the strengths in the teaching seen in other subjects are not always reflected in physical education lessons. The school has quite rightly been concentrating on improving standards in literacy and numeracy and has not focused on developing teachers' subject knowledge and skills in teaching this subject, although some is planned for the future. Games skills are taught effectively and resources are well organised and evaluated. All the equipment was on the Clitterhouse field, for example, and when the pupils arrived for games much had been set out for various groups. A good feature of the teaching at Key Stage 2, is the differentiated activities arranged for lower attaining pupils in the standing jump. Class management is strong and a good example of this is the effective handling of a small number of older pupils who behaved inappropriately. They were told firmly why their behaviour was inappropriate and reference was made to choices we all have to make in life. After time for reflection, the good aspects of the lesson were recalled by pupils, thereby finishing the lesson on a positive note. Pupils' response to physical education is generally good. They enjoy the subject and are mostly well behaved, showing suitable regard for health and safety issues. Pupils are confident when asked to demonstrate their work and concentrate hard on what they are doing.
99. Teachers follow a range of guidance, including recent government guidance, to plan their work, but do not have their own scheme of work. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory.