

INSPECTION REPORT

**HEATHFIELD PRIMARY & NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Basford, Nottingham

LEA area: Nottingham City

Unique reference number: 122442

Headteacher: Mr C J Farmer

Reporting inspector: Mr C Rhodes
16408

Dates of inspection: 12-15 November 2001

Inspection number: 230789

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Scotland Road Basford Nottingham
Postcode:	NG5 1JU
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Briggs
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Mr C Rhodes	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
			Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Music	How well are pupils taught?
			Equal opportunities	
11072	Ms S Elomari	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?
31575	Mr W Indian	Team inspector	History	How well is the school led and managed?
			Physical education	
			Foundation Stage	
20368	Mrs S MacIntosh	Team inspector	English	
			Geography	
			Religious education	
			English as an additional language	
28686	Mrs E Walker	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Heathfield Primary and Nursery School is in the Basford district of the City of Nottingham. There are 330 pupils aged between three and eleven on roll, which is bigger than many primary schools. There are a similar number of boys and girls in the school as a whole, but nearly double the number of boys than girls in Years 1 and 4, and twice the number of girls than boys in Years 2 and 5. Many families and pupils are under pressure and live in housing where there are high levels of social deprivation. An above average percentage of pupils are entitled to free meals. Approximately two out of every five pupils have special educational needs, usually moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, which is twice the national average. One pupil has significant and complex difficulties and additional funding has been allocated for his support. Approximately one in five pupils is from a non-white UK, European, Caribbean, African, Indian or Pakistani heritage. This is relatively high. Seventeen pupils have a first language other than English. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below nationally expected levels.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education. The quality of teaching across the school is at least satisfactory, and is better in two lessons out of every five. The standard of leadership and management is sound overall. Progress is satisfactory. Standards at the age of five are below expected levels because many children have special educational needs and a significant number find it difficult to put their thoughts into words. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make steady progress as they get older and are fully included in all the school's activities. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of eleven, although improving, remain below the national average. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school takes good care of its pupils. Pastoral leadership by senior staff is strong.
- Pupils and adults get on well together.
- Teaching is sound. Two out of every five lessons are good or even better.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- The staff who manage English, mathematics, science and assessment, and who are responsible for the different age groups within the school, are effective.
- Nearly all the behaviour is good.
- The quality of singing, especially by the choir, is outstanding.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are not active enough in their direction of the school's overall improvement.
- The allocation of teaching periods during the week, and the way that some are used, does not make the best use of the time available, especially in Years 3-6.
- The work set for different groups within a class is not always at the correct level of difficulty.
- The class work set for pupils with special educational needs does not always link to the targets in their individual education plans.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998. There has been satisfactory progress in dealing with the key issues identified in the report. Standards remain below average at the age of seven and eleven in English and mathematics, but have improved in science at the age of seven. Attendance has remained at the same level as 1998 and has not improved in line with the national trend. The curriculum for science and design and technology now meets national requirements. Reasonable progress has been made in achieving a broad and balanced curriculum, in making better use of assessment, and in developing longer term planning and the role of the subject co-ordinator. Good progress has been made in developing schemes of work. Lesson planning still does not take sufficient account of the wide range of ability found in every class. The teaching of basic information and communication technology skills [ICT] is improving. The school is in a satisfactory position to improve further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E*	E
mathematics	E	E	E*	E
science	E*	E*	E*	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
the lowest 5% nationally	E*

Levels of attainment in 2001 in English, mathematics and science were in the lowest 5% nationally and were well below average in comparison with schools containing pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the year group included an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and there were two

unavoidable staff changes during the year that affected the attainment of pupils in those classes. The school did not reach the challenging targets it had set itself. The trend over the past few years has been one of slight improvement but not as much as the overall rise in national standards. This is partly due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Staff are now becoming more skilled in analysing why pupils have not been successful in the past and in taking steps to strengthen weak areas. Although pupils' results at the age of seven were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, they were on an equal level with similar schools in reading and writing. Based on teachers' estimates, standards in science were also well below average.

The inspection judgement is that children up to the age of five make satisfactory progress, but do not reach nationally expected standards by the end of the reception year. Seven-year-olds' standards in English and mathematics are also below average but standards in science have improved and are now in line with national expectations. Eleven-year-olds' standards in English, mathematics and science are better than last year but are still below average. Standards in religious education, art and design, design and technology, physical education [PE] and music are close to expected levels at the ages of seven and eleven. Standards in geography are below. Standards in ICT and history are in line with national expectations at seven but are below at eleven. Overall attainment is very similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move each year from class to class. Despite the disappointing results in the 2001 national tests, the analysis showed that three quarters of these pupils had made satisfactory progress over four years. In many cases, it is pupils' lack of language skills and difficulties in basic communication that limits their progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Most are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well for most of the time in classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Strong and trusting relationships between adults and pupils are a particular strength of the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory despite the school's best efforts to meet its targets.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is sound overall, with two in every in every five lessons being good or better. Seven of the 55 lessons seen during the inspection were of a very high standard and pupils' learning was very good as a result. The particular strength in the better lessons is the knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching that inspires and motivates pupils. Most lesson plans are well constructed, but their effectiveness is limited when the planned work does not match the needs of all pupils or does not give them enough opportunities to think for themselves. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily, with particular strengths in mathematics in Years 5 and 6. Literacy and numeracy are taught soundly and the skills are used effectively in other subjects: for example, measurement in science or note taking in history.

The overall quality of learning is also satisfactory although small groups of pupils in several classes are not well behaved or are reluctant to learn, and therefore do not make enough progress. Learning is good or better in well-managed lessons when pupils enjoy rising to the challenge they have been set, know what they have to do to improve and are keen to be successful. All pupils are encouraged to take a full part in lessons. Teaching assistants work hard with those who have special educational needs, but some class work is not linked closely enough to the targets in their individual education plans. This limits their progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory on balance. The way in which time is allocated for lessons within the week is unsatisfactory, especially in Years 3-6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There is a large staff of teaching assistants who work effectively alongside pupils in classrooms.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall but the school is not keeping records of pupils individual progress so that work can be matched correctly to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils benefit from the opportunities to reflect on their learning and learn about the different cultures and religions found in modern society. Social development is a major focus as many pupils come from disadvantaged circumstances. The development of a firm moral understanding is an important part of the school's philosophy.

Aspect Continued	Comment Continued
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good arrangements for the care of pupils. Procedures for the regular assessment of pupils' progress are good but this information is not used effectively in all subjects to plan their future success.

The curriculum meets national requirements and those of the local agreed syllabus for religious education, although opportunities to study aspects of ICT and PE in any depth are limited in older classes. The range of extracurricular activities is good but the nature of the site restricts the opportunities for sport. Links with parents are good overall, but annual reports do not contain enough specific comments about pupils' progress in the different subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Whilst there has been satisfactory progress in the leadership and management of the school since last inspection, there are weaknesses in aspects of its leadership. The headteacher and deputy headteacher need to be more active in setting the school's strategic direction. The deputy headteacher's experience and expertise should be more fully used. Other members of the management team have a growing and positive influence in setting the school's future educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is committed and effective, and is becoming increasingly well informed. Governors have begun to monitor the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory because so much of the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's time has been used to solve staffing difficulties or deal with immediate problems. The headteacher needs to be giving stronger direction when the reasons for low attainment are analysed and reviewed.
The strategic use of resources	The level and use of resources are satisfactory.

There is an appropriate match of staff to the demands of the curriculum. The building has been improved with new classrooms and a welcoming entrance hall. The Year 1 classroom has to be used as the way through to Year 2. This is disruptive, but staff and pupils cope very well. The school is aware that the current provision for ICT is unsatisfactory as there is no direct way to link the suite of laptops to a printer. The governing body are beginning to apply the principles of best value effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The good teaching and the progress pupils make.• The easy access to the headteacher and staff.• The way the school expects pupils to work hard and do their best.• The good leadership and management.• The encouragement of maturity and responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would like to see the amount of homework increased.• A few would like to know more about how well their children are doing.• Several would like to see an increased range of out-of-school activities.

The number of responses to the questionnaire was relative small and only two parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents and with their concern that annual reports could be more informative. The amount of homework is appropriate and similar to most other schools. The overall level of provision for activities outside lessons is good, although there are limited opportunities for sport.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below expected levels, especially in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal relationships. They make satisfactory progress, especially in personal, social, emotional and physical development, but complete the Foundation Stage at levels that are generally below those typical for their age. This pattern continues throughout the school. Most pupils make one year's progress each year, which is satisfactory, but never catch up to the target level for their age. The high percentage of pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties, the considerable levels of social deprivation and the limitations in many pupils' language and communication skills affect overall levels of attainment.
- 2 Attainment in national tests at seven and eleven is well below average. Although there has been a steady year-on-year improvement since 1998 in overall standards at seven, the results have been consistently well below the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. The results in 2001 were close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds in reading and writing, but were below in mathematics. Progress from the age of five was satisfactory.
- 3 The results in the 2001 national English, mathematics and science tests for eleven-year-olds were in the lowest 5% nationally and were well below average in comparison with similar schools. However, the year group contained an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and there were two unavoidable staff changes in Year 6 during the year. The achievement of three quarters of the pupils was at least satisfactory because they had made a year's progress each year. While recognising the particular circumstances in 2001, results have been consistently well below average for a number of years. There is some evidence of improvement, but not as much as the national trend. The school did not reach the challenging targets it had set itself. There have been particular problems in science, with results continually in the lowest 5%. Poor language skills have had a particular impact on results in all three subjects.
- 4 Seven-year-old boys did better than girls in reading and writing in 2000. There was little difference between them in mathematics. Eleven-year-old boys did less well than girls in English and science in 2000, and achieved similar levels in mathematics. The school increased its efforts to raise boys' standards in writing, and governors have made this a particular focus for their monitoring visits. Older higher attaining pupils are now taught separately so that they have the best opportunity for success.
- 5 The inspection team concentrated on standards in Years 2 and 6, as these are the ends of the infant and junior stages. Their judgement is that current standards are largely below average. Standards in English and mathematics

are below average at seven and eleven. Pupils' understanding of science is better in Year 2 and current standards are close to the national expectation. They remain below average in Year 6. These judgements represent an improvement over the disappointing test results achieved in past years. The school has predicted its results for next summer very carefully, using its knowledge of pupils' past performance, but realises that the pupils have a great deal to do if they are to reach their targets. Language skills continue to hold back pupils' progress. Even higher attaining pupils have difficulties with English. One able eleven-year-old explained in her book that an electric wall socket was over-loaded by writing: 'to much wires in the Dubles plug socket.'

- 6 Current standards in English are below average at seven and eleven. Standards in speaking and listening are below average overall, although many pupils do better when there are planned opportunities in lessons for them to develop their skills. The majority of pupils in Year 1 are reading at a level below national expectations, but more pupils are reading closer to expected standards by Year 2. This good progress is supported by good communication between home and school through reading diaries. The collaboration works well and standards are improving as a direct result.
- 7 Standards in reading at eleven are below average overall, but progress is satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy reading, particularly those who choose their own books. They know what kind of books they like and have favourite authors. They find books exciting, and some read their favourites over and over again. However, below average readers remain on reading scheme books as they move up the school. This limits their knowledge and experience of other books and authors, and their enjoyment of reading. The reading diary system is not used consistently in Years 3-6, and parents are not as directly involved in helping their children to make progress.
- 8 Standards in writing are below average and generally lower than in reading. Pupils have limited skills on entry to school and therefore progress is satisfactory. Individual pupils' progress is evident in their writing over a period of time. Many pupils in Year 2 are using full stops and capital letters appropriately, and spell common words correctly. Their handwriting is developing satisfactorily. Most Year 6 pupils plan their writing carefully and use a range of vocabulary to interest the reader. Their handwriting is joined and legible, and spelling is generally correct. Lower attaining writers still make basic errors of punctuation, spelling and grammar. This limits their progress and ability to write accurately about what they have learnt in other subjects.
- 9 Standards in mathematics are rising, and attainment at the age of seven and eleven is now below, rather than well below, national averages. There are signs of improvement that indicate that all year groups are making satisfactory progress. Seven-year-old pupils recognise number patterns and can count in twos, fives and tens. Work in other aspects of mathematics is held back by poor language skills. Some worksheets are too complex for them to understand and there is little evidence in pupils' books that they have applied their understanding of number to real life situations. They do not have a

secure knowledge of the place value of three-digit numbers. Higher attaining pupils who were working with a calendar to classify months into seasons found it difficult to sequence the months of the year. Pupils with special educational needs cannot consistently add a two-digit number to a single-digit number.

- 10 The majority of pupils in Year 6 have not developed their mathematical skills enough to match expected levels of attainment. Many had started in Year 1 with below average standards, and their ability to work out problems has been limited by their language skills. Many have special educational needs. Their progress is satisfactory, but they have never caught up to the levels expected for pupils of their age. Teachers use a variety of methods to extend the pupils' ability to compute using two and three-digit numbers. Pupils use their knowledge of mathematical tables and an ICT program to practise the rules of number. They have little understanding about collecting data or using graphs to interpret information. Pupils do not carry out enough mathematical investigations or use their understanding of number to solve real problems. Standards in all these aspects of mathematics are below expected standards.
- 11 Standards in science are in line with national expectations at the age of seven, but are below average at eleven. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. They know why healthy eating is important, recognise the essential elements for growth in humans and plants, and can explain how soil, water and sunlight changed their beans into tall plants. They have studied magnetism, understand the importance of an appropriate habitat for birds and animals, and have some awareness of the properties of materials.
- 12 Standards in science in Year 6 are below average, but they have made satisfactory and steady progress since they were in Year 2. Pupils are not practised in talking and thinking in scientific terms. Many answers are given with little thought and pupils' written work is relatively immature. Pupils have a very basic understanding of the functions of the main organs of the body and the properties of common materials. Although all pupils know that boiled water turns to steam and condenses back to a liquid, only the higher attaining pupils could explain it using scientific vocabulary. Most pupils' understanding of their work this term on electrical circuits and health and safety is superficial for their age.
- 13 Standards in religious education, art and design, design and technology, PE and music are close to national expectations at seven and eleven. The quality of singing, especially in the choir, is outstanding. Standards in geography are below expected levels at seven and eleven. Standards in history are in line at the age of seven but below that expected for eleven. The school has recently invested in a suite of laptop computers so that ICT can be taught systematically to whole classes. This has already made an impressive impact on standards. Seven-year-olds are already working at the levels expected for their age. Eleven-year-olds' attainment in communicating information and in some aspects of handling information is appropriate, but they have still to strengthen their understanding of the use of ICT to control mechanisms or explore ideas through simulations. Standards at eleven are therefore below expectations.

- 14 The overall level of attainment in the school is broadly similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. English, mathematics, and science in Year 6 remain below average. Seven-year-olds' standards in science, history and ICT have improved. Eleven-year-olds' standards in art and design and music are not quite so high.
- 15 Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all class lessons, unless they are withdrawn temporarily for unsatisfactory behaviour. They make satisfactory progress when working closely with a teaching assistant or when the task has been carefully matched to their needs. The support is not as effective in whole-class sessions if the teaching assistant concentrates solely on pupils' behavioural difficulties rather than working with them quietly to encourage them to offer answers and take a fuller part in the lesson. Progress is unsatisfactory when the work they have to do does not link closely enough to the targets in their individual education plans.
- 16 Staff do not have additional information on pupils with English as an additional language. Their progress as a group and their performance in national tests is not monitored. This makes it harder for teachers to match work to their needs. For example, several pupils with English as an additional language are on the early stages of the special educational needs register for learning difficulties. There is no information as to whether they have similar difficulties, or whether the difficulties are linked to English being an additional rather than a first language. It is possible that confusion between tenses in speech and writing might be attributable to the fact that a pupil is not operating in their first language, rather than to a learning difficulty. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in lessons. In 'News Time' in Year 3, four pupils with English as an additional language spoke fluently and confidently using a wide vocabulary in the class discussion about the Diwali festival.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 17 Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good. The school has maintained and developed the standards noted in the previous inspection report. Behaviour in lessons and around school is almost always good. The quality of relationships is good, particularly between staff and pupils. All pupils know what is expected of them and generally respond positively to encouragement and praise.
- 18 Pupils are keen to come to school and see it as a happy, friendly place. Most enjoy the lessons and activities. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their child liked school. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work and usually show enthusiasm for it. However, there is a small but significant number of pupils who listen passively in lessons and who are reluctant to participate. The school reports that this is particularly noticeable after weekends. Only half the class were prepared to offer answers in one Year 5 literacy lesson, although the teacher tried hard to involve everyone.

- 19 Children in the nursery and reception classes co-operate well in pairs, small groups and role-play situations. They behave well and are keen to learn and take part in planned activities. Pupils with special educational needs respond positively when working individually. A very good example was seen when a pupil in Year 3, who finds communication very difficult, smiled radiantly and tried her hardest when encouraged by her teacher to repeat musical rhythms on an electronic drumming machine.
- 20 Behaviour in lessons is generally good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress. They settle to work quickly in most lessons and concentrate hard, especially when the work matches their needs and is interesting. However, pupils occasionally get restless and find it difficult to concentrate or listen. The school's strategy to manage badly behaved pupils by removing them for a short period from the classroom is successful because it allows the work of the rest of the class to continue and helps the pupils concerned to develop greater self-control. However, they sometimes miss important teaching and take up the time of the headteacher or other senior staff. There has been one exclusion in the last school year. The pupil concerned has now been re-integrated successfully into his year group.
- 21 Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is good, although some play becomes over boisterous. Movement around the school is quiet and orderly when pupils are supervised. However, at other times a few pupils choose to run in the building. Noise levels are relatively high at lunchtime but there is a pleasant social atmosphere. Almost all pupils are polite and well mannered. Pupils are well supervised by the midday supervisors during lunch and in the playground. They usually play happily together. However, a few do not always pay attention to others, for example when throwing balls or running around, and this results in minor accidents. Pupils are almost always polite to one another and to adults, encouraged by the good example set by the staff. Pupils look after their own property and take good care of the school's books and other resources. A particular feature is the respect with which pupils treat the recently acquired laptop computers.
- 22 Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are satisfactory. They work very well in small groups during the literacy and numeracy lessons and generally stay on task when the teacher does not supervise them directly. They usually concentrate well and help one another. They share books and equipment sensibly. Several examples of this were seen in ICT lessons where two pupils share a computer and help each other to learn new skills. However, in several other lessons observed during the inspection, the number of adults in the classroom meant that help was almost too readily available and some pupils preferred to ask for assistance rather than work things out for themselves. Although pupils have many opportunities to co-operate in pairs or small groups, opportunities for them to work collaboratively on a project are not so common.
- 23 Pupils in all classes help their teachers willingly by distributing books and other equipment, and by tidying the classroom at the end of lessons. Pupils in Year 6 are expected to help to look after younger pupils and most take a pride

in doing so. This year the school has trained a group of Year 6 pupils to act as mentors, especially to help resolve playground disputes and be alert to bullying. The response has been enthusiastic. One Year 6 Bullying Stops Here [BSH] mentor felt that the incidence of “nastiness” in the playground was less and enjoyed helping to sort out problems. A Year 2 pupil confirmed the success of the project by saying that when you are upset you “tell a BSH. That’s a junior and they wear a yellow thingy and you can go and they sort it out and sometimes they talk to the teacher for you.”

- 24 The school is successful in fostering pupils’ personal development. They have a good range of opportunities to discuss their feelings and responses in personal and social education lessons and at quiet times, when pupils discuss sensitive matters in a circle. They learn to listen with respect to the views of others, such as the Rabbi who talked to them about his faith, and the special way in which holy books must be treated.
- 25 Relationships throughout the school are good and a strength of its work. Staff support pupils very effectively, and consistently use praise to good effect. Teachers and other adults provide good role models for the pupils by showing them respect and listening to their views. Pupils generally co-operate well with each other. They have an understanding of the impact of what they do on others, but sometimes find this difficult to sustain, especially when they are out of the classroom. Instances of bullying are infrequent. Pupils understand the importance of reporting bullying to a BSH or to staff, and are confident that their concerns are taken seriously.
- 26 Attendance is unsatisfactory. At the time of the previous inspection, attendance was in line with the national average. Since then the national average has risen and attendance rates at the school have failed to keep pace, and is now below average. Figures submitted to the Department for Education and Skills in May 2001 show that attendance for the most recent school year was 91%, well below the national average. This represents a decline over the previous year, when attendance was 93%. Most absence is due to illness, with some children suffering recurrent infections that lead to repeated absences. However, a significant number of parents take their children out of school for holidays during term time. Levels of unauthorised absence are above the national average. A few parents regularly fail to provide a reason for their child’s absence. The majority of pupils arrive punctually in the mornings but there is a significant amount of lateness and a few persistent latecomers. Registration procedures comply with statutory and local authority requirements. The school frequently reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and good timekeeping, and shares weekly figures with parents. The school is currently working very hard, and with success, to raise attendance. It has set itself the ambitious target of 95%.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 27 The overall quality of teaching in all parts of the school is sound, with many strengths that outweigh the areas for development. Two in every five lessons were good or better, including two that were particularly outstanding and five that were very good. Only three of the 55 lessons observed were unsatisfactory or poor. Overall standards are broadly similar to those reported during the previous inspection. However, there have been considerable improvements in the overall quality of teaching in ICT, although the staff have not received their full training and some do not yet have the same expertise as their colleagues.
- 28 The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Planning is secure and takes full account of the national guidance for children aged up to five. There is an appropriate balance between adult led and child-initiated activities. The work is generally well matched to children's needs, and takes particular account of those with English as an additional language. Well-established classroom routines ensure that children in both classes move from one activity to another confidently and with a clear sense of purpose. Very little time is lost, and interest and enthusiasm are generally sustained. A consistent strong feature of the work of teachers and nursery nurses is the quality and range of their questions. They provide many good opportunities for children to deepen and extend their answers. Although children are generally encouraged to work independently, but there are some occasions when over direction by adults limits the opportunities for them to try out their own ideas. Teachers measure and assess children's progress on a regular basis but, because they use different procedures, their effectiveness is limited.
- 29 Teaching in Years 1-6 is also sound, with many strengths. In the very best lessons the pupils pick up the teachers' own lively enthusiasm and are encouraged to greater effort. They know their targets and are keen to be successful. Teachers' expectations are high, and pupils rise to the challenge. In other very good lessons, teachers continually consolidate pupils' learning through the use of flash cards, or use the overhead projector and white board as a focus for attention. The pace is animated and not a moment is wasted. Each pupil is given just the right amount of time to learn and move forward confidently. "I'll try for it..." said one Year 6 boy to himself as he ventured an answer. Teaching is very good when pupils become aware of the quality of what they are doing, and find that little bit extra to improve. This was seen for example in the singing and in some of the extended writing. "We didn't just sing," said a boy in Year 4, "we added texture."
- 30 Teachers' secure subject knowledge is a strength in many lessons. Their certainty earns the pupils' respect who feel that they can ask questions because the teacher is knowledgeable. Pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy lessons is particularly effective when they sense the teachers' own confidence with the materials, good preparation ensures that everything is ready for the lesson, and interesting tasks challenge each group. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily and from a confident understanding of the subject material, with particular strengths in mathematics in Years 5 and 6. Literacy

and numeracy are taught appropriately and within the suggested format suggested by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The skills learned in formal lessons are used effectively in other subjects: for example, measurement in science and note taking in history. Good examples of teachers' secure subject knowledge were also seen in ICT when teachers and support staff used a correct technical vocabulary. Learning was equally good because pupils as young as Year 1, for example, recognised the symbols they had been taught and used words such as 'icon', 'save' and 'print' correctly.

- 31 Teaching is good when lessons' instructions are very clear, and pupils know exactly what they have to do, how to improve and what they must have completed by a certain time. A Year 2 class knew they had 20 minutes to plan a set of instructions for cleaning teeth. They were able to celebrate their achievement by showing the rest of the class a poster that set out the order in which things had to be done. Teaching is also good when pupils are asked questions that make them think, and teaching assistants encourage shy members of the class to have a go. Support staff add their own important contribution to the quality of teaching when they are active members of the teaching 'team' and use their own subject knowledge to support the class teacher.
- 32 Teaching is satisfactory but less successful when the work groups are too large and some pupils are watchers rather than doers. Learning is not successful when the class task is limited to completing work sheets, as these do not encourage higher attaining pupils to explore an aspect in greater depth and become little more than copying exercises. Teachers write up the learning objective for each lesson on the whiteboard or a display sheet, but do not always refer to it. Learning is not effective when teachers allow their whiteboards to fill with a variety of words and comments. This is confusing to pupils who need a clear reference point to consolidate their understanding. Learning is sound rather than better when small groups of pupils are reluctant to learn despite their teachers' best efforts.
- 33 Teachers plan very carefully but there are several weaknesses in current practice. The actual planning format used by many teachers is very good in its simplicity. Literacy and numeracy lessons link directly to weekly planning sheets, and are starting to include an increasing use of ICT skills to help pupils learn more quickly. Good use is made of teaching assistants and nursery nurses, but it is not always clear who is to lead the various activities. In ICT, for example, some plans did not indicate whether the teaching assistant or the class teacher was responsible for teaching the first part of the lesson. This was confusing to the pupils and the adults concerned, and affected the quality of the learning. The reverse is true in music where there is an equally strong partnership between teacher and pianist, but it is clear that the initial instruction will come from the teacher. Planning is also unsatisfactory when it does not take enough account of the wide range of ability found in all classes, and all pupils are given similar work or higher attaining pupils have to complete the same work as the rest before being given more challenging tasks. This concern was also noted at the time of the previous inspection and not enough progress has been made. A shared text in one literacy lesson, for

example, contained extremely complex language and the time required to explain it to most pupils meant that they did not reach the planned end for the lesson or really understand what they were doing. On some occasions the teaching was over-directive and pupils reached the answer without understanding why.

- 34 The teaching in a very small number of lessons was unsatisfactory or poor. This happened when teachers shared their own lack of subject knowledge with the class, time was wasted at the start of a lesson, pupils did not have enough to do, or the poor behaviour of a small group affected the overall quality of learning of the rest of the class.
- 35 Teachers work hard to include pupils with special educational needs in all classroom activities. This is effective, and learning is successful when the work matches their needs. Some individual education plans, however, are not sufficiently detailed to show the stage or the learning needs of those on the special educational needs register. This makes it harder for teachers to make sure that the group activities are in line with their main targets. Teachers are appropriately aware of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language but seldom make any special provision to ensure they understand English idiomatic phrases that might not occur in their first language.

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

- 36 The overall curriculum is not as well balanced as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully but has felt it necessary to take time away from other subjects in order to find additional opportunities for guided or quiet reading, spelling and handwriting. This has only been partially successful, especially in Years 3-6. The pupils who receive extra support with their reading, for example, make greater progress because of the extra support they receive, but the other reading activities that take place unsupervised at the same time do not make the pupils work hard enough. Other lessons are too elastic and tend to run on until the tasks have been completed, rather than having a more organised structure with clear objectives linked to the achievement of objectives within a set time. As a result there is not enough planned time for subjects such as PE and art and design, and pupils do not study them in enough depth. In a Year 6 art and design lesson, pupils had to draw and refine a design within 30 minutes. This did not allow the teacher enough time to support and guide pupils to a successful conclusion before the lesson finished.
- 37 The Foundation Stage curriculum used in the nursery and reception classes is sound. Children are given a broad and balanced curriculum through well planned, interesting and often challenging activities delivered by a dedicated team.
- 38 The school has used national guidance and its own expertise effectively to draw up new schemes of work for all the National Curriculum subjects. They provide a useful framework that enables teachers to plan consistently and

develop the specific schemes of work for each year group. The phase co-ordinators oversee the planning to ensure there is no overlap and that pupils can make progress. The concerns in the previous report about the science and design and technology curriculum have been addressed successfully. Some concerns remain about ICT, but are being quickly addressed as the new equipment comes into use. The mathematics curriculum for younger pupils does not include enough opportunities for them to use their understanding of number in practical situations. The music curriculum is particularly strong. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a strong impact on work in all subjects. The planning for literacy and numeracy is good, and teachers are starting to use the same lesson framework of introduction, group work and final session effectively in other subjects. There is an appropriate programme for sex education and pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug misuse.

- 39 The provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils with learning or behavioural needs are supported by a number of teaching assistants who work hard to make sure that they are actively included in the learning. A particularly good example is the close professional relationship between pupil and supporting adult in Year 6. Her excellent work enabled the pupil concerned to feel valued and included in the learning. All pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are supported individually and the task is related to an education plan. Occasionally teachers' planning is too generalised and does not reflect the needs of those pupils who find reading and writing difficult. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in these lessons because the tasks are not appropriate to their ability. There is a very effective specialised music programme to support individual pupils with communication difficulties.
- 40 The culture and background of pupils with English as an additional language is recognised and valued, particularly in religious education lessons. There was a good opportunity and example of inclusion in Year 3 when a Sikh pupil explained how his family celebrated Diwali, a current topic for the class in religious education. Pupils in Year 6 explained how children of different beliefs discuss aspects of their faith in school. They said how interesting that made the lessons, particularly in the previous year when they had four of the six major faiths represented in the class. Teachers make good cross-curricular links so that all pupils' cultures are respected. Year 2 tested their understanding of written instructions in a literacy lesson when they followed the directions for making a Diwali candle.
- 41 The overall provision for extracurricular activities is good. There is a wide range of activities that pupils can join after school. There are limited games activities, but there is an active and successful school choir, science and mathematics clubs, and other musical and creative groups which older pupils can join. Pupils visit a range of visits to places of educational interest and benefit from a residential visit to an outdoor centre where they experience a range of interesting and social activities. A number of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils take part in a summer school, and use the opportunity to extend their physical and mental skills and work together in a challenging environment.

- 42 The community contributes effectively to the quality of the curriculum. There are appropriate links with the local secondary school, mainly for the provision of specialised resources for science and design and technology. Staff from the Ellis Guildford Secondary School have provided guidance on the use of ICT programs so that pupils can use similar programs before they transfer at eleven. Staff discuss pupils who have special educational needs or who require additional support through the ‘family of schools’ network so that their transfer to secondary school is as smooth as possible. The links with local groups and the community are good. They support the school actively and provide a number of visitors to help pupils with aspects of their lessons. The local rabbi and a visitor from the Sikh community share the significance of major festivals in their faiths. Local musicians and theatre groups are regular visitors. A recent Japanese visitor impressed everyone with her origami skills. The school takes part in community events and fund raising activities. The before- and after-school clubs extend pupils’ social skills and are well led by staff from the school.
- 43 The overall provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision for pupils’ spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection. The school continues to provide a caring and supportive atmosphere in which pupils can learn, reflect and develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. The school meets the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. They contain an appropriate mix of story, reflection and worship. Pupils lower their heads in reverence as they hope, for example, for peace.
- 44 Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils benefit from the opportunities to reflect in lessons and assemblies, and enjoy learning about the different ideas, cultures and religions found in modern society. They have many opportunities to marvel in lessons, as when a pupil in Year 6 realised that the sun’s shadow created an example of perfect reflective symmetry as it moved across the sky, and the reception class leapt and clawed in the air with their teacher and nursery nurse as they danced as monsters leaving the Hall of the Mountain King. Pupils reflect on deeper issues in assemblies or within the confidential security of class ‘circle time’ when they take turns to discuss things that are important to them. The theme of remembrance was addressed thoughtfully in acts of worship and in pupils’ paintings of poppies. Pupils’ understanding and respect for the many faiths represented in the school and locality is extended through religious education lessons. Visitors to school give pupils an invaluable opportunity to question in depth and realise how a living faith influences people’s lives.
- 45 Provision for moral and social development is good. Social development is a major focus as many pupils come from disadvantaged circumstances. The development of a firm moral understanding is an important part of the school’s philosophy. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and most have a strong sense of justice. Older pupils stand up for younger friends. The school has been successful in developing a sense of community in which everyone helps each other within a context of fairness and a shared respect for truth and justice. Most pupils get on well with each other, and understand the

need for class and school rules. Relationships are good, especially between adults and pupils because they are based on mutual respect.

- 46 Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school promotes the cultural traditions found in the area and takes part in local community, faith and music festivals. The choir is properly proud of its opportunities to sing as part of a group of schools in the City's Royal Concert Hall. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to play instruments, and the joy on the face of a single child in making music, justifies the time the teacher has given. Pupils are aware of the art and music from a range of cultures, but the cultural diversity of the school and locality are not reflected enough in the school's resources and books, except in those relating to religious education. Pupils have positive role models in the staff's own wide-ranging backgrounds, histories and experiences. Theatre and museum visits, residential opportunities, and visiting artists and musicians enrich the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 47 The school provides a high level of care for all its pupils. Teachers and support staff provide caring and consistent support to pupils. Staff are accessible and responsive to pupils' needs. Pastoral care remains a strong aspect of the school's provision, as it was at the time of the previous inspection.
- 48 The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good. The good quality of relationships throughout the school helps to ensure that adults in school know the pupils well and leads to the provision of high quality care. Procedures for child protection are in place and take full account of the locally agreed procedures. Appropriate training is provided and there is a good level of awareness amongst staff. Good attention is paid to health, safety and hygiene in lessons such as PE, design and technology and science. For example, pupils in Year 2 are very well aware of the need to wash before handling food, and all pupils come to ICT lessons with clean hands so that keyboards remain germ free. They can only access agreed sections of the Internet. The headteacher, health and safety representative and governors carry out formal health and safety audits each term. The playgrounds were recently resurfaced as the old surface was becoming unsafe and had been a concern at the time of the previous inspection. Staff report any safety issues as they arise. Procedures for first aid are good. No medication is given without written parental consent. Parents are informed routinely of any illness or injury suffered by their child at school.
- 49 The school monitors attendance effectively on a day-to-day basis. The school began a project in September to make parents more aware of attendance issues, to raise the level of attendance and reduce unauthorised absence. Parents are now contacted on the first day of any absence. The strategy has already resulted in some improvements, for example, pupils are often absent for one or two days with minor ailments instead of three or four. Good procedures are in place to follow up any unreported absences. The education welfare officer is involved in those cases where attendance is a cause for concern. The school works hard to support those parents who find it difficult to get their children to school.

- 50 Staff carry out assessments of children's attainment within seven weeks of their entry to the nursery. This is based on local guidance and is used by all the schools in the area. The process is repeated at the end of the term prior to a child transferring into the reception class. It is used to limited effect and with little confidence by the teaching staff. There is no formal analysis of the data to draw comparisons between similar schools. Some of the assessments made on the 'official' baseline record are not the same as those made by individual teachers. Far more productive use is made of the teachers' own baseline assessments. There are good systems in both classes for recording children's progress but the procedures are different. This limits their effectiveness. The co-ordinators recognise this and are currently exploring different formats that will allow for on-going assessments to have a greater impact on the planned learning for pupils and keep parents better informed of children's progress.
- 51 The school is now carrying out a more detailed analysis of pupils' performance in national tests at seven and eleven. This has included writing in English, which is a current focus for improvement throughout the school. There are particular concerns about the poor attainment of boys in writing. The school is employing a variety of strategies to increase their motivation, such as the use of texts that will appeal to them, and different ways of working in class. In the best classes, marking is used effectively to show pupils what they need to do to improve their writing and how to go about it. The assessment co-ordinator has also identified areas of underachievement in mathematics, including a lack of understanding of the vocabulary in the questions and difficulty in selecting key information from the text. The science co-ordinator has carried out a similar analysis and passed on the results to staff.
- 52 There are good procedures for measuring pupils' progress as they move through the school but the information is not used consistently as the basis for planning future work. Good practice is developing in English and mathematics where teachers are starting to use the information gained from the national and optional tests effectively to set a projected level of attainment for each pupil. Pupils have 'progress books' with assessed pieces of written work. All the teachers use the same detailed writing assessment statements so there is a consistent grading standard throughout the school. Teachers use these judgements to set individual targets for literacy. These are regularly reviewed and, if achieved, new ones set. Younger pupils take their target sheets home with their reading books so parents and carers also know how to help their children improve, together with dates when the target has been met. Assessment systems are less well established in mathematics and science, and very little has been agreed for other subjects.
- 53 Approximately one in five pupils in the school is from an ethnic minority background and about 7% of pupils have English as an additional language. Most of the pupils with English as an additional language have been in school since five years of age and have no specific additional provision. Their progress as a group in national tests is not monitored. The school does not know, therefore, if ethnic minority pupils and pupils with a first language

other than English are achieving as well as they might. The school has demonstrated its care for pupils with special educational needs through the provision of a large team of support staff. Pupils are aware of this support but are sometimes too dependent on it, rather than thinking for themselves. This is evident, for example, when some pupils misbehave and rely on an adult to tell them when they overstep the mark rather than learning for themselves what is acceptable.

- 54 The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. Teachers have high expectations and most pupils achieve them most of the time. The school has recently admitted a number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and has risen to the challenge presented by their behaviour effectively. The specific guidelines for dealing with this group of pupils are clear and the school liaises appropriately with specialist support services. Pupils understand the rules and know what is expected of them because of their own involvement in setting them up. Lunchtime supervisors are well integrated into the school and are provided with clear guidelines for the management of behaviour. The merit system is very effective in motivating pupils but there is some inconsistency in its use across the school. Pupils generally perceive staff to be firm but fair. At times, however, pupils who behave consistently well are upset to see others being rewarded for only occasional good behaviour. Teachers use praise well to motivate and encourage pupils. The good relationships and the mutual respect shown by teachers, staff and pupils help to ensure that behaviour is good.
- 55 The procedures to deal with bullying are good. The subject is addressed in assemblies and circle time as well as in personal and social education lessons. Pupils are taught to respect the feelings of others and to have a good awareness of the effects of their actions on others. A minority of pupils finds it hard to carry these positive attitudes with them throughout the school day and behave thoughtlessly. The school peer mentor scheme, 'Bullying Stops Here', is having a positive effect on the behaviour in the playground and is making younger pupils feel more secure. Pupils generally feel safe in school and are confident that there is someone to turn to when things go wrong. Pupils' personal development is encouraged through the programme of personal and social education and circle time. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge effectively in their work. Parents especially appreciate the after-school club. This is a well-established provision, ably run by support assistants, where up to sixteen children can be cared for every day after school. It provides an interesting range of activities as well as snacks and drinks, and is much enjoyed by those who attend.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 56 Parents feel positive about the school. They particularly appreciate the accessibility of staff, the happy atmosphere, and the encouragement the school and its teachers gives to their children. Parents have an appropriate range of opportunities to find out about the progress their child is making. They are kept well informed about the daily life of the school and are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with staff.
- 57 The replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires, discussions with parents at the parents' meeting and during the inspection week, indicate that the large majority of these parents are very supportive of the school. However, only around one in six parents returned the questionnaire and attendance at the meeting was very low. The parents who responded particularly appreciate that their children make good progress and that school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. They believe that the school is well led and managed. Almost all would feel happy to approach staff with questions or problems and state that the teaching is good. Virtually all children like school. Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views of the school. Although there are some management issues for the school to address, the pastoral systems are well organised. A few parents feel that their child does not get the right amount of homework. Inspection evidence shows that pupils typically get as much homework as those in other primary schools. A similar number are concerned that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence does not bear this out. There is a good range of activities, although the provision of sporting activities is limited.
- 58 There are good arrangements to help children transfer from home to a school situation as they approach the age of five. A series of home visits by a member of the Foundation Stage team is targeted on families who have no current or previous contact with the school. The co-ordinators make every effort to ensure that the home visitor is available to receive the child on their first day. Each child is assigned to a key worker who has an oversight of their emerging needs. Parents of children starting in the nursery in the autumn or summer terms have an opportunity through a parents' evening to discuss how their child has settled in. This is not the case for parents of pupils starting in January. Parents of pupils moving into the reception class have an advance opportunity to visit and meet the class teacher. They are welcome to visit the nursery. Parents are kept well informed through a newsletter and the high quality information board placed in the area used by parents at the start and end of sessions. These give parents good quality information about what the children are doing and how to support them at home.
- 59 The school has a number of good, well-established links with all parents, who receive good quality information on a regular basis. The prospectus and annual report of governors to parents contain the full range of required information. Parents are well informed about school life and events. Notice boards around the school, especially the one in the nursery, provide a good

range of information. Some teachers put up their weekly planning for literacy lessons so that parents can read it if they wish. Senior staff members are present around the school at the beginning and end of the day to chat to parents and listen to their views.

- 60 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly consulted and discussions take place at annual reviews. The school will arrange an additional meeting if one is required, and will always talk to parents informally if there are concerns. The school values parents' cultural heritages. During the inspection, the parent of an Indian pupil in Year 3 came into their religious education lesson to talk to the class about the Hindu festival of Diwali.
- 61 Satisfactory arrangements are in place to keep parents informed about their children's progress. Parents have two formal opportunities each year to discuss their child's progress with their teachers, the second of which is an opportunity to discuss in detail the written report that they receive prior to the meeting. Parents' consultation meetings are generally well attended. Teachers try to see those who do not attend at another convenient time. Parents are welcome to discuss their child, or any concerns they have, at any time by arrangement with the teacher concerned. Many take advantage of this. The annual reports use a clear and concise format. Overall, however, the quality is unsatisfactory and reflect the concerns some parents have about the amount of information they are given about their children's progress. Comments about English and mathematics give a clear picture of what the pupil has achieved and usually indicate strengths and weaknesses. However, reports are less specific about science. In other subjects, comment is brief and generally more focused on attitude and effort than on achievement. There are not enough judgements about progress in any subject and, when they do occur, they do not give parents enough information. Targets are not specifically identified, although some teachers do indicate areas for improvement. Some comments use jargon that is not easily understood by parents, for example in mathematics: "Good understanding of number bonds to 100". There is no space allocated to the reporting of personal, health and social education. However, the reports show that teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of pupils as individuals.
- 62 The school makes every effort to work in partnership with parents but the response is not always positive. For example, the meetings held to inform parents about the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy were poorly attended. Parents support events in which their child is taking part. Attendance at concerts, performances and cross-country runs is very good. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis. They are well supported by teachers and their input is valued. Other parents offer help at other times when, for example, pupils go on an educational visit. Homework is set regularly and pupils benefit when their parents become involved. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a reading record. Many parents and teachers use this to exchange information about progress. Pupils in Years 3-6 do not all have such a record. This limits the involvement of parents in helping their child to develop his or her reading skills as well as the communication between home and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 63 Whilst there has been satisfactory progress in the overall leadership and management of the school since the last inspection, there are weaknesses in aspects of the leadership. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher need to be more active in leading its strategic development. Governors and other members of the management team are having a growing and important positive influence on the educational direction of the school.
- 64 The headteacher and deputy headteacher work hard to create a warm, positive and caring school society. The school's pastoral aims are clearly reflected in its daily work. The good relationships between adults and pupils help to produce positive behaviour and hard work from the majority of the pupils. The school improvement plan is detailed and identifies priorities for future development clearly. It reflects the aims of the school and is becoming an increasingly effective tool for its improvement. However, some of its action plans do not contain enough detail to explain how the impact of new initiatives will be evaluated.
- 65 The headteacher, staff and governors share a commitment to improve the school. The headteacher's increasing use of the expertise of a strong management team is having a growing influence on the school's capacity for further improvement. His strong commitment to the pastoral role of the senior management team has resulted in an under-involvement in some other elements of school leadership and management. The headteacher and deputy headteacher spend a great deal of time and effort reacting to circumstances as they emerge. As a result, insufficient quality time is allocated to a consistent rigorous analysis of the school's overall performance and the quality and range of curricular provision for pupils. Recent staffing difficulties have taken up a large amount of senior management time and have disrupted the school's monitoring and evaluation processes. The headteacher needs to be more involved in the analysis and review of the causes of weak pupil performance, in order to identify, root out and deal with the causes. The deputy headteacher's current role is not having a significant impact on improving pupils' overall academic performance. Her experience and expertise need to be used to their best effect. The involvement of the senior management team in school development issues is limited.
- 66 The governing body carries out its role effectively. It is becoming increasingly well informed and governors are committed to their work and to the attitudes and values the headteacher endeavours to promote. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and, despite recent losses of members with specific expertise, they have demonstrated a ready acceptance of recent changes in governors' roles. They have started to monitor the work of the school and have a growing understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are becoming more confident in asking challenging questions of the senior managers in relation to targets for future improvement and are clear about priorities for the school's further development. They are involved in drawing up the improvement plan and have established a secure process for linking it to the budget. There is an appropriate committee structure that enables the governing body to work more effectively.

- 67 Staff with responsibility for the various age groups within the school are beginning to play an increasingly significant and positive role in its management. Job share arrangements are working effectively for the nursery and Year 1-2 co-ordinators, and the new co-ordinator for Years 3-6 has added strength to the management team. However, their impact is reduced by the lack of a clear structure and framework for their involvement. This is reflected in an irregular pattern of scheduled meetings and an agenda that often lacks sufficient focus on school improvement. Subject co-ordinators, particularly in the non-core subjects, have had limited opportunities to monitor their subjects in classrooms or pupils' books. The English, mathematics and science co-ordinators and a few non-core subject co-ordinators have monitored teachers' planning. There is little evidence to date of this monitoring impacting on the range and quality of curricular entitlement for pupils. They have also started to analyse the outcomes from national tests and use them to adjust medium term planning. The work of the new assessment co-ordinator is beginning to have a growing and positive influence in this area of school life.
- 68 Governors have established clear procedures for staff performance management but recent staffing changes have resulted in some slippage in the programme. Some staff have not yet agreed their performance management objectives with the new team leaders. The headteacher has yet to agree his performance management objectives with the responsible members of the governing body.
- 69 There are secure systems for efficient and effective financial control, with limited but appropriate use of computer systems to ensure that governors receive appropriate budgetary information. A newly available grant is being used to provide support for pupils with English as an additional language in order to raise their achievement and to increase staff awareness of their specific needs.
- 70 The governors are beginning to apply the principles of best value to good effect. Most spending is carefully considered and targeted through the school improvement plan, produced in consultation with staff. Recent developments in the reception and nursery area were carefully costed and decisions made on the basis of quality and time as well as price. This has brought about an effective integration of the improved nursery and reception facilities. Governors are also understandably proud of the recent improvements to school security. There is, however, room for improvement in the allocation of resources to subject areas by the senior management team. Whilst the broad allocation takes account of curriculum priorities, there is little evidence of analysis of the impact of previous spending in relation to the emerging needs of specific non-core subjects. Some money, in PE for example, has been spent to little or no effect. As a result of the satisfactory progress made by pupils as they move through the school, mainly sound and some good teaching, and generally appropriate use of resources, the school is judged to give satisfactory value for money.

- 71 The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers and the match of their qualifications and expertise to curriculum responsibilities is satisfactory. Their subject knowledge is generally good and is reflected in their teaching. The exception is ICT, where the full training programme has yet to take place. There is a sound induction programme for newly qualified teachers and for those new to the school. The arrival of new staff has increased the school's capacity for further improvement. Newly qualified teachers have a mentor and are well supported, having appropriate non-contact time and access to in-service training. The turnover of staff has been high in recent years, particularly affecting pupils in Years 3-6. The job share arrangements work effectively. Teaching assistants are generally used effectively and a small number of committed parent helpers provide valuable additional support. The role of the subject co-ordinators has been developed and expanded effectively since the time of the previous inspection. The staff team gives pupils a range of positive role models in terms of gender and racial background.
- 72 Two qualified teachers teach the nursery class and share responsibility for leading the Foundation Stage on a job share basis. This works well and makes good use of their varied experience and backgrounds. Both have a common passion and dedication to their children and team and, as a result, have a direct and positive impact on the provision for children in both classes and the progress they make. The work is planned co-operatively and results in a well-organised and effective nursery and reception unit. Parents and other helpers who also work in the two classes are fully aware of what is expected of them and the children. There is a carefully planned programme of staff development that meets the needs of all staff.
- 73 The special educational needs co-ordinator [SENCO] is currently the deputy headteacher as the post-holder is absent on secondment. Class teachers are responsible for writing individual education plans but have little guidance. The senior assistant manages the eleven teaching assistants effectively in consultation with the co-ordinator. Outside agencies are involved as appropriate. The specific needs of the one statemented pupil are met appropriately.
- 74 The accommodation is appropriate for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Most rooms are of sufficient size, although the Year 4 and 2 classrooms are small for the numbers using them. A disadvantage is that the Year 1 classroom has to be used as a thoroughfare to and from Year 2. The library is small and not suitable for use by a whole class. It is currently being reorganised and there are appropriate plans for its use to support the literacy strategy. Security procedures have been tightened so that incidents of vandalism have been reduced.
- 75 The extension to the outdoor area and wet weather canopy has improved provision for outdoor opportunities for the nursery and reception classes. A classroom has replaced the mobile classroom criticised in the previous inspection report. This extension has also provided a bright and attractive foyer. The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the building and site to a high

standard. Displays throughout the building are bright and celebrate pupils' work effectively as well as providing helpful information. There are separate play areas for children in the nursery and reception, those in Years 1 and 2 and for the older pupils. All these areas are small and the Year 1 and 2 area is particularly difficult to supervise due to its irregular shape. Playgrounds have been resurfaced and have covered areas with benches where pupils can sit quietly. The school has access to a field some distance from the building but this is often unusable as it becomes waterlogged whenever there is heavy rain.

- 76 The resources for learning are satisfactory overall but with some shortcomings. The current library provision is unsatisfactory. However, the school is planning to extend the use of the library and has recently acquired new books and got rid of outdated material. The provision of percussion instruments is good. Current resources for geography and PE are limited in range and unsatisfactory. The previous inspection report judged that resources for art and design, music, religious education and history were limited. These are now satisfactory, although the cultural diversity of the school and locality are still not reflected enough in books other than those relating to religious education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 77 The headteacher, staff and governors should continue to work together to:

- (1) raise standards in English, mathematics and science;
(paragraphs 5, 6, 9, 11, 94-98, 105, 114, 116)
- (2) increase the active involvement of the headteacher and deputy headteacher in the strategic direction of the school's overall improvement;
(paragraphs 63, 65)
- (3) review and reallocate teaching periods during the week in Years 3–6 to make best use of the time available;
(paragraphs 36, 103, 123, 127, 152)
- (4) improve lesson planning so that group work is set at the correct level of difficulty;
(paragraphs 32, 33, 100, 110, 118, 141)
- (5) ensure that the class work set for pupils with special educational needs links to the targets in their individual education plans.
(paragraphs 15, 35, 39, 101, 106)

Governors should also address the following minor issues in their action plan:

- ensure that the individual progress of pupils with English as an additional language is tracked systematically;
(paragraphs 16, 35, 53, 101)
- continue to strive to raise rates of attendance.
(paragraphs 26, 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

55

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

61

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	5	15	30	2	1	0
Percentage	4	9	27	55	4	2	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	306
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	110

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	119

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	23	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (73)	77 (71)	80 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	15	14	14
	Total	23	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (75)	73 (87)	80 (71)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	25	28	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	17
	Girls	15	11	15
	Total	23	21	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (58)	40 (53)	60 (63)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	18
	Girls	20	21	19
	Total	32	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (48)	70 (53)	70 (55)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	15
Indian	14
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	225
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Average class size	30.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	254

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.***Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.***Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	648396
Total expenditure	652218
Expenditure per pupil	1924
Balance brought forward from previous year	28766
Balance carried forward to next year	24944.31

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	312
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	31	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	52	6	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	44	15	4	4
The teaching is good.	70	28	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	41	7	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	69	30	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	24	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	35	17	2	6

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

78 There have been significant improvements in the provision for children in the nursery and reception classes since the previous inspection. The extension to the outdoor area, and the recent relocation of the reception class alongside the nursery class, has done a great deal to strengthen the strong team identity amongst the staff. Overall standards on entry are well below those expected of children of a similar age, and many start in the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal relationships. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in personal, social, emotional and physical development. However, many children enter Year 1 with standards that are below those indicated by the early learning goals. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Planning is secure and takes full account of the latest national guidance for children aged up to five.

Personal, social and emotional development

79 The quality of teaching and provision for the children's personal and social development is good. Relationships between staff and children are good and help to create a calm, positive and well-disciplined learning environment in both classes. A significant number of children start in the nursery with immature skills in personal and social development but demonstrate a growing confidence and self-assurance in their application to tasks. They are generally enthusiastic about their learning. Many settle quickly to their work and show increasing levels of independence. They behave well and have positive attitudes to work. Most understand what is expected of them. They co-operate well and recognise the need to take turns. Children sat patiently, for example, while others were receiving their flapjacks at snack time.

80 The youngest children in the nursery are beginning to listen to the teacher and one another, whilst the children in the reception class were keen to take part in a discussion about 'Winnie the Witch'. The adults provide good role models for the children: treating each other and the children with respect and courtesy. This warm trusting relationship is reflected in the positive way the majority of children play during free choice activities. For example, two children waited for another to buy her ticket before moving the 'pretend' train. Structured play, including role-play, is also used effectively to develop children's social skills. Care is taken to teach and reinforce good practice in relation to personal hygiene. The older children know the class routines well and observe them without needing to be constantly reminded. There was little evidence of children tidying away things for themselves and they missed an important opportunity to develop a respect for the environment and the property of others. Despite their good overall progress in personal, social and emotional development, many children start in Year 1 with standards below those expected nationally.

Communication, language and literacy

- 81 The quality of teaching and provision for developing children's communication, language and literacy is sound with good features. Teachers and nursery nurses often take opportunities to introduce new vocabulary. Children make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. The effective balance of whole class, group and individual work ensures that they have opportunities to inter-act with each other and adults in a range of situations. Role-play is used effectively to develop their communication skills. For example in the 'sausage song' the 'cooks' were asked to talk about the smell, taste and sound of the cooking sausages. Many children enjoyed using the word 'sizzle'.
- 82 Adults are careful to speak in sentences and ask pertinent questions that will extend children's vocabulary. A wide range of well structured and sequenced questions are used to encourage the more able children in longer conversations, challenging them to explain what they are thinking or give reasons for the choices they have made. In the discussion relating to the story *Tiny Titch*, nursery pupils were invited to suggest why he was called 'Tiny'. Good opportunities are provided for children to recall their experiences for the rest of the class. Many respond well in these sessions. The more able children in the reception class were keen to share their observations about the actions and feelings of the key character in the story *What a bad dog*. Two nursery children were able, with adult prompting, to tell the rest of the class what they did to make flapjacks.
- 83 Particular attention is paid to the speaking and listening needs of children with special educational needs. A nursery class teacher was observed in a careful discussion with a child about a 'firework mouse,' and as a result, the child began to use the new words himself to explain his ideas. In the same class, a nursery nurse used and repeated key vocabulary to a child with English as an additional language as he played in the sand. As a result, the boy began to use the words accurately and more confidently himself. However, despite their steady progress, a significant number of children enter Year 1 with communication skills that are well below the national average.
- 84 Progress in reading is satisfactory. Elements of the national literacy framework are used well in both classes. The children enjoy the 'big book' sessions and an increasing number attempt, with prompting, to read the names of characters or key words. The impact of this is reduced when the opportunity is not used to show children that oral sounds and printed words are linked. However, most children's limited vocabulary means that many find it difficult to discuss the content of stories or to express personal preferences or opinions. There are many displays around the bright and attractive classrooms that stimulate and support language and reading development, but few children were observed looking at books or pretending to read stories. A limited number are using their understanding of the sounds that letters make or picture clues with confidence and accuracy. Some know about authors. Many children start Year 1 with reading standards that are well below the nationally expected level.

- 85 Progress in writing is satisfactory. An increasing number of children are beginning to form recognisable letters. A small group of more able children were able to hold a pencil correctly and form letters independently. Few can write simple words without help. Teachers maintain a good balance between copy and independent writing. Improved skills in holding a pencil were displayed in the reception class activity when children traced the outline of a scary witch. Children do not have enough opportunities to see adults themselves writing, both in formal teaching sessions and informally when supporting them in their activities. Many children enter Year 1 with below average writing skills and some are well below average for their age.

Mathematical development

- 86 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and children make appropriate progress in mathematics and numeracy. Good opportunities are provided by teachers that reinforce children's understanding of numbers in all aspects of the curriculum. The morning and afternoon nursery sessions often begin or finish with the teacher and children singing number songs. Nursery children are learning to count, and an increasing number can count to five, whilst a small number of more able children can reach ten with prompting. Reception aged children and some more able from the nursery created, with some adult support, a hopscotch grid that required them to sequence numbers to ten. The staff use many opportunities to introduce and reinforce mathematical language such as 'more than' and 'less than'.
- 87 A group of three nursery children were observed in a weighing activity involving bears of three different sizes. The children were able to sort the bears in relation to size or colour and, because of skilful questioning by the teacher, they began to develop an understanding of what was required to balance the scales. During the course of this lengthy but well constructed dialogue, the teacher took every opportunity to assess and extend the children's vocabulary in relation to colour and size. A well constructed painting and number activity gave higher attaining children in the reception class a real challenge because it required them to translate domino spots into numbers. The majority of children in both classes demonstrated good levels of interest and enthusiasm for number problems. Two more able reception children responded enthusiastically when asked to identify and select shapes by name, and demonstrated an awareness of the basic symmetry of butterfly wings. The concept of sequencing is regularly reinforced through everyday classroom routines, getting ready for lessons and finishing sessions by following a set pattern. This was reinforced by staff consistently using the words 'before' and 'after'. Children make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics but, despite this, a significant number leave the reception class with standards of attainment below the expected level. Some children begin Year 1 with standards well below the national average in basic numeracy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 88 The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the provision is sound. Children are given opportunities to learn from a wealth of first-hand experiences. The

reception class has explored the nature and speed of colour changes. Nursery children learned about natural change by studying how bulbs grow. They understand the difference between butter and oats in the recipe for flapjacks, and older children can identify a range of fruit and vegetables correctly. Good opportunities are offered for nursery children to explore their senses through an inter-active display. Younger children, with adult support, demonstrated improving mouse skills when using computer programs.

- 89 The staff have appropriate plans to extend the range of ICT resources. Good use is made of visits and the locality to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world immediately around them. A visit to Green's Mill had been fully exploited by staff, and children were offered the opportunity to make bread from flour ground during their visit. Provision for the extension of their multi-cultural awareness is good and well supported by a significant number of books and resources, such as a range of cooking implements and utensils reflecting a diversity of cultures. They study and celebrate Diwali and have visited a Sikh temple. Reception aged children demonstrated an improved understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of ancient Egyptians' use of hand-spans as a means of measurement.

Physical development

- 90 The quality of teaching and provision for children's physical development is good. They handle pencils, paintbrushes, scissors, tools and construction materials with increasing control. Nursery aged children are able to select and stick materials during a collage activity whilst the reception children engaged in the 'Wilbur the cat' collage were able to shape and manipulate the materials they had selected. Staff teach cutting skills effectively. The children are developing improving skills of co-ordination of movements during their outdoor play and PE lessons. They can manoeuvre tricycles around a road track of obstacles, stop and change direction. In a reception PE lesson of very good quality, many children were observed running, hopping and skipping to music in a controlled manner. They demonstrated a good awareness of space and most used it well. The teacher and learning assistant's own energetic involvement was reflected in the children's high levels of enthusiasm and progress. The recent extension of the safe outdoor area has provided increased opportunities for children's physical development and they are encouraged to carry out a variety of independent practical activities. Although the school has an adequate supply of large outdoor equipment, which is used well, opportunities for extending the range are limited by the shortage of appropriate storage space.

Creative development

- 91 The provision for the children's creative development is sound and they make appropriate progress in response to satisfactory teaching. Children have daily opportunities to become engaged in creative work. They paint, print and create collage pictures using a variety of natural and man-made materials. Good opportunities are provided for them to explore texture, colour and shape. Children in the nursery class are making good progress with their singing

skills and are keen to join in with their favourite songs. The staff use every opportunity to reinforce basic learning in literacy and numeracy through music. Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to step into different roles and act in the home corner. Reception children's drawings of 'Martin, the character who was different' showed sensitivity, detail and care. The children were keen to discuss how he might have felt, being 'different'. The reception class used dramatic and subtle changes to colours in their 'Winnie the Witch' drawings to create original and startling new effects. Some demonstrated genuine awe and wonder at what they had created. Two children were delighted in creating and distributing their play-dough version of 'black ice-cream'. The staff in both classes make consistently good use of questions to challenge the children to explain and justify their choices so that they extend their initial ideas. There were however a few occasions where over-direction by some adults limited children's opportunities to be independently creative.

ENGLISH

- 92 Results in national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 were particularly low, being in the lowest 5% nationally and well below the average of pupils in similar schools. The school did not reach its target for English and the results were well below the teacher assessments, which have been much closer to the test results in other recent years. However, there were several unavoidable staff changes during the year affecting Year 6 pupils, as well as an unusually high percentage of pupils with special educational needs.
- 93 Pupils' test results at the age of seven were well below average in reading and writing in 2001. However, they were on an equal level with similar schools, as they have been for the previous three years. There has been a steady improvement in reading over that time and an overall improvement in writing. Results in spelling in 2001 were close to the provisional national average, a result of good and consistent teaching. In this year's tests for seven-year-olds, girls performed better than boys in reading and writing. During the previous three years, however, they did less well than boys. Teachers in Year 2 who had classes with twice as many girls as boys last year, now have the reverse situation, and have introduced particular strategies into their teaching which help boys to concentrate for longer periods.
- 94 The inspection judgement is that current standards, as seen in lessons and pupils' books, although higher than last year, are still below average. Many pupils start full-time schooling with below average skills in speaking and language. Two out of every five pupils are on the special educational needs register. Overall progress, including that made by pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Standards were below the national average at the time of the previous inspection in reading and writing, well below in speaking and close to average in listening.
- 95 Standards in speaking and listening are below average, although many pupils do well when there are planned opportunities for them to develop their skills.

Overall progress is satisfactory. In Year 2, for example, pupils take it in turn to talk about something they have brought to school. Skilled questioning encourages them to go into greater detail, bringing out a variety of language and vocabulary. Pupils listen carefully to each other and ask thoughtful questions. When Year 6 pupils prepared for a debate for and against child labour in Victorian times they took on different roles very effectively, such as a poor parent and a workhouse owner. “What on earth is a ‘porringer’?” asks a ‘poor parent’, using some of the technical language encountered in previous literacy lessons. The ‘workhouse owner’ was so much in his role that he challenged the proposed menu by insisting “You only get vinegar if I can get it really cheap!” In this context pupils develop their speaking and listening skills effectively. In other lessons, for older pupils particularly, there are not enough planned opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills. This holds back their learning in other subjects as well as in English, for example, when they need to be able to explain what they are doing and thinking in science and mathematics, or writing in history and geography lessons.

- 96 Standards in reading are below average at the age of eleven but progress over time is satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy reading, particularly those who choose their own books. They know what kind of books they like and can explain why, and have favourite authors such as J K Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. They find books exciting, and some read their favourites over and over again. Below average readers remain on reading scheme books as they move up the school. This limits their knowledge and experience of other books and authors. One older pupil wanted to read *Harry Potter* rather than the reading scheme book and could do so, when given the opportunity, using clues, his knowledge of the story and other appropriate reading strategies. He made better progress because his level of interest was much higher.
- 97 The majority of pupils in Year 1 are reading at a level below national expectations, but by Year 2 more are reading close to the expected level. Their progress is increased by good communication between home and school through the reading diaries. This collaboration works well, progress is good and standards have started to rise. The scheme is not used consistently for older pupils and there is no common system for recording or encouraging pupils’ progress in reading. Apart from reading scheme books, other books are kept in the class libraries and pupils use these to select their reading books. There is no regular opportunity for pupils to borrow books from the school library. Currently there are no fiction books on the library shelves as the room is being reorganised and its use to meet the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy are very limited. The school’s overall supply of books is extended appropriately with non-fiction and fiction books on loan from the local Education Library Service. The use of ICT to develop research skills and locate information is limited.
- 98 Standards in writing are below average and generally lower than in reading. However, pupils have limited skills on entry to school and therefore progress is satisfactory. Individual pupils’ progress is evident in their writing over a period of time. Many are using full stops and capital letters and spell common

words correctly by Year 2. Their handwriting is developing satisfactorily. By Year 6 average ability writers are planning their writing using a variety of vocabulary and a range of structures that create interest for the reader and improve the standard. A particularly effective example of this was seen when pupils planned an individual responses to scenic photographs. Their very good opening sentences included 'I looked at the river flowing faster and faster so that it eventually collided with rocks,' and 'The cool breeze ran round me trying to reach the other side of the calm water'. Their handwriting is joined and legible, and spelling is generally correct. Lower attaining writers, although some develop their ideas effectively by planning what they will write, still make basic errors of punctuation, spelling and grammar. This limits their ability to record accurately what they have learnt in other subjects such as science, for example, 'to much wires' for 'too many cables'.

- 99 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with one in every three lessons being good or better. Teachers are knowledgeable and their detailed planning shows that they have a good understanding of the literacy strategy. The most effective teaching happens when group activities are carefully matched to pupils' needs. They then try their hardest. Pupils' confidence increases in the lessons when the teacher uses every opportunity to reinforce the learning that is taking place. A lively style, good pace and interesting content keep pupils actively involved and learning. In most lessons teachers tell the pupils what they will be learning at the beginning of the lesson, and check and reinforce their understanding at the end. They manage pupils well, encouraging and praising effort. They establish good relationships with pupils, and behaviour is generally good so that pupils learn effectively. The quality of marking is a particular strength of the teaching. As well as praising what the pupils have achieved, the written comments tell them how to improve their work using language they can understand. These are reflected in their targets. Appropriate use is made of homework, particularly in Years 1 and 2. In addition to reading books and practising spellings, opportunities for research in Year 2 such as 'Keep a food diary for a day' is set and carried out successfully. Teachers support pupils' writing development effectively, for example, by extending their vocabulary to create more interest for the reader/listener, or by providing them with a structure for their writing.
- 100 Good learning takes place when teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm motivate pupils. Some remained passive in a few lessons in spite of the efforts of the teachers to provoke a response. Some younger pupils find it hard to sustain their listening over a longer period of time and so learn less. Teaching is less effective when there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills or extend their thinking. Pupils do not achieve as well as they might in lessons where the work is not closely matched to their ability. This occurs when the same work is set for all pupils and the level of difficulty is not appropriate. Insufficient use is made of pupils' new confidence in the use of ICT in English lessons.
- 101 Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are fully included in all lessons. Teaching assistants and nursery nurses work effectively in the classroom with activities planned by the teacher that explain

and reinforce the main learning points of the lesson. However, there is little reference to pupils' individual education plans or, for example, any notes or dates on the plans to indicate if pupils have made any progress towards their literacy objectives set by their previous teachers in July 2001. In most classes there are a few pupils who have English as an additional language and who make satisfactory progress overall. However, not all teachers are aware enough of any specific language needs of pupils where English might not be the language spoken at home.

- 102 English is well managed and led by experienced co-ordinators who have a good understanding of their subject. They support staff effectively by building up their expertise with resources and advice, and making them aware of training opportunities available from the local authority. They monitor planning throughout the school to make sure that the curriculum is fully covered. They have also observed teaching, most recently in Years 1 and 2, and have given demonstration lessons for other staff.
- 103 Many good systems and practices to raise standards are already in place. These include setting individual targets for pupils from assessed pieces of writing every half term. Teachers mark to the targets so pupils are clear how to improve their writing. There are target books and sheets so pupils and parents can see what pupils have achieved and what the next targets are. The co-ordinators and staff have produced a portfolio of assessed writing at every level to raise staff expertise in assessment and make it more reliable. Equally good systems are in place for the teaching of reading for younger pupils. However, these are either not present or being implemented with the same rigour with older pupils in Years 5 and 6, and so opportunities for teaching reading skills effectively and monitoring pupils' reading and assessing their progress are missed. There is little direction for the use of additional time for English. It is not consistently well used, particularly in older classes, either in the amount of time, or the nature of activities that take place. For example, where the teacher works with a group of pupils teaching reading skills, there is no structure to the activity for the rest of the class other than keeping on with the book they are reading. Less able readers have no opportunity to seek advice and therefore read without comprehension. Learning is then unsatisfactory for that part of the lesson for a significant proportion of pupils.

MATHEMATICS

- 104 The standards reached by seven old pupils in the 2001 national tests were well below average and were in the lowest 5% for eleven-year-olds. Standards at seven were below those of pupils in similar schools and well below at eleven. There had been some improvement by eleven-year-olds but not at the same rate as the national trend. Attainment was also well below national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven at the time of the last inspection. Standards have declined over recent years when compared to national averages. Seven-year-old girls did slightly better than boys but there was little difference between them at eleven. Teachers' own assessments of how well pupils would do suggested that more should have achieved a higher level. The school did not meet its target and has adjusted the 2002 target to more realistic levels.

- 105 The inspection judgement is that standards are rising and that attainment at the age of seven and eleven is now below, rather than well below, national averages. There are signs of improvement that indicate that all year groups, and pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress. Teachers are now more focused on raising standards and are using a wide variety of strategies to engage pupils and improve their performance. A new co-ordinator is in place, providing good leadership and helping colleagues to teach more effectively.
- 106 Seven-year-old pupils can recognise number patterns and can count in twos, fives and tens. Work in other aspects of mathematics is held back by poor language skills. Some worksheets are too complex for some pupils to understand and there is little evidence in pupils' books that they have applied their understanding of number to real life situations. They do not have a secure knowledge of the place value of three-digit numbers. Higher attaining pupils who were working with a calendar to classify months into seasons, for example, found it difficult to sequence the months of the year and find key numbers relating to birthdays and events in the year. Pupils are sometimes reluctant to share their answers in lessons and do not contribute to the discussion unless specifically encouraged to do so. Pupils with special educational needs cannot consistently add a two-digit number to a single-digit number. Some individual education plans are not specific enough and group work for those who will not have extra support from a teaching assistant is not always matched closely enough to pupils' actual levels of ability.
- 107 By the time pupils are in Year 5 they have strengthened their number skills. They make good progress when they calculate areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes using two-digit numbers. They work out formulae to improve their method and then apply them to other shapes.
- 108 However, by the time pupils are in Year 6, the majority have not developed their mathematical skills enough to match expected levels of attainment. Many of the current Year 6 pupils had started in Year 1 with below average standards, and their ability to work out problems has been limited by their language skills. Many have special educational needs. Their progress is satisfactory, but they have never caught up to the levels reached by many pupils of their age. Teachers use a variety of methods to extend the pupils' ability to compute using two and three-digit numbers. Pupils use their knowledge of mathematical tables and an ICT program to develop these concepts and to get practice in applying the rules of number. However, they have little understanding about collecting mathematical information and using graphs to interpret the data. Similarly they are reluctant to solve problems using their mathematical knowledge. Pupils do not carry out enough mathematical investigations or use their understanding of number to solve real problems. Standards in all these aspects of mathematics are below average for pupils of their age.
- 109 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some good features, especially in Years 5 and 6. The numeracy strategy has been implemented satisfactorily, and provides a secure framework for teachers'

planning. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher used a series of questions effectively to enable all pupils to share their methods and say how they arrived at their answers. She then used their examples to help other pupils and developed the confidence of all, including those who have special educational needs or who were reluctant to contribute to the lesson. In good lessons, as in Year 1, teachers share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they can extend their knowledge by learning mathematical key words and number facts. They use challenging questions and vary the approach they use for specific groups of pupils. Arrangements for homework are broadly typical of all primary schools.

- 110 The quality of learning is good when tasks are matched closely to each level of pupils' ability. In Year 6, for example, the pupils had all taken part in rapid and progressive discussion about the properties of various two- and three-dimensional shapes. The tasks that followed were based on the lesson and every pupil completed an expanded diagram in order to make a variety of shapes. Pupils with special educational needs were fully involved by teaching assistants and all pupils completed their specific task within the lesson. The good use of questions to follow up the lesson confirmed that pupils had made good progress and were ready to move to the next stage. This is the case in the majority of lessons. However, in some lessons where higher attaining pupils are not always given challenging tasks, they do not make sufficient progress and lose the opportunity to extend their learning by applying the skills they have learnt to other mathematical problems. In less effective lessons pupils are not able to complete the task they have been set because it is not matched to their ability and, consequently, they do not make satisfactory progress. Where pupils had different tasks but had to share apparatus, their response was slowed down because they could not discuss their methods or answers with each other and had to wait for the materials they needed.
- 111 The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are still gaps in the provision, particularly in data handling and applying mathematical knowledge. ICT is not used enough to present and analyse results. There are few opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects, although examples were seen of accurate measurement in a science lesson when pupils measured the different lengths of shadows using centimetre tapes. There are interactive mathematics displays in the classrooms, but few illustrate how mathematics can be used in everyday life. The school has recognised the gaps and is taking action to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered in greater depth.
- 112 Teachers' marking does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils about improving or extending their work. The use of symbols to alert pupils to think about or ask for help is helping younger pupils to respond. Pupils have mathematical targets, understand what they are expected to achieve and try hard to reach them. However, some class targets are too broad and limit the level of challenge for those capable of higher attainment. The results of assessment tests are recorded in pupils' progress books but are not used as the starting point for planning later work. They have little value other than recording the pupils' current levels of achievement. Targets are not shared with parents. This makes it very hard for them to support their children's mathematical development.

- 113 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She is committed to raising standards and keen to address the issues of pupils' achievement, resources and sharing good practice in the school. The results of last year's national tests have been analysed and the school is beginning to use the information to guide future planning and improve pupils' performance. This is a comparatively recent strategy but is beginning to impact on the school. Resources for the subject are adequate but are not enough for some oral and mental number activities. There are sufficient resources to support the other areas of the subject but they are often 'stretched' between two groups. This affects the efficient management of the lesson and limits pupils' progress.

SCIENCE

- 114 Standards are in line with national expectations at the age of seven, but are below average at the age of eleven. The poor results in national tests for eleven-year-olds have been a matter of concern for several years. Overall attainment has been in the lowest 5% since 1999, and was well below average when compared with similar schools. The school is now tackling the problem with a better and more systematic analysis of the reasons for poor attainment. The co-ordinator has identified that pupils' answers in the 2001 tests were imprecise, often not using the knowledge teachers knew they had, or the correct scientific vocabulary they had been taught. He is working with staff to correct this. The more able pupils from the two Year 6 classes are now taught together, and this is helping to create a feeling of achievement in lessons. The school is predicting a slight improvement in results in 2002. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, especially when they are supported by teaching assistants who help them with the group tasks.
- 115 Standards in the current Year 2 are in line with national expectations, and have risen since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress from the age of five has been good. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They know why healthy eating is important, and have used their numeracy skills to make graphs that compare healthy foods with favourite foods - not necessarily the same list! They understand the importance of cleaning teeth, using the word 'plaque' correctly. They recognise the essential elements for growth in humans and plants, and can explain how soil, water and sunlight changed their beans into tall plants. Higher attaining pupils use words such as 'pollination'. Pupils have studied magnetism and can list items in the classroom that are magnetic and non-magnetic. They know why birds and animals need an appropriate habitat if they are to thrive. They have some understanding of the properties of materials, recognising that heat changes ice into water.
- 116 Standards in Year 6 are below average. Pupils in the current Year 6 have made steady progress since their were formally assessed by teachers at the age of seven. They are not practised in talking and thinking in scientific terms. Many answers are given with little thought and pupils' written work is relatively immature. Poor literacy skills are evident in the low standard of spelling and use of language. Pupils have a very basic understanding of the functions of the main organs of the body and the properties of common

materials. Higher attaining pupils could describe the effects of change. Although all pupils know that boiling water turns to steam, and condenses back to a liquid when cooled, only the higher attaining pupils could express this using scientific vocabulary. Pupils' understanding of their work this term on electrical circuits and health and safety is superficial for their age. Pupils enjoy carrying out investigations, but most do not have the skills or confidence to design an experiment for themselves or explain how they would ensure a 'fair test.'

- 117 The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory. Particular strengths include teachers' confident use of their own subject knowledge and the ways in which basic scientific skills are taught. In the best lessons, an investigation into sundials in Year 6 for example, materials are well prepared and pupils are given plenty of opportunities to speculate and participate in the learning. The good use of open questions encourages pupils to think more deeply. Good links are made to numeracy, selecting which type of graph will be best for recording results. Pupils of all abilities are fully included in lessons, often with the quiet help of a teaching assistant who encourages their participation. Teaching is good when there is an insistence on the use of the correct scientific vocabulary. The repetition of 'positive' and 'negative' in one lesson on electricity by the teaching assistant as well as the teacher, ensured that pupils started using the words correctly themselves. Learning is also good when books are marked carefully and pupils know how to improve. Learning is good when teachers explain the purpose of the lesson clearly, as was seen in a Year 2 lesson on electrical circuits. The pupils settled to their work without any fuss and made good progress because they knew what they had to do and learn by the end of the session.
- 118 Teaching is not so strong when teachers' planning places too much emphasis on work sheets that are to be completed by the whole class. Pupils fill them in, but lower attaining pupils do not always understand the answers they are giving and higher attaining pupils have no stimulus to find out things for themselves or for work at a deeper level. This concern was also noted at the time of the previous inspection and has not been fully addressed. Although work is always marked, there is not enough analysis in some classes of where the different groups of pupils are being successful or are having difficulties. Again, this results in a lack of challenge for the more able pupils, and insufficient opportunities for lower attaining pupils to consolidate what they already know. Teaching is unsatisfactory on the very rare occasions when, despite the teacher's good planning and preparation, the poor behaviour and attitudes of a few pupils stops the rest of the class from learning effectively. Very little use is made of ICT. The school does not have the range of sensors and similar equipment for use in science lessons, nor make enough use of computer programs to record data or present results in graphical formats.
- 119 The quality of learning is better in Years 1 and 2 than in older classes. Pupils overall attitudes are more positive and they are prepared to make a greater effort. Their interest and concentration levels are higher, and are resulting in higher attainment. Although their attitudes were more positive in the actual lesson observed, Year 6 pupils are not generally enthusiastic about science and answer questions too quickly and without reflection.

- 120 The subject is managed effectively by a keen and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The scheme of work has been improved since the previous inspection, and takes proper account of the latest government guidance. He monitors teachers' planning, and has carried out some formal classroom observations in order to support colleagues and evaluate standards. He has started to analyse the results of last year's national tests, to introduce formal assessment at the end of blocks of work and to work with teachers to strengthen their practice. These are important steps in the right direction but are not yet rigorous enough in practice to help teachers raise standards. There is a basic range of science books in the library but pupils were not observed using them during the inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

- 121 Seven-year-old pupils are currently achieving results that are close to national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Progress is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection because the amount of time available for art and design has been reduced. Current standards at eleven are close to national expectations rather than being above. Pupils do not have as many opportunities to develop and consolidate their skills.
- 122 Pupils' work in folders and on display around school is varied and is often used to extend other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2, for example, use a variety of media as part of their work in history. This has included printing and drawing various Tudor houses and the use of colour mixing skills to illustrate the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Year 4 develop their landscape painting technique using aerial photographs from their geography lessons and mix various shades of pastel colour very carefully to interpret the different features of the landscape.
- 123 It was not possible to see enough teaching during the inspection to make a fair judgement of its quality. However, in the one lesson observed, the task related closely to the design element in the design and technology lesson that had begun earlier in the week. The teacher showed pupils how to use their observational skills and as well as their imaginations to design a Harry Potter logo. They were careful about using pencil shading and line drawing to illustrate their design. They were taught how to improve the quality of their work but did not have sufficient time in the short lesson to put the guidance into place. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their art and design work, pay close attention to detail and enjoy their lessons. They are frustrated when they do not have enough time to complete their tasks.
- 124 The scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that they use a wide range of different media. Eleven-year-olds can discuss their relative merits and how they can be used to replicate the styles and work of great artists. Pupils have some experience of working with two- and three-dimensional material but this is not yet secure. They have used a limited range of modelling materials to make and decorate facemasks. Pupils co-operate well and discuss their work with each other, making suggestions and giving their reasons for the particular

choice of materials they have made. They are keen to discuss their work with each other and recognise the features of good design. Pupils use technical language effectively and are encouraged to express their ideas clearly to the class. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well and contribute fully to the displays and other discussions about the work.

- 125 The management of the subject is good. The temporary co-ordinator has carried out a full audit of the subject and has introduced new materials as part of the implementation of the new scheme of work. The use of ICT is developing but does not yet contribute significantly to pupils' artwork. A new scheme based on national guidelines offers the opportunity to develop links with other subjects. It emphasises the skills development required so that pupils can make progress. The co-ordinator has provided sufficient and secure guidance to staff so that new ideas and variety can be introduced to support the scheme, but has had no opportunity to monitor what is taking place in the classrooms. Pupils were not observed using the library as part of their work in the subject during the inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 126 Standards at the age of seven and eleven are close to national expectations, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The curriculum has been revised and is now based on new national guidelines. Pupils now spend more time on designing their products and in looking at ways to modify and improve the design before they make it. These had previously been areas of concern. Teachers have worked hard to improve their planning so that the design elements are given sufficient emphasis. Additional guidance is available and the co-ordinator has provided resources and guidance so that pupils are able to recognise and discuss the merits of any design and how they can improve a product.
- 127 It was not possible to observe sufficient lessons during the inspection to make a judgment about the quality of teaching. However, from examining work in portfolios, displays of pupils' work and in discussions, it is clear that there is appropriate overall development of skills and knowledge across the curriculum. There are gaps, particularly in Years 3-6, because there is insufficient time available on the timetable to complete any project in depth or to extend other than the basic skills. Pupils looked forward to decorating their purses and boxes but they had to move on without enough time to give the attention to the stitching or painting that they would have liked. Pupils make satisfactory progress, particularly by the time they are seven, in using simple tools to cut a variety of materials. They make good progress in learning when they follow a recipe on how to make pizza. Volunteer helpers support them effectively. They recognise food hygiene rules and use the equipment safely before mixing and combining the ingredients.
- 128 Pupils in Year 6 were given very clear directions and provided with a variety of different models on which to base a design for a Harry Potter hat. The teacher developed their speaking and listening skills by introducing and discussing a range of different forms of headgear and their suitability for use

in various situations. Pupils were able to evaluate how the hat had been made, describing the materials and various facets of the hat in technological terms. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language made good progress because they also developed their language and design skills in their discussions.

- 129 The subject is managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who keeps a photographic record of pupils' achievement. However, there are insufficient opportunities to assess pupils' work against the objectives that have been identified. There has been some training for staff to update their skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the new scheme. The co-ordinator does not have any formal opportunity to monitor and evaluate work across the school, particularly at the essential planning and designing stage. There are insufficient links with ICT to develop the design aspects of the curriculum. Pupils were not observed using the library as part of their work in the subject during the inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

- 130 It was not possible to observe teaching in this subject in the inspection week. However, based on the evidence that was available at this early stage in the school year and discussions with pupils, standards in Year 6 and Year 2 are below the expected levels. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. The subject is taught in termly blocks alternating with history. It is taught for one term out of three in Years 1, 3, 5 and 6, and in two terms out of three in Years 2 and 4. Whilst this does give pupils time to study the subject in depth, they lose the opportunity to develop their geographical skills as a continuous process over the year and affects the overall quality of learning made by all pupils. Progress, including that made by pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory.
- 131 Geography is taught as part of topic work in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 2 learn about places and could find Nottingham and London successfully on a map and make basic comparisons. Pupils take one of the class bears with them on holiday and report back about the weather conditions in different countries, drawing pictures of the bears sitting in their deckchairs. In Year 4 pupils learn about village settlements and what they need to survive. They have located villages on a map of their own local area and investigated the origins of some of the names. They developed their geographical skills by drawing their own version of a map of the locality from 'a map taken from a helicopter'. Pupils are not familiar with the term 'aerial view'. They understand the purpose of symbols and a key on Ordnance Survey maps, and can explain the meaning of geographical vocabulary such as 'features, origin, and location'. They locate grid references using coordinates, drawing on the skills learned in numeracy lessons. Pupils in Year 6 recall little of geography over the years. They remember learning about Greece and Sparta last year, drawing maps and performing a play about it – 'really good!' However, this was a unit of study in history. They made comments such as 'Through the years we've not done that much geography' and 'We don't do that much of

anything in geography'. They know they will be studying rivers soon and are looking forward to it.

- 132 The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator undertook an analysis of pupils' work after the previous inspection, which revealed that some aspects were repeated. This is now no longer the case. In September 2000 the school adopted the units of work in the recent national guidelines for geography. The co-ordinator is aware that more resources are urgently needed, particularly ICT software, resources for studying a settlement abroad, and modern atlases. The current level of resources is inadequate if pupils are to develop their geographical understanding and enquiry skills. There is no formal assessment system so that teachers, pupils and parents can see how well pupils are doing. Little use is made of the library.

HISTORY

- 133 Current standards are broadly typical for pupils at the age of seven. However, evidence from an examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff, indicates that by the age of eleven pupils attainment is below the standards expected for their age. This is very similar to the time of the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- 134 Year 2 pupils were able to identify similarities and differences between different periods of time and demonstrate a firm grasp of details relating to the Fire of London, with more able pupils keen to discuss the causes and effects. Year 3 pupils acted as historical detectives and investigated aspects of Roman life through pictures. Teachers provide well-planned lessons, some of which attempt to develop the speaking and listening capability of pupils. For example, pupils in a mixed Year 5 and Year 6 class held a debate about child labour in Victorian times. They drew on the teacher's resource materials and their reading of Charles Dickens to make detailed comparisons between working conditions in the nineteenth century and present day. They showed an appropriate understanding that people would hold a variety of views depending on their station in life. The factory owner of the time was compared with his modern counter-part as well as with the life of the factory worker he employed. Pupils with special educational needs find it difficult to extract information from historical sources, including library books, unless helped by an adult or work partner. Good use is made of historical visits to the Brewhouse Yard Museum for younger pupils and to Nottingham Castle for older pupils. Viking 'visitors' had inspired pupils in Year 3.
- 135 Three history lessons were observed during the inspection, all in older classes. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory with many good features. Pupils enjoy history lessons and Year 6, for example, were able to draw on their knowledge of the text of Oliver Twist that they had studied in the literacy hour to give a context for their debate about the relative merits and weaknesses of the Victorian child labour system. In the best-taught lessons, teachers prepare their materials thoroughly and pass on their own interest to the pupils. Teaching and learning is particularly effective when pupils are

challenged intellectually and have to think deeply about what they are doing. Good teaching is seen when pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the learning through the support of a teaching assistant who helps them with any reading or writing task, and enables them to concentrate on the historical emphasis to the lesson. Their work is as interesting as the other groups, and other pupils value their contributions to the final session of the lesson. Appropriate use is made of ICT through researching facts stored on CD-ROMs.

- 136 There is a coherent overall plan for the teaching of history throughout the school that relates closely to national guidance, but there is no agreed way for monitoring pupils' progress in key historical skills. This makes it harder for teachers to evaluate their work or plan subsequent topics. The recently appointed co-ordinator has this in hand and plans to link it to her on-going monitoring of planning. She has not yet had the opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' attainment. The school has taken some steps to address the resource limitations identified in the previous inspection by increasing its stock of historical photographs and illustrations but there are few historical artefacts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

- 137 Standards are in line with national expectations at the age of seven but are below at the age of eleven. Attainment in ICT has to be seen in the context of the school's acquisition of new resources. Standards are rising rapidly in all parts of the school since the purchase of enough laptops for whole-class lessons. This has been alongside the reallocation of one of the nursery nurses' time as a teaching assistant so that he can use his considerable expertise in supporting and working with teachers in ICT skills lessons. All pupils make good progress because they are taught basic skills systematically. This is very different from the time of the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 are already close to expected levels, especially in communicating information using computers. Attainment in Year 6 is still below average as the pupils have a great deal to catch up. Although the school is now meeting the basic requirements in the National Curriculum, there is still some distance to go before pupils receive their full ICT entitlement. Older pupils do not have full access to the software and hardware needed to use ICT to control, measure, or test ideas with computer-based simulations. Teachers have not yet had access to the new training programme and there are limitations on how the laptops can be used because they are not currently directly linked to a printer,
- 138 Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language also make good progress because the paired work enables them to sit with a more skilled pupil and the instructions given by the teachers are extremely clear. Pupils with writing or spelling difficulties enjoy the easy way in which they can correct mistakes and set out their work in an attractive manner.
- 139 Seven-year-old pupils are familiar with computers, and their understanding is at levels expected nationally for their age. They can switch on, log on and use basic word processing and art programs. They use a basic vocabulary

accurately, including words such as 'icon', 'shift', and 'save' in their answers to teachers' questions about their work. They understand that messages can be sent electronically by e-mail and that information is available on Internet websites, and some have the skills to do this for themselves. They are familiar with the keyboard and enter their names, using the space bar and shift key correctly. They have some understanding of the use of ICT in every day life: swipe cards in shops and the bar codes on a supermarket packet. Most understand how TV sets can be controlled using an infrared remote control.

- 140 Eleven-year-old pupils are also familiar with ICT and computers, and many have their own computers at home. They have a satisfactory understanding of how e-mail and the Internet can be accessed through landlines. Higher attaining pupils log on confidently, and use the Internet within the boundaries set down by the school for safe access. They are competent in communicating information through word processing. They understand how to change the style, shape and colour of text, and how to import illustrations. They have used CD-ROMs to handle information and find out more about the Victorians. They have a limited recall of programming a floor robot. They have a basic understanding of how ICT is used in modern living, working out, for example, that a superstore's computer can count how many items have been sold and might be programmed to order replacements automatically. They can log onto the Internet and know that schools within the City have their own websites.
- 141 The overall quality of teaching is good. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson because the class teacher's own subject knowledge was insecure. A major improvement since the previous inspection is that ICT skills are now taught rigorously and systematically. Instruction is often shared between the class teacher and teaching assistant. This works well when it is clear which of the two is responsible for leading the lesson and evaluating its outcomes. Where the planning is unclear, the lesson loses its sense of purpose and pupils become confused. The split roles also make it harder to judge individual pupils' progress and plan successfully for the next lesson. Teaching tends to be for the whole class, which is acceptable in this early stage of using the laptops, but it does not make any allowance for the fact that some pupils are much more advanced than others. They have to wait, become bored and are not using their time productively.
- 142 Teaching is particularly effective, and pupils make good progress, when the materials are well prepared and basic skills are taught systematically. In one very successful lesson in Year 1, the teacher helped the pupils to find the keyboard keys they would be using on their own dummy keyboards and explained the meaning of new icons by using large pictures. When pupils opened their laptops and switched on, they were able to start their work very quickly because they had just practised what they had to do in a non-threatening way. In the best lessons, teachers link pupils' new ICT skills to other parts of the curriculum. Year 2, for example, practised their word processing skills to write a letter to the Rabbi who had visited the class in a religious education lesson. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

- 143 Three members of staff co-ordinate the subject. Although this means that budget, technical knowledge and curriculum understanding are all represented, it makes it harder to know exactly who is evaluating the current level of standards or planning a differentiated programme of work. There are well considered plans for the future development of the subject, including connecting the laptops to a common server and printer through a wireless link.

MUSIC

- 144 Based on the limited evidence available, standards are close to national expectations for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. The current Year 6 have little recall of what they have learned in previous lessons, but teachers' planning indicates a full programme has been taught. The overall standard of singing is high, and the quality of performance by the choir is outstanding.
- 145 The school employs a pianist to work alongside teachers in music lessons. This is good value for money as it ensures that all teachers can work confidently and that the pupils receive a balanced and appropriate curriculum. The pianist is normally employed at times of the week that fell outside the inspection, but came in for one lesson during the inspection, worked with a pupil with special educational needs, and accompanied the choir. Her contribution was of high quality in all three situations. Discussion with pupils indicated that they have regular opportunities to make music through singing and playing percussion instruments, have listened to a range of modern and past composers and have composed their own tunes. It is clear that music is very important, and that the subject makes an important contribution to the ethos of the school as a whole.
- 146 Not enough lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, the standard of work by the class teacher and the pianist were good in the lesson observed. They worked well together, and it was clear that the lesson had been planned by the teacher on a good understanding of what pupils had learned before and needed to do to improve. The singing was tuneful, with appropriate emphasises and mix of soft and loud singing. Thoughtful consideration was given to which instruments would add texture to the sound, and these were played confidently and with a good sense of rhythm. Pupils evaluated their own performance and improved through rehearsal. Learning was enjoyable, although two or three were reluctant to join in despite the teacher's encouragement. The lesson included a good cross-curricular link through the use of a world map to place the origin of the song in the Caribbean.
- 147 Pupils with special educational needs are included in all musical experiences and make satisfactory progress. Some are given opportunities to make music with the specialist. This gives the pupils concerned a great thrill, and enables them to grow in all round confidence and develop their listening skills.
- 148 The quality and range of work exhibited by the school choir is exceptional. High quality teaching and a deep pleasure in making music together combine to produce a range and quality of sound seldom heard in a primary school.

Singing is a physical pleasure because it is relaxed but technically rigorous. The pupils give of their best across a wide range of material. The choir includes boys and girls from seven years and above. A parent and a teacher joined them in the part-singing to keep their groups together, but the pupils hardly needed them as they felt part of the sound and wove their voices naturally, hearing how their own parts worked in harmony with others. It is not surprising that they are regularly invited to sing in concerts in the City. Their work makes an important contribution to the spiritual and cultural life of the school.

- 149 The subject is co-ordinated by a very experienced and dedicated member of staff. The school has produced its own scheme of work. This is a detailed and very useful programme that covers the full breadth of the National Curriculum for music and can be taught confidently by a non-specialist. All the strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained and strengthened.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION [PE]

- 150 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that overall standards at seven and eleven are broadly in line with those found in primary schools nationally. This is similar to the time of the previous inspection. The majority of pupils attain the required standard in swimming by the time they leave Year 6. The school places a high priority on this aspect of the curriculum.
- 151 As only two lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to comment on the quality of teaching throughout the school. The teaching was never less than satisfactory, and in one Year 2 lesson it was good. Both teachers had a secure subject knowledge and high levels of enthusiasm and, as a result, pupils displayed positive attitudes to learning. During a Year 2 dance lesson on 'the weather' pupils devised a sequence using a variety of body movements reflecting the pulse, beat and rhythm of a piece of African music and a single tambourine. In a Year 6 class, a well planned lesson relating to the teaching of racket skills included appropriate warm-up activities and ended with many pupils, including those with special educational needs, being able to demonstrate improved forehand and volley shots.
- 152 All teachers teach their own classes. A scrutiny of class timetables and discussion with pupils indicates an uneven entitlement to elements of the PE programme across the school and in Years 3-6 in particular. The strong emphasis on swimming on a half termly basis is in direct contrast to an under-emphasis on other aspects of the subject, and gymnastics in particular. Whole school planning is broadly linked to national guidelines, but medium term planning is unsatisfactory and does not provide a coherent programme for the teaching and consolidation of key skills. Attainment and progress in swimming are tracked carefully but other areas are neglected.
- 153 The new subject co-ordinator has a strong desire to raise the status and provision for PE throughout the school. She is ably assisted by a second member of staff who has carried out an analysis of resources to identify areas

for future development. Both have a good understanding of what needs to be done next to extend and improve the provision for all pupils. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor planning and teaching. Resources for the subject are limited. Some purchases, made before the new co-ordinator took up her post, were inappropriate and have not been good value for money.

- 154 There is a strong, successful and well run cross-country club, but other sporting extra-curricular activities are limited by the lack of a games field on site. The new co-ordinator has plans to introduce basketball and badminton. The school is justifiably proud of its adventure and camping programme for older pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 155 Standards in Year 6 and Year 2 are close to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The progress that pupils make, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. They develop a sound understanding of the world's major faiths, particularly those represented in the local community. Visitors to school from different faiths, as well as artefacts and resources used in lessons, add effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers make satisfactory use of a scheme of work that incorporates the locally agreed syllabus and the recent national guidelines. Since the last inspection the school has purchased artefacts to extend pupils' understanding of different faiths.
- 156 Two religious education lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was good in one and sound in the other. A main feature of the good lesson was the very effective contribution of the Hindu visitor who talked about the practice of worship in Hinduism. The teacher had used artefacts very effectively to create a Hindu shrine in the classroom, so that pupils became familiar with them and understood their symbolism. Pupils display a positive attitude and interest in finding out more. They had lots of prepared questions for the visitor and listened carefully to her explanations. The teacher reinforced the main learning and information points. Good preparation led to good learning. No use of ICT was observed during the inspection.
- 157 Teachers include time for discussion in their lessons in order to develop pupils' understanding of major religions as well as finding out more about them. For example in Year 2, when pupils learned about the significance of the Torah in Judaism, they learned about it from a local Rabbi who visits the school. In the following lesson, the teacher and some pupils brought in a book that was special to each of them, just as the Torah is special to Jews, and talked to the class about why their book was special. Pupils are then able to make the connection that, for people who believe, their religious book or scroll is very special. Some teachers are skilled in creating empathy, as when Year 5 were asked 'How would you feel? What would you do?'

- 158 Pupils display a very positive attitude to learning about the major faiths of the world and are respectful and genuinely interested. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of different cultures and to their spiritual development. Pupils in Year 6 understand the importance of rituals in different religions to show respect, such as washing before praying or touching a holy book. Pupils reported how good it was in Year 5 when they had members of four different religious faiths in the class, including the teacher, who all contributed to discussions.
- 159 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the role. He is undertaking an inventory of resources to see where there are any gaps in the provision and has ordered videos to support learning and promote class discussion. In a short space of time he has already contributed considerably to ensure coverage of the six major faiths and compliance with the locally agreed syllabus. There is, however, as yet no systematic assessment of pupils' progress in religious education. A good range of books is available for use in classrooms, but pupils were not observed extending their researches in the library.