

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE NOTLEY GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Braintree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 132020

Headteacher: Ms F Trussler

Reporting inspector: Mr A. Portlock  
21411

Dates of inspection: March 12 – 15, 2001

Inspection number: 230751

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Blickling Road  
Great Notley  
Braintree  
Essex

Postcode: CM7 8ZJ

Telephone number: 01376 343485

Fax number: 01376 553894

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Turner

Date of previous inspection: No previous inspection.

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21411	A. Portlock	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Geography	How high are standards?
			History	How well are pupils taught?
			Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
13828	R. Ibbitson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29989	P. Goodsell	Team inspector	Science	
			Art	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			Special educational needs	
18645	C. Loizou	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Information technology	
			Design & technology	
			Under fives	
			Equal opportunities	
			English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants  
 16 Wychwood Drive  
 Trowell Park  
 Nottingham  
 NG9 3RB

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The Registrar  
 Inspection Quality Division  
 The Office for Standards in Education  
 Alexandra House  
 33 Kingsway  
 London WC2B 6SE

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<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated near to Braintree, Essex, on a new and still developing housing development. The school opened in September 1999 with 48 pupils. This is the school's first inspection. There are 168 full-time pupils, including 30 children in the reception class, some of whom are part-time. The school is smaller than most primary schools. The school takes its pupils from neighbouring and surrounding areas. A significant feature of the school is the steady number of new pupils joining the school all the time. The school has recently had to extend its accommodation by adding two temporary classrooms, even though it has only been open for 18 months. The children's attainment on entry is broadly average, although because it serves a new and growing population, its intake varies. Three pupils (2%) are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Forty-four (29%) pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and this is below average. Very nearly all pupils speak English as their first language. Three per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic communities and this is below average.

## HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This new school has made a good start. The headteacher, with the support of the governors and the staff, has effectively and efficiently established the school. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time the pupils leave the school, they achieve above average standards in English and mathematics and make good progress in these subjects, largely because of the effective teaching, the good leadership and the positive attitudes the pupils have to their work. The headteacher and governors have already put in place effective procedures for evaluating the school's performance. The school provides effectively for the needs of its pupils and gives good value for money.

### What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average and the pupils make good progress.
- Overall the teaching is good.
- The headteacher, staff and governors share a commitment to improvement and to raising standards.
- The school is establishing a caring environment in which the pupils are highly valued and there are very good relationships.
- Special educational needs teaching, provision and management is good.
- The provision for the Foundation Stage (children in the reception class) is good.
- The assessment and monitoring of the pupils' progress in English and mathematics is effective and helps the pupils to achieve high standards.

### What could be improved

- Improve the standards in handwriting and spelling.
- Improve the satisfactory standards in science to match those in English and mathematics.
- Strengthen further the partnership with parents.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

As the school has only recently opened, this is its first inspection.

## STANDARDS

In the Foundation Stage (children in the reception class), results of the baseline tests show that standards of attainment on entry overall are in line with those found for children of this age. The school has been open for less than two years and the 2000 national tests for seven and 11 year-olds were the first tests undertaken. Seven pupils took the Year 6 tests and 12 pupils took the Year 2 tests. Half of the Year 2 pupils were on the school's special educational needs register and a quarter of them arrived very shortly before the tests were taken. No pupil had been in school for more than eight months at the time of the tests. The results, therefore, are not a reliable guide to present or future standards and need to be interpreted cautiously. What they do show is that there is a very wide variation in standards in different year groups. The Year 2 results in reading,

writing and mathematics indicate well below average standards and those in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science well above average standards. The school has responded to the Year 2 results by focusing additional learning support for these pupils in order to raise standards.

Inspection evidence finds that the youngest children make good progress, and by the end of the reception year, the majority will achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals. The standards in English and mathematics at age 7 are in line with those expected and at age 11 they are above average. The school has rightly concentrated on raising standards in English and mathematics. In science, standards are in line with expectations for both seven and 11 year olds and these need to be raised in line with English and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in most aspects of English and in mathematics and satisfactory progress in science. Standards in handwriting and spelling are below average.

By the time that they leave the school, the pupils' attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and religious education is in line with expectations. In physical education, in those aspects observed, standards are above expectations. The school is aware that as most of the pupils are fairly new to the school and have encountered a variety of learning experiences in these subjects at their previous schools, there is a need to find ways of raising standards in these subjects.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' good attitudes to school and work result in good gains in learning. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils are very polite and friendly and this is contributing significantly to the rate of learning.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. The pupils take on responsibilities with enthusiasm and carry out tasks in a mature way.
Attendance	Broadly in line with the national average.

The pupils concentrate and try hard with their work. They listen well to the views and opinions of others. The members of staff are very good role models. The pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of improving their work and their good attitudes and effort are key features in sustaining and improving the standards achieved. There are high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and, as a result, the pupils work hard and enjoy school.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>Aged 7-11 years</b>
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.*

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons; good in half the lessons and very good in nearly one-fifth. The teaching of literacy and numeracy lessons is good overall. The teachers meet the needs of all pupils effectively. A team atmosphere is developing in the school. Very good relationships are formed, which are seen in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils. The teachers use their good knowledge of the pupils and the subjects that they are teaching to plan appropriate and challenging work. Although the pace of lessons is brisk, there is usually time for the pupils to gain good understanding, although in a small number of lessons this was not the case. However, the teachers are not providing sufficient time at the end of some lessons for the pupils to reflect on what they have learnt. The learning support assistants are used well to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as a second language. Homework is well used and makes an effective contribution to the pupils' learning,

especially with older pupils. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good overall. The reception teachers provide a very secure and caring environment with daily routines firmly established. In English and mathematics, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The school has rightly identified the teaching of handwriting and spelling as areas for improvement, especially for the infant and younger junior pupils. In science, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In other subjects, the quality of teaching is good overall in art and design physical education and in information and communication technology. It is satisfactory in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides an effective, broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are well supported by individual programmes and learning support assistants and these ensure that progress is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for the pupils' personal development is good. The pupils have good opportunities to extend their social skills and cultural awareness and to gain an understanding of right and wrong. The provision for the pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.	Good. The pupils are well supported by the school in developing their language and they are making good progress.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Day-to-day personal support and guidance is good; the monitoring of the pupils' personal and academic development is good and this makes a significant contribution to building the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Assessment information is used well to set targets for the pupils' learning.

The school's curriculum is interesting and meets the needs of all pupils. There are good procedures for tracking and monitoring the pupils' progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well planned and gives all pupils a firm foundation that is built upon throughout the school. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consistently developed in other subjects. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning intentions but these are not always shared with the pupils. The curriculum is not as yet sufficiently enriched through extra-curricular activities, including visitors into school and visits out of school. However, such activities are developing steadily. Each child is highly valued as an individual. The child protection procedures are very good and all staff make a significant contribution to the care of pupils and to creating a friendly, caring and supportive environment.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher's effective leadership has laid a firm foundation for this new school. She has been well supported by the staff. All staff with management responsibilities are committed to the further development of the school and to providing high quality care and education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed and have played an effective role in establishing the school. They are supportive of the school and fulfil their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, supported by the governors and subject co-ordinators, has established good procedures to evaluate the school's performance and is using this information to set targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The headteacher and governors use and target the available funding well. Budgets are set following careful consideration given to the school's priorities and take account of the principles of best value. Effective use is made of special grants.

The teaching staff work as an effective team and are very well supported by the other members of staff. The headteacher, with other teachers, has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. These monitoring procedures allow the management team, the governors and the teachers to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate targets for improvement. The governors are kept well informed by the headteacher. They are improving their knowledge of how well the school is doing.

## 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>• The children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The behaviour is good</li> <li>• The school expects the pupils to work and to achieve their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The information provided by the school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework set.</li> <li>• The way the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. Most parents are happy that their children like coming to school and are pleased with their progress. They are also appreciative of the school's expectations that children will work hard and do their best.

The inspection finds that on most of the issues concerning the parents the school has made a good start and does not support most of these views. The links with parents are satisfactory and are developing. Some parents help in the classrooms and assist with other school-based tasks. The school believes that it welcomes parents in to help in school. The school is well supported by an active and growing Friends' Association. A group of parents work regularly in the school producing displays. The leadership of the school and the quality of teaching are good. The quality of the information provided to parents is good. Homework is well used and makes an effective contribution to the pupils' learning, particularly with older pupils. Since the school opened a limited but increasing range of clubs and activities outside of lessons have been established and these are well attended. At present these include, music, netball and a computer club.

The school is dealing effectively with the needs of the many new families who join the school but has encountered various, and at times conflicting, views and opinions and this has caused some dissatisfaction. The school is looking at appropriate ways of ensuring that all parents can feel welcome and well informed. From the pre-inspection meeting for parents and from the replies to the parents' questionnaire it is evident that parents take a keen interest in their children's work at school and are supportive of their children's learning. It

is also apparent, however, that a significant number of parents have concerns and say that they wish to be involved further and that this will require a strengthening of the school's partnership with parents. It is vital that the headteacher, senior staff and governors consider ways to achieve this.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the Foundation Stage (children in the reception class), results of the baseline tests show that standards of attainment on entry overall are in line with those found for children of this age. The school has been open for less than two years and the 2000 national tests for seven and 11 year-olds were the first tests undertaken. Seven pupils took the Year 6 tests and twelve pupils took the Year 2 tests. Half of the Year 2 pupils were on the school's special educational needs register and a quarter of them arrived very shortly before the tests were taken. No pupil had been in school for more than eight months at the time of the tests. The results, therefore, are not a reliable guide to present or future standards and need to be interpreted cautiously. What they do show is that there is a very wide variation in standards in different year groups. The Year 2 results in reading, writing and mathematics indicate well below average standards and those in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science well above average standards. The school has responded to the Year 2 results by focusing additional learning support for these pupils in order to raise standards.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that the youngest children make good progress, and by the end of the reception year, the majority will achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals.
3. The standards in English and mathematics at age 7 are in line with those expected and at age 11 they are above average. In science, standards are in line with expectations for both seven and 11 year olds. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in most aspects of English and in mathematics but less so in science, where progress is satisfactory. Standards in handwriting and spelling are below average.
4. In English, the children in the reception class begin school with good speaking and listening skills. In the rest of the school, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed and standards are higher than those expected of seven and 11-year-olds. The teachers provide many ways for the pupils to develop spoken language. By the age of 11 most pupils speak clearly and confidently to an audience. The pupils in both Years 5 and 6 show increasing confidence when speaking to an audience, presenting their ideas and listening to others in a group.
5. By the age of seven, the pupils' reading skills are in line with the standards expected for their age and they are making good progress. A small number of higher attaining pupils are reading above the expected level with confidence and enjoyment. The pupils of average and lower attainment are reading books that present them with appropriate challenge. Infant pupils are developing an enjoyment of reading and like to talk about the characters and plot. The pupils continue to make good progress in the junior classes and almost all pupils in Year 6 have reading skills that are higher than the standards expected, with a small number of pupils achieving very high standards. All pupils, including the average and lower attaining pupils are able to read well.
6. Standards in writing are broadly in line with those expected and the pupils are achieving well because they experience a range of writing styles which includes poetry, fantasy genres, factual accounts and descriptive writing. However, there are some weaknesses in the pupils' handwriting. Although handwriting is taught regularly, many pupils do not transfer these skills to other writing tasks. In both the infant and junior classes, most pupils are using writing well for a range of purposes and across many subjects. Higher attaining pupils are developing a good understanding of speech marks and narrative in their writing. By the age of 11, the pupils are able to write for different audiences and in a wide range of styles, such as formal letters, newspaper reports and poetry. Their work shows the development of more complex sentence structures and the spelling of more complex words. However, there are inconsistencies in the standard of spelling across the school.
7. In mathematics, by the age of seven, the pupils can count accurately and put them into equal sets. They explain why their answers are correct. They solve simple multiplication problems. They have a good knowledge of place value to 100 but most have difficulty beyond this. The pupils use their knowledge that subtraction is the inverse of addition to solve number problems. Lower attaining

pupils have begun to understand place value and to order numbers. They add and subtract numbers to 10. By the age of 11, the pupils can discuss and devise strategies for solving more complex number problems. They multiply whole numbers to 1000 and change improper fractions into mixed numbers. They add and subtract negative numbers. Lower attaining pupils create line graphs and find the area of square and triangular shapes. They record their work effectively and check their results by estimating what the answers should be.

8. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have some understanding of life processes and living things, for example they know the life cycle of an apple tree. They record their observations about the changes that take place in their food tests with good attention to detail. They learn to use scientific vocabulary correctly and when they carry out an investigation into melting ice in four different places, they can make sensible predictions as to what might happen. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of simple circuits in their written explanations and labelled drawings. Overall, the pupils present the data they collect carefully and they are beginning to draw conclusions from what they observe and record. By the age of eleven, the pupils develop a range of strategies for conducting scientific enquiries. They are aware of how to plan their experimental work and obtain evidence by making appropriate observations and measurements. They have a good understanding of how to construct fair tests. The more able pupils understand the importance of considering the outcomes in terms of their original predictions. When discovering how to separate solids from liquids by filtration they plan the investigation, and select appropriate equipment and resources to help carry out the test. They make good use of scientific terms and vocabulary, and a few pupils know how to use results in order to draw conclusions and suggest explanations. They can present their data in a range of useful forms such as tables, graphs, pictures and diagrams.
9. By the time that they leave the school, the pupils' attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and religious education are in line with expectations. In physical education, in those aspects observed standards are above expectations. The school is aware that as most of the pupils are fairly new to the school and have encountered a variety of learning experiences in these subjects at their previous schools, there is a need to find ways of raising standards in these subjects.

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

10. The pupils' attitudes to their work are good and together with their good behaviour in lessons, this makes a major contribution to their learning. They enjoy coming to school, their motivation is high and they are eager to participate in lessons. In a physical education lesson Year 2 pupils enjoyed dancing to the music of a video, carefully following the steps suggested by the teacher. They co-operated well when they danced in groups and they were able to give a highly credible performance at the end of the lesson. Year 4 children in a science lesson behaved very sensibly when conducting an experiment to find out about air resistance when they ran up and down the playground with large sheets of cardboard in front of them. After the lesson they were able to discuss their findings using appropriate scientific terms.
11. Boys and girls mix well together in lessons and at other times. They chat to their friends and behave well as they move around the school, play in the playground and have lunch together. The pupils are very polite to visitors, cheerfully greeting them and opening doors for them. There was no evidence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour seen during the inspection. The pupils understand the class rules of behaviour and abide by them. There have been no exclusions.
12. In one-to-one situations, small groups and in some whole class situations the pupils with special educational needs confidently volunteer answers to questions. They are encouraged to take part in school activities and are fully included in working situations across the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs have good relationships with adults who support them individually, when working in small groups and in whole class activities.
13. Relationships between the pupils is very good and the relationships which the teachers form with their children is also very good and is a significant contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. The teachers and other adults in the school serve as good role models.

14. The pupils' personal development is very good. When opportunities are provided for the pupils to exercise their initiative and responsibility they are keen to accept the challenge. Following a visit to County Hall by pupils, each class now runs a Class Council. It is planned that a full School Council will develop from this. The pupils enjoy taking part in these Class Council meetings and are beginning to understand the rules of running meetings and the need to listen to others and their points of view. There are daily duties set for all classes, which the pupils accept cheerfully, for example tidying away at the end of lessons and taking registers to the office. In the reception class a few children are selected each day to prepare a snack for the others. All pupils participate in raising funds for charities and through this have an awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. In their participation with the local community, for example, pupils are helping to raise money to provide a playground for disabled children.
15. The attendance rate was found to be broadly in line with the national average and is satisfactory. The rate of unauthorised absences is below average. Pupils arrive punctually for the start of the day and lessons begin on time.

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

16. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons; good in half the lessons and very good in nearly one-fifth. The teaching of literacy and numeracy lessons is good overall. The teachers meet the needs of all pupils effectively.
17. There is a team atmosphere developing in the school. The staff are committed to doing their best for the pupils and there is a growing consistency about the way in which they work with them. Very good relationships are formed, which are seen in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils. The teachers bring out the best in the pupils and strive to develop the pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
18. The teachers use their good knowledge of the pupils and the subjects that they are teaching to plan appropriate and challenging work. Although the pace of lessons is brisk, there is usually time for the pupils to gain good understanding, although in a small number of cases this was not the case. The teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and use a range of teaching methods to develop the pupils' skills and understanding. In the best lessons, they ensure that all pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn in the lesson and they involve the pupils in assessing what they have achieved. However, the teachers are not providing sufficient time at the end of some lessons for drawing together what the pupils have learnt and ensuring that they have understood the work. Computers are used extensively, for example when drafting and re-drafting written work or when finding information for a topic on Ancient Egyptians. The learning assistants are used well to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as a second language. Homework is well used and makes an effective contribution to the pupils' learning, especially with older pupils.
19. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good overall. The reception teachers provide a very secure and caring environment with daily routines firmly established. The good range of stimulating activities give relevance to the children's learning, and are comprehensively planned to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The teachers use the results of the baseline assessments effectively to provide suitable work for the children, which relates closely to their ages and differing abilities. The management of the children is very good, resulting in very good behaviour and a positive working atmosphere.
20. In English, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. One very good writing lesson was also seen in Years 5 and 6. The teachers make sure the pupils know what they are expected to learn. In the most effective lesson seen they were encouraged to read a "Fairy Tale" written by one of the pupils. This was displayed on an overhead projector and the pupils corrected the text searching for different ways of writing words and phrases. In all of the literacy lessons the tasks are planned to take account of the pupils' prior attainment and to present challenge. Consequently the pupils work hard. The teaching of reading in both the infant and junior classes is well planned with good strategies in

place to help the pupils read words and sound out letters. The school has identified the teaching of handwriting and spelling as areas for improvement, especially for the infant and younger junior pupils.

21. In mathematics, the quality of teaching is good overall and this is ensuring that the pupils are making good progress. In most lessons, the teachers demonstrate confident and secure subject knowledge that allows them to extend the pupils' understanding of the work and ensures that pupils of differing abilities are fully involved in the work. In most lessons the teachers give good opportunities at the end of the lesson to ensure that the pupils have understood the main ideas of the lesson and to reinforce the mathematical vocabulary. However, in a small number of lessons, some of the work was not explained sufficiently clearly and was not appropriate to the needs of all the pupils.
22. In science, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In all of the lessons seen, the teachers demonstrated that they have good subject knowledge; they used scientific vocabulary correctly and expected the pupils to think scientifically. They encouraged the pupils to share equipment and provided opportunities for them to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. However, the teachers' planning does not always identify work that is matched to all the pupils' needs and this means that some pupils are not achieving as well as they could. There is a lack of regular assessment of the pupils' knowledge and understanding and as a result, the work is not always challenging enough for some of the more able pupils. In addition, the school is having to contend with the fact that some pupils have already covered topics in their previous schools, whilst others have not. This issue has not yet been fully addressed.
23. In other subjects, the quality of teaching is good overall in art and design and in information and communication technology. It is satisfactory in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education. In these subjects the teachers' subject knowledge varies and this accounts for the difference in the quality and the challenge and expectations in these subjects. In some subjects, such as in history and geography, the quality of teaching observed was good but the pupils' earlier work was not in sufficient depth and their progress was satisfactory.
24. The class teachers prepare the work for pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language by working closely with the learning support assistants. The work is well matched to pupils' needs and in most cases identifies the small steps needed for them to make good progress. However on a few occasions the effectiveness of the plans is reduced by the fact that the targets that are identified are too broad and cover too long a time span. Overall, the plans are carried out with very good liaison between the class teachers, the learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The learning support assistants manage the pupils very well and maintain good standards of behaviour. They help the pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language to make good progress.
25. The teachers' good rapport with pupils ensures that the pupils listen and respond effectively to questions. The teachers expect high standards from the pupils and provide challenging work. The pupils respond well to this and apply themselves in the effort that they make. There are clear links between the quality of teaching and the standards achieved. The school makes good use of the National Frameworks for Literacy and Numeracy but more could be done to raise standards in handwriting and spelling. The work the pupils do at home is supporting their learning. Teachers are willing to learn new skills and to work together to do this. For example, the subject co-ordinators share their skills with other teachers and the learning assistants effectively support the teachers.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered by the school are good and the curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the recommended Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage. The provision for physical education is affected by the lack of an appropriate and safe grassed area for large ball games and athletics. There are opportunities provided

for investigation in science and mathematics. Planning for continuity between the infant and junior classes is fully developed. A strength of the curriculum is the equality of access for all pupils.

27. There are good procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for the assessment of their progress against the targets set in the individual education plans. The pupils are taught in a mixture of situations, being withdrawn in small groups, individually and supported within the classes. Their individual education plans are reviewed each term and targets set. These are generally clearly focussed and in small enough steps to enable good progress to be made. The class teachers, learning support assistants and special educational needs co-ordinator work closely together to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met and that they have full access to the curriculum provided. The special educational needs co-ordinator works with the pupils identified as being more able once a week on programmes that challenge their thinking and extend their knowledge and understanding. Gifted and talented pupils, as well as those identified as just falling short of the expected standards for their age in the juniors, are given additional support in literacy and numeracy. This is well managed and appropriate to meet their specific learning needs.
28. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented in the school and these are helping to raise standards. The planning and provision for literacy and numeracy are good. The Literacy Strategy has been adapted successfully so that it is appropriate for classes of mixed ability. Planning in both subjects identifies what pupils need to learn, the tasks for pupils of differing attainment levels and the opportunities to assess the pupils' work. There are detailed schemes in place for all subjects and a common format is used for half-termly and weekly planning. Cross-curricular links are identified between subjects and these are used well to link common themes and activities so that pupils are re-visiting skills across a range of subjects. This is having a positive effect on their learning.
29. There is good provision for personal, health and social education. A draft policy and scheme of work have been written. Health education, including sex education and drug awareness, is taught appropriately in science and personal and social education lessons. Relationships are explored in assemblies and religious education and other aspects are taught as they arise in class discussion. Homework is of good quality and is set regularly. Younger pupils take home reading books and spellings. Junior pupils have literacy and numeracy work to be completed every week.
30. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. When pupils assemble for collective worship they do so in a quiet and reverent atmosphere. They know that this is a special time. There is a very supportive and positive atmosphere in assemblies. All pupils and teachers join in the singing, sometimes with actions, and prayers. There is time for reflection, about sharing, helping and kindness to others. Spiritual development is less evident in lessons.
31. The provision for moral development is good. All adults involved in the school set a good example in their relationship with each other and with the pupils. They also make it clear how they expect pupils to behave towards each other. The pupils know what is right and wrong. This is reinforced in assemblies. Morals are drawn from stories and themes, for example, the headteacher led an assembly on the theme, "The grass is always greener in the other field". The pupils were told a story about a man who was never satisfied with what he had. In another assembly the importance of keeping promises was emphasised. Again a story was told and the pupils were asked why keeping a promise is important to others.
32. The provision for social development is good. The pupils have many opportunities to develop their social skills in school. In many lessons they share in their learning by working in pairs or groups. In practical lessons, the way that pupils are grouped enables higher-attaining pupils to share with and help those who are less secure in the subject. At the end of lessons, when pupils are given opportunities to tell the class what they have achieved, others respect this and listen attentively. The pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are given opportunities to participate but in large groups they are less inclined to offer suggestions or ask questions unless supported and encouraged by another adult.

33. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils learn about their own culture through history and geography. Other cultures are studied through ancient societies such as the Greeks, and comparisons are made between the pupils' own village and a village in Southern India. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their literacy skills through studying stories from a variety of African and Asian countries. Studies are made of different faiths and pupils hear stories of Mohammed as well as Jesus.
34. Since the school opened an increasing range of clubs and activities outside of lessons is being established and these are well attended. Whilst these are as yet limited, they are beginning to make an increasing contribution to the pupils' learning. At present the activities include, music, netball and a computer club as well as some competitive sport. The curriculum is enriched by the use of resources outside the school, such as Top Sport, Crucial Crew activities and involvement in a local initiative for highly able pupils.
35. There are good links with the local community. Local residents are invited to concerts and plays. There are well-established links with the local high school. These links are useful in helping pupils when they change from one phase of education to another.

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

36. Notley Green is a caring school and the provision for the pupils' personal support and guidance is evident in the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils. The parents are pleased with the effective way in which children are introduced into the reception class when they first enter school. The teachers quickly establish good routines and the pupils feel secure. The children soon learn to register themselves each morning as they enter school with their parents or carers. The teacher then checks this.
37. This standard of care is continued into the rest of the school. The monitoring of pupils' personal and academic progress is good and teachers have a clear picture of each child's development. The school has already in place support and welfare policies, which guide its actions. These include guidance about the harmful effects of smoking, the misuse of drugs and its approach to sex education.
38. The pupils with special educational needs receive highly effective support from staff within the school. There are good arrangements in place to make use of support from external special educational needs staff and other agencies such as the service for the hearing impaired. All statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out and additional support is provided for the pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are good procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' academic progress and personal development, and the pupils are involved in evaluating their own progress as part of the annual review Statements of Special Educational Needs. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported by the school staff who provide additional language work, reading and writing activities for them and consequently are making appropriate progress.
39. Child Protection procedures are very good. The headteacher is the named person in the school to deal with child protection matters and a named governor is active in supporting this aspect if, and when, necessary. The headteacher has received training in child protection and all staff are kept advised of changes. Records are securely held of all child protection matters. The school's health and safety arrangements are very good and records are well maintained of all health and safety checks.
40. The school has very good policies for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and is particularly watchful for signs of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. The pupils understand the behaviour policy and its implementation is fair and consistent throughout the school.
41. There is good monitoring of the pupils' attendance by teachers and the school's administrative staff. A system of recording all attendance data on the computer has recently been established and this is beginning to help keep track of absences. The Educational Welfare Officer comes in once a term to check attendance records. The parents support the school by sending notes when children cannot



attend and these are held in class registers. The school is quick to follow up cases of unexplained absence. Registration takes place promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and registers are accurately and consistently recorded.

42. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good and the results of assessments are used well to raise attainment for groups and for individual pupils. In the Foundation Stage, the children are assessed on entry to the school and there are continuous assessments made throughout the year. Infant and junior pupils are tested every half-term in literacy and numeracy. These are effective and targets are set half-terminally for individual pupils. These targets are discussed by pupils and teachers and are shared with parents. There are plans to introduce assessment in other subjects. Since the beginning of this school year the progress of the pupils of differing attainment from each year group have been tracked, using a variety of assessment data. The analysis of the results of national and other tests is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of English and mathematics. As a result, handwriting and spelling have been identified as the weaker areas in English and plans have been made for improvement. However in science, there is insufficient regular and informative assessment of the pupils' knowledge and understanding and teachers do not always plan work that is matched to all the pupils' needs. In literacy and numeracy the teachers keep good records of what the pupils can do and in which areas they need help. The school is planning to use this information to improve the way it reports the pupils' progress to parents. As a new school, this is only the second year in which reports have been prepared and the school is using its assessments to prepare clear and effective reports to parents about their children's progress and learning targets.

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

43. The partnership that the school has with parents is satisfactory but a significant number of parents have some concerns. Most parents are happy that their children like coming to school and are pleased with their progress. They are also appreciative of the school's expectations that children will work hard and do their best. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire, however, pointed strongly to some other areas where parents would like to see improvements. These include more information on their children's progress, the school working more closely with parents, a greater consistency in the setting and marking of homework and the increased provision of activities outside of lessons. The inspection finds that on most of these issues the school has made a good start and therefore does not generally share their views. One parent at the parents' meeting believed that the school had rightly concentrated on getting those aspects, such as teaching and the curriculum right, before setting up many clubs and other activities. She felt that these were developing but agreed that in future she would like to see more. Another parent disagreed and felt that even the youngest pupils should already be provided with a variety of out of lesson activities. The school is dealing with the needs of the many new parents joining the school but at times has encountered various, and at times conflicting views and opinions and this has caused some dissatisfaction. The school is looking at appropriate ways of ensuring that all parents can feel welcome and well informed.
44. Some parents help in the classrooms and assist with other school-based tasks. A group of parents calling themselves the 'Busy Bees' arrange some displays around the school. This not only provides stimulating displays but is helpful to pupils and staff. The school is well supported by an active and growing Friends' Association. The association holds various fund raising activities and has made valuable donations to the school. Contributions have included commemorative medals for each child when the school opened, a children's entertainer at school parties, books for leavers and a video camera. It is planned that future donations will help towards the purchase of portable staging. Through such events as family events the Association also provide occasions for parents, children and staff to meet socially.
45. The school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language. They are invited to meet with the teachers and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children. Suggestions are given to parents by the school staff about support that can be given at home to extend the work being done in school and parents are supportive of the work done at school.

46. The quality of the information provided to parents is good. The pupils' annual reports enable parents to see the progress of their children over the year and at the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed their appreciation of the reports. In the pupils' annual reports religious education is combined with Personal, Social and Health Education and not as a separate subject, sometimes resulting in religious education not being reported upon. Other than this the reports comply with the statutory requirements. The school prospectus meets all requirements, as does the governors' annual report to parents and both publications are informative and well presented.
47. The termly parents' evenings are held for the parents to discuss their children's progress with the class teachers and the targets for improvement that have been set. The school holds these meetings at different times to enable as many parents as possible to attend. Newsletters advise parents of school events such as forthcoming visits and classroom arrangements. The newsletters are also available on an external notice board for a short time. Already, in response to the parents' requests, information on future topics to be covered has been tried in a number of ways. However, different parents want different ways of being kept informed and the school is considering adopting both systems it has tried so far by sending out a class newsletter and making it available on the respective classroom windows. Information booklets were sent to parents in September explaining the two Key Stages and the national testing procedures. Information provided by the local education authority and the Basic Skills Agency was also sent. All pupils have reading diaries in which the progress of their reading can be recorded and the diaries also form a useful means of communication between school and parents. Although the diaries are used well for younger children the use of them to record the progress of older pupils is less consistent. From the pre-inspection meeting for parents and from the replies to the parents' questionnaire it is evident that parents take a keen interest in their children's work at school and are supportive of their children's learning. It is also apparent, however, that a significant number of parents say they wish to be involved further and that this will require a strengthening of the school's partnership with parents.

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

48. The headteacher, with good support from the staff with management responsibilities and governors, has made a good start in establishing the school as efficient and effective. The staff work well together as a team. The school has put in place clear aims that are already well reflected in its work and shared by all. The headteacher has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, including the quality of teaching. The subject co-ordinators have been involved in this process and have produced action plans to set out the future developments needed in their subjects. The procedures in English and mathematics are established and are beginning to help the school to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate targets for improvement. The procedures for science and other subjects are not yet in place but are being planned for. There have been a number of concerns from parents about the way in which the problems they raise are being dealt with. Whilst the inspection findings do not support most of these (see the section on the partnership with parents), it is vital that the headteacher, senior staff and governors consider ways to achieve the strengthening of the partnership with the parents.
49. The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher. They are rapidly improving their knowledge of how well the school is achieving and have appropriate procedures in place to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. The headteacher and governors use the results of the monitoring to set clear targets for development. The chair of the governors meets with the headteacher regularly and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs visits the school and keeps herself well informed. Other governors work hard to support the school and are putting in place regular visits to observe the school working. The governing body is establishing the means for appraising the work of the headteacher and has set performance targets for the headteacher. The procedures for setting targets for teachers are well under way.
50. The headteacher and governors have worked hard and efficiently in their use and deployment of resources. This includes the use of specific grants. In their strategic planning, the governors have sought to apply the principles of best value when buying resources and services. The school

development plan is detailed and beginning to be a useful tool. The priorities and the means of achieving them are appropriate and they are clear about raising standards and developing effective performance management. The two school administrative assistants carry out the day-to-day administration very well and very good use is made of new technology. Levels of teaching staff are good and number of learning support assistants is high. There is effective induction of teachers new to the school and for those who are newly qualified.

51. The subject managers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hard working. They have put in place well-developed and useful policies and schemes of work. They provide much valued informal support and guidance for colleagues and monitor the teachers' planning. However, they have as yet had few opportunities to evaluate pupils' progress, for instance, by scrutinising the pupils' workbooks and discussing the work with the pupils.
52. The special educational needs co-ordinator is newly appointed; he is released for half a day a week to carry out his role. He has attended training and has contributed an action plan to the school's development plan. The plan outlines the development of his role and the school's overall approach to review procedures and documentation for the pupils with special educational needs. All members of staff are aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for the pupils with special educational needs and parents know who are their main points of contact in the school. Teaching and support-staff work closely with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator and the provision for special educational needs is integrated into teachers' planning. The governing body is supportive of, and has a good over view of the work done by the school with the pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language.
53. The school is well resourced for teaching literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. It is well equipped with a good range of new, high quality educational resources to support the whole curriculum. In all subjects, resources are still in the process of being developed and improved as needs are identified and as the number of children grows. Overall, the learning resources are well stored and cared for, although the school is fast running out of suitable storage space.
54. The school building is new and was opened in September 1999. Although the building has received numerous architectural awards and the design is considered to be successful by governors, staff and parents there is already a problem of space due to the rapid growth of the school. The school was built to accommodate 180 children in six classrooms but to cater for the rapid expansion a study is now taking place on the feasibility of doubling the capacity. A double demountable classroom has already being installed to ease the situation. The library area is small and due to its shape has limited space for bookshelves. Classrooms are of a good size and very suitable for all ages within the school. They are bright and airy and make very good learning environments. The whole school is very well maintained and kept clean by a dedicated site manager. There is a large and pleasant hall with a bamboo floor that is particularly suitable for physical education. The rooms for food technology and information and communication technology are very good. The pupils appreciate the new school and they take a pride in it.
55. A number of outstanding problems are being investigated, such as the playing field where the surface is stony and unusable, and a playground that is inaccessible at times due to flooding. The playground for Key Stages 1 and 2 children is small but satisfactory but it has limited provision for shade in hot weather. The separate playground for the youngest children is good. There is a toilet for the disabled and with some small adaptations the school could accommodate disabled pupils. In general the accommodation is good in meeting the needs of the curriculum but the school cannot use the playing field in its present condition.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

1. The headteacher, governors and teaching staff should:

- Improve the standards in handwriting and spelling.  
(paragraphs 6, 20, 42, 75-9)
- Improve the satisfactory standards in science to match those in English and mathematics.  
(paragraphs 42, 85-89)
- Strengthen further the partnership with parents.  
(paragraphs 43-47)

### **Other minor issues**

- Provide sufficient time at the end of lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to draw together what pupils have learnt.  
(paragraphs 18, 21, 79, 83)
- Ensure pupils' annual reports include religious education.  
(paragraph 46)
- Improve the quality of pupils' recorded work in history and geography.  
(paragraph 102)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

48

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15%	50%	35%	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**

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	168
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

#### **English as an additional language**

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
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#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	93
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.9%
National comparative data	5.2%

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
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	7	5	12

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	58	58	67
	National	84	85	90

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	58	67	75
	National	84	88	88

### ***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	2	5	7

Insufficient pupils took the tests to include the figures.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	132
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	22.5

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	143 hours

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

The current year is the first full financial year and therefore no figures are available.

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

168

Number of questionnaires returned

89

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	46	6	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	33	47	10	3	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	61	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	56	15	8	3
The teaching is good.	30	51	15	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	41	30	8	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	37	7	10	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	48	3	3	1
The school works closely with parents.	25	42	20	8	5
The school is well led and managed.	25	45	10	11	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	55	10	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	1	33	33	26	6

**Other issues raised by parents**

1. The parents at the meeting voiced concerns over the rapid rise in the number of pupils requiring two additional classrooms to be erected within 18 months of the school opening with many of the new houses not yet complete.
2. They questioned:
  - Why only six classrooms were built when there are seven years in the school?
  - Why is the field not yet ready for use?



## **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**

56. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. Two part-time teachers teach the class. The school admits all the children into its reception class at the beginning of the school year in line with the local authority's admission policy. At the time of the inspection, 19 children were full-time and 11 children attended in the mornings only and will start full-time in the summer term. A baseline assessment test was completed within the first few weeks of the children entering the reception class. Results show that standards of attainment on entry overall are in line with those normally found for children of their age. The children make good progress. By the end of the reception year, the majority will achieve or exceed the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals that are suggested for children by the end of the Foundation Stage.
57. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good overall. The reception teachers provide a very secure and caring environment with daily routines firmly established. The good range of stimulating activities give relevance to children's learning, and are comprehensively planned to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The children demonstrate an enthusiasm to learn, showing interest and enjoyment in their work. The teachers use the results of the baseline assessments effectively to provide suitable work for the children, which relates closely to their ages and differing abilities. There are good procedures for monitoring the children's progress over time. Systems for tracking the children's progress on a daily basis are developing. The management of the children is very good, resulting in very good behaviour and a positive learning ethos. Parental involvement is actively encouraged, and parents are kept well informed about children's progress.

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

58. The children develop their personal skills well. They have good opportunities to listen carefully to their teachers and each other, and they continue to make good progress. The children are encouraged to talk about their experiences in class discussion times. Most children are confident speakers and many enjoy addressing the class. They are well motivated to learn, settling enthusiastically to tasks and concentrating very well for sustained periods. The very good relationships promote an atmosphere in which the children can flourish. The teachers and learning assistants provide very good role models for social relationships. The children co-operate very well and are able to organise their activities. This was effectively demonstrated in the role play area set out as "Ward 10" of a hospital when a group of children organised themselves into different roles related to a hospital; they took turns to check a 'patient', discussions what was wrong and "How to make him better".
59. The teachers have high expectations of the children's behaviour and encourage the children to care for each other. They have structured the activities so that the children can make independent choices after each adult-led and focused session. The children independently choose equipment from suitably labelled areas, and they all tidy away at the end of each session. The teachers place great emphasis on developing the children's self-esteem and social awareness. The children's contributions are valued, and all take turns to be the classroom helpers. This promotes good attitudes to learning.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

60. The children develop their speaking and listening skills effectively. Their ability to speak clearly and converse in a range of situations is very good. Through the provision of the well-established daily literacy lesson together, with a wide range of activities that support the development of language and literacy, the children continue to make good progress. Many children now recognise and name the letters of the alphabet, most are beginning to spell words by sounding out letters. The children learn to form letters correctly in the writing area. Older children are able to make their own books when they write about "Little Red Riding Hood" or the sequence of events that led to "Jack and Jill tumbling down the hill". Sand, dough and tracing are used appropriately to reinforce correct letter formation. For example, a group of children enjoyed making letter shapes using coloured plasticine, recognising

each letter and talking about words that begin with each letter. The children listen carefully, follow instructions well and continue to develop a wide vocabulary. They speak with confidence in a variety of situations, and are developing good expression in class reading sessions as, for example, when sharing the 'Big Book' and reading together with the teacher. Most children have made a good start to early reading. They recognise many words, and use a range of strategies, such as phonics and picture clues. For example, they are beginning to recognise rhyming words when reading aloud the nursery rhyme "Jack and Jill". They follow the sequence of the rhyme, recognising some words on the page of the book as the teacher points out similar sounds and rhymes. As a result, most will achieve, and some will exceed the Early Learning Goal for reading.

61. A strength of the good teaching in this aspect is the level of enthusiasm of the reception teachers and learning assistants, and the good range of strategies used to maintain the children's interest. For example, the teacher effectively uses words in the class *Big Book* to ask questions about the likely outcomes in the story, and the children are challenged to spell some words. Learning is fun, so that all concentrate for sustained periods of time. The well-chosen activities, pitched at the right level, enable all children to make progress in their learning. They settle to work quickly and persevere with the task. There is a good balance of self-chosen and directed activities and the children make good use of equipment, including the computer, to reinforce their knowledge of words and sentences. The children enjoyed looking at an arrangement of objects that the teacher took out of the "mystery box". They matched pairs of objects that sounded the same, for example, each object was placed next to a card with a word that helped the children to label each object. They quickly recognised that some words had the same initial letter sound, such as 'car' and 'cat'. These were key words that were also included in a nursery rhyme. Good use is made of new technology, for example computers and listening tapes, to help the children listen to stories, poems and nursery rhymes. In this way they are experiencing a broad range of literature and language, enabling them to improve their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

### **Mathematical development**

62. The teaching of mathematics is good, and the children make good progress. Most children recognise numbers to at least 10, and count accurately to 50. High achieving children count and recognise numbers to 100, and are beginning to use addition and subtraction symbols. The children use a range of mathematical terms with which to describe their work. For instance, they understand, *take away*, *more* and *less*. They distinguish between boxes that are *heavy* and *light*. They have constructed class pictograms that chart colour of eyes, and the types of houses they live in. They recognise simple shapes such as *triangle* and *circle*.
63. The teachers have established effective routines for numeracy lessons, which result in the children knowing what is expected, and time is used well. The daily numeracy lesson effectively enables the children to practise whole class counting and to develop mathematical language and the children are well supported when working on individual activities. For example, while younger children understand the concept of taking away, they require individual help to count accurately and to record their work. Most children can form numerals correctly. The teaching is well organised and planned so that the children develop their understanding of the value of numbers and their place on a number line. For example, using numbers to 20 arranged on a 'washing line', the teacher asked the children to close their eyes while she re-arranged two numbers. The children opened their eyes and could identify the errors by placing the numbers in the correct order. A good technique was also used to help the children use mathematical language. Three different sized and coloured boxes were set out in front of the children. The whole class guessed how many toy vehicles could fit into each box, starting with the largest box. Before counting toys into a smaller box the teacher would ask the children to guess what 'size' of number is it likely to be. In this way the children developed a good understanding of the relative value of numbers as 'smaller' or 'larger'.

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

64. The children gain a good understanding of the world around them through play and discussion. They can name a range of materials such as, *wood*, *brick* and *concrete*, which they have observed on their

walks around the school. Through the adventures of 'Jack and Jill' and the pictures and stories they have produced about 'The big bad wolf', they identify a range of materials when painting, making and role-playing. They categorise materials into rough and smooth textures. The children show a good degree of confidence when using the class computers. They use the mouse with good control and know when to use the space bar and arrow keys. Through well-organised activities in the sand and water trays, the children are learning to feel and experience the difference between wet and dry sand. They respond to music and sounds on a compact disc player by choosing instruments that are likely to produce a similar sound, discussing the different characteristics of the sound and how it is made.

65. The teachers provide a good range of carefully planned activities through which the children effectively learn more about their world. This enables the children to make good progress, and most will achieve, and many will exceed the Early Learning Goal in this area of learning. The good, first hand opportunities together with the effective connections made between the areas of learning, consolidate the children's learning. For example, in one lesson, the children used construction equipment to make 'diggers' representing the construction work taking place near to the school. In the sand tray, a group of children discussed the 'hill' they made, representing the one that 'Jack and Jill' fell down. The structured use of computers to support and reinforce the children's work in literacy and numeracy enables them to make good progress towards the early stages of the information and communication technology curriculum.

### **Physical development**

66. By the time they leave the reception class, most children will exceed the Early Learning Goal for this aspect of learning. In physical education lessons, the children control and move their bodies well, changing shapes and using in different directions. Good use is made of language to evoke discussion about shapes and movements, for example, the teacher used imaginative language when using different ways to describe "beans". The children responded by changing their movements when prompted with words like "jumping bean", "runner bean", "broad bean" and so on. They are able to dodge, balance and use space well. They are very attentive, watching others, and adapting their work accordingly. The children learn to use a range of tools. They hold pencils and paintbrushes correctly and many colour and draw with a good degree of accuracy and control. They use glue and scissors appropriately. They demonstrate good hand-eye co-ordination when joining sections of construction kits as when making a *tiny house* for a *teddy*.
67. Good teaching ensures that the children make good progress in their physical development. In the physical education lesson observed, the teacher provided challenging activities that interested the children and inspired them to try harder. She gave good demonstrations, which enabled the children to complete the activity successfully; for example, by showing how well a child interpreted the shape and movement of a "jumping bean". The well-planned activities enable the children to effectively develop control over a range of materials such as clay and paint. All activities have a common thread and relate to language and mathematics. For example, the story of "Robin Hood" led by a parent, involved the children in cutting out sentences and arranging them into chronological order. During painting activities, the children are well supported by learning assistants, who teach them how to hold brushes and crayons correctly, improving their fine motor control.

### **Creative development**

68. The children know the names of colours. They know how to mix paints to make new colours. They successfully use a range of materials to make pictures, models, and take individual decisions about the type of decoration to use. They sing songs and nursery rhymes with enthusiasm, developing appropriate pitch and pace. They play creatively in role-play situations. The children's completed artwork shows that they have taken care with materials such as glue and paint, and have persevered to complete the work.
69. The teaching is good and it provides good opportunities for the children to reinforce their language and observational skills. For example, drawing and painting teddies, and some good observational drawing where one group observed a 'Teddy bear' placed inside a 'Lego' construction representing a chair, then sketching what they see. The teaching encourages parents to help in the reception class

with these activities, and provides them with comprehensive advice so that the children receive effective support and make good progress. Good music playing and an appreciation of musical instruments is also developed and encouraged during self-chosen activities which are organised so that the children can listen to music and songs on tape or compact disc and then choose a musical instrument to accompany the music.

## ENGLISH

70. Standards in English are above those expected for 11 year olds and are in line with those expected for 7 year olds.
71. The children in the reception class begin school with good speaking and listening skills. Their baseline test results show that they start school with reading and writing standards that are broadly in line with those expected for children under five. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their learning needs and prior attainment. Less than two per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language and they are well supported by the school staff who provide additional language work, reading and writing activities for them and consequently are making appropriate progress.
72. In the rest of the school, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed and standards are higher than those expected of seven and 11-year-olds. The teachers provide many ways for the pupils to develop spoken language. In Years 1, the pupils enjoy reading unfamiliar words, such as 'Vikings', when reading aloud from a book about "Viking adventures". In Year 2, the challenge of finding new words when searching through dictionaries and thesauri evokes good discussion about words and phrases that can be used to describe an object, animal or artefact. In Year 3, the pupils were able to explain clearly how they were going to set out their story plan when talking about traditional stories. In both key stages, the teachers encourage the pupils to respond to questions in complete sentences. Although the concluding part of many of the literacy lessons is often cut short because too much time is spent on the introductions, they provide opportunities for the pupils to present their work to the class and to express opinions. In a very good Year 5 lesson, the pupils enjoyed listening to their teacher recite a poem in 'rapping rhyme' and then attempted this for themselves. By the age of 11 most pupils speak clearly and confidently to an audience. This was seen in a very good Year 5 and 6 writing lesson when the pupils discussed how to portray a character in 'Fairy Stories'. The pupils in both Years 5 and 6 show increasing confidence when speaking to an audience, presenting their ideas and listening to others in a group. Some pupils, especially those identified as having special educational needs, are less secure in large groups. Although they are well supported by learning assistants, who are usually deployed so that they sit with a group of pupils, special educational needs pupils are less inclined to offer ideas or participate in class discussions.
73. By the age of seven, the pupils' reading skills are in line with the standards expected for their age and they are making good progress given that many of them have started school at different stages during the year, coming from other areas and schools. A small number of higher attaining pupils are reading above the expected levels with confidence and enjoyment. They can find information in simple reference books, using the contents and index pages. The pupils of average and lower attainment are reading books that present them with appropriate challenge. They recognise most words in the text and use the sounds of letters to attempt unfamiliar words. Infant pupils are developing an enjoyment of reading and like to talk about the characters and plot. The pupils continue to make good progress in the junior classes and almost all pupils in Year 6 have reading skills that are higher than the standards expected, with a small number of pupils achieving very high standards. The pupils read a variety of texts and choose books appropriate for their level of competence, although Year 3 pupils are unable to use a simple non-fiction catalogue system to find references. Year 6 pupils are reading with expression and understanding, and can explain why the author uses figurative language, such as an extract from Gerald Durrell's "The World in a Wall", where he uses descriptions such as that of a black scorpion, "looking as though he were made of chocolate". Average and lower attaining pupils are also able to read beyond the text to find meaning. One Year 5 pupil was able to talk about the different stories in an anthology of stories and is reading well above the standard for her age. Most

pupils are able to find information from a range of sources, including using computers to search the Internet and CD ROMs to find information, text or illustrations. As a result, they are able to pick out and summarise main information points.

74. Standards in writing are broadly in line with those expected and the pupils are achieving well because they experience a range of writing styles which includes poetry, fantasy genres, factual accounts and descriptive writing. However, there are some weaknesses in pupils' spelling and handwriting. Spelling and handwriting styles vary across the school, demonstrating that the school has not yet established a common approach to handwriting and spelling. The pupils are beginning to write in a variety of styles and are becoming more adventurous with vocabulary and writing in general but the pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate some unsatisfactory and poorly formed handwriting styles. Infant pupils are forming their letters in different ways and this is an indication of the irregular influx of pupils joining the school from other schools. However, from an early age, including the children in the reception class, a particular style of writing is not being systematically taught. Most of the children in the reception class form their letters well and show that they can print individual letters without joining them to form words. In Year 1 and 2 the teaching points out the correct way to form letters but the pupils are using a range of handwriting, some of which is irregular in size and usually printed without any letters joining. This continues in Years 3 and 4 but older pupils in Years 5 and 6 use joined style of handwriting. The contrast between the handwriting of older pupils in the junior classes and the rest of the school demonstrates a significant weakness in the way the school is establishing the teaching of handwriting. Furthermore, the teachers are also demonstrating their own writing in different ways when they use white boards or when displaying and labelling work on walls. Most of the writing seen by the pupils is printed without any specific reference to joining letters. Although handwriting is taught regularly, many pupils do not transfer these skills to other writing tasks.
75. In both the infant and junior classes, most pupils are using writing well for a range of purposes and across many subjects. The content of writing includes stories, note-taking, narrative and play-scripts. Higher attaining pupils are developing a good understanding of speech marks and narrative in their writing. Their use of capital letters and full stops is usually correct and the use of commas and exclamation is usually accurate. By the age of 11, the pupils are able to write for different audiences and in a wide range of styles, such as formal letters, newspaper reports and poetry. Their work shows the development of more complex sentence structures and the spelling of more complex words. However, there are inconsistencies in the standard of spelling across the school. The pupils of all abilities are making spelling mistakes signifying some lapses in the way that spelling rules are taught across the school. Higher attaining pupils are more adventurous in their vocabulary and style. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have written imaginative poetry and good accounts of stories they have read. Throughout the school the pupils have the opportunities to plan, redraft and refine their own work.
76. The positive relationships established by the teachers enable the pupils to develop good attitudes to their learning and almost all pupils behave well in lessons. Most pupils are eager to learn and keen to share their ideas. The pupils generally work well independently or in groups. A group of Year 5 pupils listened carefully to each other when reciting their favourite poems. Infant and younger junior pupils show less confidence and independence in their strategies for spelling and do not correct spelling errors or use dictionaries often enough.
77. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Two lessons were satisfactory and three were good. One very good writing lesson was also seen in Years 5 and 6. The teachers make sure the pupils know what they are expected to learn. In the most effective lesson seen they were encouraged to read a "Fairy Tale" written by one of the pupils. This was displayed as an overhead projection and the pupils corrected the text searching for different ways of describing words and phrases. The pupils then de-constructed their own writing and this provided them with opportunities to share ideas and improve their work. In all literacy lessons tasks are planned to take account of the pupils' prior attainment and to present challenge, which results in the pupils making an effort to learn. The teachers use effective questioning techniques to develop the pupils' understanding of the text when reading aloud or as a group. The learning support assistants are used well to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as a second language. This ensures that their progress matches that of other pupils. The teachers mark work regularly and there are useful

comments in the pupils' books on how to improve work but spelling errors are not always corrected or pointed out. The teaching in both the infant and junior classes is well planned with good strategies in place to help the pupils read words and sound out letters. This is having a positive effect on reading standards, which are above those expected. In Year 2, when reading and matching definitions during dictionary work, the pupils were being constantly challenged to think for themselves about the meaning, making sure that their responses were supported by references to the dictionary. In Year 5, the feedback from the writing task, involving evaluation of different poems, encouraged the pupils to think of ways of explaining their ideas and refining their writing. Year 6 pupils made good progress interrogating their own fantasy stories, improving their writing as a result and developing an understanding of how to add descriptors and adjectives in order to make the writing more interesting for the reader. Although the school has identified handwriting and spelling as areas for improvement there is still some way to go before all pupils are spelling accurately and writing clearly, especially infant and younger junior pupils. Strategies for developing the pupils' spelling are not consistently taught; there are inconsistencies, for example, in the identification of spelling errors and in the pupils' response to them.

78. The school has responded well to the National Literacy Strategy and this is helping to raise attainment. However, appropriate time at the end of the lessons needs to be given to drawing together what the pupils have learnt. Computers are used extensively for drafting and re-drafting, their use being encouraged to improve word processing skills and combining text and pictures. The management of English is good. The analysis of test results and the pupils' work has identified weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting and spelling. The assessment and recording of attainment and progress are good. Since September 2000 the pupils have been set targets for improvement in English and these are discussed with the teacher and shared with parents. The quality and quantity of books and resources in the school are good and reflect the interests of all pupils and the cultural diversity of society. The range of books and resources to support the teaching of literacy is good and is proving effective in promoting learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. Standards in mathematics are above those expected for 11 year olds and are in line with those expected for 7 year olds. The pupils in both key stages make good progress. Boys and girls attain similar standards and the pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language are well supported and make good progress.
80. By the age of seven, the pupils count sets of counters accurately and put them into equal sets. They explain why their answers are correct. They solve simple multiplication problems. They have clear knowledge of place value to 100 but most have difficulty beyond this. The pupils use their knowledge that subtraction is the inverse of addition to solve number problems. Lower attaining pupils have begun to understand place value and to order numbers. They add and subtract numbers to 10. By the age of 11, the pupils can discuss and devise strategies for solving more complex number problems. They multiply whole numbers to 1000 and change improper fractions into mixed numbers. They add and subtract negative numbers. Lower attaining pupils create line graphs and find the area of square and triangular shapes. They record their work effectively and check their results and are beginning to estimate answers.
81. The quality of teaching is good overall and this ensures that the pupils make good progress. In most lessons, the teachers demonstrate confident and secure subject knowledge. They extend the pupils' understanding of the work and ensure that pupils of differing abilities are fully involved in the work. In a small number of lessons, some of the work was not explained sufficiently clearly and was not appropriate to the needs of the more able pupils and therefore the pupils did not make sufficient progress in those aspects of the work. In the good lessons, the pupils make most progress where the teacher encourages them to use accurate and appropriate mathematical language. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, a group of pupils were challenged through effective questioning to describe how they found the inverse of an operation to help solve a problem. The pupils in a Year 4 class were given good opportunities to explain the strategies they were using when partitioning and multiplying numbers. In these lessons the teachers give good opportunities at the end of the lesson to ensure that

the pupils have understood the main ideas and to reinforce the mathematical vocabulary. They also use this well to assess the pupils' progress and understanding. In all lessons, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils were well supported by the teachers and learning support assistants. Work is regularly assessed and the results of these tests are analysed to set suitable individual and class targets.

82. The school has responded well to the National Numeracy Strategy and this is helping to raise attainment. However, in a few lessons the teachers are not providing sufficient time at the end of the lessons to draw together what the pupils have learnt through effective questioning. The teachers' weekly planning clearly identifies what is to be learnt, although in a few lessons in Key Stage 2 the objectives could have been shared more fully with the pupils.
83. The school has made a good start in establishing an appropriate curriculum. The co-ordinator has produced a clear action plan identifying the areas for development and is supporting other staff. The assessment and recording of attainment and progress are good. Since September 2000 pupils have been set targets for improvement in mathematics and these are discussed with the teacher and shared with parents. The quality and quantity of resources in the school are good and they are making a good start in using information and communication technology.

## SCIENCE

84. By the end of both key stages, the pupils' attainment in science is in line with national expectations. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. Most of the pupils enter Year 1 with attainment that is in line with national expectations, however many pupils have joined the school at different points and with different experiences of science. The school has begun to assess the pupils' skills in scientific enquiry, but there is little evidence of assessment of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific topics. The school has arranged the timetable so that classes have two science sessions each week, on occasions this leads to a fragmentation of learning as often the theoretical written work is done in the first lesson with practical experiments being carried out in the second lesson. In addition, there is an imbalance in the number of science lessons some classes have had, and consequently, in the amount of work covered. The pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language are well supported and integrated fully into the lessons and they make good progress.
85. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have some understanding of life processes and living things, for example they know the life cycle of an apple tree. When they study how foods change when they are cooked, such as bread, eggs, and margarine, they record their observations about the changes that take place with good attention to detail. The pupils demonstrate that they understand how to use a range of strategies to identify and classify the properties of materials. They learn to use scientific vocabulary correctly and when they carry out an investigation into the speed at which ice melts, they can make sensible predictions as to what might happen. In a lesson on sound, the pupils identify long and short sounds, and high and low notes using percussion instruments. They place them in the correct categories using a Carroll diagram and are able to suggest reasons why none of the instruments produce short high sounds. The pupils have a good knowledge of the different functions of electrical appliances. They group them according to whether they light up, heat up, produce sounds, or move. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of simple circuits in their written explanations and labelled drawings. Overall, the pupils present the data they collect carefully and they are beginning to draw conclusions from what they observe and record.
86. By the age of eleven, the pupils develop a range of strategies for conducting scientific enquiries. They are aware of how to plan their experimental work and obtain evidence by making appropriate observations and measurements. They have a good understanding of how to construct fair tests. The more able pupils understand the importance of considering the outcomes in terms of their original predictions. The pupils have a good knowledge of electrical circuits, and they know that some materials are conductors and others are insulators. They carry out experiments to test the strength of magnets and they know how magnets can be used in practical situations. They do work on features of healthy eating and know that exercise raises the pulse rate. When the older pupils measure a shadow

to illustrate the Earth's movement, they are able to predict the next set of results with some accuracy. When discovering how to separate solids from liquids by filtration they plan the investigation, and select appropriate equipment and resources to help carry out the test. They make good use of scientific terms and vocabulary, and a few pupils know how to use results in order to draw conclusions and suggest explanations. They can present their data in a range of useful forms such as tables, graphs, pictures and diagrams

87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teachers are using national guidelines for their scheme of work and the teachers' medium and short term planning is clear and provides for continuity and progression in learning scientific skills. In all of the lessons seen, the teachers demonstrated that they have good subject knowledge; they use scientific vocabulary correctly and expect the pupils to think scientifically. The pupils are well managed and good use is made of learning support assistants to enable all the pupils to have access to the curriculum. The teaching helps the pupils to develop positive attitudes to their work. They persevere and concentrate hard on the tasks. They share equipment well and are very willing to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. However, the planning does not always identify work that is matched to all the pupils' needs and this means that some pupils are not achieving as well as they could. There is a lack of regular and informative assessment of the pupils' knowledge and understanding which means that the work is not always challenging enough for some of the more able pupils. In addition, the school is having to contend that some pupils have already covered topics in their previous schools whilst others have not, and it has not yet fully addressed this issue.
88. The co-ordinator for science is committed to raising standards in science and has contributed an action plan to the school's development plan which outlines how she intends to do this. It includes plans to monitor and evaluate the present scheme of work and identifies the need to establish how the school will assess pupils' work in order to inform future planning. The school has been built with environmental issues in mind and this is being well used to support the work in the classrooms. The resources for teaching science are good, they are matched to the topics to be studied and are well stored and cared for. The school has enhanced the curricular opportunities for the pupils by arranging a visit to the Science Museum and it intends to promote activities with a scientific focus during the National Science Week.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. By the end of both key stages, the pupils attain the standards expected by the ages of seven and eleven. The pupil all have access to the art curriculum, the teaching values the pupils' work and the pupils achieve well. The work seen in lessons, and the work exhibited around the school, is colourful, interesting and well displayed. Work in art is often related to the topics being studied in other subjects, such as English, geography, history and religious education and this provides the pupils with relevant contexts for their artwork. However, the present scheme of work, whilst providing for progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of skills and techniques limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their own ideas and explore media using their own imagination.
90. At Key Stage 1, the pupils mix colours using a variety of media. When painting they successfully blend new shades. This was seen where the pupils painted a background in graded shades of blue to contrast cut-out fish in the opposite shade graduation. They use chalk and pastels to produce pictures on black paper. The pupils demonstrate good observational skills that enable them to paint lively self-portraits. The Year 1 pupils contribute to a class collage depicting the Chinese New Year and illustrate their ideas on school rules with relevant drawings. In Key Stage 2, the pupils develop their skills for recording ideas in more detail. They have experience of trying a range of media including paints, pastels, crayons, pencils, collage and clay and they have opportunities to use a good range of techniques and art forms such as collage, modelling, printing, sketching, and painting. The pupils respond well to the works of famous artists and are able to express their opinions and feelings as they talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about different shapes, shading and drawing techniques used by the artists they study. For example, the pupils discuss the contrast in styles between a Picasso still life and a similar subject painted by Louis Meledez. They show a mature understanding of the effects



of different colours and shapes and are able to express and explain their preferences. The oldest pupils produce work of a good standard as they design, make and decorate forms of headgear – some inspired by their visit to Covent Garden to the Costume Museum and to see a performance of *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Throughout the school the pupils work with enthusiasm, concentration and confidence on their projects. They are able to evaluate their work and say how they could improve or change it.

91. The teaching is good overall. The teachers plan carefully to ensure that the pupils make progress in gaining skills and understanding when using different media. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and provide the pupils with a good range of media and art forms. They prepare materials and other resources well and the lessons are well managed and organised. The teachers respond sensitively to the pupils' work and opinions, and show this by displaying work well in classrooms and corridors. The pupils work carefully, willingly try new techniques, and use different materials to achieve the effects they have in mind.
92. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how art should develop in the school and has an action plan that includes monitoring and evaluating the present scheme of work in the near future. The resources for art are adequate and continue to be developed. In addition to the pupils' work on display, pictures and artefacts from different cultures and traditions further enhance the environment. During the inspection a delightful display on the theme of 'Spring' was created by parent volunteers in the triangular open area. The pupils watched its development with interest and many made positive comments about the display. Art is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development because it provides them with opportunities to study art from different cultures and periods, and offers them a means of responding artistically to topics being studied in a range of subjects.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected for pupils' aged seven and 11. The teachers plan their lessons using the recommended national scheme of work for design and technology and this has helped this new school to quickly establish an effective curriculum. As a result, the teachers prepare lessons that enable the pupils to evaluate simple designs, exploring ideas and improving finished products. Design and technology is also linked well to other subjects and this has a positive effect on the pupils' learning adding relevance to what they learn.
94. In Year 1, the pupils have studied playground structures by looking at a 'Playground', observing the different shapes and structures of climbing frames, roundabouts, swings and slides. They have investigated the way that these work and have used pipe cleaners, card, paper and glue to produce a good range of models representing these structures. In Year 2, and as part of their science work, the pupils have tasted and compared different foods and explored the different ways that food is prepared, for example, grating cheese or squeezing fruit juice. In Year 3, the pupils have studied pneumatic systems to design and make moving monsters. They were observed discussing how best to make different parts of their monster and how to make it move using plastic bottles, syringes and plastic tubing to produce the desired effect. The pupils have gained a good understanding of hinge mechanisms by looking at examples of moving models and are planning to apply this to their own 'monsters'.
95. The pupils make good progress because the work is planned so that topics and skills are re-visited regularly. The investigation of simple pneumatics to make models move builds on the work previously done on structures and mechanical movement. This is extended further when the pupils reach Year 5 where they explore other mechanisms to produce moving models, for example pop up toys that convert rotary movement to linear movement. In Year 6 the pupils evaluate the cooking process in food technology and this has also enabled them to explore foods from cultures other than their own.
96. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall, with one good lesson. The work produced and the well-planned curriculum suggests that the teaching is effective. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has ensured that a scheme of work is used to help teachers plan their lessons. This is also

helping the pupils' learning as there is a common thread in most topics that are linked to the work done in other subjects.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

97. Standards in both subjects are in line with expectations for both 7 and 11 year olds and the pupils make satisfactory progress. During the inspection three geography and four history lessons was observed. The standards seen in the lessons show improvement, as they are higher than those seen in the pupils' previous work. The school is aware that whilst the standards are improving they are not yet high enough for many pupils and that there is a need to consolidate the varied geographical and historical experiences encountered at their previous schools.
98. In geography, Year 3 pupils take the role of travel agents and they are beginning to show an awareness of other places used as holiday destinations. However, their knowledge and use of the atlases and other information books is limited. Year 4 pupils have a better understanding of using atlases when they research the weather conditions around the world. They understand that different places will have different weather conditions at different times of the year. One pupil discussed with good understanding the conditions of the rain forests in Malaysia. In Year 6, the pupils discuss the changes that are taking place in their locality and the effects this has upon the environment.
99. In history, Year 1 pupils explore a variety of artefacts, and in pictures, from early in the previous century. They recognise and discuss, both in a class discussion and in their small groups, the differences between the past and present. They enjoy finding out what the objects are and give good ideas as to what they thought the objects were used for.
100. In Year 2, the pupils get involved in sequencing sentences to tell the story of the Great Fire of London using Samuel Pepy's Diaries for 1666. Their group discussions show good understanding of the story, which has already been shared with them by the teacher. They are beginning to show awareness of why events happened as they did in the past. In Key Stage 2, the Year 4 pupils are researching life in Ancient Egypt through a number of Internet sites and other computer programs. They are confident in the use of the computers. They are beginning to ask appropriate historical questions and to focus their research to find the answers they need. Year 6 pupils use their knowledge, gained partly from a visit to a Victorian museum, to describe the life of children in the nineteenth century. They develop their ideas through imaginative accounts that show their clear understanding about the main differences between then and now.
101. In history, the pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of how the different periods they study relate to each other. In both subjects, the quality of the pupils' recorded work varies from class to class. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and in the best lessons they ensure that the pupils clearly understand what they have to do and what is expected of them. The pupils are keen to talk about their work, for instance, the teacher's careful questioning develops their understanding about the artefacts they are using. In the lessons seen, the tasks set were interesting and appropriate. The pupils enjoyed the tasks and worked hard to complete them within the given time. They are beginning to make good use of information and communication technology throughout the school, although this is still developing.
102. The subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable and have produced appropriate action plans for future development in their subjects. They monitor other teachers' planning and the schemes of work ensure that the planning is consistent across the classes. However, there are few opportunities to monitor and assess the pupils' work and the recording of work needs to be improved still further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

103. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected at age seven and 11. In the short time since the school opened the headteacher, governors and staff have ensured that resources are of good quality and that the computers are ready for all pupils. As a result,

all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language, are provided with good opportunities to use computers and other new technology and they are making good progress in every strand of the ICT curriculum. The co-ordinator provides good and effective teaching and support for teachers and ensures that the school's ICT room is used well to complement the work being done in classrooms. This is having a positive impact on standards because the teaching is very focused and well resourced.

104. Infant pupils make good progress using a word processing program to type in and correct or rearrange text. The pupils also make good progress using a programmable robotic device. They are learning simple programming skills to manoeuvre the device through simple pathways. Junior pupils in Year 4 were observed being taught basic turtle graphics using a program called "Logo". The tasks are more demanding, building on the pupils knowledge of simple commands and the pupils enjoy the challenge of having to type in these to control and move a turtle around the computer screen to produce letter shapes. Year 6 pupils benefit from focused teaching in the ICT room. They are being taught to produce a 'web page' to be used as part of the schools Internet work. Evidence from their previous work and experience shows that they have made good progress in all aspects of the subject. As a result, attainment is in line with that expected for their age with some good examples of word processing, graphics and a combination of desk top publishing skills that utilises the pupils' knowledge and understanding of combining and re-organising text and images. Junior pupils have produced their own simple spreadsheets, graphs and charts when investigating and interpreting data. For example, when collecting information about favourite colours, different heights of pupils and using spreadsheets to calculate simple number operations. The school is very successful in combining ICT work with the work that the pupils do across a range of subjects and topics.
105. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The school provides a balanced and effective programme of ICT and teachers have become accustomed to planning work that will enhance and extend the pupils' learning in many subjects. As a result the pupils enjoy using the ICT room to practise basic computer skills and to search the Internet or to e-mail messages to other pupils. The school has just set up a special *Intranet*, which is an internal local area network enabling parents and new pupils to find information about the school. Good use is made of the digital camera to present pictures and information about the pupils as well as displaying their previous work on walls.
106. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well organised. Resources are well matched to the needs and capabilities of the pupils as well as to the demands of the ICT curriculum. The teachers are involved in training to improve their skills. The pupils are allowed time to experiment, sometimes learning from their mistakes. The pupils are able to self-correct, edit and re-organise text, use graphics and control technology, including the use of spreadsheets and data handling programs. This broad range of experience is a reflection of the good teaching and the skilful support provided by the co-ordinator and a learning support assistant. The use of the ICT room helps to provide focused teaching with pupils sharing one computer with a partner. The school extends the use of this facility to include more research and independent investigative work by organising appropriate supervision for older pupils when they require access to the room during normal lessons. There is a thriving computer club, which is well attended after school hours every week.

## **MUSIC**

107. Standards by the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally. The pupils enjoy the music lessons, they respond well to music and are making good progress in singing, developing listening and appraisal skills and in learning, understanding and applying musical terms, such as tempo, pitch and ostinato. They are eager to get involved in singing and in instrumental activities and they remain focussed and attentive throughout the lessons. They handle musical instruments well and treat them with care and respect.
108. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils sing a range of songs, paying attention to tempo and dynamics. The youngest pupils successfully sing in two parts and the Year 2 pupils know the names of a variety of percussion instruments and how to play them. They use listening skills very effectively in dance sessions and in a science lesson they can distinguish between high and low sounds and between long and short ones by playing and listening to a range of percussion instruments. Throughout Key Stage 2,

the pupils play a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and sing a repertoire of songs. They can sustain rhythms whilst listening, playing or singing. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy singing. They sing tunefully and with expression. They know and perform a range of songs and hymns. The pupils make good use of the opportunities provided to listen to a wide range of musical styles both in lessons and in assemblies. The pupils listen carefully to recorded music and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss and appraise it.

109. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. The teachers have variable subject knowledge and the school has worked hard to extend this through implementing the national guidelines for music, together with a commercial scheme of work, in order to provide the pupils with a structured curriculum. The teaching provides the pupils with a range of well-planned experiences that enable them to make steady progress. In the lesson taught by the specialist music teacher the teaching was very good. This is because she has very good subject knowledge and enthusiastically ensures that the pupils participate in a well-planned range of activities enabling them to make good progress. The school enhances the opportunities the pupils have to participate in musical activities by making available a range of activities outside normal lessons. The school makes effective use of visiting teachers to provide weekly lessons in playing the piano, electronic keyboard, guitar, and a number of brass and wind instruments. The music co-ordinator, together with one of the learning support assistants, provides an opportunity during lunchtime for the more advanced recorder players to participate in making music together and at Christmas the choir performed successfully with a local choral society,
110. The school has a good range of traditional tuned and untuned percussion instruments available together with instruments from other cultures and musical traditions. The musical curriculum and associated events, such as the visit to Covent Garden to experience a production of *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. The pupils attain good standards and achieve well throughout the school in those aspects of physical education seen during the inspection. In the lessons observed the standards achieved were above those expected for the pupils' ages in gymnastics, games and dance. There is a swimming programme and the majority of pupils at age 11 can swim to at least the expected standard for their age in line with the requirements set out in the National Curriculum. Outdoor activities are included in the annual Year 6 residential activity trip.
112. Dance lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. In Year 1, the pupils begin to develop a simple dance sequence that links various movements as in a rainstorm. The pupils respond well to the music and think clearly about the type of movement they are making. One boy describes well the zig-zag movements he is making in the storm. Another pupil demonstrates the high jumps he makes in time to the beat of a drum. Some pupils evaluate each other's work and this is carried out in a useful and sensible manner. They achieve good standards of performance. In the Year 2 lesson, the pupils create and perform a dance based upon *The Snowman*. They describe how they feel about the dance movements. They work effectively in pairs, listening carefully to the music and creating interesting and imaginative steps. In both classes, the pupils respond well to the teachers emphasis on safety, control and quality.
113. In the Year 4 games lesson, the pupils are developing rules for a bat and ball game. They work well in groups of four, sharing ideas and trying them out. They play sensibly, mostly to the rules they have devised and modifying these as they work through them. One group decided that the hoop they were using was too small and changed it for a larger one, which proved to be better. The Year 5 pupils were finding out about the importance of warming-up and devising a warm-up session suitable for preceding a striking, throwing and catching activity. Nearly all pupils demonstrate good control and co-ordination when performing their activities. They work well in their groups to devise their techniques and ideas appropriate to the task.

114. The quality of teaching overall is good. The teaching is successful because the teachers have good subject knowledge, plan thoroughly and expect the pupils to perform to their best. The teachers provide the pupils with good opportunities to explore and develop their own skills. In the best lessons, there is emphasis upon the pupils' self-evaluation and the support pupils give each other through evaluation. All lessons begin with an effective warm-up session. The pupils understand the need for this and they take part enthusiastically. Many of the lessons involve pupils in developing their own ideas for dance sequences rules for games or specific warm-up sessions. These are a positive feature of the teaching and raise standards of performance because the pupils are involved in the development of the activities.
115. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new but brings good understanding and is planning ways to improve the subject further through a well thought out action plan. The school is still developing its programme of out-of-school activities. This programme is organised by the co-ordinator and teachers. The school is well resourced for games and the hall is large and well used. However, the field is still unusable and this limits games outdoors to working on the hard surfaces. All outdoor surfaces are well maintained and are safe areas on which to perform, but that these are liable to flooding.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. By the end of both key stages, the pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven. The pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining insight into and understanding of religious issues and the part they play in the development of individuals within different cultures and traditions. They take part confidently in discussions about ideas and feelings; they listen to each other and treat one another's opinions with respect.
117. The youngest pupils at Key Stage 1 find out about special people such as Mother Theresa and that places of worship are special. They learn how to treat other people's property, and how members of the community such as firemen help us. By the end of the key stage, they know that festivals have a special significance as they learn about Easter, Christmas and Harvest in the Christian tradition. They learn about a variety of special celebrations and they know that some have a religious meaning. They begin to have an understanding of the meaning of Remembrance Day and why the poppy is used as a symbol of the death of soldiers. In learning about the parable of the 'Prodigal Son', they think about the special feelings we have for those we love and how the father in the story was able to forgive his son because he loved him.
118. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils show an increasing knowledge of world religions. They have an understanding of the Hanukah, and its importance within the Jewish religion. They learn about festivals from religions other than Christianity, such as the Hindu festivals of Janmashtam and Pongal. The pupils have good understanding of different creation stories, for example from the Bible and the Hindu tradition. They know a range of stories from the Bible, such as the story of Abraham and of David and Goliath, together with stories of Jesus' life from the New Testament.
119. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory. The school is using a scheme of work that is carefully related to the locally agreed syllabus. This provides for the pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding of religions and enables them to consider how they can relate religious issues to their own lives. The teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan lessons thoroughly, making sure that the pupils are aware of what it is they are to learn by the end of each lesson. The teachers provide opportunities for reflection on ideas; this makes a significant contribution to pupils' religious and spiritual development. The assemblies make a sound contribution to pupils' learning.
120. The subject is well co-ordinated and there is a good range of resources to support the planned curriculum. There are interesting displays around the school, which relate to the work done in classes, such as writing and illustrations on the theme of 'Exile'. The school has made a good start in the implementation of its religious education policy and scheme of work and the subject makes a significant contribution to the personal development of pupils and to the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

