

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **MIRIAM LORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Manningham, Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107296

Headteacher: Mrs S Clark

Reporting inspector: Tony Painter  
21512

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> –17<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 243316

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Manningham Bradford
Postcode:	BD8 8RE
Telephone number:	01274 496611
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D L Astley
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21512	Tony Painter	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What kind of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils and students taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19692	Bob Folks	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?
24895	Kath Hurt	Team inspector	Geography History Foundation Stage	
27276	Carole Jarvis	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	
20655	Beryl Rimmer	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education	
4430	Richard Eaton	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
32073	Jackie Barnes	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average community primary school for pupils aged from three to eleven years with 384 pupils. In addition, a nursery class caters for 92 children who attend part-time. A resourced unit within the nursery caters for 11 children with special educational needs, some from outside the school's usual area. The school is larger than at the time of the last inspection as it has been recently re-organised to include pupils aged from nine to eleven years. Most pupils live in the inner urban area around the school, which is recognised as having substantial social priorities. The proportion of pupils eligible for free meals, at 36 per cent, is above the national average. Almost all pupils come from Pakistani backgrounds with English as an additional language. Many pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The main home languages of these pupils are Punjabi and Urdu. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is very low. Many pupils leave and join the school during the year, including a significant number who take extended breaks from school. There are 110 pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Of these pupils, 19 have statements of special educational need, well above average.

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

This effective school provides satisfactory value for money. The management is good and the headteacher, senior staff and governors have begun to identify and tackle the needs of the re-organised school. This has raised the quality of education and teaching, particularly in improving the planning of the curriculum. Pupils' attitudes to school are good although the standards they achieve are still low.

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

- Children get a good start to their school lives in the nursery and reception classes.
- There is a welcoming atmosphere and pupils are cared for very well.
- The school promotes moral and social development well and this helps pupils to gain good attitudes and values.
- Very good relationships have been established with parents and the local community and they support the school well.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' experiences.

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

- The standards achieved by pupils by the time they leave the school could be higher.
- Teachers do not make enough use of assessments to match work to pupils' abilities and language skills.
- Teaching and other staff are not used effectively enough to ensure that pupils learn through independent investigative activities.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their English through discussions with other pupils about aspects of their work.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Because this school has been recently re-organised, it is difficult to make valid comparisons based on the earlier inspection in February 1996. However, the school has tackled all of the key issues identified in that report with some success and overall improvement is satisfactory. Better curriculum documents are helping teachers' planning and there are signs of some improving attainment in pupils' writing and mathematical skills. Close work with the local community is reducing the time pupils lose on extended visits to Pakistan. A framework for monitoring teaching has been established and this is helping to target training that is beginning to improve teaching.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	N/A	N/A	E*	E	well above average A
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	E	above average B
Science	N/A	N/A	E*	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Because the school has recently been re-organised to a primary school, 2001 was the first year in which eleven year olds were in the school to take the national tests. Their results were very low, particularly in English and science, where they were in the bottom five per cent of the country. However, school data shows that most pupils made overall satisfactory progress through the junior years. Pupils' standards in most subjects are below average by the time they leave the school. However, they reach average standards in design and technology because teachers give them a good range of practical opportunities.

The attainment of children entering the school is very poor. Most have extremely limited skills; very high proportions have little English, and this limits pupils' achievement. This is particularly apparent in the infant classes where there has been no improvement in national test results in recent years. By the time pupils begin the National Curriculum, and by the age of seven, attainment is well below national averages. There are signs of better standards in the school, particularly in mathematics and science where current Year 6 pupils are below, but not well below, average. Improvements are the result of clearer planning of the curriculum. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory although standards in the school could be higher. Improving analysis of school assessments is identifying ways to improve, and the school is setting ambitious but achievable targets for the future.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to take part in the wide range of additional activities available.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good in all parts of the school and there have been no recent exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and pupils develop good respect for others. Their independence is limited because they have too few opportunities to take responsibility and initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school has successfully reduced the number and length of term-time holidays taken by pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching, particularly in the nursery and reception classes. As a result, pupils' learning through the school is satisfactory although there is room for improvement. Teachers have good relationships and control and these create a good learning atmosphere. Their organisation of lessons is good and they make use of a wide range of resources to interest pupils and help them to learn. Teachers' planning has improved through clearer identification of what pupils need to learn. Teachers do not, however, systematically collect and use information about how well pupils are doing to plan tasks with good levels of challenge for all. This is particularly apparent in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those who are new to learning English. Teachers do not always match tasks precisely to these pupils' needs but teaching is satisfactory because support staff interpret and amend tasks to help pupils to learn. The good staffing is not used enough to promote pupils' discussion and investigative skills. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory and improved because teachers make better use of national guidance on literacy and numeracy. Teachers give pupils some useful opportunities to develop literacy skills in subjects such as history. Numeracy is developed well in other subjects such as geography, and mathematics forms the foundation of many lessons in the computer suites. Although teaching in these suites is secure, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use their skills across the curriculum.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of activities helps all pupils to learn in all subjects. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good management helps pupils to make steady progress through the school. Teachers do not consistently link planning to assessment and pupils' individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All pupils are learning English as an additional language and teachers give a wide range of experiences that promote this soundly. However, they do not ensure that tasks closely match pupils' individual needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school approaches the Muslim backgrounds of the pupils very sensitively and makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. There is good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development within a secure and caring environment.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for child protection and the health, safety and welfare of the pupils.

Staff know the pupils very well and there are improving systems for assessing their progress. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information to match work to the needs of all the pupils. Good links with parents help to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Parents feel that the school achieves good standards and are happy with the progress that their children are making.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed and staff work together well. Increasing delegation to subject co-ordinators is widening the responsibility for improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and need to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Increased analysis of data and monitoring of teaching is giving good information but the school is less effective at using this to determine how it will improve teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Systems for financial management are good and the school makes good use of special funds and grants.

The levels of staffing and resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory although additional buildings have reduced the outside space available and led to increased complexity in the day-to-day management. The school seeks to get best value from resources, including teachers.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• Teachers teach well and have high expectations of pupils.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework that pupils are set.</li> </ul>

Parents were very supportive of the school, in the large number of questionnaire responses received and in meetings. The inspection agrees with the positive atmosphere in school and the good management. Although some teaching is good, the overall quality is satisfactory. Teachers set appropriate homework that is used effectively to help pupils to learn.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the school with very low attainment and many factors restrict their standards. Most have extremely limited skills and prior experiences and many have special educational needs. All children have English as an additional language and the proportion at a very early stage of understanding and learning English is very high. These factors limit their achievements. Children in the nursery and reception classes have a rich curriculum with a wide range of interesting activities. A strong emphasis on developing children's language helps many make good progress. However, by the time they begin working on the National Curriculum, their attainment is still well below that generally found in pupils of that age. Only a few are likely to achieve the levels expected for their age in some aspects of their social, physical and creative development.
2. Pupils' restricted language and other skills continue to limit their progress in the infant classes. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests and tasks at the age of seven have been consistently very weak. In 2001, these were in the bottom five per cent in the country in English and science. Results in reading and mathematics were well below those of similar schools although the writing results were a little better. Small variations in results have resulted primarily from the different abilities of the groups of pupils involved.
3. Pupils' results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven show overall very low attainment, well below that of similar schools. In particular, the results for English and science were in the bottom five per cent of the country. Because of recent re-organisation, this was the first year that this age group has been in the school. The very weak results can be traced in part to the weaker group of pupils, with higher than normal numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In addition, significantly high numbers of pupils throughout the school take extended breaks from their schooling to visit families in Pakistan. This restricts their progress. The school's records of the progress of individual pupils in this year group shows that most have made overall satisfactory progress since the age of seven. The school is undertaking analysis of the results and is now setting higher and more challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Observations during the inspection suggest that these targets are achievable.
4. Over one in four pupils has been identified by the school as having special educational needs, including 19 pupils who have statements of special educational need, which is higher than average. Over half the pupils identified have difficulties with language, and about one in five has difficulties with behaviour. All are learning English as an additional language and procedures for identifying those who also have special educational needs are clear. Boys outnumber girls by three to two on the school's register of special educational needs. The work of pupils with special educational needs reflects the low standards throughout the school, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Most attain well below the standards expected for their age group in English and mathematics. Although most pupils are capable of reaching higher standards, many make steady progress and a few achieve well, especially in the younger year groups.
5. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress through the school. Staff with bi-lingual skills soundly extend pupils' vocabulary and consolidate understanding through their home language, while remaining firmly focused on the development of English. This approach works well for more capable pupils, and many attain the standards expected for their age group. A small number attain above average standards in the national tests. However, many pupils have individual weaknesses in spoken and written English that persist for too long. In some cases, the school's assessment system identifies these weaknesses, but teachers rarely make specific changes in tasks and teaching to deal with them. Teaching

lessons to a whole class has the advantage of including all the pupils in similar experiences and work. Through the school, this leads to increasing confidence and capability in English. However, in addition, many pupils need a more individual approach to planning and checking their learning of English to ensure all pupils make good progress.

6. The inspection finds clear signs of recently improving standards in the school, notably in mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are now below, but not well below average in the final year of school. Teachers use national guidance in English and mathematics more effectively to target work to improve pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. Pupils improve their literacy skills when writing creatively in subjects such as history and geography. The wide range of activities and experiences gives pupils good subject matter for reading and writing. Pupils use their developing mathematical skills to good effect in lessons such as science and geography. Many activities in the computer suites use mathematical activities as their subject matter and these make a positive contribution to pupils' numeracy.
7. Pupils achieve standards in English that are well below average by the ages of seven and eleven but better standards were seen in some classes. These generally relate to teachers' more effective use of national guidance to plan lessons. A wide range of additional initiatives also has a positive influence on the attainment of some pupils. For example, the current emphasis on developing reading has been successful in helping pupils to develop strategies for reading new words. Pupils read with increasing fluency and expression although their comprehension is weaker. Many find it difficult to understand what they have read or to talk about their books. Pupils' writing is somewhat stronger than their reading. A sound approach to teaching basic skills helps pupils to learn grammar and sentence structure. Spelling is weaker because pupils have less understanding of patterns of letters in words. Pupils gain new vocabulary through teachers' careful explanations and effective support from classroom assistants. However, pupils have too few opportunities to discuss their work together and use their developing English to explain their thinking and learning. This limits their achievements in speaking and listening with a consequent restriction to their reading and writing.
8. An enthusiastic approach to mathematics makes effective use of national guidance. This is helping to raise the standards seen in many lessons, although they are still below average by the age of eleven. Attainment by the age of seven is well below average. Pupils' limited language skills make it harder for them to understand aspects such as problem solving. However, teachers are often effective at encouraging pupils to consider the underlying mathematics of problems. Pupils sometimes understand the work better than they can talk about it or set it down on paper. A strong emphasis on number calculations enables many pupils to make good progress. Some more able pupils, for example, become competent at recognising and using factors and percentages. Other aspects of mathematics, such as data handling and shape, are particularly well developed through other subjects.
9. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in science is well below national expectations. Their attainment is particularly restricted because many have very limited general knowledge. However, there are some improvements through the school and attainment in the current year 6 is below average but better than last year's National Curriculum tests. A significant strength of the subject is the extent to which pupils know scientific language and vocabulary. Teachers ensure that pupils improve their knowledge and understanding but do not place enough emphasis on developing skills of independent scientific enquiry. Pupils have difficulty in understanding and expressing their own thoughts and ideas because they are given too few opportunities for discussion.
10. The standards in most other subjects are similarly below average and often restricted by pupils' weak language skills. Attainment in design and technology, however, reaches the national average by the age of eleven. This is a result of good opportunities for pupils to investigate mechanisms and practical building of models. Pupils learn a range of techniques and skills in using appropriate tools.

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

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take part in the wide range of additional activities available. This is particularly true in the nursery where children are made to feel welcome by the school and adapt quickly to its requirements. Here they learn to socialise together, to share and to co-operate with others. For the rest of their time in the school they play well together, look after each other and have respect for feelings and beliefs. Relationships within the school are good and this was evident at all times. Friendship groups were seen before school, between lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes when children were playing and talking happily together, and a good learning environment has been developed overall in the school. This is a purposeful, friendly and happy environment.
12. Pupils' behaviour is good in all parts of the school and there have been no recent exclusions. At playtimes and lunchtimes, they play and talk happily to each other. There was no sign of any oppressive behaviour during the inspection. Pupils are respectful of others and of property. They are taught during assemblies and lessons to understand other people's feelings and how their actions may affect others. It is evident that they have learned from these by their attitudes and behaviour around the school. Parents are happy with all aspects of pupils' personal development. The high standards recognised at the last inspection have been sustained.
13. In lessons, attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are keen to learn and raise their hands readily to answer questions. When they have the opportunity, they contribute well to lessons and listen to other pupils' contributions. They work well individually and often concentrate hard. There was some evidence of working in pairs and occasionally in groups and they do this co-operatively and responsibly. However, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their skills of discussion in English, and hence their wider language skills.
14. Pupils with special educational needs grow in confidence and develop a reasonable ability to communicate socially with each other. Most are keen to learn and thoroughly enjoy stories and books. However, they have too few opportunities to reinforce their understanding and the new words they have learned, by using spoken English as part of their work. This limits their fluency in English, reduces the quality of their writing and restricts their ability to understand instructions and information.
15. The school does provide some opportunities for pupils to show some independence and take responsibility. These include taking registers to the office, taking messages, preparing for assemblies and dining room duties. Pupils undertake these tasks readily. They would be able and willing to take on more responsibilities to develop independence and show initiative if encouraged and given the opportunity. However, these opportunities are limited and need to be expanded to improve their personal development. This applies in lessons as well as in other activities around the school. For example, pupils are not given enough opportunities to plan their own investigations in subjects such as science. The opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their communication skills is rarely given.
16. Attendance for last year was broadly in line with the national average. This is commendable in view of the area in which the school is situated and the number of extended holidays which are taken by some pupils during term-time. The de-registration of pupils after four weeks absence is an effective way of trying to limit the loss of education to the pupils. The school meets all statutory requirements. Pupils arrive punctually at the school. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and the incidence of extended holidays during term-time has reduced.

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

17. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with a high proportion of good teaching and no unsatisfactory lessons. Although not strictly comparable, this is a similar position to that outlined in the last report. However, improvements in teaching have taken place, often associated with effective use of national guidance such as for literacy and numeracy. Teachers often develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well in other lessons. The school has successfully responded to weaknesses identified in the last report and teachers have improved their planning of lessons. These usually include statements of what pupils need to learn that are shared with pupils during the lessons. This process generally helps pupils to have greater understanding and recognition of their learning. In some lessons, however, the statements are not worded simply enough or do not relate sufficiently sharply to the lesson itself. Assessment systems in the school are being developed and teachers have a clearer view of how well pupils are doing. Teachers do not yet use the systems enough to match work precisely to pupils' prior attainment or their specific needs. This is particularly pertinent to the teaching of the large number of pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English.
18. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall and children are given a good start to their time in school. All adults work effectively as a team and this provides a good example for the children. They make sure that children understand the routines and know how to behave. Many children lack independence and rely heavily on adult support. The staff effectively stimulate children's interest by talking to them as they play and helping them to share the good range of toys and equipment. However, adults could do more to challenge children to speak more often and more fully themselves, rather than accepting their first brief answers. This is particularly apparent in activities designed to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Some activities are not sufficiently challenging and do not develop children's imagination and initiative. Some careful records of children's progress are made, for example in mathematical development, although the information is not consistently used to group children or to target activities to meet their needs. Good teaching of creative development, particularly in the nursery class, gives children a wide range of stimulating activities and promotes higher standards.
19. The teaching of children within the special resourced nursery unit is good. Children's strengths and weaknesses are carefully identified and recorded, and plans for the next stage of their learning are firmly based on what they can already do. The adults have high expectations of what the children should achieve, and their teaching is clearly linked to what each child needs to learn next.
20. Throughout the school, teachers' relationships with pupils are good. This helps them to establish and maintain interest and control. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and express these clearly so pupils are in no doubt of what is expected of them. The positive relationships foster good attitudes and a strong willingness for pupils to learn. Teachers have effective control of classes and make good use of the positive behaviour strategies. These establish good atmospheres for listening and help pupils to learn. Teachers' organisation of lessons is often very good. They use their good knowledge in subjects such as music and history to devise an interesting and effective range of activities. They make effective use of a wide range of resources to enliven lessons and help pupils to understand. Year 3 pupils, for example, are very excited as they reveal historical artefacts during a simulated 'archaeological dig' in a box of soil in the classroom.
21. Teachers are very clear about the new vocabulary that they want pupils to learn. They develop this well through careful explanations and effective questioning. A significant strength in science, for example, is the extent to which teachers effectively promote words connected with their topics. They constantly reinforce new words such as *particles* throughout the lesson and this helps pupils to learn. In English, pupils are asked to talk about the *setting* of stories and use terms such as *fiction* and *imaginary*. Many pupils are reluctant to speak and do not have enough opportunities to clarify their thoughts and share them with others. In a Year 1 information and communication technology lesson, the teacher gives pupils time to

answer, knowing some need enough time to collect their thoughts. Some other questioning by teachers is less effective because they are willing to accept short, often one-word, answers from pupils. Teachers do not give pupils opportunities to discuss their learning with each other. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, the emphasis is on giving facts and pupils have no real chances to talk about the activity. As a result, pupils' misconceptions are not revealed and clarified and this reduces learning.

22. The school's staffing is good and there are large numbers of teaching and support staff. Often these are used effectively, for example, in enabling teaching in smaller groups or for specialist teaching. However, in some lessons pupils rely too heavily on support staff. Sometimes this is because teachers have not matched tasks sufficiently closely to the needs of different groups of pupils, such as when a whole class has the same task. In other lessons, tasks do not give pupils enough opportunities to investigate and discuss their work, limiting pupils' independence.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall but, given the high staffing levels, it could be improved significantly. The school has the benefit of 14 support staff trained to work with pupils with special educational needs from the reception to Year 6. Many of the support staff are bi-lingual and are able to help pupils with unfamiliar words. Pupils who have a statement of special educational need are generally taught well and make good progress. They usually have an assigned support assistant to ensure that they understand what is asked of them, have suitable resources and stay focused on their work. This individual attention also enables the staff to use spare moments to support the pupil in other ways, such as discussing correct spellings or guiding them towards the use of reference material to help with solutions in mathematics. In this way, many individual weaknesses are recognised and dealt with quickly, which helps pupils to make the best of class lessons.
24. Teachers mainly teach other pupils with special educational needs in class lessons, often with the general help of support staff. In addition, there are occasional opportunities for pupils to be withdrawn from lessons for individual work. The teaching of these pupils is more variable, although never less than satisfactory. From Year 2 to Year 6, pupils work in groups for English and mathematics, with others who are at similar stages of learning. These are successful in keeping the group sizes small and increasing the number of adults working with pupils with special educational needs.
25. In one of the groups in Year 2, the good teaching in a mathematics lesson owed much to the use of illustrations and resources. The pupils could see or handle these to help them to understand what the teacher was explaining. The teacher's clear guidance about the tasks the pupils were to do, and the time they had to complete them, also helped the pupils' independence. This gave the teacher and support staff the time to work with individual pupils when necessary. In this lesson, the tasks had just the right level of challenge, so that pupils did not need to keep asking the teacher but could work on the solutions with each other. In many lessons, however, the teachers' planning did not refer to the previous work of the pupils with special educational needs. Planning makes few references as to how teaching is linked to the targets and assessment in each pupil's individual education programme. The result is that although pupils make some progress, they do not achieve as well as they could.
26. All the pupils on roll are learning English as an additional language and all have full access to the curriculum. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from class lessons or provided with separate work. However, many pupils have individual weaknesses in spoken and written English that teachers do not fully address in their lessons. The school's assessment system sometimes identifies these weaknesses, but teaching is rarely amended sufficiently to meet the identified needs. Plans to introduce new assessments of levels of English proficiency are positive and will help teachers to match work more securely to pupils' capabilities.

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

27. The school fulfils the statutory requirement to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. Teachers use the national guidance for each subject, especially literacy and numeracy, to help with the planning of lessons, and the school has a clear overall plan of what should be taught to pupils in each year group. This results in a suitably broad curriculum, with good opportunities for pupils to build on what teachers taught them earlier.
28. In addition to the national guidance for subjects, the school has many of its own policies and guidance for other aspects of its work. These include the assessment of pupils' attainment, their personal development and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. These policies help to ensure that teachers and other staff are well informed about the school's procedures and its aims. They are therefore able to work together to achieve them. For example, the school has a policy of including all pupils, whatever their ability and background, in all curriculum opportunities. The supportive relationships between staff and pupils and the efforts to increase pupils' confidence and self-esteem are an essential part of this policy. Not all policies are yet fully effective, especially those linked to raising standards of attainment. However, the school has a development plan which identifies some of the improvements needed.
29. Teachers enrich pupils' experiences in school by a wide variety of activities including visits to places of interest. Visitors give talks on their specialist subjects or contribute to lessons, such as the two experienced volunteers who help the Year 6 pupils to enjoy their science work. The school takes advantage of national and local initiatives, such as the provision for gifted and talented pupils that is part of the Excellence in Cities project. Although at a very early stage, this has already led to the school appointing learning mentors and identifying one in ten pupils with the potential to improve their attainment. The approach to sex education has been agreed with the parents and community leaders. It is taught mainly through the science curriculum and health education, with additional guidance provided separately for boys and girls. Anti-drug education is a regular part of a well-established programme for pupils' personal and social development.
30. Pupils with statements of special educational need have the benefit of good levels of staffing and care, and have full access to the school's curriculum. The staff are aware of the newly revised national Code of Practice, and are about to receive training on implementing the new procedures. The present procedures are firmly in place and comply with the original Code of Practice. All pupils with special educational needs gain considerably from the broad range of experiences and additional activities that the school provides. The school's methodical teaching of the basic skills of English, including handwriting and the sounds of letters and words, helps pupils to learn effectively.
31. Pupils on the special educational needs register have generally well-written individual education plans. These have clear targets for attainment and useful guidance on how to recognise when a pupil has achieved a target. This good provision and management improves pupils' achievements. However, it is limited by the loose links between the targets set for pupils and the guidance in many individual education plans. Few links are established between the results of assessments and teachers' planning of the pupils' work. Where targets are too easy or not achieved, the curriculum or teaching is rarely adjusted sufficiently to ensure that individual weaknesses are dealt with and progress accelerated.
32. The timing of the school's additional activities takes into account the pupils' commitment to work with their Muslim faith community in the evening. This enables many pupils to take advantage of the activities. There are several clubs, including a breakfast club that provides food and physical activities such as juggling, a writing club and a homework club. For the older pupils, opportunities for playing hockey, netball and football are available. These activities have been very successful in maintaining pupils' interest in school, encouraging them to attend regularly, and to develop their skills and confidence.

33. Overall, the school's curriculum provides a sound basis for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It develops pupils' positive attitudes to school and encourages a strong community spirit and social skills. Boys and girls have equal opportunities, although some work is undertaken separately, and all pupils have access to the full curriculum. In the minority of lessons where pupils' work is practical and encourages them to discuss their solutions and ideas, they participate very well and learn quickly. However, much work is not so demanding and the pupils spend time listening with too little opportunity to show what they can and cannot do. The majority of pupils enter the school at a very early stage of developing their skills and knowledge. All are learning English as an additional language, and many have special educational needs. Pupils make overall satisfactory progress and many widen their experiences and understanding well. A small number of pupils achieve suitably high standards but most do not. Teachers do not pay enough attention to linking the curriculum to ambitious targets for pupils, based on prior assessments.
34. The school has a positive ethos with a warm, welcoming atmosphere. It makes good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. The school has been granted a determination from the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, and acts of worship are predominantly Muslim in character. Christian festivals are observed and pupils also benefit from visits from the vicar of the local Christian church.
35. The school provides a secure and caring environment for its pupils with a sensitive awareness of their cultural background. It is successful, through its curriculum and the approaches to teaching, in fulfilling its aim to raise pupils' self-esteem. Religious education suitably promotes pupils' spiritual development by providing them with increasing knowledge of values and beliefs. With adult guidance, older pupils are beginning to consider some fundamental issues through their work on citizenship. There are moments of excitement for pupils when they make discoveries in lessons. They were enthralled, for example, during a history lesson in Year 3 when a pupil archaeologist revealed a piece of pottery in a soil pit. Displayed work and presentations in assemblies show that pupils' contributions are valued. Throughout the curriculum, however, there are generally too few opportunities for pupils to question, discuss and take time to reflect upon the meaning and purpose of significant experiences. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils' moral and social development and further contribute to knowledge of their faith. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to be still and quiet and make thoughtful contributions in order to develop greater self-knowledge, awareness and understanding.
36. The headteacher, teachers, governors, parents and all other adults have high expectations of behaviour. They provide good role models and have a firm but fair approach to discipline, consistent with the school's behaviour policy. Teachers frequently praise pupils and give appropriate rewards for their behaviour, efforts and achievements in all areas of school life. This is effective in developing their self-confidence. Faith assemblies make a considerable contribution to pupils' moral development, encouraging respect for parents and teachers. There is an emphasis on good behaviour, and prominently displayed rules, based on respect and consideration for others, are consistently reinforced. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They behave well and the school is orderly and disciplined. The work of learning mentors is most effective in providing incentives for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own behaviour, through the *Good Kids Club*. Pupils clearly understand the consequences of actions that are unacceptable to others.
37. The wide range of activities held before and after school enhances pupils' social development to a good extent. The early morning breakfast club generates a friendly and sociable atmosphere and provides pupils with good opportunities to eat, work and play together. Sporting activities encourage teamwork and provide a sense of fair play and co-operation. The school fosters a strong sense of the value of the community and the individuals within it. The headteacher knows pupils and their families well and, as a result, good relationships are

evident in many areas of school life. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others when they make New Year resolutions about how they can help at home, at school and in the mosque. They are involved in fund-raising activities for local and national charities, including Barnardo's, Children in Need and Islamic Relief. The organisation of lessons, such as literacy, design and technology, physical education and history, provides suitable opportunities for pupils to co-operate in pairs and large and small groups. Pupils develop environmental awareness through a range of visits, including one to Belle Vue Barracks to learn about safety. Older pupils benefit from residential visits to seaside and country areas, such as Whitby and the Yorkshire Dales. Class teachers allocate jobs related to classroom organisation, which pupils carry out sensibly and willingly. Pupils from Year 6 enjoy acting as personal assistants to the headteacher, taking messages around the school. Others help in the nursery from time to time. They take their responsibilities seriously and this gives them a good understanding of living in a community.

38. The school approaches the Muslim backgrounds of the pupils very sensitively providing, for example, an after-school Madrassa, where pupils can learn the Qur'an. Separate swimming and sports activities for boys and girls meet the cultural needs of the community. Consequently, pupils have a strong sense of their own culture. The school seeks to widen pupils' cultural experience through an interesting variety of visits and visitors. Pupils listened to African music in an assembly where a visitor fascinated her audience with anecdotes and artefacts from the Gambia, for example. There are opportunities in lessons to learn about authors, composers and artists, such as the locally born David Hockney. Art, history and music make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. The school is slowly but successfully developing a growing awareness of the rich diversity in this multi-cultural society in a particularly mono-cultural district.

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

39. The school has very good procedures for child protection and the health, safety and welfare of the pupils. Parents are pleased with the way the school looks after their children and the high standards observed at the last inspection have been maintained. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory but the use of this information to maximise pupils' progress and attainment is unsatisfactory.
40. The procedures for health and safety are very good. Governors, teachers and outside agencies are involved in regular and rigorous inspections of the buildings and grounds. All statutory requirements are met and the care and attention in this area ensure that the pupils have a safe and secure environment. Security is good with digital locks on all external doors and a camera over the main entrance to identify callers. The site is well fenced.
41. The staff know the pupils very well and the pastoral care is of a high standard. All adults in the school, including the lunchtime supervisors, contribute to the care of the pupils. A good example of the high level of care is the breakfast club, which looks after the children very well and provides a wide range of varied activities before school. The procedures for welcoming children into the nursery are also of high quality. The staff make useful home visits and everything is done to ensure a smooth start to the children's education.
42. Child protection procedures are fully complied with and are addressed with appropriate sensitivity and care by the school. The headteacher is the designated person. She has undertaken suitable training and ensures that staff have a high level of awareness. There is very good liaison with outside agencies and there is ample specialist support for the school. First aid procedures are good with a number of qualified first aiders. Incidents are small in number and are of a minor nature as a result of the good behaviour in the playground. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour that staff apply consistently through the school. Pupils respond positively to the good balance of sanctions and rewards. This contributes considerably to the good learning atmosphere in the school. The school has good procedures to limit incidences of oppressive behaviour.

43. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school makes a check on the first day of any absence and the liaison teacher undertakes home visits as necessary. Many pupils take extended breaks from their schooling, often to visit Pakistan. The school's system of de-registering pupils after four weeks absence during term-time is limiting the number and length of such absences. For example, of the 21 pupils taking extended holidays this academic year, five returned within the four-week period. The computerised system and the regular monitoring ensure that the records are as up to date as they can be.
44. The school has recently introduced a new policy for assessment, monitoring and recording, and a teacher has been appointed to take responsibility. Many of the procedures are now in place, although their use is still uneven. This is satisfactory overall at this stage with the implementation in some subjects, such as mathematics and science, being better than others. The school gathers a lot of information on pupils, including the results of statutory and some non-statutory tests. This is beginning to be used to identify the strengths of groups of pupils. However, the school still fails to consistently match the work to the needs of all the pupils. The monitoring of teaching by senior staff has done little to improve the effectiveness of assessment and its use to maximise pupils' progress and attainment. There are some examples of good practice in the school. For example, in mathematics, the results of compulsory and optional national tests are used to create the ability groups for teaching. As a result, mathematics results are improving. There is a similar picture in science. Assessment is good in the nursery and is often used effectively to promote children's learning. However, in English, speaking and listening is not effectively monitored and this is a key area for the pupils in developing their communication skills. Pupils' records are kept in the school office and provide a satisfactory record of their achievements and progress during their time in the school. The annual pupil reports satisfy all statutory requirements. They provide space for parents' comments and identify areas for improvement in English and mathematics but not for other subjects. The school makes very good arrangements for translations to ensure that all parents are able to have good information about their children's progress.

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

45. Good links with parents help considerably to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Parents feel that the school achieves good standards and are happy with the progress that their children are making. They are pleased with the attitudes and values that the school promotes and with communication with the school. They are made to feel very welcome in the school. The large numbers of questionnaires received were very supportive, the only slight concern being the amount of homework being set. Inspectors looked closely at this but feel that teachers consistently set the right amount of homework. The school is effective in amicably resolving issues raised by parents, such as the wearing of traditional headscarves. This shows the strength and closeness of the relationship between school, parents and the wider community. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress and take part regularly in the reviews of their individual education plans.
46. Some parents take full advantage of the large number of initiatives that the school provides for them, such as *Better Reading Training*, *Family Literacy* and computer classes. The work of the liaison teacher in this area is of considerable importance. Her efforts with home visits, the *Mother's Club*, as well as many other examples, all help to encourage and reinforce the partnership. Many staff successfully contribute to the partnership with parents. A number of parents work in the school in a variety of ways with some of them going on educational visits and residential visits. The support of the parents contributes considerably towards the children's learning.
47. Parents receive good quality information from the school. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality and keep parents well informed of their children's progress. The school makes good efforts to ensure that all parents are able to speak to teachers about their children and parental interviews are extremely well attended. Open Days held twice a year have almost 100 per cent attendance and translators are always available. Parents support family

assemblies well. The school prospectus is an informative document and is supplemented by the governor's annual report to parents. Both of these documents comply with statutory requirements. Very useful nursery booklets are sent out to parents to help with children starting school and many letters are sent out. The school operates an *Open Door* policy, which the parents appreciate very much. This means that the headteacher is easily contacted by parents, for example in the playground before school on most mornings.

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

48. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is an efficient and effective leader and manager. The school's documentation is very good and well organised. This is a large primary school and its organisation is complex. Good administrative systems are in place to make it work smoothly. Governors and staff are committed to providing a good education for pupils and to raising standards of their attainment. Subject co-ordinators are taking an increasing role in the management of their subjects. Many have made analyses of pupils' work and are giving teachers help with their planning. This is leading to some well-targeted development plans that set out routes to improvement. Less attention has been paid to their monitoring of teaching in their subjects and how improvements can raise attainment. The chair of governors speaks enthusiastically of plans for the future of the school, for example, the way the site and building could be expanded to take better advantage of the good staffing levels. The school is a welcoming place and pupils clearly enjoy being there.
49. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the previous report. Targets for development are realistic and the school works hard to put them into practice. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the school has produced very good assessment data. However, it needs to consider the implications of test results more carefully so that it has a clearer view of how it will raise standards. Similarly, the monitoring of teaching is more thorough but does not consider enough what needs to happen to improve teaching and learning. Detailed needs based on this monitoring are not sufficiently well identified to link to the school's development plan. The very good collection of policy documents does not contain enough guidance on assessing the impact of those policies.
50. The school has had trouble in recruiting governors but now has a governing body interested in the school and alert to its strengths and difficulties. The chair of governors works very closely with the headteacher. Committees are in place for the major aspects of the governors' responsibilities. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly and the chair meets at least weekly with the headteacher. Both he and the deputy chair accompany pupils on visits including residential visits. Governors are aware of the need to raise standards and make a sound contribution to the school's development. The chair discusses test results with the headteacher.
51. The school has made several successful bids for specific funds. Because it is an inner city school with an entirely ethnic minority intake, it has a large budget. It uses this efficiently and day-to-day management of finance is very good. Curriculum leaders have to make a case for expenditure and in this way, the headteacher is sure that spending fits into the development plan for the whole school. There are other ways, however, in which the school has not thought through the needs for funding quite so well. For example, the school has a large number of support staff. They are not always used effectively although, within many classes, teachers deploy them well. The school needs to consider how best to use the many teaching and non-teaching staff to enhance the learning opportunities for its pupils. Some good ideas are already in place such as splitting each pair of classes into three groups for English and mathematics in the junior classes. This has allowed teachers to match work more closely to pupils' needs and capabilities.
52. The management of the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs is generally good. A policy is in place that provides very clear and useful guidance on procedures, and on the roles and responsibilities of staff. However, it contains little advice on

planning teaching and learning. The experienced co-ordinator ensures that procedures are followed, parents are fully involved, and the documentation is kept up to date. In addition, she provides a good range of informal advice to staff. A positive atmosphere is created in school which includes and values pupils whatever their capabilities. Staff are clear about where they should be working and how they can contribute to pupils' learning. The budget is carefully monitored and funding is spent on the areas for which it is allocated.

53. In the recent past, extra funding has created a substantial under-spend. This has been sensibly used and the balance is now well within recommended limits. With such a complex income pattern, however, the school needs to look carefully at long-term funding to be sure that its surpluses are sufficient. The headteacher is aware of this need. She monitors each income and expenditure account and from this documentation it is very clear where money originates and how each fund is spent. The headteacher and finance committee are alert to the need to spend prudently and ensure that they assess the quality and value of spending decisions. They are less effective in relating spending to improvements in attainment. The funding for each pupil is large but the school gives satisfactory value for money.
54. There are suitably qualified staff to teach the full range of the National Curriculum. The school had a stable staff until the recent loss of some key staff. It has done well to recruit replacement teachers and to re-organise the subject management to retain complete coverage. One of the recent appointments is successfully addressing the lack of expertise in music. There are many support staff in the school and some additional teachers as well. They work very hard to support the pupils through a number of additional externally funded initiatives. However, the school needs to match the work more closely to the assessed needs of the pupils, both in standards and in giving greater responsibility to the pupils. The work of these staff will be very important in these areas. For example, additional staff could be used more creatively to allow greater opportunities for pupils to undertake practical tasks, plan and conduct investigations and discuss their work together. Pupils with special education needs are given good support.
55. There are secure arrangements in place for checking how successful teachers are. The school appraises all staff annually and has good arrangements for meeting their professional needs. Training links well with the priorities in the school development plan and the school improvement plan. One of the teachers is newly qualified and receives good encouragement from the school. Appropriate additional training is provided and she has good support from her mentor and the rest of the staff.
56. The school is on a small site and the main building originally housed a first school and nursery. Three temporary buildings were provided in the school playground when the school was converted to a full primary school in 1999. The main building and two of the temporary buildings are of a good standard but the third building is only satisfactory. All of the temporary buildings have washbasins and toilets. However, these additional buildings have left the school with a small playground and it has had to introduce staggered playtimes and lunchtimes. Increased numbers of staff give more opportunities for pupils to be taught in small groups. However, the space for these is restricted, particularly in creating quiet areas to give them special attention. Nevertheless, the school manages these problems very well and is able to deliver the full range of the National Curriculum. Teachers sometimes use the open plan nature of the building well – in a history lesson where the curriculum leader talked to all the Year 4 pupils together for example. The building and grounds restrict the range of physical education that can be offered but teachers make good use of the local sports centre to make up for deficiencies. All of the buildings are well maintained and the use of good quality display ensures that the school is light and airy and provides a good learning environment. The accommodation for the nursery is very good and is used well.
57. There is a good range and quantity of learning resources overall. All are in good condition and the resources in the nursery are very good. In subject areas, the resources for science and physical education are also very good. The only area where resources are unsatisfactory is in

music where some of the instruments are dated and in poor condition. However, now that they have a new teacher and co-ordinator, the school has plans to address this weakness.

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

58. Successful management has established the new school. In order to consolidate and develop the signs of improving attainment, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Raise pupils' standards of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science, through more consistently good teaching, paying particular attention to ensuring that teachers:
  - a) gather and make use of information on how well pupils are doing to plan tasks with good levels of challenge for all;  
(paragraphs 1-10, 17, 25, 26, 31, 33, 39, 44, 72, 81, 83)
  - b) ensure that staffing levels are used to enable pupils to have opportunities to develop independent skills through practical work and investigations;  
(paragraphs 1-10, 15, 22, 54, 80, 92, 95, 105, 111, 112)
  - c) give pupils more opportunities to develop language skills through talking with other pupils about their work and expressing their thoughts.  
(paragraphs 7, 9, 13, 14, 21, 44, 74, 101, 104, 124, 126)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

91

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

28

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	31	54	0	0	0
Percentage	0	7	34	59	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

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	46	384
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	130

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	19
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18	92

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	400

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	28	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	21
	Girls	22	21	21
	Total	38	38	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (72)	70 (76)	78 (78)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	20	17
	Girls	21	21	15
	Total	38	41	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (74)	76 (78)	59 (61)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	18
	Girls	13	9	12
	Total	26	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (n/a)	44 (n/a)	53 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	18	17
	Girls	10	14	12
	Total	20	32	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35 (n/a)	56 (n/a)	51 (n/a)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. The school had no pupils in this age group in 2000.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	317
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.1
Average class size	27.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	34
Total aggregate hours worked per week	617

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	1068533
Total expenditure	1016430
Expenditure per pupil	2548
Balance brought forward from previous year	56844
Balance carried forward to next year	108947

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	454
Number of questionnaires returned	315

### Percentage of responses in each category<sup>1</sup>

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	19	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	29	3	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	25	8	2	7
The teaching is good.	71	23	3	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	26	6	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	24	4	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	20	3	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	65	25	5	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	67	25	2	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	24	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	26	4	2	9

<sup>1</sup> Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding errors

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59. Children start in the nursery at the age of three, transferring to the reception classes in either September or January as they approach their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, the children in one reception class and some in the nursery were just settling into their new classes. All have English as their second language, and many joining the nursery are at a very early stage of understanding and speaking English. Their attainment in all the areas of learning is very low on entry to the school and language is, rightly, a priority. With this in mind, there are good staffing levels in the nursery so that children are well supported and benefit from working with adults individually and in small groups. The planning in the Foundation Stage provides a rich curriculum with a wide range of interesting activities and a heavy emphasis on developing children's language. The adults work effectively as a team and this provides a good example for the children. All these features mean that children have a good start to their school lives and many of the good features found in the last inspection are still evident. Nevertheless, because of their very low starting points, the majority of children are unlikely to reach the levels expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1 except in some aspects of their social, physical and creative development. The school has maintained the quality of provision since the last inspection.

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

60. Children make satisfactory progress, but their personal and social development is unlikely to reach the expected level for their age by the end of the reception year. Some children new to the nursery are reluctant to leave their parents initially, but most soon settle happily because the adults are welcoming and encouraging. The teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. All the adults make sure that children understand the routines and know how to behave. They effectively stimulate children's interest by talking to them as they play and helping them to share the good range of toys and equipment. Children in the older reception class show a keen interest in activities like mathematics and physical activities in the school hall. They listen carefully, behave well and work hard. Some of these children are on course to attain the expected levels in their social development. Whilst children happily play alongside others in activities like the sand and role-play activities, very few children share their play or develop story lines together. More could be done to develop their independence. The children in the nursery rely heavily on the adults in choosing their activities. Many are unable to organise themselves, for instance in the role-play areas where they soon lose interest and rely heavily on adults for guidance. In a reception class the teacher explained clearly what children were to do in a literacy session, but children lost interest and concentration when asked to work independently and wasted time looking around.

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

61. Teaching is sound and pupils make satisfactory progress in this area of their learning. In view of their very low skills when they join the nursery, children make good progress in understanding what others are saying. The adults speak clearly and make sure that children understand the new words they hear. Children made good strides in their language development in a session where they learned words to describe different clothes. The teachers checked carefully what children needed to learn and organised the children into groups. The adults clearly understood what their group needed to work on and adapted the activity accordingly. One assistant who spoke Punjabi translated for a group of children with very little English. She patiently provided plenty of repetition and practice so that they learned new words like *vest*, *sock* and *jumper*. Brighter children were asked to explain the use of each item of clothing. By the end of the discussion, they could explain, for instance, that a *jumper keeps us warm*. However, many children preferred to listen rather than speak

themselves. The adults could do more to challenge children to speak more often and more fully themselves, rather than accepting their first brief answers.

62. There were good opportunities for children to talk in a reception class where they were learning the sounds of letters. Children enjoyed joining in with rhymes and talking to others in their group to decide the initial letters of words. The teacher showed them how to construct a sentence from a jumble of words. They found this exciting and they concentrated well. By the end of this activity, some children recognised some letters and formed simple sentences. Most children handle books carefully and some follow a story from the pictures, but few show interest in the text. Sometimes adults miss opportunities to encourage children to look at the words in the books. This was seen when a group was sharing a simple reading book in a reception class. Good questioning by an assistant helped children to understand how to turn the pages, to learn words like *cover* and *author* and to tell the story from the pictures. They did not recognise simple repeated words like *I* because they were not asked to look at the text. Some younger reception children struggled to recognise the initial letter of their toy in a circle game because their low language skills meant that they were unsure what it was. Few children write independently by the time they start in Year 1, though many write their names recognisably. Some brighter children develop good pencil control and their drawings of people are very carefully drawn and detailed. However, in some literacy sessions, these children spend too long on their drawings and not enough emphasis is given to challenging them to write. Less than half the children attain the expected level for their age in this area of learning.

### **Mathematical development**

63. Few of the children are likely to reach the targets for their age by the time they leave the reception year, although they make satisfactory progress. Teaching is satisfactory and adults make good efforts to extend children's skills in recognising numbers and counting. However, low levels of English hold many children back. Children eating their snacks in the nursery were encouraged by a teacher to count the beakers and the pieces of fabric she was cutting, and to sort the objects on the table by colour. They enjoyed singing number rhymes with another teacher. An assistant worked with pairs of children to develop their counting skills with numbers up to five. She carefully checked and recorded their attainments so that there is a good record of what children can and cannot do in mathematics. However, this information is not used as well as it might be to plan mathematical activities as the activities are similar for all the children, whatever their existing skills. Too much time is spent in working with children individually. This limits the time each child spends on mathematical activities. More use could be made of the careful records kept to organise groups of similar ability, and to plan activities that move them on at their different stages of development.
64. However, one-to-one working with children with special educational needs provided good opportunities for repetition and practice that enabled them to make good progress in some sessions. This was also a strength in a mathematics activity seen in the younger reception class. Children learned to count numbers to 10 and to begin to understand *more than* and *less than* because all the activities were clearly focused on developing these skills and provided plenty of practice. The teacher's skilled questioning stimulated them to guess and then count how many toys were in a bag, and then to explain the differences. The assistant supported the less able by repeating the numbers. Her infectious enthusiasm held their attention well.

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

65. Most of the children are not likely to reach the expectations for their age by the start of Year 1. In all the classes the majority of children struggle to explain what they are doing or why because their language skills are very limited. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although the adults work hard to ensure that children gain a wider vocabulary and understanding, many are unable to explain what they know or why things work as they do. Children in the nursery

know something of what happens in an Asian wedding because the staff provide very good resources, such as clothes, music and a place set aside for role-play. Children enjoy such activities and listen carefully when adults talk to them, but they rarely talk about what they have understood. In a 'dressing the dolly' session brighter children knew that a cap has a peak to protect the wearer from the sun because the teacher had encouraged them to think why this might be. Children in a reception class were learning about their homes and addresses. Some of the children were proud when they were able to tell others their street name. A map of the local area was used to show the streets, but this was too small for many of the children to extend their awareness of the local area by observing where their street was in relation to the school. In a baking session, a useful discussion led by an assistant meant that children were able to predict what might happen as the ingredients mixed and changed. Children showed imagination when creating models with construction toys. They made detailed models of houses, though sometimes the lack of specific pieces, like windows, limited their work. Sometimes, however, these tasks in 'activities' sessions do not challenge children enough. They are not set a problem to solve or investigate, and so do not develop their own imagination and initiative as well as they might.

### **Physical development**

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but few children reach the levels expected for their age when they leave the reception classes. However, some very good teaching was seen during the inspection in both the nursery and reception classes in sessions in the school hall. These sessions were effectively planned with activities designed to systematically build children's skills. Teachers gave clear instructions and other adult helpers participated alongside the children providing a useful example for them to follow. The teacher in the nursery spoke slowly and checked that children understood her instructions. As a result, children responded well to the sound of a tambourine, stopping, starting, running and walking with adult help. Their hand/eye coordination was often poor but, with practice, they repeated a sequence of movements by the end of the lesson. In another very good lesson with similar strong features, pupils in a reception class showed good skills in aiming at a target and throwing and catching a ball, beanbag or quoit. Children improved their own accuracy by watching other pupils chosen by the teacher as particularly good examples. The oldest children were on course to reach the expected levels in this aspect. All the classes regularly use the very good range of outdoor play equipment in the nursery. However, sometimes these sessions lack a sense of purpose because the planning in this area is not as effective in deciding what skills children are to learn through their play. As a result, the adults supervising them are not used as effectively as they might be because they are unsure what they are to do.

### **Creative development**

67. The provision in this area of learning is good, particularly in the nursery. Children have ample opportunities to engage in role-play, to sing, to play musical instruments and to work with paint, collage, printing and other media. Teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good in the nursery. Staff take considerable care in providing a very good range of high quality artefacts that successfully stimulate children's interest. In the nursery, children enjoyed wearing the wedding clothes and listening to the music at their Asian wedding. Others took on the roles of mum with a baby in the home corner. Their play was more imaginative when an adult was present to give them ideas. However, even then, they usually preferred a passive, watching role and were unable to create their own stories. Their imagination and ability to organise role-play is very limited. Children enjoy music sessions. Some children in the nursery tried out the different sounds made by instruments in the 'music maze' that is part of the outdoor play equipment. When an assistant joined them they happily accompanied her singing of *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* playing in time with the music. A visiting pianist supports music sessions in the reception classes. In some lessons, children make good progress in their singing and in learning the names of musical instruments. In one such lesson, the teacher encouraged them to listen and respond carefully to the music they heard. As a result,

they learned to sing a wider range of songs from memory and to recognise *soft* and *loud* sounds. Children loved singing and acting the *Five Little Monkeys* and other action songs that also strengthened their language and mathematical skills.

68. Children in the nursery produce some very attractive pieces of artwork with adult help. They weave with different fabrics creating an interesting tree shape and printed patterns using silver paint. Teachers celebrate children's achievements in attractively presented displays, like the one that brightens the school entrance area. Some children learned about Mendhi patterns when a parent helper created interesting patterns on their hands for a role-play wedding. Others created attractive scarves by printing on fabric and adding shiny shapes. In spite of this, many children rely too heavily on adults for ideas and they are not challenged enough to explore, experiment, mix their own paints and to generally decide what they will create and how they will organise their work. Apart from this, children come closer to reaching the targets for their age in music and art than in other areas of their creative development. However, overall standards of attainment are well below average.

### **Special resourced nursery unit**

69. The school has places in the nursery for 12 children with special educational needs to attend part-time. This resourced provision is very effective. It has two specialist staff and at present has 11 children who have been recommended by the local authority. Some of these live outside the area from which the school normally draws its pupils, but many continue to attend the school after they move on from the nursery. Children's strengths and weaknesses are carefully identified and recorded, and plans for the next stage of their learning are firmly based on what they can already do. The adults have high expectations of what the children should achieve, and their teaching is clearly linked to what each child needs to learn next.
70. Although the standards achieved by children in the resourced nursery are often well below other children of the same age, the teaching is good and most children make very good progress, particularly in speaking, listening and mixing with other children. They also have the benefit of a full range of nursery activities because the unit is an integral part of the school's nursery class. This puts pressure on space, but serves the children well, especially as the more capable children are readily available to watch and imitate. Links with other agencies providing specialist expertise, such as speech therapy and physiotherapy, are strong. Parents are kept fully informed and the arrangements for introducing children to the nursery are very good.

### **ENGLISH**

71. Standards in English are well below average, and well below those found in similar schools. However, pupils make satisfactory progress given that all pupils speak English as an additional language and many have very low attainment on entry to school. As this school was a first school at the time of the last inspection, there can be no comparison made of pupils leaving at age eleven. Standards achieved by pupils by the end of Year 2 are well below average, similar to those found in the last inspection. Effective support enables pupils who are at the early stages of learning English, and pupils with special educational needs, to make sound progress. However, extended holidays taken by some pupils restrict their progress.
72. Successful use of national guidance and the recent introduction of improved guided reading lessons give teachers a clear focus to lessons. This contributes to the improving standards seen in some classes. Pupils become more aware of the skills required to understand texts and improve their basic grammar. However, these improvements have not had sufficient time to influence standards overall. The co-ordinators have carried out little observation of teaching. However, through monitoring teachers' planning and checking pupils' work to monitor attainment, they have prepared a detailed action plan. Initiatives, such as *Additional Literacy Support*, *Better Reading Partners* and booster classes help individual pupils to

improve their skills. However, these initiatives cover a wide range of pupils and support is not always specifically targeted.

73. Pupils develop the skills of speaking and listening soundly as they move through the school. They are encouraged to listen carefully through the teachers' use of a range of signals, clearly given information, instructions, and teachers' expectations. They show they have understood by carrying out activities or answering questions. They improve their clarity through listening to the adults in school, who act as good role models for speech. However, teachers often ask questions that only require one-word or short answers. Some pupils are reluctant to speak in front of their classmates and therefore say little in lessons. When teachers ask questions that enable pupils to extend their answers, learning improves. For example, pupils in a Year 5 class identify the features of myths through their teacher's encouragement. Challenging questions directed to individual pupils ensure all are involved and talking about their ideas. When Year 3 pupils were discussing new ways of starting *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, they suggested and correctly used words such as *dreadful* and *scrumptious*.
74. Teachers develop new vocabulary well through careful explanations and effective use, so that pupils talk about the *setting* of stories and recognise aspects, such as *fiction* and *imaginary*. However, by Year 6, some lower attaining pupils still find it difficult to put sentences together. Pupils of average attainment in Year 6 speak fluently and with some clarity, although only a few brighter pupils have the confidence to describe their learning or offer opinions and ideas. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils described the processes involved when making their fairground rides, to Key Stage 2 pupils, parents and visitors in assembly. When speaking in front of others in class, many pupils speak very quietly. Teachers do little to encourage them to speak out and many repeat what pupils have said or read their work for them. Teachers provide too few planned opportunities for pupils to engage in focused discussions about aspects of their work. When they provide opportunities, they often limit the time so pupils are unable to explore their learning. Pupils miss opportunities to listen effectively to each other, debate their thinking or present their own and other people's ideas. This prevents some pupils reaching or exceeding average levels in speaking and listening.
75. Although standards are well below average, pupils make sound progress in reading. Through the recently improved guided reading groups, pupils learn to use a range of strategies to help them read new or unfamiliar words. They develop fluency and expression when reading aloud, through hearing expressive reading by teachers, other adults in school and some of their classmates. Some opportunities for pupils to join in shared reading are lost, however, when teachers read the complete texts themselves. The *Better Reading Partnership* scheme helps individual pupils make good progress developing fluency and expression. Pupils in Year 2 read stories and information books accurately and with some expression, especially the higher and average attaining pupils. They know the differences between stories, poems and information texts and explain how to use the contents page to find information. However, they find it difficult to understand what they read or to talk about their books. A few brighter pupils read fluently, accurately and independently and use pictures to explain the stories. Less able pupils read slowly but with some accuracy because they sound out letters to help them.
76. Pupils develop enthusiasm for reading and extend their knowledge of different types of texts as they move through the school. For example, Year 5 pupils compare an original version of a traditional story with a modern version, identifying the similarities and differences. A higher attaining group identifies the features of myths and legends. Good quality books in all classrooms encourage pupils to value reading. The library contains suitably classified information books, a wide range of story and poetry books, and other resources to support learning such as dictionaries. However, it is too small to accommodate a group of pupils. There are too few opportunities for pupils to research for information in other subjects. However, pupils learn how to retrieve information so that by Year 6, pupils choose books to match their own interests and abilities. They select the appropriate books in the library and retrieve information through use of contents, index and skimming and scanning skills. Pupils understand the main event of stories and traits of characters. However, only a few brighter

pupils understand the underlying meaning of texts, such as the humour found in some poetry and plays, and some of these pupils struggle to explain the meaning of some phrases. Although the National Literacy Strategy, and particular group guided reading, has improved pupils' skills at identifying words, comprehension is less secure.

77. Pupils make sound progress in writing through opportunities to watch adults write and shared and individual writing tasks. Satisfactory teaching of basic skills enables pupils to develop an understanding of grammar and sentence structure, although as many pupils write as they speak; this gives rise to some confusion over tenses. Pupils extend their range of types of writing. By Year 2, pupils write stories, instructions, descriptions and simple reports. Pupils in Year 6 use contrasting styles to write news reports. They write reviews and interesting headlines. However, although they understand the difference between biographical and autobiographical writing, pupils find it difficult to write. They develop an effective use of vocabulary through teachers' examples and encouragement to use thesauruses. Year 3 pupils add interest to their writing by adding phrases such as *cracked and dusty* or *crooked and broken*. Year 6 pupils describe a fire as *flames licking out of the window*.
78. Occasionally, pupils' misunderstanding of English causes them to use a word from the thesaurus incorrectly, such as *lumpy hills* instead of *rough hills*. Pupils learn to punctuate sentences correctly through teachers' emphasis on punctuation. Average and brighter pupils in Year 2 understand and sometimes use capital letters and full stops correctly. Year 6 pupils punctuate sentences accurately, with brighter pupils using paragraphs. Spelling is a weakness throughout the school. Pupils learn common words through practice and simple words by using letter sounds. However, although pupils regularly have lists of words to learn, teachers do not successfully teach spelling strategies by explaining patterns of letters or encouraging pupils to remember whole words. Many pupils continue to try to sound out words so that they make mistakes such as, *breffast* instead of *breakfast*, and *clos* instead of *clothes*. Presentation of work and handwriting is variable, as it was at the time of the last inspection, with much work untidy and letters incorrectly formed or joined.
79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory as it was at the time of the last inspection. Good relationships with pupils ensure they respond well to their teachers by listening carefully and behaving well. Teachers explain new learning clearly, and effectively develop new vocabulary. This encourages pupils to share their understanding and use interesting vocabulary in their writing. Pupils know what they are to learn because teachers share the objectives for each lesson. This helps to focus pupils' learning and is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers use the plenary session well to review learning but they do not encourage pupils to assess their own learning by referring to the lesson objective. Effective use of praise gives pupils confidence and encourages them to 'have a go', such as when Year 5 pupils read a legend: they tackle difficult words confidently, if not always accurately. Challenging questions directed to different pupils involves them fully in lessons and extends their learning. When teachers make lessons interesting through lively and enthusiastic presentations, pupils make good progress. This was evident in a Year 3 lesson when pupils provided interesting and imaginative language in the beginnings of their stories. These teachers also provide challenging tasks that stimulate pupils' thinking. Effective use of classroom assistants to support pupils, who are at the early stages of learning English, enables them to extend their language and understand lessons. Pupils have sound opportunities to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, particularly in increasing their vocabulary. They used interesting vocabulary to describe *Pandora's Box* in history, for example, and wrote postcards from Jamaica in geography. Pupils have some opportunities to develop word-processing skills that support their learning in literacy. Teachers do not, generally, make enough use of information and communication technology in English lessons.
80. Although teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy, they do not always adapt it to suit their pupils, so introductions are sometimes too long. Pupils' attention wanders and they are not fully engaged in learning. A few teachers talk too much and this limits pupils' opportunities to think, discuss their ideas and offer suitable replies. Over-directed teaching inhibits the

development of pupils' independence and limits their responses. Teachers do not always set time limits for individual activities or make their expectations clear. The pace of lessons slows during this time and pupils do not always complete their work. This remains a weakness from the last inspection.

81. Teachers base their planning on the national guidance and they group classes according to attainment. However, systems to assess pupils' achievements are inconsistent and lack detail, therefore many teachers do not have this information to adapt work to match the needs of individual pupils. Most pupils within a group follow the same activities and some pupils lack the challenge that would help them achieve higher standards. Marking is variable and does little to indicate pupils' successes or help them to improve in the future.

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

82. All the pupils on roll are learning English as an additional language. About three-quarters of them are supported with the help of considerable additional funding from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. Most of the funding is spent on providing additional staffing in recognition that pupils' ability to participate in lessons may be better than their speaking skills in English. A clear policy on the school's approach is in place, including statements about teaching and learning styles. Most of the policy's guidance is clearly evident in the school's day-to-day practice. This includes all pupils having access to the full National Curriculum or to the experiences recommended for the Foundation Stage. Pupils are rarely withdrawn from class lessons or provided with separate work. Good use is made of staff with bi-lingual skills to extend pupils' vocabulary and consolidate their understanding through the use of their home language, while remaining firmly focused on the development of English.
83. This approach to learning English as an additional language works well for the more capable pupils, and many attain the standards expected for their age group. A small number attain above average standards in the national tests. However, the approach is less effective for the large number of pupils whose standards of work are low. Many of these pupils have individual weaknesses in spoken and written English that persist for too long. In some cases, the school's assessment system identifies these weaknesses, but rarely is specific teaching planned to deal with them. Teaching lessons to a whole class has the advantage of including all the pupils in similar experiences and work. However, in addition, many pupils need a more individual approach to planning and checking their learning of English. In the near future, the school intends to introduce the new national scales for assessing the improvements made by pupils learning English as an additional language. This is a sound decision that needs to be linked with arrangements to adapt the curriculum and teaching to ensure all pupils make good progress.

### **MATHEMATICS**

84. The school has made satisfactory progress in mathematics since the time of the last inspection although standards are still not high enough. Current work shows that they are higher in Year 6 than standard attainment tests showed them to be last year and in several year groups, work is not as far below the national average as it used to be. The school organises work in mathematics well. It has begun many new ideas and taken part in many initiatives. Much of the teaching is good. Pupils learn well in lessons especially in the junior classes. However, teachers still do not always expect enough of many pupils, especially those in the middle range of attainment. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
85. Pupils in Year 2 reach standards that are well below those expected nationally for their ages and have made satisfactory progress. In Year 6, pupils have a better grasp of their work and standards are nearer the national average although still below. Pupils' difficulties with language make it harder for them to understand, especially where they need to use English in

the work – in problem solving for example. This is partly the reason for standards being low. Year 6 work shows some examples of better understanding where pupils have invented and written out problems for their own solution. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and this helps the older pupils, especially, to make progress. They sometimes understand the work better than they can talk about it or set it down on paper. This contributes to the low test results. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils experienced difficulties in understanding the language of the problems they knew how to solve mathematically.

86. The school has enthusiastically introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. It puts much time into number work in response to the key issue in the last report but many pupils still find handling numbers hard. In Year 6, for example, some lower attaining pupils are not secure or quick at recalling number bonds to 20. Years 1 and 2 pupils' books show that they have not found easy some quite low-level work for their age. More able pupils in Year 6, however, are making good progress and many of them achieve well. They understand factors well and many were quick to recognise the factors of a square number. Another group's calculations with money were very competent and clear, all of them being secure in a method of calculating VAT. Work in shape, space and measures, and data handling is under-represented in pupils' past work in mathematics lessons. However, pupils show these skills better in their use of mathematics across the curriculum. In a Year 5 geography lesson, for example, pupils could interpret weather charts quickly and accurately. In a science lesson, pupils made graphs to show how the size of a parachute made a difference to its rate of descent. Year 6 pupils use the residential visit to Whitby to provide 'real' money calculations. Year 2 pupils counted notes in music and Year 1 pupils counted the class and the dinner numbers as well as the milk bottles in an efficient registration time. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics lessons is generally limited. However, many lessons in the computer suites use mathematics as their subject matter and these make a good contribution to pupils' numeracy. For example, pupils gain skills in shapes and patterns, representing data and using a formula in spreadsheets.
87. A minority of pupils do not concentrate well and this slows their learning. Generally, though, pupils enjoy mathematics. They are keen to answer questions and most work at a good pace in lessons. They work hard at home, as their homework books clearly show.
88. Teaching is sound in Years 1 and 2 and good in the junior year groups. One especially good lesson was seen in Year 2. Good teaching helps pupils to become more confident and clear about their work but it has not yet made enough impact to raise standards significantly. In Years 2 to 6, the teachers group pupils according to level of attainment in mathematics. Generous staffing allows the school to make three groups from two classes in each year group. This gives smaller groups, more teacher and class assistant time, and helps to make pupils more involved. It also means that teachers can set suitable work for pupils' attainment levels. In some year groups, no significant rise in standards has yet come from this but in others, pupils are benefiting and improving in their work. The higher attaining Years 5 and 6 pupils, for example, clearly make better progress as a result of these measures. Within these groups, however, there is still a range of ability and teachers do not always address this fully. Teachers mark thoroughly, and assessment in mathematics is good. The school analyses all its tests well but does not yet consider sufficiently what this analysis means in terms of teaching and future work. Analysis is thus not helping to raise standards as well as it could. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. However, their targets are sometimes too broad, more specific targets being needed.
89. Most teachers question well. In many lessons pupils are urged to think and work out *why* something works in maths as well as *how* to do the 'sum'. This improves their understanding and lays a better foundation for future learning. Able pupils in Year 5, for example, learned why their subtraction square always led to a zero in the centre. Occasionally, however, teachers need to give pupils more time to think about their answers and for more pupils to work out the answer. This would also help them to put their ideas into words, a skill so many of the pupils find difficult. Teachers pace lessons well and adopt a lively style that shows pupils that they

are themselves enthusiastic about mathematics. This helps pupils to want to work and to learn. In the best lessons, explanations are clear and easy to follow. A Year 1 teacher, for example, talked calmly and clearly to her class and this helped them understand the work. For pupils with limited English this is very valuable.

90. Resources for mathematics are good and the school has a good supply of suitable equipment to aid teachers in their lessons. One exception is the poor imitation money used in practical work. It may be partly responsible for the difficulty some younger pupils experience with practical money work – as Year 2 pupils' past work showed for example. The co-ordinator organises mathematics well and documentation is full and thorough. This helps teachers in their planning to improve pupils' learning.

## SCIENCE

91. The standards in the national tests for eleven year olds in 2001 were very low when compared to all schools nationally. This was the first year that the school administered such tests, contributing in part to the weak results. In addition, the group that took the tests included a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. However, an average number of pupils were successful in reaching the higher Level 5. This reflects a wide spread of ability and some effective teaching. Inspection evidence shows that attainment by the age of eleven, whilst still below average, is better than in the previous year. Junior age pupils have made good progress and Year 6 pupils have greater scientific knowledge than was shown in last year's test results. At the age of seven, however, pupils' attainment is well below national expectations.
92. By the age of seven, pupils record experiments and information accurately, using a range of drawings, diagrams and charts. They classify materials, find out about their own bodies and investigate forces and motion by pushing and pulling. In their work on electricity, they learn how to light up a Christmas tree. Year 2 pupils pay close attention to what happens to materials when heated, such as bread becoming toast and chocolate melting. They successfully build on Year 1 work when they use their senses to examine the appearance, texture and smell of the foods. However, their responses reveal very low levels of general knowledge. Many pupils have difficulty finding the vocabulary to describe the materials or the processes. More able pupils are suitably challenged by teachers asking questions such as 'can we change it back?' Pupils begin to make predictions when variables are changed in investigations. In Year 2, for example, the teacher asks, 'what will happen if I raise the ramp?' during work on forces. In Year 3, pupils begin to develop their enquiry skills suitably during work on physical processes, where they enjoy finding out which materials are magnetic. The more able explain that scissors are attracted to the magnet because they are made out of steel. They know they cannot be silver because they have learnt that silver is not attracted, through an effective teacher demonstration. However, pupils have too few opportunities to question or initiate their own ideas.
93. By the age of eleven, pupils have limited scientific knowledge but the most able pupils in Year 6 reach the standards expected for their ability. They are beginning to gain skills in scientific thinking and enquiry. Pupils consider how to find out how to dissolve sugar more quickly and prove their findings. They show good understanding of what is meant by a fair test, confidently and accurately using technical vocabulary, such as *constants* and *variables*. In response to challenging questioning, when finding out about materials and their properties, they begin to consider how mixtures can be separated. They know the importance of careful measuring and plot their findings on tables and graphs, making good links with their work in mathematics. Pupils frequently use mathematical skills to measure outcomes, such as measuring shadows when exploring the effect of light on solid objects and finding the correlation between the size of a parachute and the speed of landing, for example. They use their literacy skills by finding information about the solar system from books. A significant strength of the subject is the extent to which pupils know scientific language and vocabulary.

All teachers effectively promote words connected with their topic, constantly reinforcing new words such as *particles* throughout the lesson. Most classes have a prominent display area for science, giving a suitable focal point for learning.

94. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching, particularly in the older infant and junior classes. Teachers make careful assessments through questioning to find out what pupils have remembered from previous lessons and how much they understand. Year 6 pupils, for example, show they have listened and understood when they enthusiastically recall learning about solutions and evaporation. Assessments are used to place pupils in ability groups to provide a sharper focus for learning. However, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, complete the same tasks. This is not always appropriate for pupils' varying levels of knowledge and understanding. Only the most able pupils are confident to draw intelligent conclusions from their recording. As a result, the overall learning of all pupils is only satisfactory. The emphasis in some lessons is on giving information with too little account being taken of levels of understanding. In Year 5, most pupils are just beginning to understand the differences between solids, liquids and gases. The work on the compression of air and water is beyond many.
95. Teaching is at its most effective when it provides opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves. Year 4 pupils investigate the difference between solids and liquids and consider how these change when carefully observing lighted candles. Teachers' demonstrations are often lively and engage pupils' interest well. However, pupils rarely have the opportunity to choose their own ways to investigate an idea. This limits their development. They follow clear instructions well but seldom ask questions to extend their own knowledge and understanding. Pupils throughout the school become very dependent upon adults to provide them with information and they need much adult help to complete the required tasks. As a result, they do not always understand the scientific principles behind them. Most have difficulty in understanding and expressing their own thoughts and ideas because they are given too few opportunities for discussion. Poor levels of reading comprehension prevent pupils from completing the work sheets independently.
96. There are clear signs of improvement in science since the school's last inspection. This is due to greater emphasis on the subject throughout the school, re-organisation of the school's timetable and an increase in teacher confidence. Committed leadership of the subject has led to improved teaching and learning. A good quantity and variety of equipment and resources aid learning. The school's extensive resources for information and communication technology are used effectively to support learning in science. For example, Year 5 pupils use a database when looking at birds. The curriculum is well supported by a good range of visits, such as the Eureka science museum, the Life Caravan and the Quantum Theatre.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

97. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. From these, talking with pupils, discussions with the subject leader and looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work, pupils achieve below expected standards. This is lower than at the time of the last inspection when pupils attained average levels. However, there are two new co-ordinators recently in post, who have identified areas for development through discussions with colleagues and looking at pupils' work. The use of national guidelines ensures all pupils experience a full range of materials and techniques and their progress through the school is sound. Provision for the subject is satisfactory. Visits to art galleries, such as Cartwright Hall, visitors to school, and effective links with other subjects, enable pupils to evaluate the work of artists from other cultures and times. Teachers effectively use the local environment as a stimulus for pupils' ideas. For example, Year 6 pupils visited a local landmark, where their teacher took photographs, and used them to identify and draw features of a city landscape.

98. Pupils successfully use and mix paint to create their own paintings. For example, Year 2 pupils imitate the colours of autumn leaves to experiment with shades of one colour. Pupils' observational drawing skills and the use of line, shape and tone develops soundly through the school. For example, Year 1 pupils use crayon to draw self-portraits, Year 3 draw the Roman soldiers visiting school and Year 5 pupils develop shade and the shape of animals using charcoal. Pupils throughout the school use drawing programs on computers to create pictures using a range of drawing tools. By Year 6, pupils attempt to use figure drawing to show movement with varying success. Although pupils have opportunities to draw and paint from their imaginations, they have few opportunities to choose from more than a limited range of material. They do not use sketchbooks to experiment with ideas to use as inspiration for their art. This limits pupils' opportunities to use and develop skills they have learnt in lessons.
99. Assessment systems enable teachers to record attainment in some aspects of art and design. However, they do not clearly indicate what pupils can or cannot do and, therefore, are not used to plan future work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. Pupils achieve standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2, the same as at the time of the last inspection. Standards are also average when they leave the school at eleven. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to investigate building models and to use different mechanisms by using construction kits. This enables pupils to understand a range of techniques and to develop the skills necessary to design and make new artefacts. They learn to handle tools correctly and join different materials in a range of ways. For example, Year 2 pupils make a picture frame by measuring, sawing, gluing and painting wood. They incorporate a computer-generated picture in their design. Pupils investigate manufactured articles to develop their understanding of what is required in design. For example, Year 3 pupils examined a range of photograph frames to find how they stand up. They used the results of their investigations to make up their ideas using construction kits in preparation for their designs.
101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good support by classroom assistants and effective classroom organisation enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are new to English, to progress soundly. Pupils often have to design or solve problems in small groups. This encourages them to discuss their ideas together, although some pupils are reluctant to offer suggestions and prefer to listen to others. Teachers miss opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own or other people's work and therefore pupils miss opportunities to explain their learning. The effective use of national guidelines enables teachers to plan lessons to develop skills and techniques successfully and cover the full range of materials. However, assessments only occur at the end of units of work and provide too little detail to be used in future planning. Teachers set challenging tasks, which encourage pupils to experiment with different ideas. By Year 6, pupils use simple annotated drawings to indicate their ideas, build accurate models, such as fairground rides, using a range of materials and mechanisms, and improve and adapt their models both during and after building. They consider the function of products and try to achieve high quality finished articles. Teachers develop pupils' technical vocabulary using terms such as *concave* and *convex*, and pupils begin to use it to describe their work. This is of particular help to those pupils who are still learning English as an additional language. However, teachers do not develop pupils' writing skills through providing opportunities for them to write instructions or progressive plans.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

102. Pupils attain standards that are below the standards expected of pupils of their age in history and well below in geography by the age of seven years. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of eleven years, standards are below the expected levels in both subjects. This

picture is similar to the one found when the school was last inspected. However, in view of the low starting point of most of the pupils, their achievements are satisfactory.

103. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is more secure when lessons are practical. The school makes very good use of interesting visits and visitors to bring the subjects alive. These have a long-lasting impact on pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 2 talked enthusiastically about a clearly enjoyed visit to the local industrial museum as part of their history work. They remembered well the different kinds of transport they had seen, and confidently placed them in order from the oldest to the most recent types. Pupils in Year 6 described how they used maps to follow a trail on a residential visit to Buckden when they were in Year 4, and were aware of the different features of the area. In Year 3, pupils gained a deeper understanding of life during the Roman invasion of Britain when a 'Roman centurion' visited. Their observational drawings of his clothes and equipment were very detailed and well presented. By contrast, pupils in Year 2 learned about Ireland from photographs and talks with their teachers as part of their topic on *Barnaby Bear's travels* in geography. However, because they had not seen it at first hand and their language skills were often weak, their understanding was very shaky. For instance, they talked of Ireland being in Dublin. Their understanding of their local area was limited, and they struggled to identify the attractive and unattractive features of the area around the school.
104. Practical demonstrations of how water is able to seep through layers of sand but not through clay in a plastic bottle were particularly effective in the geography lessons in Year 6. Pupils observed closely so that they understood how a stream is formed. They later described the process clearly, sometimes using words like *permeable* and *impermeable* in their explanations. Teachers are well aware of the language needs of pupils generally. In all the lessons observed they made sure that pupils understood the new language introduced, often using word labels prominently displayed in the classrooms. These are often a key feature of attractive and informative displays that stimulate a lively interest in the subjects, as shown in pupils' good attitudes and behaviour in lessons. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about their work, and more could be done to encourage them to extend their first brief answers when questioned.
105. Some of the work in pupils' history and geography workbooks has too great an emphasis on factual knowledge. More could be done to encourage pupils to investigate, interpret and explain aspects of their topics. For example, Year 6 pupils' accounts of Ancient Greek wars from the point of view of a soldier related many facts. They did not interpret the facts to reflect the soldier's feelings or the reasons for the wars. In some classes, there is too much use of the same factual worksheet for all the pupils. This limits the response of brighter pupils, and those with low language skills struggle to complete them.
106. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall in both subjects with some good and very good teaching seen during the inspection. Very good teaching was seen in a history lesson in Year 3 when pupils acted as archaeologists digging for relics in the earth. Because the teacher had good subject knowledge, she asked just the right questions that stimulated pupils to think hard. For instance, in her introductory discussion on the Anglo Saxons she asked 'How do you know?' which led to a valuable discussion about how historians learn about the past. Everyone took part in the 'dig' and by the end they knew what it was like to be an archaeologist because they had carefully dug, scraped, washed and labelled their 'finds'. Pupils became absorbed in the activity and were excited when pieces of pottery were unearthed. They were all eager to discuss these, including pupils with little spoken English, who were keen to add their comments.
107. There are some gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. For instance, pupils in Year 2 had little recall of famous people and events in the past. Older pupils had little understanding of what it is like to live in other parts of the world, although they readily describe life in Pakistan. Too little is done to check that pupils are steadily developing their historical and geographical skills. Although teachers award levels to pupils' work at the end of topics, these do not highlight what pupils can and cannot do. As a result, weaknesses in pupils'

learning go undetected. This is best seen in older pupils' shaky awareness of chronology. Pupils in Year 6 were confused when asked to place the different periods they studied on a time-line stretching back in time. The relatively new subject co-ordinators have identified some of these areas for development, and are working on plans for improvement, such as in the ways pupils record their work. Although there is evidence that some teachers do set interesting writing tasks, this is not general practice and much more needs to be done. This was highlighted in the last inspection and needs further development still.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils achieve below average standards by the ages of seven, below those indicated in the last report. Attainment by the age of eleven is also below average. However, the school has purchased substantial new resources, including two suites of computers and interactive whiteboards. The co-ordinator has made good use of national guidance for the curriculum and has arranged training for all staff. The school is now well equipped to meet all the demands of the National Curriculum requirements.
109. Pupils in the infant classes learn to use computers through appropriate games and activities. In Year 1, for example, they improve their accuracy when using the mouse as they arrange clothes on the teddy. They gain increasing familiarity with the layout of the keyboard as they add their names. The teacher made good use of the support assistant in this lesson to encourage pupils to discuss their work. This was particularly effective in helping those pupils with little English to improve their language skills. As a result, many pupils used specialist terms correctly when describing their work. Year 2 pupils begin to understand the need for careful framing of questions when using a database. They use a simple set of data to answer the teacher's prepared questions.
110. In the junior classes, pupils continue to develop their skills. They give instructions to a small robot and most understand how these instructions are represented in a computer program. They approach the program with confidence and enter the commands given by the teacher. Higher attaining pupils in this lesson predicted what shapes they would get and their attainment was average. However, most pupils did not predict what would happen. Their learning was restricted because they did not have opportunities to plan their own commands and investigate the program. Junior pupils learn specialist vocabulary well, such as the language associated with spreadsheets. Year 5 pupils, for example, began to use this correctly in their answers to questions. Most show interest and enthusiasm, taking pride in their increasing language skills. Some older pupils begin to show increasingly secure attainment. For example, a Year 5 pupil has written the game to *dress the teddy* used by Year 1 pupils. Year 6 pupils show confidence and willingness to investigate when creating formulas within spreadsheets.
111. Teaching is satisfactory overall and enables all pupils to learn soundly throughout the school. Teachers take many lessons in the computer suites and they generally plan these well with effective use of a range of suitable resources. New vocabulary is often introduced carefully and teachers ensure that pupils recognise new words. Teachers have increasing confidence with the new equipment and teach the basic skills to pupils appropriately. As a result, pupils enjoy working with computers and most feel confident in their work. Teachers take some sound opportunities to incorporate aspects of other subjects in information and communication technology lessons. This is particularly apparent in the ways teachers help pupils to gain mathematics skills through working with spreadsheets and databases. However, teachers are less effective at incorporating information and communication technology skills in other lessons, particularly those taking place in classrooms. Year 2 pupils used a computer-generated picture in their designs for picture frames. Year 5 pupils e-mailed their results from a mathematics lesson to an Internet contact. In most lessons, however, pupils have few opportunities to apply their developing skills to their work.

112. The school encourages many pupils to use the computers to follow independent learning programs to develop mathematics and English skills. Access to the computers is given in before and after-school sessions as well as at lunchtimes. These help pupils to have confidence in starting machines and logging on to the network. They encourage some independence but teachers do not use this independence enough in lessons. Most tasks are too closely defined and pupils have too few opportunities to try out their ideas and discuss them with other pupils. Teachers do not generally make sufficient use of the developing assessment system for pupils' achievements when planning lessons. The same tasks are often given to all pupils in a class although their earlier knowledge and understanding vary widely. As a result, some pupils are not challenged enough to improve and consolidate their growing attainment.

## MUSIC

113. Standards in music are below the nationally expected levels for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. Pupils do not sing well and few have a well-developed sense of pitch. Many pupils have little sense of pulse, many pupils in Years 3 and 4 being unable to clap the pulse of *Li'l Liza Jane* for example. A group of Year 6 pupils, however, showed much better pulse sense in their rap recorded on a tape. A small group of them showed a good musical ear in their keyboard lesson being able to pick out and play notes sung by the teacher. Similarly, in both the class lessons in Years 3 and 4, several pupils could tell which notes from a five-note scale another pupil was playing. Singing is poor, at least partly because so many pupils do not pitch well that it is difficult to hear the tune. Pupils have no definite line with which to identify when everyone sings – despite the teacher's clear examples. They appear simply to be unused to pitching notes on the singing voice. Pupils listen well, however. In the Year 4 lesson they were very attentive to some Indonesian music and offered good ideas about it. One described the harp-like sound and how it might have been made very well indeed. There were some perceptive comments for the age group.
114. Pupils clearly enjoy music making and join in enthusiastically. Occasionally they become too excited and can be silly. In the Year 2 singing session this happened, but a teacher quickly led them back to more sensible behaviour. In the junior classes, pupils were keen to join in and especially eager to play percussion instruments. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are able to join in the music making well. There is no difference between the involvement and attainment of girls and boys.
115. The music co-ordinator teaches all classes in Years 3 to 6. This means that good, confident music skills are used to encourage and guide pupils' music making. Teaching here is good. Class teachers teach the younger pupils and they are less confident, but here, as with older pupils, they prepare and organise lessons well. Teaching is very sound. Through the school, teachers lead pupils to sing often in music lessons. This helps them to speak English and, in many instances, read the words of the songs. In Years 1 and 2, a visiting pianist accompanies songs competently and musically, freeing the teachers to concentrate on leading the lesson, managing the class and teaching the words. In all lessons seen, teachers emphasised the words of songs and language specific to music. Pupils' language skills benefit considerably through their music lessons. A good scheme of work is in place and the new co-ordinator has the musical skill to lead pupils into high quality music making.
116. The school has made satisfactory progress in music since the time of the last inspection but is poised now to make good progress. Funds are available to increase the stock of classroom instruments and the presence of a specialist musician should take the subject forward rapidly.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards are below average by the ages of seven and eleven. It was not possible to see any lessons in games, gymnastics or swimming during the inspection and judgements are based on dance lessons, discussions with pupils and teachers, and records.
118. Low standards were reported at the time of the last inspection. Although some measures were taken at that time, including additional training for teachers, the school has just begun to make the subject a priority. The two co-ordinators have evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses and there are appropriate plans for training to raise teacher confidence in dance and games. There is an emphasis on the organisation of the curriculum and the structure of lessons to enable all pupils to make satisfactory progress. As a result, the satisfactory teaching throughout the school is most effective in achieving good standards of discipline and behaviour. Pupils listen well to very clear instructions from teachers because of their high expectations and firm control. There are plans for new schemes and innovations, designed to improve provision. These are likely to lead to improvements in standards in future.
119. Infant pupils quickly learn the effect of exercise on their bodies. In a well-managed Year 1 class, for example, a pupil notices that his heart is *bumping hard* after a vigorous warm-up. A new venture into orienteering was successful in Year 3, providing pupils with an enjoyable experience, linking effectively with other areas of the curriculum. Standards, however, are below expectations. The lesson took good account of the pupils' needs, adapting the course to accommodate all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
120. Pupils reach good standards in swimming and the school is justifiably proud of its achievements in this area. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are able to take advantage of opportunities to swim and they make very good progress. More than half of the pupils, from being non-swimmers, gain certificates for swimming at least 25 metres. A number achieve beyond this.
121. In dance in Year 6, boys and girls are taught separately in accordance with parental wishes and this ensures a full range of opportunities for all pupils. Pupils engage in an energetic warm-up session as part of a planned programme of work, showing an appropriate awareness of space, stillness and speed of movement. Pupils have suitable opportunities to interpret North American Indian music using body movements, scarves and ribbons to represent circles. There is a broad spread of ability. A small number of pupils move creatively with sensitive interpretation of the music and use their imaginations well. They demonstrate precision, control and fluency of movement, showing understanding of composition when they use different levels to create a sequence of movements. Many pupils, however, show an awkwardness of movement with an element of self-consciousness. They lack confidence in dance and standards are below those usually found. Teaching does not consistently encourage the least able through demonstration and evaluation of best practice.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Standards in religious education both by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils make satisfactory progress through the school, similar to that described in the last report. A new agreed syllabus has just been introduced and the curriculum is in the process of being adapted accordingly.
123. The school's programme for religious education sensitively reflects the needs of its Muslim community. Classroom displays reflect the school's commitment to provide pupils with knowledge of different world faiths such as Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity. By the time they leave school, pupils have a secure knowledge of their own Muslim faith and a growing understanding of the importance of religion in the world. They learn about the special places, times, food and people for different religious groups. This learning is enhanced by appropriate visits to the Mosque, a Church and the Gurdwara. Visitors such as the local vicar and a representative from the local Interfaith Centre give pupils an appropriate breadth of experience. However, discussions with pupils indicate that their knowledge of

religions other than their own is still limited. Year 6 pupils have only a vague understanding of the significance of items on a Puja tray to Hindus. However, teaching is effective at developing pupils' language and vocabulary. Thus, pupils do know that signs *represent* or *stand for* ideas. Pupils write about relationships and feelings, topical events of a sensitive nature and other fundamental issues. Most pupils write similar accounts showing limited imagination or independent thinking and some over-direction by teachers.

124. By the end of Year 2, pupils have gained some knowledge of the importance of certain festivals and rituals in other religions. The school celebrates the significance of Easter for Christians, Diwali for Hindus, and Ramadan and Eid for Muslims. Pupils in Year 1 are encouraged to understand the importance of belonging to a group, such as their own family and the family of the school and mosque. Pupils have a limited vocabulary and understanding, however, and progress is slow. Standards are below average because of underdeveloped language skills and too few opportunities for discussion.
125. Pupils made good gains in their awareness of other beliefs in a successful Year 5 lesson because the teacher gave good opportunities for discussion. A most effective presentation of an Aboriginal creation story provided inspiration and motivation for pupils. Good teaching combined acknowledgement and respect for pupils' own beliefs whilst introducing comparisons and inviting pupils' own ideas. With encouragement, pupils willingly talked thoughtfully about their own ideas about the creation of the world. Whilst holding on securely to their strongly-held beliefs, the most able pupils recognised and respected the beliefs of others. These pupils reached high standards.
126. Elsewhere, teaching is satisfactory and teachers manage classes effectively because of their high expectations of behaviour. Pupils' good listening helps them to learn. In Year 4, for example, the teacher reinforced pupils' knowledge of the five pillars of Islam by reference to the importance of the Hajj journey to Muslims. Pupils listened obediently but made very little contribution. In most lessons, pupils have too little opportunity to talk about their own experiences, or reflect upon the information that teachers present. This limits their progress in their understanding about religion, and results in lower standards.