

INSPECTION REPORT

FILTON AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Horfield, Bristol

LEA area: City of Bristol

Unique reference number: 108927

Headteacher: Mr Stuart Ransom

Reporting inspector: Mrs Kay Cornish
21080

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th June 2002

Inspection number: 243028

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lockleaze Road Horfield Bristol
Postcode:	BS7 9RP
Telephone number:	0117 5030305
Fax number:	0117 9030089
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Radcliffe
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21080	Kay Cornish Registered inspector	English; Art and design.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9644	Mike Whitaker 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?
22578	Gavin Jones Team inspector	Information and communication technology; Geography; History; Equal opportunities; Special educational needs.	Other specified features: Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit.
22704	Garry Williams Team inspector	Science; Design and technology; Physical education.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
20997	Kathy Gilbert Team inspector	Mathematics; Music; Religious education; English as an additional language.	

The inspection contractor was:

MSB Education Limited

Broomhill
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 7AR

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Filton Avenue Junior School has 288 pupils on roll aged from 7 to 11 years, of almost equal number of boys and girls. This is about average in size nationally. There are eleven classes with an average of 26 pupils. There is a unit within the school to cater for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Seven pupils attend this unit. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is 23, which at 8 per cent is higher than most schools. There have been nine occasions in the past year when pupils have been excluded for a fixed period of time. Seventy-six pupils are on the register of special educational needs. At 26 per cent this is above the national average. Ten pupils have statements of special educational need, at 3.5 per cent this is above the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 110, which is well above average at 38 per cent. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual time is about average for joining and higher for leaving. This is due to a local trend of falling rolls. Assessment of children on entry to Year 3 shows that a significant proportion is well below average on entry in reading, writing and mathematics. The playing field is a substantial asset to this city school site. Accommodation is spacious.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Filton Avenue Junior School is most effective at providing a very good education to enrich pupils' individual needs. During the inspection, pupils made good progress in their learning; over time, they show very good achievement from their well below national average standards on entry to Year 3. In 2001, the school received a National Achievement Award for its improvement in National Curriculum test results over four years. Standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection and, by the end of Year 6 pupils reach national average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science and most other subjects. They reach above the nationally expected levels for design and technology, music and physical education. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of Bristol's agreed syllabus. Aspects of pupils' writing and information and communication technology skills are below the nationally accepted levels, although the school has already identified these aspects for further development. The excellent headteacher gives very clear, purposeful educational direction and the governing body is excellent in fulfilling its statutory duties. It is strongly supported by the hard working staff. Teaching and pupils' learning are predominantly good. The school provides good educational inclusion for all pupils through sensitive support. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in design and technology, music and physical education are above nationally expected levels.
- Teaching is predominantly good.
- There is very good achievement by pupils from entry in Year 3 to the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher's leadership is excellent and purposeful. He is very well supported by his hard working deputy and staff.
- The excellent chairman ensures that the governing body fulfils its responsibilities to a very high standard. There is excellent financial planning to support educational priorities.
- There is very good management of the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit.
- Children's welfare is central to the school's ethos and there is a high standard of care.

What could be improved

- Pupils' writing standards and use of phonic building strategies.
- Aspects of pupils' skills in information and communication technology.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the previous inspection of May 1997. All the previous key issues have been rectified, although, due to new national initiatives, some aspects of pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) have still to be remedied. Successful initiatives include:

- Good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
- Provision of a computer suite with weekly access time for each class.
- An ICT technician has been employed and staff have completed training.
- The school has run family computing courses for parents and children.
- Higher attaining pupils have received greater challenges.
- There has been a major focus on pupils' writing and developing their research skills.
- All statutory requirements are now included in the governors annual report.
- Health and safety requirements are now fully met.
- New guidelines for homework have been issued.
- Links with the local community, businesses and industry have been further developed.
- Targets for the school's development plan are now fully costed.
- Subject co-ordinators have been given opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.
- Excellent financial management has improved accommodation.
- Performance management for staff is well established.
- The school has anticipated the effect of falling numbers on roll and has produced contingency plans.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores¹ in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	E	D
Mathematics	E	C	C	A
Science	E	D	D	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is well below the national average, with approximately two-fifths identified as having special educational needs. Currently, by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils reach national average standards in English, mathematics and science, with the exception of some aspects of skills in writing and ICT, which are below the nationally expected levels. In 2001 National Curriculum assessment tests, pupils' English scores were well below average in comparison with all schools nationally, and below the average of similar schools². This was due to low attainment in writing and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. Reading standards were much higher than writing and close to average. Mathematics results were close to national averages for all schools but well above average for similar schools. Science results were close to the national average for all schools but above the average for similar schools. Current standards in all other subjects are close to the nationally expected levels, although standards in design and technology, music and physical education are above. Pupils meet the requirements of

¹ Average points scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

² Schools with more than 35 per cent and up to 50 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Bristol's agreed syllabus for religious education. Higher attaining pupils receive good challenges and a significant majority consistently reach higher levels in their work. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress towards their realistic targets. Overall, from the beginning of Year 3 to the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements are very good and have improved since the previous inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils demonstrate good, positive attitudes to school. In lessons they show interest and enthusiasm. The majority are keen to take advantage of the extra opportunities on offer. Attitudes have improved since the previous inspection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	A very small minority of pupils have challenging behaviour but most pupils are unaffected by the negative attitudes of this group, due to the staff's consistently applied management strategies. Over the preceding twelve months, the school has effectively used exclusion on nine occasions. Behaviour is good, overall.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good due to good relationships and strong support throughout. Pupils are tolerant of each other and are happy to listen to those of different faiths. Pupils readily applaud the good efforts of others. During the inspection no racist or oppressive behaviour was observed. Pupils are drawn from a wide range of ethnic, faith and language communities. They are fully integrated due to the school's sensitive inclusion policy.
Attendance	Attendance levels are unsatisfactory compared with the averages for England. The disappointing levels are due to a lack of co-operation from certain families, although the school has made an effort to improve attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good

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

Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' good learning. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good. Seventy-seven lessons were observed. One lesson was excellent, seven lessons were very good, forty-five were good and twenty-four were satisfactory. No lesson was overall unsatisfactory. This is a positive picture and a good improvement from the previous inspection. Teaching is good in each year group. The teaching of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is good, although aspects in the teaching of writing are weaker. Although younger pupils lack reading strategies, there is very good development of speaking, listening and reading. There is predominantly very good teaching in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit and good teaching of music and physical education. Good teaching of design and technology is reflected in the high standards of pupils' finished products and their recorded evaluations. ICT teaching has improved with extra provision of equipment, although the teaching of data handling and control technology is underdeveloped. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language

is often good and there is very good use of highly effective teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. Teachers and all staff work very hard to provide a wide range of enrichment activities and there is very good commitment to raising pupils' standards. This impacts strongly on pupils' very good achievement over time.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and meet statutory requirements. All pupils are fully included in an enriching range of experiences most appropriate to the different cultures and customs. Although appropriately broad, the curriculum has some imbalances in aspects of writing and ICT skills. Teachers' curriculum and lesson planning is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs generally have very good access to the broad curriculum provided by the school, although some pupils sometimes miss science lessons and this is unsatisfactory. Pupils make good progress overall because of the high quality of support available. There is very good management of the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit so that pupils are fully included in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	As part of the school's family education programme, the provision for pupils with English as an additional language at home is well co-ordinated and closely monitored. Results indicate that pupils make good progress at the same rate as other pupils. Pupils adapt to English schooling quickly due to the extra teaching support funded by the local education authority and the warm welcome given by pupils and staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The calm, purposeful ethos ensures that pupils learn well so that personal development is good and pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very high standard of care for its pupils. Children's welfare is central to the school's ethos. All staff work hard to maintain a safe and happy environment. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Very good use is made of assessment to guide curriculum planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The excellent headteacher gives purposeful and very clear educational direction. He has very good support from the talented and hard working deputy and staff. The delegation of staff to managerial responsibilities is expertly managed so that monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators is very good and well established.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The excellent chair of governors gives loyal support and has been a wise influence through the management of change. The governing body is excellent in fulfilling its statutory duties and in shaping the direction of the school. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's development plan prioritises aspects of the school's progress, carefully identifying key personnel and costing initiatives. It is regularly evaluated by all governors and staff and updated frequently. The school takes good account of the opinions of all staff, parents and pupils through effective analysis of individual questionnaires, before making decisions.
The strategic use of resources	The school's educational priorities are supported very successfully through excellent financial planning. The excellent management of the budget reflects difficult decisions made to ensure the balance of staffing is kept constant, despite falling rolls due to the ageing estate which surrounds the school. The spacious accommodation and site have been imaginatively improved and have maximum use. Resources are generally good, although some resourcing for ICT software is lacking. There is excellent use of specific grants. Daily administration is efficient and unobtrusive due to an industrious administrator and assistant. Best value principles are applied regularly and the school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards attained by their children and good support given to them. Ready accessibility of staff. Welcoming and encouraging ethos. Good management of behaviour. Very good support for parents and children with English as an additional language. Good and regular information about children, school events and curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redecoration of the accommodation. A more appropriate lunch menu for wide cultural needs. A very small minority expressed concerns over pupils' aggression on the playground exit walkways. 26 per cent of parents were concerned about children's homework.

Inspectors agree with all that pleases parents. The redecoration of the rest of the accommodation is planned for in the forthcoming year, according to the budget. The school has begun negotiations with the catering firm for more appropriate menus, for example Halal foods, and pupils are included in the working party. No aggressive behaviour of pupils leaving

school at the end of the day was observed by inspectors. Evidence shows that information given to parents about homework procedures is good. However, there is some inconsistency in the regularity and amount of homework given between classes in each year group.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is well below the national average. By the time pupils are about to leave the school at the end of Year 6, they reach average standards in English, mathematics and science, with the exception of some aspects of personal, expressive writing and some aspects of ICT, which are below average. From the ages of 7 to 11, pupils' overall progress in learning is very good.
2. At the time of the previous inspection in May 1997, standards were close to average with exceptions in investigative aspects of mathematics and data handling, which were below. Results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 in 1996, showed that pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was well below the national averages, but science attainment met the national average. All other subjects were satisfactory, apart from skills in information technology, which were unsatisfactory. Higher attaining pupils lacked challenges and underachieved. Special educational needs provision ensured that pupils made satisfactory progress. Since the previous inspection, there has been very good achievement made by pupils.
3. In the 2001 National Curriculum assessment tests, pupils in Year 6 had average point scores in English which were well below the average when compared with all schools. They were below average in comparison with similar schools. This was due to a low level of writing skills and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Reading standards were much higher than writing. Mathematics results were close to the national average for all schools. The school's performance in National Curriculum mathematics tests in 2001 was well above average when compared with the results of similar schools. Science results were in line with the national averages for Level 4 (the expected level) or above, but slightly below on average point scores. Compared with similar schools, the school's performance in science was above average. In 2001, the school received a National Achievement Award for its improvement in National Curriculum test results over four years.
4. Trends over time in the school's average National Curriculum points for all subjects tested were broadly in line with the national upward trends. Results show that higher attaining pupils and pupils with English as an additional language, were successfully challenged. The higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 in 2001, reduced the average scores compared with all schools nationally. Boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science, but girls' results were higher than boys in English. However, in 2001, there were nearly twice as many boys as girls on the Year 6 register. The school has made a very good analysis of its performances in National Curriculum tests over time, both according to gender and minority ethnic needs. It has identified that skills in writing are unsatisfactory, particularly for boys.
5. Current standards in Year 6 show an improvement from those of 2001, and very good improvement from well below average when pupils entered in Year 3. There has been good progress towards targets. Year 6 standards in speaking, listening and reading are close to the national averages, as are English standards overall. However, aspects of writing are weaker and in need of further development. Standards in science and mathematics are close to the national averages. Standards in ICT are close to expected levels for word processing, but are below in data handling and control technology using sensors, due largely to problems

with software. Pupils reach the nationally expected levels in art and design, history and geography. Their standards are above the nationally expected levels for design and technology, music and physical education. They meet the requirements of Bristol's agreed syllabus in religious education.

6. Both the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented well, particularly for reading. The good implementation of both strategies has had a very good influence on improving reading comprehension and knowledge about children's literature and authors. Improvements are noted in pupils' understanding of the value of each digit in large numbers and flexibility with calculating numbers. The very good progress pupils show in basic skills has ensured that standards for research, collecting information and recording findings in other subjects, such as science, history and geography, are strongly supported. However, opportunities given to pupils to write their own imaginative thoughts are too limited, due to the heavy emphasis on worksheets in these subjects.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress over the four years. This evidence is supported by the reduction of numbers of pupils identified in need of extra challenging as they progress through the school, having received at least good support from teachers and their assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress due to specialist help and consistent support, as, for example, when pupils and their families are provided with translations of documents when transferring between stages of schooling. The school's fully inclusive programmes of education ensure an open acceptance of all individuals, which increases the confidence of pupils and encourages good learning. Higher attaining pupils in each year group are challenged progressively in order to achieve standards above the accepted levels. The only exceptions are in aspects of pupils' writing and skills in ICT.

8. The successful picture is one of strongly improving standards and very good achievement from the low level on entry in Year 3, due to good teaching and good overall subject provision.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils demonstrate good, positive attitudes to school. A significant majority of pupils are interested in their school work and keen to take advantage of the opportunities the school offers, such as singing in the choir, playing a musical instrument or taking part in the country dance club. In lessons, pupils show interest and enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, in which pupils were generating ideas for a story called 'Trapped', there was a buzz of industrious enthusiasm as pupils responded to the teacher's brisk pace and lively style. Older pupils are equally responsive to challenge, discipline and high expectations, as was seen in a Year 6 physical education lesson in which pupils were practising the skills of running and jumping. They evaluated and recorded each other's performance, demonstrating their ability to work responsibly and independently. In each class in the school, there is a minority of pupils whose attitudes are unsatisfactory. A number of these pupils have diagnosed emotional and behavioural difficulties, whilst others are immature and have yet to reach the school's behavioural expectations. The majority of pupils are unaffected by the negative attitudes of this group, due to teachers' good behaviour management strategies. Pupils' attitudes to school have improved since the previous inspection.

10. Behaviour is good, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Behavioural standards improve as pupils move up through the school and develop in maturity and understanding of the school's requirements. In lessons, pupils respond positively to well established classroom routines. The majority of pupils are polite and respectful to their teachers and other adults in school, and generally behave well in assemblies. Pupils are pleasant, friendly and keen to show visitors their work. Play is lively but well supervised; nothing threatening was observed. Some parents expressed concerns regarding aggressive

conduct as pupils leave the premises at the end of the day. Part of their route from the school premises to the main road passes through a narrow, high fenced alley, which would certainly facilitate unpleasant behaviour (and which may well be outside the Junior School's jurisdiction) but nothing of concern was observed during the inspection. Over the preceding twelve months, the school has used exclusion on nine occasions. As with attitudes, there is a minority of pupils in all classes who display challenging behaviour. For the most part, this consists of low level disruption - fidgeting, fiddling with pens and pencils and talking when the teacher is talking, but on occasions, it escalates to confrontation and defiance. Such instances are invariably expertly handled by staff employing well understood procedures. Such conduct has little immediate impact on the rest of the class.

11. The school is an inclusive one. It contains pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, with a wide range of abilities. Pupils are drawn from a number of ethnic, faith and language communities. All are fully involved in the life of the school. During the inspection, no racist or sexist behaviour was seen, nor was any bullying observed. Although in a pupil questionnaire of June 2001, half the respondents said that they were 'sometimes bullied in the playground', inspectors saw no evidence of this. Pupils from both sexes and all backgrounds take part in social, artistic and sporting activities - girls play football and boys play recorders and enjoy country dancing. The school records accurately any racial or sexual harassment in order to identify and respond quickly to emerging problems. The school celebrates the diversity of values, beliefs and cultures.

12. Pupils with special educational needs show good and sometimes very good attitudes towards their work and towards the support they receive. They were seen working in mixed ability groups, on their own, and within groups of pupils with similar abilities. Pupils' behaviour in all of these settings is regularly good.

13. Pupils' personal development is good, as was reported in the previous inspection report. Most pupils have regular school and classroom routines - from watering plants to looking after the overhead projector - which they carry out diligently. They are tolerant of each other and are happy to listen to those of a different faith, as was seen in a Year 6 religious education lesson, where pupils from minority communities were leading group discussions about the rites of passage in their faiths. Pupils demonstrate maturity in confronting potentially difficult issues, as was seen in a Year 5 science class discussing changes in boys' and girls' bodies at puberty. Relationships are good. There is a clear rapport in many classes between pupils and staff. Teachers treat pupils with respect, valuing each contribution. One parent at the pre-inspection meeting observed that, "Staff do not talk down to children." Particularly strong and supportive relationships develop between pupils with special educational needs and the learning support assistants with whom they work. Pupils, for the most part, relate well to each other. They listen to each other's contributions in lessons and readily applaud good effort.

14. Attendance is unsatisfactory. In the past year, authorised absence was 6.8 per cent and unauthorised absence was 1 per cent. Both figures exceed the national averages for primary schools. The authorised absence rate is very similar to that noted at the previous inspection but the incidence of unauthorised absence has increased. The disappointing attendance levels are due to a number of factors, including term time holidays (including long term visits to the Indian sub-continent) and problems with dysfunctional families. There is some lateness, particularly amongst pupils from families with domestic difficulties.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' good learning. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good. A proportion of teaching was very good and one lesson was excellent. No lesson was overall unsatisfactory. Seventy-seven lessons were observed. One lesson was excellent, seven lessons were very good, forty-five were good and twenty-four

were satisfactory. This is a positive picture and a strong improvement from the previous inspection.

16. Teaching throughout is good, with very good features. As a result, pupils' learning in lessons is consistently good. Achievement over time is very good. When teaching is very good, there are high expectations of pupils' performances and very good challenges given to interest pupils and maintain their concentration. Teachers deploy effective methods to ensure good standards and they use a variety of approaches as, for example, when pairing pupils for discussion, ensuring practical investigations in mathematics and science, and enabling group feedback when discussing a variety of styles in landscape art.

17. Displays are colourful and frequently initiate good responses through leading questions. Throughout, the good management of pupils' behaviour is consistent so that pupils' co-operation and respect are strongly evident. Planning of lessons is good and teaching assistants are given very good guidance in their deployment. The use of support staff and resources is very good so that teaching assistants offer very good support during lessons or on other occasions. Good assessment procedures are used constructively to plan further lessons and all teachers and assistants know their pupils well. Marking of pupils' recorded work gives clear guidance for improvement. However, although homework procedures are very clear for parents, the consistency in amount and regularity of homework given within each year group varies, and this is unsatisfactory.

18. Teachers' knowledge of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy is good and both strategies are implemented strongly, although weaknesses exist in the teaching of writing. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write complex sentences with enriched phrases or to engage in their own personal expressive writing. Handwriting is not practised sufficiently in some classes and older pupils' paragraphing is underdeveloped. Younger pupils lack sufficient phonic building strategies (where letters and words are sounded out) or practising the use of picture dictionaries. However, there is very good development of speaking and listening and of reading, particularly in comprehending a variety of texts, discussing characters, plots, a wide range of different types of literature, and the resolution of conflicts within stories. There is predominantly very good teaching in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit. Good teaching of design and technology is reflected in the high standards of pupils' finished products and their recorded evaluations. There is good teaching of music and physical education. Although teaching in ICT has improved, with extra provision of equipment, the teaching of data handling and control technology is underdeveloped and a lack of sufficient software has restricted the teaching of some programmes of study for ICT.

19. Teachers match tasks to pupils' prior learning effectively, so that lessons meet the needs of all pupils, the higher attaining pupils, the average, and those with special educational needs. Teaching by learning support assistants is good overall, with some examples of very good teaching. Equally the special educational needs co-ordinator and the teacher both have many skills which they use to good effect when working with pupils who have special educational needs. Many learning support staff are very well qualified through training as well as experience. This has a very positive impact on their effectiveness.

20. Teachers and all staff work very hard to provide a wide range of enrichment activities throughout the year so that all pupils are allowed to participate in activities wherever possible as, for example, when drummers and performers of circus skills visited the school. All staff work closely as a team, with very good commitment to raising pupils' standards, offering good support to each other and to pupils. The impact of this results in pupils' very good achievement over time and their good attitudes and behaviour.

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

21. The planned curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good. It is sufficiently broad to meet requirements, offering all subjects of the National Curriculum; and religious education which is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is relevant to the understanding and interests of the pupils. Time allocation for each subject has been appropriately adjusted to ensure full coverage of the programmes of study. The balance of the curriculum is weighted towards English and mathematics and this is appropriate for the needs of all pupils. The school fully recognises that pupils come from a wide range of different backgrounds and religious cultures and is sensitive to their traditions.

22. Pupils with special educational needs generally have very good access to the broad curriculum provided by the school. However, on occasions, some pupils are too regularly taken out of other subjects in order to have extra support for English. The time is now appropriate for the school to check the timetables of pupils who have regular support, in order to ascertain if their equal opportunities are inadvertently being eroded.

23. Most pupils have equal access to the broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Awareness of other cultures is promoted successfully through religious education, but could be better promoted within music, art and design. There is little evidence of art from Eastern cultures, and music celebrating ethnic communities is not regularly played in school. Higher attaining pupils are now better challenged in their tasks.

24. Although appropriately broad, the curriculum does have some imbalances in the teaching and planning of ICT and aspects of pupils' writing. There is an imbalance in the opportunities provided for data handling, measuring and sensing and current shortcomings in data handling and control technology. The school acknowledges this and is to address it as a matter of urgency. The school has already identified the deficiencies in planning for aspects of pupils' writing, and participation in a new local project has already started. The school is fully inclusive in most of its practices and all pupils generally have access to the curriculum.

25. The curriculum is enriched through a range of visits and visitors to the school, as, for example, in the 'Walk along the Trym' which supports geography studies in Year 6. A seven day residential visit in Years 5 and 6 supports pupils' environmental programme as well as their physical activities when pupils acquire map reading skills required for orienteering and walking, and when they use the swimming pool to develop confidence and stamina. Visitors to the school include the Theatre for Science and a drum workshop as well as a Life Skills Course for pupils in Year 6. These are only a few of the enrichment activities on offer.

26. Planning is broken down into appropriate units of work, some drawn directly from nationally recommended schemes of work, others from a customised version more appropriate to suit the needs of the pupils. All subjects are supported by policy documents and schemes of work, and this represents improvement from the previous inspection. Short term planning identifies clearly the objectives for the week, which are conveyed to pupils at the beginning of each lesson. The overall management of the curriculum is the responsibility of the headteacher and deputy head, who have established new systems to enable co-ordinators to monitor more effectively the planning, teaching, learning and standards of their subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are both well established and have a good impact on pupils' learning, particularly in speaking, listening and reading. Literacy skills are taught very competently, with the exception of personal expressive writing tasks, over and above the literacy hour. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully in this school and there is clear evidence of improving standards in mathematics.

27. Pupils from all ethnic groups and those with English as a second language, are fully involved in all activities. These pupils are provided with individual and group tuition by specialist part-time staff. Currently this represents eight per cent of the school roll. This is a decrease since the previous inspection, when the figure was 17 per cent. Staff identify pupils with problems in consultation with the local education authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement co-ordination services. New pupils join a pre-tutoring course to enable them to settle into the school environment. Scientific and mathematical vocabulary has been identified as a weakness for girls, and a programme has been designed to support them. The school shares a support teacher with the main feeder infant school, and this ensures a high degree of continuity for pupils and their families. Support teachers from the local education authority work with pupils and their families through home visits and by providing a translation service for documentation required for pupils to complete their education. Equality of opportunity is provided for all pupils. Pupils with emotional and behavioural problems are supported through games, role play and discussion to enable the development of more positive attitudes to education and society. As part of its family education programme, the school will host a family reading course next term and will actively seek to involve parents for whom English is an additional language. Provision for English as an additional language is successfully co-ordinated. Records are kept regularly and pupils' achievement is monitored and analysed. Results indicate that these pupils make progress at the same rate as other pupils. Overall, the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are identified early and have good individual education plans. Accurate assessments are made of pupils' individual needs, which lead to clear and precise individual education plans being established. These are reviewed on a regular basis, but there is no 'at-a-glance' system of tracking particular progress towards targets of special educational needs pupils as a group. The school is aware of this and is to receive advice shortly.

29. The school offers an effective programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education. Some is in its infancy and some new initiatives, which are good, need time to become firmly embedded, but these are very positive moves. Sex education is included as part of the personal, social, moral and health education provision and is taught in conjunction with science. The staff recently received an in-service training day with the focus on sex education and drugs awareness and one member of staff is solely responsible for this area. The local constabulary is not involved in supporting this area of the curriculum. These aspects are taught through circle time³ as well as part of the class science programme when other aspects such as relationships receive a high focus. The school is part of the Bristol Healthy Schools initiative and a school counsellor, sponsored by the NSPCC as part of the Children's Fund initiative, is available at the school once a week to discuss any problems, such as bullying, which pupils feel they may want to chat about.

30. Provision for extracurricular activities is good and lunchtime and after school clubs are an integral part of school life. Opportunities to appreciate music are regularly provided by the school. There is a high focus on musical activities with tuition being offered for string, woodwind and recorder. Clubs include football, rugby, cricket, netball, gymnastics and country dancing. The school joins with other local schools in tournaments, such as rugby, football and netball. These activities, together with the residential experiences, complement and extend the school curriculum, as well as promoting personal and social skills, improving relationships and developing independence and interdependence.

31. Good links have been established with the community. Sports links have been established with various sporting clubs, including rugby, football and cricket. Quality links have been established with local shops and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. These community links support learning in the school, which continually strives

³ In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.

to establish and maintain contacts with the local community to support their belief of the school being a community within the wider community. Disappointingly, there is a distinct lack of support from the police, which has diminished over the past few years.

32. Effective liaison has been established with feeder, cluster and acceptor schools. An effective headteacher group has been established. There is a cluster group for the feeder schools involved in considering different aspects of the curriculum. These include special educational needs, literacy, personal, social and health education and involvement with the City Learning Centre for ICT.

33. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a similar picture to that provided at the previous inspection. The dedicated headteacher, ably supported by caring and committed staff, is pivotal in this position. Filton Avenue Junior School is a very caring place, where the principles for showing compassion and respect for each other are evident. Assemblies are planned to encourage pupils to consider their own attitudes and feelings and their effects on others. In subjects such as music, history and English, pupils have the opportunity to consider the effects of emotions and actions on the outcome of any situation.

34. The calm and purposeful atmosphere has created an environment where pupils can learn effectively. Attitudes to school are positive and pupils' behaviour is good. The experiences and activities that are offered to pupils, in lessons, educational visits and through visitors to the school, effectively help to prepare them for life.

35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There is a planned programme of collective worship that is mainly Christian, but includes a range of festivals and events from other religions. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on some of the fundamental questions in their lives and on themes such as tolerance, forgiveness and care which particularly support the school community. Teachers take care to value pupils' ideas for others to see. In mathematics lessons, there are plenary sessions where pupils are helped to take a pride in themselves through the opportunity to demonstrate how they calculated a particular answer. There are genuine moments of awe and wonder in lessons, such as when a pupil in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit was able to complete a circuit and light a bulb during a science lesson. Similarly, there is joy shown by Year 3 pupils as they proudly show the purses they have made in design and technology. Recent renovations have enhanced the school buildings and created a courtyard garden. These improvements are aesthetically pleasing and help to raise pupils' self esteem.

36. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils' moral development and opportunities are created to emphasise moral issues. Staff work hard to develop high moral standards. Pupils are thoroughly taught principles of right and wrong. These are embedded in school life through a clear code of conduct and expectations of behaviour. Rules for behaviour are clearly displayed. Good behaviour is rewarded and enables pupils to choose an activity for the whole class. Such activities enable pupils to understand other people's points of view and to be aware of how their actions affect other people. Equal opportunities are actively promoted, regardless of ability, background, gender or belief. Success and achievement in behaviour and academic work are praised and commended publicly. Pupils are courteous and considerate of others. Teachers lead by example and treat pupils with individual respect. Year 6 pupils discuss the treatment of children in Victorian society in history, and in English lessons they consider the dilemmas faced by children in step families as portrayed by modern fiction. Year 3 pupils discuss the fairness of equal shares in numeracy.

37. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Social education permeates all aspects of the school's life. Good relationships exist throughout the school. A range of activities supports social development. Pupils have the opportunity to experience residential education in Years 5 and 6. Throughout the school year, there is a programme of clubs and activities during the lunch hour and after school. These activities combined with the

programme of visits and visitors to the school encourage this development. Filton Avenue Junior School is an inclusive community: it supports pupils for whom English is an additional language by providing translations and explanations of documentation, such as transfer to secondary education. Pupils are encouraged to show care and consideration to others. Circle time is used effectively to help pupils understand other people's points of view and to be aware of how their actions affect others. In a very successful English lesson in Year 6, pupils discussed a difficult family situation described in a novel. This discussion raised pupils' awareness of the NSPCC counsellor's box available to all pupils. Charitable initiatives are supported, including singing at an annual carol concert to raise money for the Save the Children Fund.

38. Provision for cultural education is satisfactory. There are planned opportunities for pupils to recognise and appreciate British culture. The Golden Jubilee celebrations provided a focus for research into the monarchy. Visitors to the school have provided pupils with the experiences of Morris dancing, theatre, circus skills and contemporary music. Religious education includes an opportunity for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. A multicultural assembly has been celebrated, combining the cultural heritage of pupils and work on other faiths. Pupils celebrate other festivals besides Christmas and Easter. They learn about the Hindu Diwali and the Muslim Eid. Pupils from different faith communities describe their beliefs to their peers with confidence. In English, history, geography, music and art and design, pupils' cultural understanding is developed. Pupils are introduced to drumming through listening and appraising in music lessons. This has been further supported by a whole school presentation by a contemporary musician. Pupils study the work of famous artists, as, for example, when Year 6 pupils study Picasso and create their own versions of his work. Currently pupils are able to watch an artist at work, painting scenes from history on walls within the school grounds. Filton Avenue Junior School celebrates the cultural diversity of its community and this ensures that its pupils are prepared for life in a modern, multicultural society.

39. All pupils are present during collective worship. Worship is included in song practice, and hymns are selected to support the theme of worship. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Collective worship strongly supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils. A focus for worship makes this occasion special, and time for reflection, to include the development of personal insight, is provided. However, presentations from visitors leading school assemblies do not always include worship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school provides a very high standard of care for its pupils. The headteacher is responsible for child protection matters; all staff, including support staff, are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. The necessary pastoral support plans are in place for 'children looked after'; a nominated governor has responsibility for them. Children's welfare is central to the school's ethos. The headteacher and senior staff spend considerable amounts of time on informal support for parents and children. The school hosts a counsellor from the NSPCC. In a four week period, seventy children made contact with her, through the community education service. The problems posed by underachieving and disaffected Afro-Caribbean boys are addressed by a visiting teacher from the Bristol Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. Working with pupils, staff and families, he has achieved success in improving the attitudes of the pupils concerned. Pupils in Year 6 attend the Bristol Life Skills course, in which they learn about hazards to safe and healthy living.

41. All necessary health and safety procedures are in place. A member of the governing body and a staff health and safety representative make periodic inspections of the premises. Contracts are in place for the regular safety inspection of physical education apparatus, electrical items and fire equipment. Fire drills are held termly and the bell tested regularly. There are competent arrangements for first aid, of which pupils are well aware. Records of

treatment are kept and parents informed of bumps to the head. Health and safety is addressed in the curriculum: for example in physical education lessons, pupils are able to explain why they have warming up and cooling down exercises.

42. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance. Registers are properly maintained and checked. Parents are contacted when their child has been absent without explanation after three days. Where the child is thought to be at risk or liable to truant, the contact is made immediately. Late arrivals are recorded in a 'late book'; entries are examined and parents of consistent latecomers are contacted. The services of an education welfare officer are available to the school but the local education authority expects the school to take a number of steps itself, in advance of a referral. The school knows that its attendance level is below the national average and analyses figures carefully. Because of attitudes to school attendance in the catchment area, attendance is below average - school is not seen by a number of families as being of real significance. This problem is compounded by a small number of pupils with extremely poor attendance records - three pupils in one year group missed a total of 166 sessions in one term. In addition, a number of families take holidays in term time - the financial saving is considerable and the area served is predominantly low income but this negatively affects pupils' education. The school presents awards annually to both good attenders and improved attenders. Families posing particular problems are contacted directly and invited to attendance 'surgeries'. Considerable improvement in attendance was achieved in some (but not all) of the families.

43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The creation of an orderly and secure learning environment continues to be a principal focus of the school's development plan. Staff have high expectations of pupil behaviour, underpinned by clear rewards and sanctions. A class can earn a reward - which may be a video or additional physical education - through accumulating points. Equally, poor behaviour may result in the loss of free time - referred to as 'payback'. There is a precise hierarchy of sanctions, ranging from warning, through 'name on the board' to 'time out' in another classroom, for unsatisfactory behaviour. The school's rules, and the consequences of their transgression, are displayed all over the school. Pupils are well aware of the school's expectations. The consistency with which all staff implement the behaviour policy is impressive. Behaviour is thoroughly monitored; class teachers keep comprehensive behaviour records of all instances. There is a lunch time club for those pupils who behave unacceptably during the lunch hour. Led by two appropriately trained learning support assistants, the club provides structured activities for such pupils. Certain pupils may be subject to a daily report procedure, which involves their parents. Procedures for pupils in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit are broadly similar, but subject to modification as the need arises (these pupils may present extreme behavioural problems). When pupils from the unit are attending lessons in other classes, they are subject to exactly the same rules as the rest of the class.

44. There are good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Instances of bullying are recorded and monitored for recurrence. Parents are involved when a second instance happens. The headteacher maintains and monitors the required record of racist instances. The issue of racism is addressed through the school's programme of personal, social and health education and in assemblies. Visitors from various ethnic minorities work with pupils; minority cultures and faiths are celebrated in religious education lessons.

45. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good. Each class teacher keeps comprehensive records of pupils' progress in the core subjects of English (including a reading log and spelling test results), mathematics and science. Such records are used for reporting clearly to parents, for determining work groups in classes, and for deciding whether pupils need additional support in literacy. Pupils are given targets in English and mathematics and each pupil has a progress book in these subjects. Assessments support the notion that pupils from all groups make similar progress as a result of planning being implemented successfully. Higher attaining pupils are readily identified and supported.

46. There are good systems for identifying and assessing pupils' special educational needs. All members of staff work hard to gather information about the pupils they work with. This leads to the establishment of clear and precise individual education plans being developed which are reviewed on a regular basis. However, the analysing of the collection, and collation of ongoing assessments for the whole school, is not currently being carried out successfully by the co-ordinator. No effective system exists for tracking progress of pupils with special educational needs as a group towards targets on a regular basis. The school is aware of this and will shortly receive further advice in order to improve the situation. Bearing in mind the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs, the co-ordinator lacks sufficient time to complete this task and no other adult has been identified to co-ordinate an effective tracking system or to analyse data.

47. Very good use is made of assessment information to guide curriculum planning. On entry to the school, pupils' results in the Year 2 national tests are analysed. Subsequent tests, including optional national tests and the school's own reading and mathematics tests, are analysed both by ethnicity and by gender. Test scores are retained year-by-year to build up a picture of each pupil's achievement and potential. Errors are analysed to identify common areas of weakness. Teachers, as a group, examine pieces of writing and agree the National Curriculum level that the work represents, thus ensuring consistency across the school. Tests at the end of particular curriculum topics - such as those in geography and history - are used to determine pupils' understanding. Assessment procedures are being developed in ICT, art and design and in music.

48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting both academic progress and personal development are good. Staff - teachers and learning support assistants - have a good knowledge of pupils and their personal circumstances. That knowledge, together with the school's ethos of care and the high quality of pupil-staff relationships, ensure that each child is well known to at least one member of staff. The comprehensive classroom records kept by all teachers ensure that pupils' academic progress and personal development are carefully tracked. Behaviour, domestic and friendship problems are known, so that appropriate support can be given.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school works hard to promote good, effective links with parents. It recognises that many parents are uncomfortable with formality and tries to make contact with school as relaxed and informal as possible. Teachers are always prepared to discuss problems at the beginning or end of the day and the headteacher will, if at all possible, make himself available without prior appointment. In the pre-inspection Ofsted questionnaire, only four per cent of parents said that they would have difficulty in approaching the school with a problem. Parents are welcome to attend school events such as the Christmas music performance or the Harvest Festival service.

50. Parents are kept well informed about school events by regular newsletters, written in parent friendly language. At the beginning of the year, the school sends parents an information pack, which includes the school behaviour policy and guidelines for homework. Information about pupils' progress is good. Parents have three formal consultation opportunities a year and the school goes to some pains to ensure that as many parents as possible attend. Pupils' reports are satisfactory. They provide a clear description of the child's attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, science and mathematics and a less detailed evaluation of progress in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. The child's personal development is reported on but no targets for the ensuing year are included, although targets are discussed with parents at consultation meetings. Parents for whom English is an additional language are supported by multilingual staff from the Ethnic Minority

Achievement Service. Parents are equally involved in the reporting of standards through annual reports, irrespective of ethnicity or any other minority grouping.

51. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to children's learning at home and at school. Parents generally are reluctant to become formally involved with school affairs. Consequently, there is no formally constituted parent-teacher association. However, social and fund raising events involving staff and parents do take place. Support for the school, though largely passive, is nonetheless positive; parents respond well to opportunities to express a view on the school. The response to the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, at about 50 per cent, was above average.

52. Partnerships with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. Parents are invited to attend annual review meetings in order to discuss their children's progress and understand the new targets set. They are again invited into the school during the other two terms for the regular termly parents' meetings in order to discuss progress. The school has sent questionnaires to parents which contain questions about special educational needs. Responses which relate to 'support' and 'pupils reaching their true potential' are answered positively.

53. Parents' views of the school are positive. They appreciate the standards attained by their children and they like the ready accessibility of staff. The school's ethos is valued and parents consider that their children benefit from that ethos. Parents accept that there are some pupils whose behaviour presents problems but most believe that behaviour is well managed. A few expressed concerns about aggressive behaviour by a minority of pupils on the way out of the school premises but no such behaviour was observed during the inspection. Of parents responding to the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, 26 per cent were unhappy with the amount of homework set. Inspection evidence is that the homework procedures are satisfactory. There is, however, some inconsistency in the regularity and amount of homework given in each year group.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. Since the previous inspection there has been very good improvement in leadership and management. The excellent headteacher gives very clear educational direction and has an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and needs. Despite being in post for fourteen years, he is still enthusiastic about introducing new initiatives for improving the school. In 2001, the school received a National Achievement Award for improvement in National Curriculum test results over four years. The headteacher receives very good support from his talented and hard working deputy and staff in order to consolidate good initiatives and to implement change. Many worthwhile initiatives have been implemented in recent years and all the key issues have been rectified since the previous inspection apart from some aspects of the provision for ICT.

55. The governing body is excellent in fulfilling its statutory duty and in shaping the direction of the school. The excellent chair of governors gives loyal support and has been a wise influence. There is shared, honourable intention for improvement and the capacity to succeed. For example, with the headteacher, governors have debated long and hard about the merits of opting out of the local education authority's building and refurbishment programme and decided that their move to independence in this field was necessary. Their decision has been more than justified. The reflection of the school's aims and values in its work is very good and is evident in all aspects. The very good ethos of the school is strongly reinforced through very good respect for individual differences and its all inclusive opportunities to ensure that pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and pupils with English as an additional language, reach their potential.

56. The governors' annual report to parents is clearly written, giving a good account of how the school meets its responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs. Although governors do not discuss special educational needs at every meeting, the full governing body is kept well informed by the governor with responsibility for this aspect of the school's provision. This governor works in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit at the school and, therefore, has good access to information with which to keep the governing body informed of all aspects of the work in this area of the school's life. The school has yet to complete its re-categorisation of special educational needs pupils in line with the latest national recommendations. Whilst the special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision of support well, she has insufficient time away from her class duties in which to complete this task fully and that of collating all the special educational needs evidence. The school complies fully with the Sex Discrimination Act and the Race Relations Act. On a difficult site, it works hard to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

57. Governors have an excellent understanding of the strengths and needs of the school and are appreciative of the information provided by staff to help them to make informed decisions. The delegation of staff to managerial responsibilities is clear and expertly managed. Monitoring of teaching and learning is very good and well established by subject leaders. In addition, co-ordinators have analysed samples of pupils' work collected for each year group. The very successful school inclusion policy ensured that a staff training day was spent in analysing pupil and staff responses to questionnaires, and this provided very useful information for managing subjects and learning. The headteacher and co-ordinators monitor planning and have observed teaching. The school's development plan prioritises aspects of the school's progress carefully, identifying key personnel and costing initiatives. The school development plan is regularly evaluated by all governors and staff and updated frequently.

58. The number of staff is very good to support pupils, and the match of expertise to responsibilities is often very good. All teachers are qualified to teach the National Curriculum and there is very good use of staff expertise across the school. Teaching assistants work very hard to gain extra, relevant skills and their contribution is invaluable and much appreciated. Performance management is implemented to a high standard. The site manager and cleaning staff keep the school well maintained and all support staff ensure good safety for pupils at all times, including lunchtimes and break times.

59. The accommodation is adequate for the numbers and ages of pupils on roll. The school premises were formerly a secondary school and the governing body has worked hard to adapt it for primary school use. Outdoor space is good, with two large tarmac playgrounds and a spacious field. Small quadrangles between blocks have been developed into attractive quiet areas. The school benefits from having two halls and two libraries, together with separate rooms for storing resources, for the lunchtime club, a computer suite and one room for use by parents. A pottery kiln occupies its own secure room. There is a separate dining hall. Classrooms are adequate in size for the numbers presently on roll but average class sizes at present are small - eight of the eleven classes have 26 or fewer pupils. Thirty or more pupils in some of the rooms would be restrictive. Toilet provision is satisfactory for pupils and a large sum of money has been set aside to improve them for September. However, toilets are barely sufficient for adults. The previous inspection report commented upon the building's state of repair. The deficiencies noted have been rectified and the condition of the corridors and windows is much improved.

60. Resources for learning are good overall. They are very good for physical education and the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit. Resources are easily accessible and used thoroughly. However, there is a lack of provision in some aspects of ICT software, which restricts learning in control technology and data handling. Good use is made of the school's site for physical education and music. The number of visitors for a wide range of subjects makes an important contribution to enhance and enrich teaching and learning.

61. The school's educational priorities are supported very successfully through excellent financial planning. The estate surrounding the school is ageing, resulting in a drop in pupil numbers on roll and the subsequent effect on staff redundancies. The excellent management of the budget reflects difficult decisions made to ensure the balance of staffing for pupils is kept constant. The school is justifiably proud of new initiatives to protect the budget and to succeed in obtaining extra funding as, for example, when the school was successful in its bid for a share of £29,000 to support the PHONOGRAPHICS Project in order to raise literacy awareness in families linked with the school's pupils. Strategic use of resources, including specific grants and other funding is, therefore, excellent. Daily administration is efficient and unobtrusive, due to an industrious administrator and assistant accounting technician. Daily routines are well established and calm. New technology is used effectively to inform parents, governors and teachers, and the chair of governors saves valuable time in the use of e-mail to help him communicate with the headteacher and school.

62. The school uses the principles of 'best value' with serious intent, resulting in some excellent initiatives to save on building refurbishment. As a result, the effectiveness of the school has greatly improved. Currently the school gives good value for money, an improvement from the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to address effectively the issues of this report, the headteacher, staff and governing body, in conjunction with the local education authority, should:

- **Improve** writing standards by ensuring sufficient opportunities for pupils to:
 - Engage in their own personal, expressive writing;
 - Write complex sentences with enriched phrases and appropriate connectives;
 - Practise handwriting more frequently in all classes;
 - Increase phonic building strategies (where pupils sound out words) and the use of picture dictionaries for younger pupils;
 - Develop paragraphing for older pupils.

Paragraphs: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 18, 73, 74, 75, 78, 79, 81, 109, 117, 141.

- **Improve** aspects of pupils' information and communication technology skills by providing more opportunities for control technology and data handling, and better software to ensure complete coverage of the programmes of study.

Paragraphs: 5, 7, 18, 24, 60, 119, 123, 124, 126.

As well as the above major issues for development, the following minor issues should be addressed:

- Ensuring consistency in the amount and regularity of homework given in each year group.

Paragraphs: 17, 53.

- Engaging the full co-operation of all parents over pupils' attendance.

Paragraphs: 14, 42.

- Providing more time for the special educational needs co-ordinator in order that she has better opportunities to collate assessment information and monitor teaching.

Paragraphs: 46, 56.

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES UNIT

64. The unit makes very good provision for a small group of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is a good improvement on the provision noted at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' needs are addressed very well and as a result, pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them.

65. Because of their emotional and behavioural problems, most pupils enter the unit with standards below and sometimes well below levels expected for their age. During their time in the unit, pupils not only make good progress towards the targets set for them, but they make at least satisfactory progress towards nationally expected levels. The majority will fall just short of these levels, but in an early morning mathematics activity, for example, pupils completed an activity covering the use of several mathematical operations, set at a level, which would test pupils in the equivalent mainstream classes. All pupils completed the exercise and several explained their strategies to the inspector.

66. Standards in literacy, numeracy, art and physical education show pupils from the unit achieving well and making good progress in their learning, whilst achievement in other subjects is at least satisfactory. Pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. At times, as the prime task of the unit is to equip pupils with strategies to cope with the learning

situation in a mainstream classroom, staff use their expertise to determine day-to-day access to the curriculum in line with pupils' individual needs.

67. The quality of teaching in the unit is often very good; a good improvement on standards noted at the previous inspection. This is equally true of the head of the unit and the committed and well trained learning support assistants. Of considerable importance is the consistency shown by the adults in their corporate approach to behaviour management. This is at the root of the progress made by pupils.

68. Very good opportunities are given to pupils to discuss transgressions in relation to the high expectations placed on them by the staff. Direct evidence was seen of adults giving very good advice and support on occasions when individuals misbehaved. The unit has clear and supportive reward and sanction systems in place, which pupils understand, and support adults relate to them with a high level of consistency.

69. In a very good literacy lesson, support adults and the head of the unit were noted following the planning and delivery of the literacy hour, albeit for a very small group of pupils, in order that pupils maintained close contact with mainstream strategies and methods.

70. Assessment is of a high priority, especially when pupils join the unit so that a programme can be planned for them, in order to meet their specific needs. The unit relies heavily on the good advice of educational psychologists, following which the head of the unit writes individual education plans, which contain specific short term targets for pupils. These are regularly reviewed and reset. As a result of progress made against these targets, the professionals involved will decide on a course of re-integration into a mainstream class. This can start for a period of minutes and culminate in total integration, where appropriate.

71. The management of the unit is very good. This is better than at the previous inspection. The unit is fully included in the life of the school, as are its pupils. They are observed enjoying playtimes and assemblies and when in classes, being more often than not, absorbed in the lesson. When observed, a pupil, integrating into a mainstream mathematics lesson, was fully accepted by the class, supported well by the class teacher and made good progress in his learning.

72. It is a pity that since the previous inspection the local authority has not found time to monitor the provision the unit provides for those pupils it sends to it. The very good practice and undoubted success of the unit would benefit being observed by other similar units and at the same time, its value for money and effectiveness could be judged against its high financial costs. This was pointed out at the inspection in 1997.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	45	24	0	0	0
Percentage	1	9	58	31	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	288
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	110

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	76

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	47	33	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	32	45
	Girls	21	22	24
	Total	42	54	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (68)	68 (77)	86 (82)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	38	26
	Girls	19	22	17
	Total	44	60	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (59)	75 (71)	54 (71)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	11
Indian	10
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	233
Any other minority ethnic group	23

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y3 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	204.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	8	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	694,901
Total expenditure	712,618
Expenditure per pupil	2,262
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,291
Balance carried forward to next year	10,574

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	288
Number of questionnaires returned	144

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	43	5	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	4	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	58	4	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	54	20	6	0
The teaching is good.	54	44	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	53	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	40	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	38	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	57	9	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	44	3	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	48	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	49	10	3	12

Due to rounding percentages may not total 100.

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

ENGLISH

73. Standards in English are close to the national averages by the end of Year 6, although aspects of pupils' writing are below. When pupils enter school in Year 3, their literacy attainment is well below the national average. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, they make very good progress in speaking, listening and reading. Overall, pupils make good progress in writing, but insufficient progress in a personal, expressive writing style. Since the time of the previous inspection, English standards have improved.

74. National Curriculum test results in English for 2001 show that Year 6, despite good improvement, were well below the national average and below the results of schools in similar contexts. Trends over time show that gains in reading standards are notably good and by 2002 they are very close to the national average. Writing standards in 2001 were well below national averages for Year 6, particularly for boys, but have improved this current year. However, the school has identified the problem and teachers and staff work hard to increase pupils' writing scores. Trends over time show success with their strategies and good improvement compared with pupils' attainment at the beginning of Year 3.

75. Currently, higher attaining pupils are challenged well and a good proportion of pupils, about a quarter, achieve the higher Level 5 in reading. The picture is not as good for writing standards, due mainly to a very low level of writing standards on entry, as well as the fact that the school's catchment area has been identified with high adult illiteracy and unemployment. The school has been successful in its initiative to gain part of a £29,000 grant for implementing the PHONOGRAPHICS scheme to rectify problems in literacy. This is to be implemented very soon. Pupils with special educational needs have very good provision in English and good provision overall, resulting in very good progress in English, particularly in speaking, listening and reading. Pupils with English as an additional language quickly gain an understanding of English through very good support, and their standards are good by the end of Year 6.

76. Speaking and listening skills are acceptable, and satisfactory throughout all year groups. Many appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to develop clear enunciation and understanding of conversations, as, for example, when they explained logically the sequence of a story plot or described who was trapped, where and when, during a lesson around a story called 'Trapped'. By the end of Year 6, pupils are confident, articulate speakers, whether in a small group or in front of a large audience during collective worship. This was demonstrated very clearly in a Year 6 lesson which included a discussion of high quality about conflicts and resolutions that arose in a story called 'The Suitcase Kid'. The majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 discuss all areas of their learning with appropriate vocabulary, fluency of ideas, demonstrating good understanding.

77. Reading standards are acceptable and satisfactory by the end of Year 6. Most pupils read with interest and full understanding of the printed word. In all year groups, the majority of pupils describe accurately the plot, characterisation and features of narration in stories. Their prediction of events and awareness of recurrent themes by individual authors are secure, particularly in Years 5 and 6, when their very good learning of the genre of fantasy in literature enables them to compare confidently the different ways stories transfer from reality to fantasy situations, as, for example, in the stories of Tolkien, J K Rowling and C S Lewis. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good extended research skills, using the contents and index pages of books confidently. They use dictionaries competently and can locate specific books in the Dewey library classification successfully. Phonic skills are mainly satisfactory, but the building of syllables in Years 3 and 4 is less confident. The higher order reading skills of

skimming and scanning help pupils in their research for other subjects, such as science, history and geography.

78. Pupils' writing skills are relatively weaker and aspects are below the national average by the end of Year 6 and in need of further development. Despite the fact that a significant proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 write with a joined, legible handwriting style, many pupils do not join letters and lack confidence in building syllables fluently to help memorise spelling patterns. There is insufficient use of picture dictionaries in younger year groups to enrich and enlarge pupils' vocabulary for writing. Throughout, pupils lack sufficient practice in writing full and interesting sentences of their own in order to reflect their ideas and to improve the use of appropriate connectives, as well as enriched phrases. Presentation and punctuation of work on display are good, but there is a lack of consistency in pupils' recorded work books. Grammar is generally accurate, but paragraphing by older year groups is insufficiently developed. Overall, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in their own personal, expressive writing compared with factual recording, although the range of pupils' writing is good.

79. Teaching in English is predominantly good and occasionally it is very good. In one lesson seen, teaching was excellent. However, pupils' work reflects that the teaching of writing is not as strong as for speaking, listening and reading. There is good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, particularly for improving reading standards and the analysis of texts. Other aspects of good teaching include good planning for lessons which identifies targets that match pupils' ages and needs closely. Teachers expect high standards of listening and behaviour and there is very good use of well qualified teaching assistants and resources in order to support pupils' learning. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in learning is good. These good aspects have a strong impact on the very good achievement of pupils by the time they are about to leave Year 6.

80. Another result of the impact of good teaching is that most pupils show good attitudes to listening and reading. Pupils listen carefully to teachers, wait to offer their opinions and answer questions, and consequently, the quality of discussion about a range of subjects is good. Most pupils try hard to produce sufficient and acceptable work and are helped by the teachers' regular marking, which highlights areas for development and whether pupils have reached their personal targets. Behaviour is predominantly good, due to the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy. Most pupils enjoy reading and have a positive attitude to it, due largely to teachers' enthusiasm for literature.

81. The management of English is good and has ensured that from a well below average standard at the beginning of Year 3, to an acceptable average standard at the end of Year 6, pupils' learning has improved significantly, even in writing. Some current, worthwhile initiatives are developing well, such as the new PHONOGRAPHICS project, linked with other schools in order to involve parents in the drive to improve literacy. The school has made a close analysis of pupils' weaker results in writing and begun to implement good new strategies as, for example, recognising the need for extra time to be given for sustained writing tasks and opportunities given to draft writing through ICT. Visits to the school by celebrated authors raise the awareness of writing for different purposes. Interesting and relevant stories where conflicts in relationships are resolved successfully do much to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

82. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in mathematics are very close to the national average. Pupils' achievement is very good from well below average attainment on entering Year 3. This is reflected in the school's improved performance in national tests since the last inspection. This performance is well above average in comparison with similar schools. Standards are similar for boys and girls. Analysis by ethnic group shows that pupils achieve

similarly to the overall pattern of improvement. The school received an Achievement Award in 2001 for an improvement in National Curriculum assessments over four years. This improvement is the result of good teaching and good leadership linked to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.

83. Results of the Year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were very close to the national average and sustained the trend set over the previous three years. In 2001, in comparison with similar schools, results were well above average. For higher attaining pupils the results are almost in line with the national standards. Inspection findings are that by the end of Year 6, current standards are about average. The analysis of results in mathematical assessment tests for Years 3 to 5 identified areas which require greater support.

84. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 made good progress in learning. This is despite the fact that there are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Very good support teaching is organised for pupils of all ages. Teachers and learning support assistants have received specialised training in the use of support programmes for lower attaining pupils. Given their well below average results in national tests at seven years of age this provision ensures pupils' very good achievement over time.

85. Observed teaching in mathematics was good overall and never unsatisfactory. Mental calculation is taught thoroughly and pupils are flexible when using numbers. A range of games and recording methods including hand held boards are utilised to assist progress. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils had a breathless challenge in a 'Follow me' game. With a class record to beat, pupils were given cards showing a question and an answer from another problem. A pupil began by reading a question, then the pupil holding the card with the answer followed, giving the correct answer, and the next question. Pupils relished this challenge.

86. Pupils in Year 6 begin a bridging unit for mathematics at the end of the summer term, which they take to their secondary school for completion. Pupils are enthusiastic about the work and hope that this will create a good impression of what they are able to achieve in mathematics. Pupils work on conversion of fractions to decimals and percentages with confidence. More challenging problems involving percentages are provided for higher attaining pupils. Games are used well to support pupils' understanding of percentages. A form of 'bingo' is played effectively where the teacher calls out a fraction and pupils cover up the equivalent percentage. Pupils have good recall of their tables to assist them in their calculations.

87. Numeracy skills are utilised in other areas of the curriculum, such as graphical work in science, timelines in history and in the creation of patterns when studying Islamic art in religious education. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are fostered in mathematics lessons, with pupils being asked to explain their results to the class as a whole. Teachers ensure that pupils are able to read and write key words such as Venn or Carroll diagrams. Pupils record their work in mathematics books and are encouraged to aim for good standards of presentation which they generally achieve.

88. Pupils enjoy mathematics and take advantage of the learning opportunities provided. Pupils in Year 5 revise pencil and paper procedures to add and subtract numbers less than a thousand. They have learnt good strategies for the addition of four figure numbers and competently pick out the number bonds which add up to ten and one hundred with confidence. This speeds up their calculations. Pupils work co-operatively in groups and rotate the responsibilities of calculating and scribing. Errors are recognised and pointed out to other group members in a thoughtful manner.

89. Teachers plan work co-operatively, producing clear and helpful documentation. The questioning skills used by teachers ensure that pupils fully understand what they are doing. They expect pupils to be able to explain their method of calculation in addition to providing the

answer to a question. This is clearly understood by pupils. Various methods of calculation are discussed and compared in order that pupils have a range of strategies to use in their work. Pupils in Year 5 are constantly reminded of the variety of methods to tackle addition which result in the correct answer. In one Year 6 class pupils were given many examples to demonstrate the link between fractions, decimals and percentages in order that all pupils had a good understanding of their relationship. In a Year 4 class, the teacher made good use of questions to revise the previous lesson to ensure that pupils had a sound understanding of Venn diagrams. Pupils' targets are well matched to their specific needs. Higher attaining pupils designed their own Carroll diagram according to given criteria whilst lower attaining pupils gathered information from such diagrams.

90. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils are keen to do their best. Where pupils find sustained concentration difficult teachers remind pupils of the need to complete tasks fully. The impact of the good relationships and teaching ensures that most pupils make good progress and enjoy the challenge of mathematics.

91. Leadership in mathematics is good. The co-ordinator has appropriate priorities for the progress of the subject. A clear action plan has been formulated and the school is progressing at a steady rate. Careful analysis of end of year assessments and a regular programme of testing have provided essential information about pupil progress and areas of weakness in various year groups. The co-ordinator has been supported through the provision of very good staff training. The use of ICT in mathematics has improved since the last inspection. Appropriate software has been purchased. Since the previous inspection, when data handling work was found to be underdeveloped, this area of the curriculum has become more prominent, although less so in science.

SCIENCE

92. Standards in science have been improving steadily since the previous inspection and are now in line with nationally expected levels. The school is effective in the inclusion of all pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. In scientific investigations they receive a good level of support. Provision for higher attaining pupils is good.

93. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress in learning and there is very good achievement over time. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of materials and their properties. Younger pupils enjoy using simple tests to find out information about familiar materials. Most pupils use scientific vocabulary confidently to describe their investigations and their results. From the lessons observed, the analysis of work books and discussions with pupils, most have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding in all the programmes of study. In Year 3, during their investigation of testing the absorbency of different types of paper, pupils showed satisfactory levels of scientific understanding that materials have certain properties. In Year 4, pupils understand clearly that sound is made when something vibrates. They understand how sound travels and competently conducted an investigation on whether the size of strings affected pitch. They predicted the results accurately and later compared their predictions with the recordings from their investigation. All pupils are encouraged to predict, carry out a fair test and collect data, which they do well. By the end of Year 6, pupils have considered gravity, life support systems, the water cycle, circuits, materials and the body as a machine, and reached clear understanding.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Sometimes, teaching is very good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge and this gives them confidence. They plan carefully together across the year groups and the analysis of work shows very good coverage of National Curriculum requirements. Resources are good and relevant. Teachers have a good understanding of the importance of investigative work and this is a strong feature of work in every year group. They have clear learning objectives that are thoroughly shared

with pupils at the beginning of each lesson. This has a positive impact on pupils' understanding of their own learning. Each lesson is set in the context of current work, so that pupils are very clear as to what they are expected to learn and what they need to do in practical sessions. Plenary sessions are used appropriately for pupils to share their learning with others.

95. The majority of teachers have highly developed class management skills which keep pupils interested in their tasks, concentrating well throughout the lesson. Pupils collaborate and co-operate well when carrying out investigations. Teachers focus carefully on appropriate terminology and on objectives, extending pupils' knowledge through challenging questioning and good demonstration. All these features have a very good impact on pupils' learning and, as a result, their attitudes and behaviour are usually at least good, often very good. Where teaching and learning are less effective, several issues emerge. Where the management of pupils' behaviour is less well developed, a small minority of pupils lose concentration and interrupt their own learning. Occasionally, written work is limited by worksheets that lack challenge, and work is sometimes marred by poor presentation, and spelling and punctuation errors. However, there is plentiful evidence of good matching of tasks to pupils' needs.

96. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, due to her thorough monitoring of teaching and learning. After identifying that investigative science was underdeveloped she effectively addressed this issue with the introduction of a new scheme of work and extra training for staff. She was aware that provision for higher attaining pupils needed to be rectified and this has now been achieved. She acknowledges that the use of literacy and ICT in science is underdeveloped and this issue is now being planned for. Good assessment procedures are implemented, which enable teachers to track pupils' progress throughout year groups and set targets for improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Pupils' attainment in art and design, by the end of Year 6, is close to the nationally expected levels. There are strengths in fine line drawings and close observational drawings of natural and man-made objects. There is very good work on creating colour, mood and form in the style of European artists, such as Picasso and Matisse. Areas for development are to extend all pupils' experiences in landscape painting and perspective, ceramics and sculpture. Pupils lack sufficient opportunities to study comprehensively the art of Eastern cultures. Since the previous inspection, acceptable standards have been maintained and there has been good improvement in broadening the programmes of study for art and design.

98. By the end of Year 6, pupils show satisfactory progress in using a broad range of media. They demonstrate good learning in representational fine line drawings so that completed portraits and drawings of flowers are above the nationally expected levels. Throughout all year groups, pupils use soft pastels, woven material and paper collage competently, as can be seen in a large collaborative effort of a material wall hanging against glass, depicting a ship on the sea, with the light shining through the weave. Pupils show effective use of computer generated art in their Egyptian cartouches. Their wrapping paper designs and samples of designs based on the styles of William Morris, show appropriate attention to detail and awareness of repeated patterns. Although there are some fine examples of clay sculpture and 'modroc' masks in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit, sculpture is an area for development throughout the school.

99. From examples of photographic evidence of pupils' past work, of current work on display, and of lessons observed during the inspection, the teaching of art and design is predominantly satisfactory with good features. There is very good teaching of art and design in the Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Unit and good teaching of art in the style of

European artists. Teachers' planning shows good links with other subjects studied as, for example, when pupils study the Ancient Egyptians, Tudors and Victorians, or observe the natural fauna and flora in science. Preparation for art and design lessons is good, and the management of pupils' behaviour is consistently good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive very good support in art and design and often make good progress in learning. Higher attaining pupils receive appropriate challenges.

100. The impact of teaching and management ensures that pupils have good attitudes towards art. Pupils are enthusiastic and attentive, ask perceptive questions and co-operate well as for example, when they share different sized viewfinders and discuss with a partner the most appropriate area of a picture or design to illustrate. Most pupils take pride in perfecting their work and talk animatedly about their art and design tasks and work on display. The co-ordinator for art and design has worked hard to revise the programmes of study, taking good account of teachers' audits of the subject through the use of questionnaires. The effective management of the subject ensures that art and design displays are eye-catching and help pupils to focus on the clear messages given. However, there have been no recent opportunities for pupils to visit art galleries.

101. Art and design is valued throughout the school as an enlightening activity to communicate ideas and feelings in a visual form. For example, during the inspection, a parent painted large murals on outside playground walls, depicting themes to create a gigantic timeline. This initiated pupils' avid interest and much discussion. The subject is successful in improving pupils' perceptions and makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards in design and technology are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 6. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in designing and making throughout the school. This indicates an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be close to nationally expected levels.

103. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is higher than expected and progress in learning is good through all year groups. Pupils' skills of cutting, sawing and drilling are continually developed and are, therefore, good. Different models were scrutinised during the inspection as well as the evidence of photographs, planning files and discussions with co-ordinator and pupils. All aspects of the subject are covered expertly and pupils, models using mechanisms and vehicles showed a good breadth of study, including food technology. All pupils' models provided secure evidence that skills were being systematically taught well. Pupils design their work carefully, identifying materials and tools required to make, according to their constructional designs, including methods of joining materials. They use a joint design and evaluation sheet, which is both practical and sequential. There is space for pupils to draw their design from two viewpoints and label their requirements. Then, prior to beginning their construction, they have to answer a series of questions, which prompts thought about designing and making and provides a sound basis from which to start. The same sheet identifies any improvements made by pupils and evaluates the final construction. This successfully supports learning and provides good opportunities for pupils' personal and social development, as well as promoting speaking and listening skills.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils make good progress in their acquisition of designing and making skills within each year group. There is very good achievement over time from the beginning of Year 3. The teaching of basic skills is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is used expertly to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Planning is generally effective, and pupils respond positively to the range

of activities provided. Relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils themselves are good, and this has a positive effect on progress made in lessons. Teachers have effective systems for managing pupils' behaviour, and, as a result, pupils behave sensibly in lessons and act very responsibly. Assessment of pupils' work is objective and provides teachers with sufficient information to adjust future planning in order to set appropriate targets for pupils to ensure further improvement. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject, especially the use of control technology. Otherwise effective use is made of good resources and support staff, which has a positive impact on the progress made in lessons.

105. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Since the previous inspection the co-ordinator has carried out an extensive audit of resources and assessed the training needs of the staff. Both of these have been acted upon with positive results. Teachers are now more confident and resources are good. The current scheme of work fully reflects the most recent national initiatives and there is a good policy for the subject. There have been opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor standards, which she does through some teacher observations and discussions with staff. The high standards of pupils' finished products, and their pride in them, reflect that the subject contributes significantly to pupils' personal and social development.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Although no statement was made at the last inspection about standards in geography, it would appear that they were in line with national expectations, as they are now. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make secure progress in their learning and have developed a range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding.

107. In the lower half of the school, pupils are involved in a range of topics that cover appropriate elements of the National Curriculum. Through these, pupils describe competently the physical and human features of local places and are accurate about those beyond their immediate locality.

108. In Year 3 pupils effectively study their immediate area, find maps on the Internet and plot their routes to school. They write an account of their journey to school, giving support to their literacy skills. In Year 4 pupils begin to look in more detail at maps. In an observed lesson, they looked at large scale maps of the Bristol area and were able to point out the motorway and use symbols to locate places such as churches and schools. Pupils remembered how to use simple letter and number grid references so that they might find places which the teacher detailed for them. Previously completed work illustrates that pupils can colour accurately the countries of the British Isles on a map, noting capital cities, seas and the English Channel. Few examples are noted of pupils drawing or copying maps for themselves. Year 4 travel to Weston-super-Mare in order to carry out a comparative study with Bristol, in which they will note both physical and human differences between the two locations.

109. Pupils in Year 5 completed a considerable piece of work on the rainforests, making good use of ICT. In this study they compared aspects of weather, home life, flora and fauna. They classified animals found in the area and the work showed good links with science. In spite of some good quality writing, rather too much of the work was focused on work sheets, which did not give pupils sufficient opportunities to use their extended writing skills. A visit to Bristol Zoo gave good support to this topic. In Year 6 a good field trip to the River Trym, added an important element to the work on water and rivers. Prior to the inspection, pupils had previously completed work, showing secure understanding of how the water cycle worked, and correctly mapped wet and dry areas of the world. On their field trip pupils had opportunities to record river flow and note the various features as they walked the course of the river.

110. Teaching of geography is satisfactory with good features. Planning is appropriate and preparation for lessons is good, with teachers enlivening their work with the use of good resources. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs, although not always are there specific tasks for pupils with special needs. In at least one lesson the introduction and length of discussion were too extended, with pupils wanting to be more active in their learning. As a result, a small minority of unsatisfactory behaviour was noted.

111. The effective co-ordinator has developed a comprehensive scheme of work, adapting a nationally recommended scheme to suit the school's needs. He has not yet had an opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning process first hand in other classes and assessment has not yet been developed fully. However, practical opportunities to study physical features of geography outdoors, and locally, contribute much to pupils' personal, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

112. At the previous inspection little teaching of history was seen and standards were noted as "at least satisfactory and sometimes good". In the four lessons observed in this inspection, standards were universally in line with national expectations. However, in some aspects noted in the analysis of pupils' previously completed work, there were clearly elements which were above nationally expected standards.

113. Pupils in all year groups, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in gaining historical knowledge and understanding, together with improving their skills of interpreting stories and information presented to them in different ways. On occasions, teachers do not always provide pupils, who have special needs, with sufficiently different work, which accurately meets their needs. When this happens progress is too limited.

114. Pupils in Year 3 accurately recognise the differences between the Greece of ancient times and Greece today. They understand about a range of Greek gods and goddesses and what it was like in a school at that time. In Year 4, pupils start their topic, as all classes do, noting down what they already know about the subject and what they would like to find out. One pupil knew that, "Romans had chariot races," and wanted to find out, "What they wore and what their houses were like?" Pupils learnt the countries invaded by the Romans. They clearly understand life in Roman Britain. Pupils drew, with annotations, a Roman soldier in battle clothes.

115. In Year 5, pupils have a clear picture of the chronology of the period of Tudor history. They make a family tree of the Tudor dynasty and make notes on similarities and differences they would have experienced as a child in that period of history. They know the main characters of the time and discuss correctly several different queens of the period. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they discuss with interest the lives of children in the Victorian period and use source material in order to obtain a feel for the life style of the privileged and the working class during this period of history.

116. Pupils obtain much useful knowledge and understanding through good use of ICT. Whilst making good use of their technology skills, they explore CD-ROM material for each of their history projects. Pupils were seen accessing a website dedicated to the early Victorians, whilst other pupils were 'visiting', through the computer, John Cabot's ship.

117. The quality of teaching was good in all four lessons seen. Teachers' knowledge is good and teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and about using ICT skills. Lessons are carefully planned and pupils are challenged well by activities. Teachers make use of a number of worksheets in history. Some worksheets are effective and allow pupils good

opportunities to write and use their literacy skills. Some however, only require pupils to write one word or short phrases, thus not giving sufficient support to the school's initiative for extending writing skills. Although separate challenging work is not regularly noted for pupils with special needs, help is often at hand so that they can cope with the work set for the rest of the class. As a result, pupils enjoy history and are attentive during lessons. Their personal and cultural development is enhanced by their studies and by opportunities to use ICT as a research tool. A number of visits have been used successfully so that pupils might have first hand experiences of history. This has helped raise their awareness of local history, has made the subject more meaningful and ensured good personal, social and cultural development.

118. The subject has good management and the co-ordinator supports colleagues well, meeting them both formally and informally to check on progress. There is a useful scheme of work to support the staff's needs. The co-ordinator has not yet had opportunities to monitor the teaching of history, neither have methods of assessment been fully developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Improvements have been made to the provision and teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). In spite of this there still remain issues to address before standards in all elements of the subject are in line with nationally expected levels.

120. Since the previous inspection, at which time work in information technology was a key issue for development, the school has successfully:

- Developed a computer suite to which all pupils have access on a weekly basis;
- Provided all teachers with training which has improved not only their technical competence but equally their self-confidence;
- Revised the scheme of work so that good planning exists for all elements of the National Curriculum requirements;
- Provided for protected Internet access in the computer suite.

121. Standards noted at the previous inspection were said to be "below national expectations". As a result of the above initiatives, provided in the main by the subject co-ordinator, progress in the communication element of the subject is now close to national expectations. Pupils have developed good keyboard and mouse skills and are able to change fonts, add colour to their texts and import graphics to enliven their writing. Year 6 pupils create brief information sheets of all countries in the World Cup. They include not only information about the countries, but competently add maps and colour to brighten their work. Other work shows good use of a painting program, with which pupils have designed Christmas cards, making use of a variety of painting tools. Pupils have yet to be involved in devising multimedia presentations, bringing together many of their communication skills.

122. Work seen in the modelling and simulation areas of study is of a high quality. Here, there are very good cross-curricular links with history, geography and science. Pupils are provided with access to material on all computers in the suite, covering such topics as Tudors, Egyptians, Ancient Greeks, Romans, the rain forest and the human body. When pupils access these programs, in conjunction with the appropriate topics, they not only find valuable information, but at the same time make use of their search and retrieval skills in a very practical way.

123. In spite of good work noted in Year 3 on data handling techniques, this has not yet been noted throughout the school. There have been some problems in using the software, which has put back the use older pupils make of these programs. As a result, the standard of their work is below that expected nationally. Pupils have had little opportunity of amending and creating their own databases or of using data to create graphs and charts. Use of

spreadsheets is not evident in work seen and when pupils in Year 6 were questioned about their work, they could not describe using spreadsheets to investigate relationships between sets of figures or of devising questions to test hypotheses within a spreadsheet. In the same way, problems with software have slowed progress in data logging and pupils use of ICT to measure and sense physical data and identify changes which take place. Standards in this area of study are unsatisfactory.

124. Pupils have good protected access to the Internet, which they use competently to support a number of subjects. In a series of lessons seen in Year 6, for instance, pupils accessed a history website and found information about life in Victorian times. As yet the school has not made e-mail available to pupils, so that they are currently not able to exchange information and ideas with other schools or pupils. In the areas of the subject, which are covered well, pupils make good progress in their learning. The same applies to pupils with special educational needs. They often work alongside higher attaining pupils who give them good support in aspects of reading from the screen.

125. Teaching of ICT is good overall, an improvement since the previous inspection. In the seven lessons seen, five were good and two satisfactory. In the good lessons, teachers showed confidence in their own technical knowledge. This has been due largely to good quality support from the subject co-ordinator. Teachers gave clear instructions and recapped on techniques and skills before introducing new methods and procedures. As a result, pupils built on their previous knowledge in a step-by-step systematic way. Pupils enjoyed their experiences in the suite, behaved well and made the most of their time at computers. As a result, pupils usually made good progress in their learning.

126. Although cross-curricular links are good, and an improvement since the previous inspection, the lack of computers in classrooms restricts the use teachers can make of ICT to support lessons when away from the suite. For example, in literacy and numeracy lessons, opportunities for links to be made with writing, calculations and skills practice are missed. The school is aware of this problem and whilst it is noted in the school development plan, it may be some time before it is effectively answered, due to the financial implications involved.

127. The subject, in spite of some of its difficulties, is well managed. The co-ordinator, who has very good subject knowledge, has developed a good scheme of work and has worked hard to include in planning, links to assessment. Currently, however, these assessments are not being applied throughout the school. Recent changes to the saving of pupils' work have been a useful move in retaining work for assessment. There is now a good opportunity to use this work so that teachers may extend and confirm their understanding of the various levels of attainment in the subject by monitoring and levelling some of this saved material.

128. The co-ordinator has had opportunities to work alongside colleagues, monitoring their progress. Useful reports have been written in order to support colleagues. Good links with parents and the local community have been established with a 'Computers for Parents' club. This involves parents working with instruction in the school's suite, later being joined by their children.

MUSIC

129. Standards in music are good. Pupils' attainment is never less than satisfactory and often it is above the nationally expected levels for this age. Music plays an important part in the life of Filton Avenue Junior School and makes an important contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Pupils sing clearly and sweetly in assembly. They sing songs confidently, some in two parts, with good pitch, rhythm and melody. They effectively play tuned and untuned musical instruments to create a drone or ostinato accompaniment for singing. Year 4 pupils enjoy comparing the depth of sound produced by different instruments.

They display a sense of wonder when they realise that larger chime bars produce deeper sounds. Year 4 pupils use graphic notation to record compositions. They enjoy the opportunity to express their preference for different types of music. Pupils of all ages listen to and appraise music. This is an improvement since the last inspection when this aspect of music was underemphasised.

130. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Planning is clear and takes account of the requirements of the National Curriculum in performing, appraising and composing. In a Year 4 class, the teacher accompanied the pupils' learning of a sea shanty to assist with the introduction of part singing. The subject matter of the song was linked to the history curriculum and Tudor ships. The music curriculum effectively supports the teaching of literacy in the areas of speaking and listening.

131. Teaching is well planned and the use of a purchased programme has greatly assisted the staff in their teaching of the subject. This new scheme of work introduces pupils to music from different cultures. Assessment is linked to each unit of work and is organised to give a clear picture of pupils' progress. All pupils have access to the music curriculum.

132. Staff organise extracurricular musical activities with great enthusiasm during lunchtimes and after school. Choir and recorders are available to all pupils. Peripatetic teachers for strings and woodwind visit the school to give lessons. Their pupils have opportunities to perform in assembly and to play as an orchestra in school productions. In the summer term an annual musical is produced which combines the talents of pupil musicians and actors. At Christmas, pupils participate in a carol concert to support the Save the Children Fund. Such events give pupils good opportunities for solo or group performances in front of a live audience.

133. Resources for the subject are well organised but have had to be duplicated because of the difficulties of moving equipment between buildings, with a significant number of steps separating them. There is no dedicated room for the teaching of class music. Information and communication technology is not used at present in the music curriculum, although inclusion is planned for the future.

134. There is good management of the subject and the co-ordinator has a clear view of how she would like the subject to develop. There is an action plan for this subject. The co-ordinator has been successful in supporting other teachers to raise their confidence in teaching music. During the inspection, a drumming workshop was arranged for pupils. This was a very popular event with pupils who learnt about the history of the instrument in different cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Observations made during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and achieve standards above those expected nationally for their age in physical education. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. There are very good opportunities available for all pupils to be included in the majority of sporting activities.

136. Pupils in Year 4 work enthusiastically to improve the way they co-ordinate their bodies during warm up exercises, and use space well. They listen carefully to their teacher and respond accordingly. All pupils are aware of the need to warm up and the effect it has on the heart. They work effectively in pairs to develop and link balances in a sequence. They listen carefully to their partner and persevere to achieve good body shape. Pupils demonstrate their sequences in front of the class, Sequences are subsequently evaluated by other pupils in order to further improve their skills. In the games lessons observed, pupils improved their

individual skills of throwing using various types of passes, such as the overhead, chest and javelin pass. Progression was seen with pupils improving their techniques and accuracy throughout the lesson. In an athletics lesson pupils listened carefully when discussion took place at the beginning of the lesson about improving both jumping and running by using their arms more efficiently. Pupils measure distances and times, record results and recognise their own improvement through improved techniques. Pupils in Year 4 attend the local swimming pool throughout the year and make good progress and approximately 85 per cent achieve the 25 metres unaided swim, as well as other national swimming awards. Pupils who join the school after Year 4 do not have the opportunity to take this test. However, the school acknowledges this and it is to be addressed as soon as possible. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy a seven day residential visit where apart from their environmental programme being extended, other outdoor challenges, such as swimming, walking and orienteering are be enjoyed.

137. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in both behaviour and skill development. They encourage pupils to evaluate their performance in order that they become aware of their own development. Planning is good overall and the scheme of work provides good guidance for teachers as well as ensuring parity of learning and opportunity for parallel classes. Teachers teach all the required disciplines and the wide range of activities including netball, football, rugby and country dancing support and enhance skill development as well as competitive experience. Staff teach with commitment and know their subject thoroughly, resulting in positive and enthusiastic responses from pupils. The high expectations teachers have in this area are conveyed to pupils who respond positively and energetically. Pupils have developed a positive attitude towards the subject, are mostly self disciplined and are aware of the safety aspects required in this subject.

138. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic with considerable expertise. He provides appropriate guidance to continue to move the subject forward. Assessment and monitoring of teaching, learning and standards is to be his main focus for future development and already has strategies to continue to improve this area. Resources are very good overall. The school has very good internal physical education accommodation, which is complemented by a large hard surface and field areas. This supports the effective teaching and learning of this subject. There are good links with other schools for physical education and Filton Avenue school teams have enjoyed significant success locally. Such friendly participation in a variety of events contributes substantially to pupils' social, moral and cultural development and encourages pride in the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Standards in religious education are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of Bristol's agreed syllabus. Pupils have sufficient knowledge of several other faiths and beliefs, in addition to Christianity. Year 6 pupils have secure knowledge about Islam and the reverence given to the Qur'an. The Year 6 classroom display on Islam demonstrates the respect given to the Qur'an by the Moslem community. Ritual objects are used effectively to motivate and inform pupils. Year 6 pupils study rites of passage as a unit of work. This helps pupils to examine life stages in five major religions, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. Two pupils, who are faith adherents to Sikhism and Islam, gave support in the research on their own religions. During a singing assembly with the theme of creation, a Year 4 pupil was able to compare correctly the Creation story of Christianity with that of the Hindu tradition.

140. Religious education makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' spirituality. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils heard the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' by Marcus Pfister which was used as an aid to discussion about different personality attributes. This lesson linked the agreed syllabus to the policy for learning about relationships and developing

personal insight. Other curriculum areas contribute to religious education as, for example, during a music lesson, when pupils prepared to perform a musical based on the Biblical story of 'David and Goliath'.

141. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils' attainment is close to the expected level of the Bristol agreed syllabus. Year 3 pupils have competently produced a series of 'Big Books'. One book on forgiveness records pupils' involvement in a dramatisation of the parable of 'The Prodigal Son'. Other 'Big Books' contain some good examples on special places, creation and prayer and worship and pupils have produced thought provoking and reflective work. All pupils record work in exercise books. However, pupils do not have the opportunity for extended writing in this area of the curriculum. Overall, teachers' planning is thorough and makes suitable provision for pupils of different abilities.

142. Religious education is given an appropriate status as a core subject of the curriculum. The co-ordination of this subject is effective. The co-ordinator was part of the working party which created the new agreed syllabus. Currently she is revising the scheme of work in line with the new syllabus, but the recommended levels of attainment featured in the new syllabus have not yet been introduced. The teaching of religious education is thoroughly supported by the programme for personal, social and health education, circle time and school assemblies. Resources for the teaching of this subject are sufficient, but ICT is not used for research purposes in religious education.

143. Plans exist to arrange a programme of visits to places of worship and to welcome visitors to support this important area of pupils' education. Year 3 pupils already make a visit to a local church and this heightens pupils' awareness of Christianity in the locality.