

INSPECTION REPORT

RICHARD AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 128819

Headteacher: Mrs D Shearsmith

Reporting inspector: Mr G Brown
21060

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 243707

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hurstwood Road
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear

Postcode: SR4 7LQ

Telephone number: 0191 5536053

Fax number: 0191 5536055

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Holliday

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21060	Mr G Brown	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12682	Mr J Griffin	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?
28170	Mr I Chearman	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Religious education	
27777	Mr R Greenall	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Design and technology	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20645	Mrs R Webber	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography	How well are pupils taught?
4926	Ms T Aspin	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design History	

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Richard Avenue is a well above average primary school situated to the western edge of the City of Sunderland. It serves a wide catchment area containing a variety of private and local authority housing. There is currently housing mobility in the area which continues to affect the school roll. There are 422 pupils on roll with up to a further 46 part-time children in the nursery. There are significantly more boys than girls in the school. An increase in the local Bangladeshi community has seen the school's minority ethnic base rise, with now some 28 per cent of all pupils speaking English as an additional language, many at an early stage of English language acquisition. Approximately 16 per cent of full-time pupils are entitled to free school meals, a broadly average figure. Seventy-seven pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and three pupils have statements of special educational need. Children's standards are judged to be broadly average on entry to the reception classes, although the increasing intake from ethnic groups means lower English standards. The school has undergone several staff changes in the past two years and a number of new or temporary staff were in post during the inspection period.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound and rapidly improving school that has become effective in much of its everyday work. Pupils achieve well, and by the time they transfer to secondary education many reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school is particularly well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have introduced many important changes in a relatively short space of time. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, although some weaknesses occur with the teaching and learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good among children up to the age of five and also among pupils of junior age.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher offer very good leadership which is effectively bringing about change and leading to rapid school improvement.
- The overall provision made for children in nursery and reception classes is very good.
- Working relationships are excellent throughout the school. Pupils behave very well, do their best and are enthusiastic learners.
- The provision made for the pupils' social development is very good. The provision made for their cultural and moral development is good.

What could be improved

- By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in English are below average for their age.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning among infant age pupils.
- The quality and use of everyday assessment could be making more impact on pupils' learning.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory, particularly among pupils up to the age of seven.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996 when the management and efficiency of the school were requiring significant improvement. The school has made good progress since that time, although it was not until January 2001 and the arrival of the new headteacher that most of the key issues raised in the previous inspection were finally resolved. Standards have been maintained overall, particularly in the junior years. The national requirements in design and technology and information and communication

technology are now being met and the school is also meeting statutory requirements for collective worship. The role of the governing body has improved and is more influential, particularly in relation to linking educational priorities and targets to the available school budget. A credit balance has been achieved. There is a more systematic approach towards annual school planning and review. Teaching has improved in Year 4 although pockets of unsatisfactory teaching now occur in Years 1 and 2. The quality of written reports to parents about their children's progress has greatly improved and is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	C	B	A
mathematics	C	A	C	C
science	C	A	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children enter school with broadly average standards although the increasing numbers with English as an additional language means significant numbers have below average skills in both English and mathematics. Most young children achieve well and are on course to attain the early learning goals expected for their age in all areas of learning. However, several remain below average in most aspects of English. In the National Curriculum tests for 2001, Year 6 pupils scored broadly average in mathematics and science but above average in English. In relation to similar schools, pupils' results were broadly average in mathematics and science but well above average in English. Over the period 1997 to 2001, the performance of Year 6 pupils exceeded the national average for their age group in all three subjects. Between 1999 and 2001, boys had a tendency to out perform girls, particularly in science. The results of inspection confirm that at Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above the national average. Most junior pupils achieve well set against their previous learning, particularly those in Year 6. Progress among most infant pupils is at least satisfactory, including those with special educational needs. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall, but better provision, particularly in the infant years, could help raise their achievements still further. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve broadly average standards in mathematics and science but below average in English. Pupils across the school achieve at least the standards expected for their age in all other subjects, with infant pupils doing particularly well in art and design and junior pupils attaining well in religious education. The targets set for pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 are realistic yet sufficiently challenging to reflect the school's growth towards even higher standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn and are keen to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Consistently very good, particularly during lessons. Pupils are courteous and supportive of one another.
Personal development and relationships	Working relationships among staff and pupils are excellent and help form a positive ethos for good learning to occur. There is very good emphasis on the personal development of children, with older pupils in particular

	showing good levels of initiative and help around the school.
Attendance	Below average. The school day starts promptly and efficiently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and good in the reception classes. It is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 although some weaknesses occur. It is good in the junior years with notable strengths in Year 6. In the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) over three quarters of lessons seen were good or better and led to good progress among the youngest children. In Years 1 and 2, a lack of good subject knowledge among staff and setting work that did not always meet the needs of the pupils, led to some unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Teaching among junior pupils was good or very good in almost two-thirds of lessons seen and led to consistently good progress among the pupils, particularly those in Year 6. The most effective lessons were characterised by high expectations among the staff, very good management of the pupils and a wide range of strategies being used to ensure learning was effective and enjoyable. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. The teaching of mathematics and science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in the junior years. All other subjects are taught at least satisfactorily in all year groups, although religious education and music are taught well among the oldest pupils and design and technology is now taught well across the school. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall, although pupils experiencing English difficulties could be better provided for. The use made of everyday assessment, including marking, could be more influential on pupils' standards and progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in the Foundation Stage and sound elsewhere. The range of learning opportunities is good among junior pupils. Good provision is made for personal development and for activities and learning outside of school hours.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory across the school but good in the Foundation Stage where additional help is most readily available. The targets set for pupils' learning could be more sharply focused.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. The sharp increase in minority ethnic pupils has not been well matched by additional training for staff or an increase in available support and resources, particularly among infant pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and the provision for moral and cultural development of the pupils is good. The provision for social development is very effective and contributes significantly to the excellent relationships in the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures are in place for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. There are very good procedures for promoting positive behaviour, racial harmony and the elimination of bullying and oppressive behaviour.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The partnership between the headteacher and deputy is particularly effective and leads to clear educational direction for the whole school. The role of the subject co-ordinators is satisfactory and becoming more influential on standards. The growing sense of teamwork in the school is impacting well on pupils' progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body meets its statutory requirements and is involved at a satisfactory level in many aspects of school life. Governors offer very good levels of support to the headteacher and school in general.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors work together well to establish a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Informed decisions are now being made as to how the school can improve further.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The annual budget is used efficiently to help support school priorities. Financial systems and procedures are clearly understood and the school has successfully removed its past deficit. There is a sound match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, although improved provision for pupils with English as an additional language is desirable. Learning resources and the available accommodation are both satisfactory overall. Good efforts are made to secure best financial value for the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leadership of the new headteacher and the general openness of the school. Staff do their best to be accessible. Teaching is good. Parents like the way teachers involve children in lessons which encourages good progress. Pupils are happy to come to school and they work hard. The 'playground squad' works well and nearly all pupils are well behaved and friendly to each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the inconsistencies in homework. Improve toilet facilities and pupils' access to drinking water. More information about pupils' progress including parental consultations in the nursery. The range of activities outside of lessons. Higher standards in information and communication technology with better computer provision for the pupils.

The inspection findings support the positive views of parents and agree the need for improved toilet, and better drinking water, facilities. The school is to re-examine its policy on homework to ensure more consistent provision. A new information and communication technology suite is soon to be established. The range of extra-curricular activities is slightly above average for schools of this type. The formal opportunities for parental consultations are about right but the school is to look closely at how best all nursery and working parents can be kept up to date as to the progress made by their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children show a wide range of attainment on entry to both the nursery and reception classes but are broadly average overall. However, increasing numbers of minority ethnic children are entering the school at an early stage of English language acquisition and many display well below average standards, particularly in oral English, general communication skills and pre-school numeracy. Most, however, achieve well during the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) due to the good teaching and other very effective provision.
2. The school's provision for young children has been extended considerably since the last inspection, particularly the planning of the new Foundation Stage curriculum, the quality of teaching and the overall level of adult support. The good teaching of basic skills ensures children learn rapidly and achieve well. Children in nursery enjoy a particularly wide range of stimulating experiences that encourage and develop their communication and other personal skills and most settle quickly into well-established yet flexible nursery routines. These skills are developed further in both reception classes where children learn more systematically about language and number, and their creativity, knowledge and understanding of the world and other areas of personal development continue to progress well. By the time they reach the end of their reception year, many children are on course to achieve the standards anticipated for their age in all areas of learning.
3. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 indicate that pupils at the school scored broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing but well below the national average in mathematics. Pupils also scored below average in reading and writing and well below in mathematics in comparison to similar schools. Based on teacher assessments in science, pupils' attainment was also below the national average. Over the past three years, standards in these subjects among infant pupils have fluctuated considerably but have generally fallen below the national average for their age group, with little difference between the performance of girls and boys. The recent inspection findings confirm that standards in the current Year 2 are broadly average in mathematics and science, but below average in English.
4. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 indicate that standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average while standards in English are above those expected for the age of the pupils. When compared to pupils from similar schools, standards were well above average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. These similar school comparisons give an indication that pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and continue to make good progress across the junior years. Standards in all these core areas show a tendency to be above the national average in recent years with boys doing generally better than girls in all three subjects. Pupils' average scores are frequently boosted by significant numbers reaching the higher as well as the basic levels. The results of the recent inspection show that standards in English, mathematics and science among the current Year 6 are above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make similar rates of progress to other pupils. The quality of learning experienced by many pupils in the junior years is strongly attributed to their

own positive attitudes to work and to the effective levels of teaching across the year groups.

5. The adoption and practice of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have helped most pupils to consolidate and extend many of their basic skills although this is less so in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make mainly good progress in their literacy and numeracy lessons mainly when the work set is very well planned and designed to build on their basic skills in a systematic and progressive way. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use their listening and speaking skills satisfactorily and converse with reasonable confidence and clarity about their work and what they are doing. By the end of Year 2, many pupils read a satisfactory range of stories and other texts. However, standards in writing are below average overall. Stories and other accounts are generally of acceptable length but do not always contain the level of imagination, grammar, spelling and sentence structure anticipated for the age of the pupils. Standards of handwriting and other aspects of presentation are also below average overall. In these respects the expectation of their teachers is not high enough.
6. By the time they are seven, pupils have a sound grasp of basic number and show average ability to work mentally, for example in the recall of number bonds and their number tables. Most know the importance of patterns in numbers and show a sound understanding of the properties of basic shapes. In science, the emphasis on investigational work, as well as a knowledge of facts, has helped introduce pupils to better understanding and led to closer observations and evaluations of what they are actually doing in science. By the end of Year 2, standards in all other subjects are at least in line with that expected for the age of the pupils, except in art and design where standards are actually above average. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with age related expectations.
7. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress with their speaking and listening skills and reach at least those standards expected for their age. Most are relatively confident when sharing their views, speaking out during assembly or discussing the outcomes of their class work. Pupils' standards in reading vary considerably but are above average overall. However, the lack of a library and other opportunities for research hamper somewhat their inference and other skills, particularly those associated with non-fiction. While some are able to draw inferences from their reading and discuss favourite authors and characters, others have limited horizons in this respect and lack the more advanced skills of being able to read in depth and research information. Standards in writing among the current Year 6 are above the national average. Many pupils write well across a wide range of subjects and significant numbers are able to write at length, in different styles and for a range of purposes. Some of their persuasive writing in particular is good and convincingly expressed.
8. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 have benefited from increased emphasis on mental skills and working orally at greater speed. Most continue to build successfully on the strategies needed to work out number problems in different ways, including which mathematical operation to apply in order to reach the answer. Most are relatively accurate with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in a number of contexts. Their use and understanding of mathematical language is broadly average. Pupils also show a good understanding of a range of topics including angles, shape, time, perimeter and area. Information and communication technology is used to enrich learning and understanding in both literacy and mathematics but could be usefully extended.

9. Standards in science are above average, particularly in relation to the pupils' use and understanding of investigative work. Good emphasis is placed on pupils recording their own findings and this is largely successful. The challenge given to higher attaining pupils is not always at the right level to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Standards in information and communication technology are now at the level expected for the age of the pupils. While many are able to complete, for example, basic wordprocessing exercises, pupils lack the opportunities to work on the Internet and to use e-mail. Pupils are slowly beginning to develop more advanced skills in the control and modelling aspects of the subject. Standards in all other subjects among junior pupils are at least at the level anticipated for their age.
10. The school sets realistic annual targets for its Year 6 pupils based on known levels of attainment for each individual or group of pupils. These targets are sufficiently challenging to help raise standards in the longer term. The school is seeking to ensure it is an inclusive school, catering equally well for pupils of all abilities. In this respect, higher attaining pupils are taught satisfactorily but the school has not yet acquired a whole-school approach to the teaching and learning of the gifted and most able. Pupils with special educational needs make at least sound progress set against their previous learning and develop skills and understanding in line with their individual educational plans. There are, however, occasions when classroom support is not available during lessons and the work set is not suited to the targets set out in individual educational plans. On these occasions, attainment and achievement are lower. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall but this is less consistent in Years 1 and 2 where the needs of individual pupils are not always well met. Significant numbers of pupils in these year groups require more specialist help and this is not always forthcoming at the right level, from either class teachers or visiting staff. In the junior years, most pupils have acquired greater mastery of the English language and can approach the wider curriculum with greater confidence and skill.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils show very positive attitudes towards school and their everyday work. They behave very well, form excellent relationships and their personal development is good. The good partnership with parents, together with the pupils' moral, social and cultural development at school, make significant contributions to these positive attitudes and values. Since the previous inspection, pupils' personal standards have improved, particularly in terms of the quality of their behaviour and relationships.
12. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good overall. Based on questionnaire returns, nearly all pupils like school and this plays an important part in their lives. For example, groups of pupils in Years 2 and 6 ranked school ahead of friends and hobbies and only behind family in a list of the important things in their lives. Most look forward to coming back to school at the end of holidays. They like the positive atmosphere in the school. They consider that the way most teachers make their learning enjoyable and the very positive relationships among nearly all the pupils, make significant contributions to this ethos. Pupils' favourite subjects and lessons are those where they are practically involved, such as physical education, art and design, experimental science and mental mathematics. The best attitudes and behaviour occur in lessons where expectations are high and work is demanding. Pupils also respond well when they are engaged in a variety of activities which provide the right level of challenge for them.
13. Behaviour in classrooms, during lunchtime and playtime is very good overall. The consistent implementation of the behaviour policy by adults is a key factor here. The

very good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the prevailing positive atmosphere for learning. In nearly all lessons pupils are very well behaved. Prior to moving in groups, pupils form orderly lines and move about in a calm and responsible way. The behaviour of nearly all pupils at lunchtime and playtime is very good. There is no sign of any bullying, racist or other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Permanent exclusions are unknown and there has only been one fixed term exclusion in the past year. Parents' questionnaire responses fully support this very positive picture, with nearly all parents clearly approving the standard of pupils' behaviour. Pupils take good care of property and resources and help keep the school in attractive condition.

14. Relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils themselves are almost always excellent. This begins in nursery and then develops very well across the school. Adults on the site act as very good role models. Teachers clearly value pupils' work, display it effectively and are quick to praise effort and good work. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 6 spoke very positively about the support they get from teachers and the fair way in which they are treated. As a result, pupils feel comfortable expressing views and asking questions of their teachers. This assists their learning. Very positive relationships among pupils, including those with special educational needs and minority ethnic backgrounds, is a striking feature. As a result, pupils become increasingly able to work well in pairs and small groups and supporting each other's learning.
15. Pupils' personal development is good overall. There is particularly strong and successful emphasis on this in the Foundation Stage where children make a very good start to many aspects of their social and personal development. Pupils know and calmly carry out the daily routines expected of them. They enjoy speaking with visitors. Most show genuine concern for others, for example when they are ill or otherwise upset. Pupils, regularly and without prompting, hold doors open for each other and adults. Many becoming increasingly comfortable taking additional responsibility as they move through school. They are keen to help others. For example, following the Gudjurat earthquake, pupils organised a collection for the victims. They also contribute to a number of other charities. Year 6 pupils, through the 'Playground Squad' and the prefect system, make a significant contribution to the life of the school. For example, the prefects, chosen by the pupils themselves, have a lunchtime monitoring role. The 'Playground Squad', who take their role very seriously, look out for pupils who seem to be sad or lonely and for any signs of bullying in the playground. Pupils become better at working in groups as they move through school. As a result, junior pupils tend to work very well in pairs and small groups during lessons. When questioned in groups, Year 6 pupils are very comfortable listening to different views expressed by others. Evidence of initiative in relation to their learning, such as the use of library or research skills, is less well developed. The school's latest approach to personal development is well thought out and taught regularly as part of the pupils' usual timetable.
16. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It has been well below the national average in most of the previous four years. No overall attendance data is available for different groups of pupils and the absence data is not broken down by absence category. From inspection of the registers, the attendance level is lowest in the reception class, where absence is mainly due to illness. Attendance is significantly higher in the juniors than in the earlier years. Overall, illness is the primary reason for absence but term-time holidays is an important secondary reason. Unauthorised absence, which is persistently above the national average, is most prevalent among minority ethnic pupils. Nevertheless, punctuality is good. Nearly all pupils come to school on time and settle to their work promptly and calmly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent. Teaching was good or better in 58 per cent of observed lessons, with 95 per cent of all lessons satisfactory or better. Some 25 per cent of teaching was judged to be very good or better. Almost all the very good teaching was observed in Year 6 or in the Foundation Stage. Five per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, all of it in infant classes. The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection. The teaching and learning of pupils in Year 6 remains consistently good or very good and continues to be a particular strength of the school. At the time of the previous inspection, the teaching in Year 4 was judged to be unsatisfactory for the majority of pupils. This is no longer the case and teaching and learning are now at least satisfactory and sometimes good in this particular year group.
18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall, with about half of lessons being very good or excellent. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was judged to be good. No judgement was made on teaching in the reception classes at that time. Lessons are now always very carefully planned and there is a good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those directed by the teachers or support staff. All members of staff understand well the needs of young children. Support staff, including classroom assistants, make a significant contribution to children's learning. They plan well with teachers and know exactly what they must do if children are expected to learn to a good standard. Practical materials and equipment are carefully prepared and are used well to motivate and involve children as well as to stimulate their curiosity.
19. In the most effective lessons, teachers ask probing questions that make children think. Speaking skills are effectively developed when children are encouraged to give explanations whenever possible. Children's answers are used sensitively to ask more questions and extend learning further. These features were all seen in a lesson to help pupils understand the different stages of plant and animal growth. Good use is made of time. In many lessons, where there is focus on one subject, for example mathematics, opportunities are taken to also develop speaking, listening, personal and social skills and general knowledge. The provision for children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. These children are carefully included in all activities and take a key role at the front of the whole class, often helping the teacher as much as others in the class. When they receive additional support, for example from bilingual or classroom assistants, they make very good progress due to carefully targeted work. Children's everyday attainment is carefully assessed and this is used well to make sure that future lessons are planned to meet the learning needs of all the children.
20. At the time of the inspection, there was some disruption to the usual pattern of teaching pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teaching and learning of these infant pupils is satisfactory overall but there are, nevertheless, currently some significant weaknesses in the teaching of this age group. For example, teaching methods are not always effective and the teaching of basic skills, including literacy, is unsatisfactory. The work prepared for pupils of different abilities is not always well matched to their needs and the use made of everyday assessment does not lead consistently to good learning. Teachers also need additional knowledge of, and support with, pupils for whom English is an additional language.

21. The quality of teaching and learning in the juniors is good. Teachers have a good grasp of the curriculum and know how to devise interesting lessons that in turn lead to effective learning. The teaching of pupils in Year 6 is of high quality and leads to particularly rapid progress. It is frequently characterised by high expectations and a wide range of teaching strategies which evoke a very good response from the pupils. The excellent relationships that also exist in this year group in particular, lend themselves to quality learning.
22. Teaching throughout the school is good in science and design and technology. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good among junior pupils but is unsatisfactory in some classes in Years 1 and 2. In all other subjects the quality of teaching among infant pupils is satisfactory. There is good teaching in mathematics, physical education, music and religious education among junior pupils. In all other subjects it is satisfactory. No lessons were observed in the junior classes in geography or in art and design in Years 1 and 2, and therefore it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in these subjects and age groups.
23. Most teachers have good subject knowledge although in Years 1 and 2 this does not always translate successfully into precisely what pupils need to move them on. In the most effective lessons teachers give clear explanations, promote subject specific vocabulary and ask relevant probing questions that very quickly and effectively extend pupils' thinking, knowledge and understanding. For example, in both a science and design and technology lesson in Year 6, pupils were able to learn with pace and rigour because the very good subject expertise of the teacher enabled key skills to be taught and developed in a progressive way. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers' subject knowledge is not always so secure and this adversely affects pupils' learning and the rate of progress they make in lessons. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, inadequate subject knowledge prevented the promotion of the proper subject vocabulary and there was an absence of skilful questioning to help develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good relationships and high levels of trust exist between all teachers and pupils and this enables pupils to feel confident when asked to participate fully in lessons. Well planned and structured lessons promote good learning in many of the classes. Throughout the school, teachers use resources very effectively across the curriculum in order to enhance pupils' learning.
24. When teaching is most effective, teachers, classrooms assistants and support staff ask questions of the pupils in a purposeful manner, ensuring that questions are framed in a way that matches all ability groups in the class. Time targets are also set to ensure a brisk pace is maintained in lessons and that teachers manage pupils effectively. Good planning is linked well to prepared forms of assessment and this ensures that work is well matched to the pupils' individual needs and abilities. This was clearly evident in several mathematics lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and also in a Year 2 lesson where tasks were suitably planned to challenge pupils of all abilities. However, overall across the school there are many inconsistencies in the use of day-to-day diagnostic assessment of pupils' progress and learning during lessons. In several lessons there was insufficient attention paid to how and what pupils were actually learning. This unsatisfactory use of assessment led to undue emphasis on teaching rather than the learning of the pupils. Where this occurs, pupils are not particularly well supported and progress is unsatisfactory. Particularly in Years 1 and 2, what the children know, understand and can do is not used well enough to help inform the next stage of teaching and learning. This also happens in a few junior classes. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, there was no clear means of assessing pupils' progress set against the learning objectives of the lesson. The teacher then finds it difficult to know exactly what the pupils have learned and

there is a lack of information available in order to plan effectively the next set of lessons for the class.

25. Other forms of everyday assessment are rather variable. Throughout the school the quality of teachers' marking is sometimes unsatisfactory. While pupils' work is usually marked regularly, it often consists of only ticks or a brief comment. Overall, there is insufficient use of constructive or other evaluative comment to help pupils understand how they might improve their work. The role of target setting in pupils' learning is now underway, but there is insufficient mention and use of this during lessons, and this valuable form of assessing in the short-term what pupils have learnt, is an opportunity lost to both teacher and pupil. While in many lessons the aims of a session are shared at the onset with pupils, there is then insufficient follow-through of these aims at the end. Pupils and teachers then have too few opportunities to be clear about what has been learned and taught successfully.
26. The setting and use of homework to support learning are satisfactory overall but there are inconsistencies across and between year groups regarding what and how much is set. This was a concern expressed by parents. However, the homework set in Year 6 is particularly well structured and relevant to learning that takes place in lessons. In most year groups there was clear and useful reference to ongoing homework tasks. However, the current homework policy is out-of-date and does not provide sufficiently clear guidelines to teachers about what is expected of homework as a valuable aid to learning.
27. The teaching of both literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory overall, although weaknesses do remain in Years 1 and 2 relating to literacy. The teaching of basic skills in the Foundation Stage and among junior pupils is good and frequently very good but is generally unsatisfactory among infant children. This is because there are some weaknesses in the teaching and implementation of particularly the National Literacy Strategy on a daily basis.
28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory across the school and good in the Foundation Stage where the amount of adult help is an important and positive factor. The recently improved individual educational plans are now constructed carefully to identify clear and meaningful targets for most pupils in literacy, number, or learning behaviour. In classrooms, most teachers set work that is appropriate to these targets. Teachers regularly consult with the special needs co-ordinator to review pupils' progress and assessment is generally, but not always, used effectively to determine pupils' success levels against targets set for their learning. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are particularly well supported. Some of this is achieved by withdrawing pupils from their normal class group, with the classroom assistants, support staff and the co-ordinator for special educational needs working well together to provide high quality, focused teaching. During whole class discussions, the level of challenge for pupils with special educational needs and also that of the higher attaining pupils was not consistently effective except in Year 6.
29. The teaching of minority ethnic pupils is satisfactory overall, but there remain clear areas where such provision needs to be strengthened and better informed. Teaching is frequently good in the Foundation Stage where the presence of additional support and the presence of bilingual speakers ensures children make good progress. This support, including that offered by the local authority, drops away in Years 1 and 2 despite the presence of several pupils who require continuous help, with literacy in particular. Teachers apply their own knowledge and skills as best they can.

However, all teaching staff would benefit from additional training in how best to work effectively with pupils for whom English is an additional language.

30. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, effective monitoring of both teaching and learning by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators, together with appropriate in-service training in subjects such as information and communication technology, science and mathematics has improved teachers subject knowledge in these subjects. This has impacted well on raising and maintaining standards in these subjects since the last inspection.

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

31. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities for all its pupils, and complies with statutory requirements for the curriculum. Areas of particular strength are the very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage; a good range of extra-curricular activities; good and improving provisions for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PHSE) and good learning opportunities gained from developing links with the community, local businesses, higher education and other schools.
32. Areas in need of further improvement include better provision for geography in Year 3; provision for continuous play for children in nursery and reception classes; the consistency and effectiveness with which the literacy and numeracy strategies are extended across the curriculum and the quality and frequency of pupils' opportunities to learn and use research and library skills.
33. Good improvements since the previous inspection, and most notably during the last year, have strengthened provision in several areas of the curriculum, including those then judged unsatisfactory. Recently revised timetable arrangements make more efficient use of teaching time. The overall time provided for the curriculum is above national norms. The new allocations give due weight to literacy and numeracy, whilst providing a fair balance across other subjects and making adequate provision for a PHSE programme that includes citizenship, sex education and drugs awareness. The school has adopted, and is continuing to develop, the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. For example, as a result of its own evaluations and its commitment to higher standards, the school has improved its provision for writing. It is also exploring ways of grouping pupils by attainment in English and mathematics and this has led to a keener recognition of different needs and to more effective planning and teaching in Years 5 and 6.
34. The school has yet to extend its strategies for teaching literacy, numeracy, and Information and communication technology (ICT) by providing specifically planned opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills in these areas to support learning in other subjects. Work in every other subject is now secured by the agreed and consistent use of established schemes of work that accord with the requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education. In most subjects, and in the nursery and reception years, the school has adopted national guidance. In design and technology and information and communication technology, this has resolved the problems identified by the last inspection. More widely, it ensures a satisfactory breadth, balance, coherence and progression of learning experience for all pupils as they move through the school.
35. The curriculum provided for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and covers all the areas of learning expected for young children, despite the lack of a

designated secure play area for children in the reception classes. The development of language, literacy and communication and personal social skills rightly permeate all lessons. Planning is very good. The leaders of each year work together to make sure that there is a smooth transition from nursery to reception. Weekly planning meetings for all staff in each year group ensure that everyone knows the key learning targets and vocabulary to be developed to make efficient use of staff and of time. There is a good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those directed by the teachers or classroom assistants. Parents and children are well prepared prior to the children's entry into the nursery. Good links are maintained with other nursery schools from which children join the reception class.

36. The curriculum planned for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is reflected, where appropriate, in their individual educational plans and is effective in promoting satisfactory levels of learning. The practice in meeting the needs of these pupils is sound and overall they receive a broad and balanced curriculum. However, the withdrawal of pupils for special input by classroom assistants needs to be carefully monitored to ensure that these pupils receive their full curriculum. Otherwise, all pupils are fully included in all areas of curriculum experience and have full access to what is offered by the school. The positive integration into school of pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority groups, ensures that they all share fully the good ethos and sound opportunities for learning.
37. An extensive and very well-planned programme of personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to the school's effective range of provisions for promoting pupils' personal development. Despite many competing priorities, the school has given great attention to improving its work in this area. A very good scheme has been developed which follows the revised national framework and includes a strong and continuous element of citizenship. The scheme provides clear and very detailed guidance for teachers in each year group, and strongly supports their planned use of the weekly hour of teaching time allocated to the programme. It carefully specifies the methods, activities, resources, visitors and excursions that best promote the key objectives. Links with other subjects are consistently indicated.
38. Arrangements to enable all pupils to have equality of curricular opportunity are satisfactory. The school is committed to including all pupils in its principles and practice and is strenuously seeking to improve its provision still further. Staff are careful to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, age, attainment or disability, have equal access to all curricular opportunities. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language benefit from the extent and quality of the care and support they receive. However, planning is not always clearly informed by good understanding of pupils' needs. The school has yet to develop ways of ensuring that its most able or gifted pupils have the opportunity to progress at their best rate.
39. Overall, the school provides a good range of activities to extend and enrich pupils' learning experience beyond the basic curriculum. Some parents expressed concern about the small range of activities outside lesson time, and it is true that, except for country dancing, activities are generally restricted to pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, the range is greater than that offered by many schools and includes clubs for football, netball, choir, recorders, drama, art, ICT and country dancing. Participation rates are good and the school is about to offer a broader choice based upon a recent poll of pupils' interests. In addition, pupils in Year 6 make an annual residential visit to Derwent Hill, and the school is extending its programme of educational visits to meet the demands of particular aspects of the curriculum.
40. Vigorous efforts to involve the wider community in the work of the school have developed good links locally that contribute well to pupils' learning. Links include the

church and a good range of local organisations, public services and businesses. Currently the school is trying to extend these contacts and tie them to specific curriculum areas, as well as to involve the Bangladeshi community and the Mosque more actively in school affairs.

41. Good partnerships with other schools and educational establishments enhance, both directly and indirectly, the range and quality of pupils' learning opportunities. Good arrangements with the nearby secondary schools ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils when they leave. The school provides work experience places for trainee teachers and nursery nurses, and has mutually supportive agreements with other primary schools for the sharing of resources and training opportunities.
42. Within personal development, the provision the school makes for pupils' social development is very good, the provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good and the provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory.
43. Through effective in-service training the general awareness of teachers of how they might develop spiritual development through the curriculum and through other activities across the school such as in assemblies has, although still developing, improved since the last inspection and is now broadly satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Spiritual development is now effectively promoted through assemblies and through daily acts of worship. Pupils are given opportunity to think and reflect about the theme for the day. In personal and social education, pupils explore and consider personal feelings and view-points about aspects of life. In religious education, pupils are encouraged to think about Christian values and to also gain an insight into the beliefs and traditions of other world faiths. For example, the school organises special assemblies to celebrate major religious festivals such as Christmas and the Islamic festival of Eid. Moments of reflection are also created through the reading of stories and poetry in English lessons. As part of art and design and religious education, pupils visit a local church in order to experience the sense of calm and peace a place of worship can provoke. A local member of the clergy regularly visits the school in order to lead assemblies. Spiritual development is well promoted in art and music. For example, in a Year 3 art and design lesson about stencilling techniques, pupils gasped with wonder as they pulled the stencil away from the paper and saw the patterns it had left.
44. The good provision for pupils' moral development has been maintained since the previous inspection. The school has recently reviewed and implemented a new behaviour policy which effectively provides clear guidelines for both staff and pupils about what is expected of pupils regarding their behaviour. The policy is consistently applied across the school and pupils know well the difference between right and wrong. All adults provide good role models for pupils to follow. Pupils are encouraged to respect property, themselves and others and this contributes significantly to the excellent relationships that exists throughout the school.
45. The provision for pupils' social development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. At the time of the last report it was judged to be good. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to work co-operatively in pairs and groups in order to develop their social skills. For example, in science, pupils throughout the school frequently work in groups in order to carry out investigations. Each class has a range of jobs and responsibilities to fulfil and older pupils take on a number of responsibilities around the school that contribute significantly to school life. For example, pupils help teachers in the nursery to prepare and tidy away equipment and help out at lunchtimes as dinner monitors. They also work musical and other apparatus for worship.

46. A particular success in promoting pupils' social skills is the 'Playground Squad' initiative. This very effectively provides older pupils with a real sense of responsibility as they bring together pupils of all ages who appear to have no one to play with in order to teach them games and befriend them. This arrangement impacts positively on pupils' social development. Pupils' awareness of the needs of people in society are effectively developed as they raise money for numerous international, national and local charities. Residential visits for older pupils, inter-school sporting tournaments and the involvement of pupils in local events in Sunderland such as carol singing in the city centre and taking part in the 'Parade of Light', contribute significantly to pupils' social development.
47. The provision for pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. At the time of the last report it was judged to be sound. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through various subjects across the curriculum. For example, in history pupils make detailed studies of ancient civilisations and learn about life in ancient Britain as they visit a local Roman site. In art and design, pupils study local architecture as they visit a local Saxon church and through a Tudor musical workshop pupils begin to appreciate different styles in music during different periods in history. In English, pupils read and enjoy stories from other cultures. Through religious education, pupils learn about other world faiths such as Sikhism, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. The school also draws effectively on the ethnic diversity of its own pupil roll in order to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures and traditions. For example, the school hosted a community multicultural awareness day and celebrated the Muslim festival of Eid at a special assembly held for parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. As at the previous inspection, the care arrangements for pupils are good, whilst procedures and use of assessment information are satisfactory overall.
49. Procedures to promote and ensure pupils' wellbeing are good. The school has good arrangements for the induction of children into nursery, reception and other classes. Home visits are also part of nursery and reception induction. Transfer arrangements, mostly to the local comprehensive school, are well established and appropriate. Pupils confirm that they are well cared for when they are ill or otherwise distressed. Child protection procedures are good. There is a good quality school policy. The procedures to follow and the designated staff member are known by all adults in the school. Effective links exist with social services. Pupils are made appropriately aware of this issue as part of their personal and social education.
50. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are good overall. The introduction of organised outside games has made the playground a more constructive and interesting experience for pupils. Teachers make pupils aware of health and safety issues in lessons, such as in personal, social and health education, design and technology and physical education. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety conscious attitude among them. Fire alarm testing and the inspection of portable electrical equipment are routinely carried out by external agencies. Fire drills are carried out regularly. First aid arrangements are well established and appropriate. Regular visual inspections to identify any risks and hazards form part of the governors' health and safety committee's role.
51. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and discipline are good overall. The new 'School Promise' which pupils value, provides a coherent basis for their behaviour, discipline and personal development. The main emphasis is on

recognising and rewarding good behaviour and nearly all pupils respond positively. Ongoing praise in most classes and assemblies is a routine feature. Class teachers deal routinely with low level classroom incidents and have a clear route for referring more serious incidents. In most classes, teachers use praise effectively and routinely maintain clear and consistent boundaries between what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. A further important feature is that the lunchtime staff are fully involved in recognising and rewarding good behaviour in the playground.

52. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, including bullying, are very good overall. The few pupils with significant behaviour difficulties are readily identified. Behaviour improvement plans are used well to support these pupils. There is a clear proportionate set of sanctions in relation to classroom and playground behaviour. The lunchtime staff feel very well supported by teaching staff and the headteacher in relation to playground incidents. All significant incidents are systematically recorded and fully investigated by the headteacher. Parents are very effectively involved in such cases. The new Year 6 'Playground Squad' exert a very positive influence by looking out for signs of bullying and other forms of social exclusion. Following considerable work with pupils as part of their own personal, social and health education, an effective anti-bullying policy has been introduced. Pupils confirm that they feel comfortable reporting rare incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. Parents speak very positively about the prompt and effective way in which such cases are resolved.
53. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality are broadly satisfactory. While there are weaknesses in data collection and monitoring, measures to promote attendance are relatively good. The manual registers are fully completed and this raw data is manually processed to provide weekly attendance data for all classes. However, this task alone creates a significant workload. Also the data cannot be readily manipulated to provide, for example, important data on attendance of various groups or absence by category. As a result, the school is not as clear as it should be on the key areas where work is needed to raise attendance levels. The school works hard to make first day contact with parents in the event of absence. The bilingual assistant is used well to make contact, including home visits, with Bengali parents. The class with the highest weekly attendance is presented with a 'Cup' in assembly. Individual recognition and rewards are also given for full termly and annual attendance. Verbal praise is given to those pupils and their parents who significantly improve their attendance.
54. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good overall, including the early assessments in the Foundation Stage and those undertaken with pupils with special educational needs and any pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has good systems for gaining accurate information about what pupils in other classes know, understand and can do in English, mathematics and science. It makes satisfactory use of this information to monitor and support each pupil's academic progress and to tailor the curriculum to suit pupils' needs and aptitudes. In addition to the compulsory national tests for seven- and eleven-year-olds, the school now uses the optional annual tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 to gain a full overview of the progress of individuals and cohorts from year to year.
55. The introduction of a computerised system enables the school to analyse all this test information in depth. The analysis highlights any individuals who are underachieving so that the school can take appropriate action. It also shows performance in each test question so that areas where skills are weak can be pinpointed and provisions strengthened accordingly. Sometimes, as happened recently in relation to concerns about writing, the school uses a whole school assessment task to locate the root causes of a problem and guide action to change the curriculum. In time, the system

- will show individual progress from Year 2 to Year 6 and enable the school to measure the value it adds to each pupil's education.
56. End of unit tests in science and periodic formal tests in English and mathematics monitor progress at intervals through the year. Procedures for continuous assessment provide further useful information to guide planning, but they lack consistency and rigour in recording each pupil's specific advances and difficulties. In ICT and other subjects, assessment is at a very early stage. The school has adopted national guidance in most of these subjects, but is only just beginning to follow the guidance by making a formal assessment procedure integral to teaching. Teachers' marking of pupils' recorded work also lacks consistency and rigour, and written comments seldom tell pupils how to improve their work.
57. The school is improving its use of assessment information. Its targets for performance in future statutory tests are now more securely based on prior attainment. The same information is also used to set medium-term targets for groups and to inform the planning of work and the grouping of pupils at different levels. Another use of assessment that is proving effective in raising standards is the rearrangement of the Year 6 classes by attainment for lessons in English and mathematics. However, teachers are not yet consistently using assessment to set individual targets or to focus efforts on raising and celebrating achievement. Nor are they using it to promote initiative and independent work, particularly for the most able pupils. The school now has better data, and shares it well with all teachers to ensure that their work is better informed by knowledge of identified strengths and weaknesses in English, mathematics and science. Beyond that, much remains to be done.
58. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good. Pupils and their needs are well known to staff. Good work and attitudes are regularly celebrated in assemblies. This recognition and reward provides pupils with frequent and public confirmation of what is good in their lives and helps raise their self-esteem. The school creates very good opportunities for older pupils to take significant responsibility for themselves and others through the 'Playground Squad' and prefect system. Parents are very positive about the school's part in helping pupils become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. The partnership with parents makes a very sound contribution to the quality of education provided by the school and the standards achieved by the pupils. The effectiveness of the partnership has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
60. Overall, parents are broadly satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. A growing majority also recognise there have been significant improvements since the arrival of the current headteacher. Around an eighth of parents replied to the questionnaire and 21 attended the pre-inspection meeting. Nearly all confirm that their children like school, behave well and make good progress. They consider that the school has high expectations and helps pupils become more mature and responsible. For example, they are positive about the many opportunities for responsibility provided by the school. They are also positive about the teaching. Most feel comfortable approaching school with suggestions or concerns and consider that this well led and managed school is now more open and accessible to them. Parents confirm that rare bullying incidents are well handled.
61. However, based on the questionnaire responses, a significant minority consider that the school does not work closely with them. A similar proportion do not feel well

informed about their children's progress and do not feel that there is a sufficiently interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspection evidence somewhat contradicts these views. Inspectors and school agree there is room for improvement in the consistency of homework levels and in a number of specific features related to the accommodation.

62. Links with parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning. This process begins very clearly in the Foundation Stage where parents are kept well informed about the work their children are doing. School is open, welcoming and listens to parents' concerns. Based on questionnaire returns, nearly all parents feel comfortable raising questions or problems with school. The quality of information to support pupils' progress is now good overall and has improved significantly in the past year. An Termly targets and half-termly curriculum information have been usefully introduced. The quality of pupils' annual reports is good. This is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. Reports give a clear sense of what pupils are doing and how well they are doing compared with national standards. Improvement targets in attitudes and the tested subjects are systematically identified. The practice of getting parents to comment is another positive feature.
63. School related information is of good quality. Regular attractively presented newsletters keep parents well informed on ongoing school life. They also raise important issues such as attendance and some key features of new policies, such as anti-bullying measures. The prospectus gives a clear outline of school's expectations and character. The governors' annual report provides a clear objective picture of the main issues which the governing body is working on.
64. Parents' involvement with the work of the school makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Discussions with pupils indicate that nearly all have somebody at home who checks that set homework is done. Most pupils are represented at the parents' evenings in the autumn and summer terms. Attendance is significantly lower among Bengali parents, however. Parents of special educational needs pupils attend and contribute to their reviews. All six parent governor positions are filled. They are keen to contribute in a responsible way. However, too many parents do not deliver well on their responsibility to ensure that pupils regularly attend school. Many parents greatly enjoyed the recent Christmas production, which was the first available to parents for many years. A cultural awareness day was held in the summer and an Eid celebration event, based on dance, was enjoyed by a sizeable number of parents, mostly Bengali. These events are positive indications of the open, welcoming and inclusive partnership that now prevails.
65. There is an active school association which works well with school. It organises and runs a highly successful range of fundraising and social events, typically raising up to £5,000 annually. Funds are well used to enhance book and numeracy resources and to contribute to significant projects, such as outside play equipment. Their activities, also help to establish and maintain very good informal links between staff, parents and pupils, as all parties are involved in most of the events. Events such as the regular discos and the annual summer fair, where older junior pupils help at stalls, for example, also contribute to pupils' wider personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

66. The leadership offered by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. The headteacher in particular has a strong and clear vision as to the educational direction required of the school and how priorities can be expressed and achieved. Although in post for only a year, she has built round her a team of staff and governors who are

collectively committed to raising standards and ensuring the aims of the school are met. The previous inspection indicated that the management and efficiency of the school were in need of substantial improvement and the new administration has quickly and successfully put into place a wide range of policies and procedures that is undoubtedly helping the school to move forward whilst building carefully on past strengths and achievements. The impact of these measures has been effective in relation to pupils' standards and ongoing staff commitment. The key issues from the previous inspection have been rigorously addressed.

67. An emerging strength of the school is the determination to empower staff with real responsibility and to ensure that their various strengths and interests are harnessed and developed well in relation to pupils' progress. The new job descriptions given to staff make it clear where roles and responsibilities now lie and the overall impact of governors and all staff with management responsibilities is now good. This represents a significant improvement, with the school being run efficiently with a balanced budget and with teachers in particular enjoying many opportunities for renewed forms of staff development and initiative.
68. The subject co-ordinators are at various stages in the development of their subjects. This is also reflected in their varying strands of experience as subject monitors. Where subjects have enjoyed high profile, such as literacy and numeracy, co-ordinators have a good grasp of provision and of standards in their subject as well as priorities for future development. Some of the foundation subjects have relatively new co-ordinators who need more time and opportunity to develop their subjects successfully in terms of the wider curriculum. The new Foundation Stage is well managed.
69. Central to the growth and future development of the school is the improvement plan which is very well constructed and gives clear statements as to the areas for immediate and more distant focus. The plan also specifies very clearly who has responsibility for each initiative with mention of likely expenditure and any criteria for success. Whilst this is currently mainly a document compiled by the headteacher and senior staff, there is a growing awareness of other groups, such as governors, of the role they should play in such forms of strategic planning. The priorities expressed in the school improvement plan are highly appropriate to the immediate and longer-term needs of the school. The action taken to meet the immediate targets of the school has been very good and has quickly erased the rather lukewarm response given to the previous post-Ofsted action plan.
70. Governors have improved to a level that is now both supportive and better informed. During the previous inspection, governors were unsure of their role and had insufficient involvement in the management of the school. The new headteacher has expressed as a priority the need for governors to be more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and to act on a well informed basis. This is currently being achieved and governors meet their statutory responsibilities. They also form a wide ranging group of the experienced and less experienced that the headteacher can rely on for support and loyalty. The committee structure of the governing body makes for efficient use of time and other resources. Governors are also becoming more proactive in relation to the curriculum and pupils' standards although these are vital areas of school life in which they need to become even more active and well informed.
71. The school is in the process of becoming more self-evaluative and appraising its past and present performance and this is currently at a good level. The headteacher ensures that staff and governors are well informed as to the standards pupils reach in their annual tests and what can be detected from the results that will help teachers

and pupils improve these still further. The monitoring of teaching and learning is firmly underway but this is still at an early stage and needs to be as rigorous as possible so that indifferent practice is eliminated and good practice disseminated around the school. Some areas of school life, such as the impact of a growing population of pupils with English as an additional language, need to be given greater priority and wider debate. A policy and approach towards the more gifted and talented pupils would also be useful. However, there has already been some considerable and influential changes for the good, a fact not lost on many parents. Among these has been the management of pupils with special educational needs.

72. The annual budget and other grants are targeted well in terms of helping to meet the declared priorities of the school. Financial procedures are good and the school budget now shows a surplus for the first time in several years. Any areas for improvement suggested in the recent audit report have been carried out. Good, value for money decisions are taken in relation to wider school expenditure and there is appropriate emphasis on the need to develop specific areas of school life such as ICT and the opportunities afforded to the school through the new Foundation Stage. A major preoccupation is to make classrooms more discrete spaces to avoid neighbouring disturbance and this is appropriate given the layout of the school. There has been insufficient attention paid to the need for secure outside accommodation for the reception classes as part of their entitlement to improved physical development. Other matters relating to general health and safety are well covered by staff and governors.
73. The day-to-day running of the school is smooth. Experienced personnel provide a welcoming and knowledgeable first contact for visitors and provide good quality administration in relation to everyday finance, cost effectiveness and important communication and links between home and school.
74. The school has a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. There are some particularly good examples in music, dance and in the Foundation Stage where the strengths of individual staff are used well to extend the levels of pupils' progress. Overall, support staff are used well, particularly in relation to helping pupils with special educational needs. The amount of experienced adult help in Years 1 and 2, to help support pupils with English as an additional language, is insufficient given the inexperience of the teachers and the amount of individual help required. While the progress made by such pupils is satisfactory overall, this is likely to be improved with additional staff resources and expertise. The school has embarked very successfully on a rolling programme to improve learning resources in all subjects.
75. The headteacher, staff and governors have introduced many fundamental changes in a relatively short space of time and the school now requires a period of consolidation and stability, particularly among its teachers, when the new policies and procedures can be given greater opportunity to 'bed in' and to become even more effective.
76. Learning resources are good in mathematics, design and technology and physical education. Those for religious education have been improved since the last inspection to include good multi-faith artefacts but book resources are still of unsatisfactory quality. Geography resources are also unsatisfactory. All other subjects have satisfactory resources.
77. The provision for pupils to access structured resources for private study and to develop research skills are unsatisfactory. Where resources are available they are well organised and readily available to pupils and teachers for teaching and learning.

78. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. It is clean, well maintained and meets health and safety requirements. In most classes, pupils' work is attractively displayed and pupils speak positively about the impact of seeing their work on the walls. The number of pupils on roll exceeds the design figure. As a result, the playground is somewhat crowded and some teaching areas, especially in the juniors, are cramped. However, pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour mean that this does not have any significant impact on play or learning. The school is working towards addressing a number of the negative features justifiably raised by parents, such as the pupils' lack of ready access to drinking water and the ageing toilet blocks. The school also has plans to replace the open-plan areas with more self-contained spaces for learning and hopes this will cut down on extraneous noise. It is also hoping to include a secure outside play area for reception children within its development plans.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to further raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1) Improve standards in English among pupils in Years 1 and 2 by:

- creating more opportunities for pupils in these year groups to practise and develop their speaking skills across a range of subjects and lessons;
- encouraging among the pupils a neat and more acceptable style of handwriting, together with improved levels of general presentation in their everyday work;
- ensuring that pupils develop improved habits in spelling and grammatical structure and show greater confidence and knowledge in their choice of written vocabulary;
- creating additional opportunities for pupils to write more imaginatively and in different styles and contexts.
(paragraphs 3, 5, 95, 100, 106)

2) Improve the quality of teaching and learning among infant pupils by:

- ensuring that teachers extend their personal subject knowledge of what the curriculum requires and that this translates more effectively in terms of the teaching of basic skills;
- ensuring that the work and activities given to all pupils accurately matches their learning needs;
- raising teacher expectations as to what pupils can and should achieve. Ensure that the individual targets given to them provide sufficient challenge to extend their learning still further;
- critically examining the teaching methods used with infant pupils on a regular basis. Ensure there are firm conclusions reached and then acted upon as to the relative success of such methods set against the effective learning of the pupils;

- extending the monitoring of teaching and learning by senior staff and disseminating more of the good practice that already exists.
(paragraphs 5, 20, 21-27, 29, 71, 74, 95, 106, 115-116, 124, 134)

3) Extend and improve the use made by teachers of their assessment of pupils' learning by:

- examining the school's policy on the marking of pupils' work and ensuring that future marking follows an agreed whole school approach and that it provides pupils with clear guidance as to what they must do to improve their work;
- giving greater emphasis during lessons as to what pupils are actually expected to learn and making sure that teachers have a clear idea at the end of lessons of what individuals or groups of pupils have actually achieved;
- extending the current good practice of sharing with pupils the aims of a lesson, ensuring that their individual targets are known and acted upon and that all pupils have opportunities to be clear about what has been learnt and taught successfully;
- ensuring that the assessment of pupils' work is used to accurately gauge what the teacher should plan next in relation to pupils' learning.
(paragraphs 20, 24, 25, 56-57, 106, 107, 119, 121, 129, 152)

4) Improve the attendance of the pupils by:

- obtaining a clearer picture of the attendance levels of various groups of pupils and the implications of the different categories of their absence;
- forging useful links with similar schools that have successfully addressed attendance issues;
- setting challenging and progressive targets for overall attendance, maintaining the current good practice of rewarding pupils whose attendance has reached praiseworthy levels;
- identifying key measures to help reduce the main categories of absence that currently exist. Plot any absence data to help the school gauge the effectiveness of any new measures it has introduced.
(paragraphs 16, 53)

As well as the above, the school should consider including in its post inspection plan the following lesser areas of weakness:

- increase staff awareness of the specific needs of pupils with English as an additional language;
- ensure that staff training is extended and that the school does all that it can to increase the amount and range of specialist help available, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
(paragraphs 10, 20, 29, 71, 74, 103, 115, 124, 148)
- improve pupils' opportunities for developing their research and library skills;
(paragraphs 7, 77, 99)

- develop a whole school policy and approach towards the recognition and support of gifted and talented pupils.
(paragraphs 38, 71)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	102
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	3	23	34	37	5	0	0
Percentage	2.9	22.5	33.3	36.4	4.9	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	422
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	77

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	123

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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	32	31	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	25
	Girls	27	27	24
	Total	52	54	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (81)	86 (77)	78 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	22
	Girls	26	26	24
	Total	51	51	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (78)	81 (83)	73 (73)
	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	31	29	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	23	29
	Girls	23	22	22
	Total	48	45	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (78)	75 (76)	85 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	25	28
	Girls	24	25	23
	Total	50	50	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (78)	83 (76)	85 (83)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	72
Chinese	2
White	286
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	30.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97
Number of pupils per FTE adult	3.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	880,241
Total expenditure	856,068
Expenditure per pupil	1,818
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,601
Balance carried forward to next year	29,774

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	470
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	47	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	39	21	3	3
The teaching is good.	60	34	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	31	24	6	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	37	13	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	35	5	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	29	31	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	45	0	2	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	53	0	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	34	26	6	11

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

80. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is very good. The quality of teaching is good with about half of lessons being very good or excellent. Both nursery and reception children benefit from spacious accommodation. This is used particularly well in the reception classes to make efficient use of the nursery nurse, bilingual support and practical resources available. The nursery has a spacious, secure hardcore and grassed play area and valuable outdoor covered area that is used daily. The reception classes do not benefit from an outdoor session each day, although teachers make every effort to compensate for the lack of a secure play area through dance and physical education activities in the hall and regular outdoor activities in the nursery area.
81. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good and in the reception classes it is good. In the previous inspection no judgement was made on teaching in the reception classes. Teaching in the nursery was judged good. All staff have a very good understanding of the role of play and child-initiated learning in the development of young children. They interact with children to further learning well by careful questioning and by developing vocabulary. A feature of the very good provision is the close teamwork of all staff in both year groups and the links between the nursery and reception teachers to make sure that the curriculum provided moves children on in their learning. The work is always very carefully planned to meet the national guidelines (early learning goals). There is also a good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those directed by the teachers or helpers.
82. Support staff and classroom assistants always know exactly what they need to do, what children are expected to learn and make a considerable contribution to children's learning. Practical materials and equipment are carefully prepared and used well, hence most activities stimulate curiosity and keep children involved. In the reception classes, the required literacy and numeracy sessions are matched to the age and maturity of the pupils. Occasionally in longer sessions when children are doing a variety of activities, there is a need for a change of focus to maintain their interest. In the most effective lessons, teachers ask probing questions that make children think. They expect children to give explanations whenever possible. This helps them develop their speaking skills. Children's answers are used sensitively to ask more questions and extend learning.
83. Good use is made of time. In lessons where there is a focus on one subject, for example mathematics, opportunities are taken to also develop speaking, listening, personal and social skills, general knowledge and manipulative skills. The provision for children with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good. They are carefully included in all activities and take a key role at the front of the whole class helping the teacher as often as others in their class. When they receive additional support, for example from bilingual or classroom assistants, they make very good progress due to carefully targeted work.
84. Children generally enter the part-time nursery class at the beginning of the year in which they are four. There is currently some provision for younger children but this is not normally the case. Assessments on entry to reception show that children are broadly average overall. Although there is a wide spread of attainment present, assessments and observations show that there is also a significant number of children with well below average skills in all areas of learning. About a quarter of

children enter the nursery that have had no, or little, previous experience of the English language. The nursery begins a profile of children on entry. This is continued throughout the two years in the Foundation Stage. The assessment procedures in the nursery and reception classes are very good. Records are carefully maintained of children's progress towards the goals they are expected to reach before they leave the reception classes. In the nursery, specific activities are carefully assessed and records maintained to ensure that key activities are completed. In the reception classes, target activities are visited by groups of children in turn. All free choice and targeted activities are carefully linked through a theme so that learning is constantly reinforced. Records of progress of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well organised, and children's needs are reassessed on a regular basis.

Personal, social and emotional development

85. This aspect of learning rightly permeates all activities in all classes and personal skills are developed very well. There is very good provision for independent learning in all classrooms. Even the youngest children quickly learn classroom routines. Hence behaviour is consistently very good in the nursery and sometimes excellent. In the nursery, children collect their own photograph to register when they arrive. This is changed to a name card at a later stage in their learning. Children quickly learn to organise their own clothes, and staff are careful to give them only the help they need to teach them to dress themselves. There are daily opportunities for individual children to participate in some activity in front of the whole class, improving both the confidence of the individual and teaching respect for others. This development is continued in the reception classes. Children understand that people speak different languages and have different customs, and accept each other's difference. Photographic evidence shows that they celebrate each other's religious festivals, for example Eid and Christmas, preparing them for life in a multicultural society. On one occasion, nursery children happily answered the register using the Bengali response for 'yes'.

Communication, language and literacy

86. Communication, language and literacy are well fostered in all classes in all activities. Staff interact well with the children and ask questions, enhancing vocabulary and encouraging talk at all times. Teaching is good overall. When children enter the nursery at the beginning of sessions this provision is excellent. All staff are immediately engaged with small groups of children discussing what they have chosen to do and introducing more vocabulary. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children listen carefully to the teachers and show a developing interest in books and stories. They have a very well developed attention span for young children. Bilingual assistants are very adept at making sure the children they support are gathered round them in whole-class sessions, quietly translating to make sure that children can take part in lessons and answer questions. Reception children took great delight in finding missing words in the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They confidently predicted words that were covered up in the large print book. Although children made some errors these were corrected sensitively and in such a way as to improve their ability to make sense of text. Children enjoy listening to stories using the tape recorders and earphones.
87. In all classes, children take books home regularly to look at with their parents. The school is just beginning to provide story bags to take home, which contain objects associated with the book in the bag to make the stories more relevant. Children in the reception classes enjoyed sharing books with a visiting adult and demonstrated skills

that are broadly average for this time of year. Those with high and average attainment recognise some words. They use the sound of the first letter to help them work out what the words say. In reading group activities, children look carefully at combined letters such as 'sh' and combine sounds to sound out words. Children with low attainment pretend to read stories, using their imagination, moving their fingers over the text from left to right. Children who start school with little English are very proud of the vocabulary they have learned and use it whenever possible. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise their writing. Early mark making is encouraged and the youngest children pretend to write their name even when letters are not distinct. A variety of activities are provided for pupils to develop hand-eye co-ordination and writing skills, for example controlling a mouse to trace letter shapes on the computer. Most are on course to attain the expected national standard in all aspects of language, literacy and communication by the time they leave the reception class. Clearly, those in the first stages of learning English will not achieve the standards expected, although they make generally good progress and very good progress when they have additional support.

Mathematical development

88. Mathematical development permeates all learning activities well and the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the week of the inspection, the mathematical focus in all classes was on the development of shape and the language associated with shape and position, but number skills were reinforced at every opportunity. A wide range of activities, some supported by a member of staff, and some chosen independently by children, was designed to reinforce key learning targets. Bilingual assistants carefully developed the understanding and diction of the key words of the children they supported, also ensuring children knew and could say clearly the initial letter sound. A nursery activity to walk around the school encouraged children to use their knowledge of simple shapes to identify those seen on the ground and on buildings. Time was used well to develop their understanding of how to keep safe, for example in the car park, and how to respect things that grow.
89. The required numeracy lessons in the reception class are well balanced between mental activity with the whole class, class teaching relating to a key target for learning and group activities matched to the age and maturity of the children. In the reception classes children, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, already order numbers to 20 and count reliably up to 10 objects. The children confidently name shapes such as rhombus and sphere, and most understand language such as next to, in front of, under and above. Those with higher attainment order numbers well beyond 20 and count to beyond 20. Those with the lowest attainment know the words for numbers, but are not yet confident recognising the written figures. They also find it difficult to complete repeating patterns. Almost all children, including those in the first stages of learning English, are expected to achieve the expected standards in number skills by the time they leave the reception classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. Knowledge and understanding of the world is developed extremely well in the nursery and provision is good in the reception classes. Teaching is good overall. In all classes a wide range of interesting and exciting activities are provided to stimulate children to ask questions and to investigate and explore. For example, the children in the reception class looked at wet and dry porridge and noticed when the wet porridge was lumpy. They learned how to make porridge, the importance of hygiene when handling food and safe procedures in the kitchen. Children in the nursery looked at

cars in the car park and thought about why there were letters and numbers on the back of the car. They enjoyed playing in a 'snow room', and related it to their own experience. Many visits and visitors broaden the experience of children in the nursery. They learn about people who help them, for example a dentist, a policeman and an ambulance driver and this stimulates role play activity with stethoscopes and other equipment. There are fewer opportunities provided in the reception classes for curriculum extension through the use of visits. In all classes, children have an increasing understanding of the past and present and the different stages of growth, time and place. In one lesson in reception, for example, children looked at different objects that might be associated with babies or adults. They made their own decision that a child or an adult could use some objects and the teacher created an extra pile for these objects. Children in all classes visit the local park and learn much about the natural world. They gain well in skills, knowledge and understanding in using computers and tape recorders. They use a range of construction materials safely and correctly. In the nursery, one child was observed hammering a nail into a piece of wood securely clamped in a vice and explained why it needed to be held firmly. Children with all levels of prior attainment or language skills are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age. Activities contribute greatly to the development of vocabulary of all children.

Physical development.

91. The quality of teaching of this aspect is good in both nursery and reception classes. The secure outdoor play area for the nursery is well used. There are clear targets for learning and guided activities are changed daily. There is plenty of opportunity for children to play and use their imagination. A wide range of wheeled vehicles, including many that encourage children to play together, are available. This area is also used regularly, although not daily, by the reception classes. In one observed lesson, reception children developed well their self-control and awareness of how their actions affected others. In all classes, classroom assistants participate fully in physical development activities. Children are taught safety procedures, not only for use of the equipment, but also for outside school. For example, they learn how to use a zebra crossing. Discrete physical education or dance lessons in the hall are well managed. There are suitable warm-up and cool-down activities, and all staff set a good example by wearing appropriate clothes and joining in. Children work safely with a range of tools such as scissors and hammers, and with a variety of construction equipment. In the nursery, children enjoyed stacking large cardboard boxes, as well as wooden blocks. In reception, children manipulated different construction kits to make, for example, chairs for a set of small toys. Children demonstrate suitable skills using paintbrushes and moulding materials. By the end of their reception year, children generally have the skills expected and meet the requirements of the early learning goals.

Creative development

92. Creative development is good in all classes and is an area for learning that is frequently very well taught. Children explore different forms of mark making and materials to make pictures. During the inspection, nursery children explored colours when painting shapes. Reception children made irregular shape patterns and attempted to fill in their patterns carefully. Nursery children join in a range of songs and some willingly perform on their own in front of the class. They respond to the teacher by using loud and soft sounds. All classes have plenty of opportunity for creative role play, sometimes on their own and sometimes supported by a classroom assistant to extend their language and stimulate their imagination. For example, reception children with special educational needs enjoyed pretending to have a picnic

in the woods and acting out the story of Goldilocks with help from the nursery nurse to remind them about the story. Reception children identify and copy simple rhythm patterns and handle musical instruments carefully. By the end of their time in the reception class, children have the skills expected to attain the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

93. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress overall and attain higher than average standards by the time they leave the school. However, younger pupils achieve less well, and at this point standards in Year 2 are below average and lower than those reported during the last inspection.
94. The results of the most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds were above the national average for all schools and well above average for schools in similar contexts. Boys and girls did equally well. Over time, this group of pupils made better progress in English than in mathematics or science, and a far greater than average proportion achieved the higher-than-expected Level 5. These results mark a good improvement after a three-year period in which performance at age eleven had failed to keep pace with the rising national trend. Pupils now in Year 6 are maintaining these good standards and are on course to achieve the challenging targets set by the school. This is because of the higher quality of the teaching in Year 6, and the recently improved provisions, particularly the grouping of pupils into 'sets' determined by their prior attainment in English.
95. Standards in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 were in line with the average for all schools but below the average for schools in similar contexts. Results in these tests have fluctuated from year to year and have not risen above the national averages since 1997. Whilst performance at the higher-than-expected Level 3 is above average, too many pupils cluster at the lower levels. The increasing numbers of pupils who have special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, partly account for this. However, these same factors apply equally in the nursery and reception classes, where children make good progress. Inspectors saw unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2, and the school has yet to fully examine this and other reasons why pupils in these years do not maintain the good progress found at earlier and later stages.
96. In speaking and listening, standards are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils' attentive listening reflects their almost unflinching eagerness to learn. They listen actively and sustain concentration in situations ranging from school assemblies to informal discussion in small groups. Their good understanding of what they hear is evident in the relevance of their responses. The great majority of pupils, including many who have special educational needs or English as an additional language, learn to speak clearly in standard English, take turns sensitively, and use talk skilfully to negotiate agreements and collaborate with partners. Occasionally, the most able pupils extend their answers coherently; read aloud expressively; use talk to solve problems and, when asked, present their learning formally to the class. In most lessons, for instance when discussing texts with the class in the literacy hour, teachers listen well, value contributions, and insist that pupils listen to each other so that answers help to build a coherent understanding. Most teachers ask and sequence questions clearly to draw pupils towards the main learning focus in the lesson.

97. In the better lessons pupils benefit from good opportunities to ask questions, explore ideas together and explain or justify their thinking. Such lessons also give opportunities towards the end of lessons for pupils of all abilities to tell the class what they have learned. However, pupils do not achieve well enough over time because their opportunities to practise and extend their skills vary so much in quality and frequency. For example, few teachers use questions in a way that recognises all the different needs and abilities in the class. There is no written scheme to guide teachers' planning for learning in this branch of English. As a result, progress is assumed rather than ensured, and is dependent on work in literacy rather than promoted in its own right. Consequently, drama has lost its place and pupils seldom have opportunities to use role play, for example to develop their understanding of a story character by questioning a classmate who is 'in role' as that character. Teachers neglect opportunities for pupils to consider and develop the speech styles that correspond to the written styles they teach. For instance, pupils learn to write instructions without reference to the familiar spoken instructions that teachers give in every lesson, and very good lessons to promote skills in writing argument texts in Year 6 offered no opportunities to practise the corresponding skills of formal debate.
98. Attainment in reading is average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Progress is satisfactory overall through Years 1 to 4, and good in Years 5 and 6. In a few classes, progress has been checked by staff absence or change. Sound and established systems support the development of reading habits, tastes and attitudes across the school. The use of quality texts in literacy lessons, together with book fairs and author visits, promotes pupils' interest in, and knowledge of, books and authors. In one good lesson in Year 5, the teacher effectively drew on her own knowledge and love of children's literature to enthuse pupils to read adventurously from a range of books that were new to them. At the same time, she ensured that pupils had immediate opportunity to read a story that excited their interest and extended their experience and skill.
99. Within the National Literacy Strategy, consistently systematic work on basic skills brings steady development in confidence and an increasing range of strategies for reading new material. The home-learning agreement enables parents to see and contribute to the secure progress pupils make, but it does not ensure daily or extended practice in reading. As a result of all this, most pupils develop an eagerness and ability to read an increasing range of fiction. Few pupils are reluctant to read; many read voraciously and some read ambitiously for their age. Some more able pupils in Year 6, for example, are currently working their way through the entire 'Lord of the Rings' cycle. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of non-fiction books, and their skills in using them to support their learning, are relatively underdeveloped. Pupils' attainment in 'reading to learn' is significantly below their potential and needs to be strengthened. For example, pupils in Year 6 could make very perceptive comments on how the author's choice of language in an unseen story text draws the reader into particular impressions of events and characters. The same pupils could not adequately identify and explain the use of the distinctive features and structures of an information text. Nor could they say how they would use a classification system to find a specific book in a library. This relatively serious shortcoming hampers pupils' learning in several subjects and reflects a lack of balance and breadth in the reading curriculum. It also reflects the fact that the school has no library within which pupils could learn these skills continuously and practise them in independent research tasks.
100. In writing, standards are below average in Year 2 but above average in Year 6. Progress is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3, 4 and 5 and very good in Year 6. The school has recognised the need to raise standards in this area, and the work of all pupils shows the good impact of actions recently taken to achieve this. For example, the school has adopted a scheme to promote the more consistent

development of handwriting skills. Work in practice books is good, and well taught, but few pupils are as yet transferring the new skills to their everyday writing. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 present their work attractively in a neat, fluent, legible and fully joined script. Elsewhere, progress towards a joined style is inconsistent. A well-planned assessment exercise enabled the school to identify and tackle some root causes of the lack of structure evident in pupils' writing across the school. A new strand in the scheme for writing consistently strengthens attention to this aspect. Progress in spelling and punctuation, and in the control of word choice and basic sentence structure, remains unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 1 and 2. For example, whilst most pupils in Year 2 write short but correctly sequenced accounts of personal experience, they heavily overwork the verb 'went', make inconsistent use of full stops and capital letters and show insecure control of simple sentence forms. Even the more able pupils make uneven progress in applying their learning of common prefixes, suffixes and letter strings to improve their spelling. At the same time, pupils develop their sense of sequence by writing for different purposes. For instance, they compose correctly sequenced instructions for making toast or jelly, and retell familiar stories such as 'The Frog Prince' in outline but correct order.

101. Teachers could usefully extend the use of homework and information and communication technology to help pupils to attain English objectives in both reading and writing. Across the curriculum, pupils, especially the more able, have too few opportunities for extended and independent writing. Nevertheless, standards are above average in Year 6, where very good teaching boosts progress. Also, the reorganisation of pupils into three separate 'sets' based on attainment in English enables teachers to suit pace, support and expectation more precisely to the varying needs and capacities of all pupils. An above average number of pupils are on course to attain the higher than expected level. Most of these pupils consistently produce thorough, thoughtful and technically accurate work. They are developing assured skills in varying language choices to suit changing purposes and achieve intended effects.
102. Many pupils know how to plan, draft and edit their work, and show good grasp of the structures and styles of different types of text, such as poems, play-scripts, reviews, reports and arguments. Much of their work reflects a dependence on structural guidance given by the teacher, but pupils respond well to occasional opportunities to write imaginatively and at length. For example, some of their 'modern' versions of stories such as 'Goldilocks' and 'Red Riding Hood' show extremely well crafted development of imaginative ideas in vivid language. The work of middle and lower attaining pupils has similar range, but less control of structure and technical features, fewer ideas and less varied choice of grammar and vocabulary. Even so, the great majority of these pupils are likely to attain the level expected of eleven-year-olds.
103. The increasing numbers of pupils who have special educational needs make good progress overall. The school is working hard to improve the quality of provision for these pupils. Where provision is most effective, pupils' individual learning plans set precise and accurate targets by which teachers plan and measure individual progress. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers, know what to do to make their support effective, and share their observations with the teacher. When their role is well planned, assistants give skilful, focused and sensitive support. However, provision is far from consistent at this level of quality. In particular, some literacy targets are too broad and distant to enable teachers and assistants to plot and monitor the small steps of pupils' progress. The school had adopted the national programme of Additional Literacy Support, but pupils in Year 4 are denied the benefit of this because the programme is discontinued at the end of Year 3. Similar problems beset the school's efforts to improve the quality of provision for pupils with English as an additional language in the context of dwindling support from the local authority. Despite the very good work of the bilingual assistants, teachers have only a limited

awareness of the language needs of these pupils and this restricts their ability to assess and plan effectively.

104. The school's literacy strategy does not yet consistently extend across the curriculum. Medium-term plans for different subjects seldom use the 'cross-curricular links' column to identify opportunities to use and extend pupils' developing language skills. Pupils read and write to collect and record information in subjects such as history and geography. However, few teachers include a focus on specific research skills when they plan and organise such activities. Nevertheless, some good links are planned. For example, after they had learned how to write instructions in the literacy hour, pupils were able to apply and extend this learning by writing instructions for making the wheeled vehicles they had designed in design and technology. This issue concerns the quality of learning throughout the school.
105. English makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Partly, this is because most teachers help pupils to see that language can surprise, please, persuade, or explain, and that literature can reflect cultural differences and enable us to grasp social and moral issues imaginatively. It is also because English lessons foster the very good attitudes and behaviour, and the excellent relationships that are a strength of the school. As a result, pupils respect and support each other very well, and persist in their determination to learn even when the teaching is dull or confusing.
106. In Years 1 and 2, the overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Half the lessons seen at this stage were unsatisfactory or poor, the others being satisfactory or good. Pupils in one Year 2 class do benefit from good teaching. Well-planned approaches, resources and methods enable them to acquire and use challenging new knowledge and skills in a supportive setting. The high quality of relationships and the clarity of expectations give pupils the confidence to work independently and learn securely. In two of the other classes, weaknesses in the teachers' subject knowledge lead to unclear aims, unfocused questioning, confusing procedures and expectations, missed teaching opportunities and misleading aids. For example, in the learning resources prepared for one lesson, all the common nouns listed began with a capital letter. The effect of these shortcomings is that new learning is neither clear nor securely linked through good assessments to previous learning. The most severe of these problems relates to the school's need to use temporary teachers who are unfamiliar with the pupils and the programme.
107. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. Of the 14 lessons observed in these classes, almost two thirds were good or better, all the rest were satisfactory. In Year 6, the teaching and learning were consistently very good. This is helped by arrangements which free each teacher to focus on a narrower range of attainment and smaller numbers than are found in other classes. As a result, teachers can meet the needs of all pupils precisely and consistently. They achieve this in lessons that are prepared in depth, informed by strong knowledge of subject and pupils, and delivered with pace, clarity, enthusiasm, stimulating methods and challenging expectations. All these qualities gave impact to a lesson in which a class of average attaining pupils explored the effects of different ways of opening a written argument. Pupils gained from very good opportunities to work in independent groups to draft and review different ideas. The quality of learning was strengthened by the teacher's responsiveness to ideas and awareness of possible improvements, and also by an excellent display which reinforced their understanding of the chief features of an argument text. There are consistent strengths across Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan and prepare well together; work closely with their assistants; have a good command of their aims, methods, resources and pupils; set clear expectations for different groups and foster very good attitudes and working relationships. There are

also significant areas for development across the school. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and often poor. Even for important tasks, teachers seldom add comments that reflect a constructively critical response and help the pupil to see what improvements have been, or could be, achieved. Few teachers share their assessment criteria with pupils or carefully review examples of good work and achievement. Too little use is made of homework and ICT to ensure extended practice in reading and writing.

108. The management of English is effective. The co-ordinator and senior staff have identified areas needing improvement and have introduced changes that are raising standards and the quality of provision. Actions taken to improve writing, to make more efficient use of subject time, and to use assessment to track progress and set targets for achievement all exemplify this. The above paragraphs also indicate a number of additional concerns and areas for further development that the school is now aware of.

MATHEMATICS

109. The standards reported during the previous inspection have been maintained. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards in all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures and data handling). However, standards are not as high as they could be and some pupils could achieve more. For pupils at the end of Year 6, standards are now above national averages for all areas. In Year 6 pupils are currently achieving at a high level and this is because of the setting by ability introduced recently, and supported by some very good teaching. At the end of one lesson a pupil said his brain was worn out but that he had really enjoyed it! There are no significant differences between the attainment of girls and boys. In Year 6, pupils of all abilities are challenged to learn effectively and homework in mathematics is well organised. There are no marked differences in the achievement of boys and girls in either key stage. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve at a satisfactory level overall, with good progress made in Years 5 and 6. Teaching quality was judged to be satisfactory overall at the last inspection with a slow pace to some lessons in junior classes. The teaching among junior pupils is now good and the pace and accuracy of learning shows significant improvement.
110. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests show fluctuations between above and well above the national average. Inspectors judge this to be due to the variation year by year of pupil groupings and not because of variation in teaching quality overall. For instance, the lower level of expectation against the 2000 results can be clearly seen in the results for these pupils as seven-year-olds. Observations in the classroom and evidence drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work strongly suggest that results in 2002 will be similar to those for 2001 with the percentage of Level 5 success also being broadly similar.
111. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that this ensures that the expectations of pupils from year-to-year according to their ages are good and that pupils build new knowledge and skills from a firm base in their previous learning. This structure, that includes the focused discussion, before and after the learning tasks set during the lesson, is not effectively in place in all classrooms. Opportunities are lost, for example, for pupils to develop ideas and mathematical vocabulary in these discussions. This is a particular loss for the least and most able pupils and such opportunities for learning enrichment are relatively weak among infant pupils. The recent focus on improving the mental

calculation strategies of pupils is however giving pupils more confidence in mental arithmetic.

112. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of number patterns and use these successfully in adding and subtracting two digit numbers. They use doubles or near doubles to half and multiply numbers and are beginning to understand the idea of multiplication as repeated additions. Many have sound knowledge of multiplication tables for 2, 5 and 10. Some already know them by heart. They are beginning to explain how to solve simple problems in money, for example how many coins are needed to make an amount. The most able are using decimal notation and pounds. Most can describe two- and three-dimensional shapes with a sound knowledge of similarities, for example squares and rectangles, using the vocabulary side and corner. They know the rule for reflective symmetry. Most have a satisfactory knowledge of measurement and time required for this age and have skills in using a tally to group data and represent it on a bar graph. The more able pupils can convert analogue to digital time for hours and minutes and know that a quarter of 24 is 6 using a fractional notation.
113. By the end of Year 6 pupils have built successfully on their earlier learning because the curriculum and teaching is well planned. They extend their earlier ideas of shape and space by classifying these and knowing the vocabulary to define properties such as parallel. The more able pupils translate shapes on the co-ordinate grid using number pairs. Many understand the properties of rotational symmetry. Most have good number skills in the four operations and use them competently to solve problems. They have developed good thinking strategies because of good teaching, such as in partitioning and in relations such as ratio, and adopt standard forms for arithmetic, such as long multiplication, with increasing confidence.
114. Pupils demonstrate good mathematical vocabulary to describe their thinking and results, and show a clear concept of the inverse property or operation. Work on fractions, percentages, decimals and mental skills are good, as is their ability to use units of measure in the metric system and time and find equivalent values. They use graphs and tables to interpret data for values or describe trends to a good standard.
115. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching and learning is just satisfactory. The main areas for improvement are the slow pace of some lessons and the lack of challenge for pupils of all abilities in teachers' questioning. Pupils' attitudes are very good but no real enthusiasm for learning is transmitted in much of the teaching. Expectations of pupils need to be consistently higher including those for whom English is an additional language. In a satisfactory Year 2 lesson, the teacher's planning was sound and materials well prepared. The assistant for pupils at the early stages of learning English knew clearly what to do with pupils in her group. However, these pupils were not included in the starter discussion before the task set for learning. Pupils were noisy and not settled to learning at times and this slowed the pace of learning. The teacher improved control and set challenging targets for most pupils in calculating change using coins. Again, the concluding discussion did not stretch the thinking of all abilities.
116. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace of learning was slow and the planning was not firmly based on good short-term assessment of pupils next step in learning. Some pupils of lower ability were unprepared for the task, off task and noisy. The teachers' knowledge and understanding was insecure and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. In another lesson on calculating change, the level of challenge to enthuse pupils was better and the teachers' knowledge and planning good, but again learning levels were only satisfactory because of a slow pace to the lesson overall.

117. Teaching is good in the junior years. There were no unsatisfactory lessons and much was good or better in terms of effective learning.
118. In the best lessons, the teachers have very good understanding of how pupils learn, they plan effectively together to maximise learning opportunities and planning and assessment is shared effectively. They challenge all abilities and have high expectations of pupils in their work, their mental agility, speed of calculation, and learning of vocabulary and problem solving. In Year 6 the teaching seen was either very good or excellent. Questioning, in teacher-led discussion, challenged all abilities and skilful open and closed questions stretched pupils' thinking and provided good assessment opportunities for the teacher. Because the pupils know that the teachers know their individual potential and value each one of them, they all try their best and are highly motivated learners. The pace and planning of lessons was matched by assessment to the best efforts of all abilities. Teachers are highly skilled in giving constructive feedback whilst pupils are on task to encourage them or to verify learning. Teachers are also highly skilled in modelling pupils' doubts and anxieties. For example, they act out panic in solving a problem and not knowing what to do! They then model behaviour needed to succeed and gain confidence. Consequently pupils are eager to learn. Target setting for learning and time allowed for tasks is clearly shared with pupils, who then become partners in learning. Pupils in Year 6 are so keen to learn that many are stretched to the limit and attention can drop off at the end of some lessons because they have worked so hard.
119. In all satisfactory lessons and even in some good lessons, the pace of the lesson is slow because the mental work and related discussion with pupils does not challenge them to make a rapid response and think quickly. Sharing of learning outcomes against targets set and ongoing assessment of what pupils have achieved is not managed well enough to motivate pupils at the end of lessons. The use of homework needs to be used consistently to support learning targets.
120. The teaching of mathematics and its relevance across the curriculum is satisfactory and sometimes good. For instance, in art and design and religious education with symmetry, and in using graphs in science.
121. The school is in the early stages of sharing individual targets with pupils for mathematics that present the 'right sized bites' for each pupil. With better consistency this will motivate pupils further. The marking of pupils' work, although complete, is relatively weak in both key stages. Rarely in mathematics books or sheets is there an evaluative comment that leads the pupil to the next step in learning. The procedures defined in the marking policy are therefore not consistently followed.
122. A strength in all teaching is the use of the good resources for numeracy, the commitment to improvement in the subject, and the effort that goes into team projects. For example, in developing strategies for problem solving and whole school planning for the three-part lesson. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory in supporting pupils' learning, except for the use of calculators. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are usually good or very good and this is demonstrated in the good levels of care and pride they take in their work and the very good relationships in the school.
123. The leadership of the subject is good. There has been systematic monitoring of teaching and learning and the information has been used effectively to identify areas for improvement in the subject. Arrangements for assessment are generally good and the information is used well to identify pupils in need of additional help in the upper

juniors through the 'Booster' and 'Springboard' groups. It is not yet well enough used to measure individual pupils' progress against targets and monitor levels of achievement, but the school is now well placed to begin. Teachers throughout the school also need to look critically at how pupils best learn in mathematics and to adapt teaching approaches to suit the needs of their pupils more exactly. Learning resources in the subject are good.

SCIENCE

124. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and by the age of seven pupils attain average standards. In the junior years, pupils make good progress overall, achieve well, and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. There are currently no significant differences between the standards achieved by girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make at least sound progress set against their previous learning. This applies also to pupils with English as an additional language, although some of these pupils would benefit from a more significant input from classroom assistants and support staff, particularly in the infant years. The results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds over the past five years show standards have remained consistently above the national average, although in the 2001 tests, standards were much closer to the national average than in previous years. In comparison with similar schools the school's performance in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds was close to the average. This good achievement in the junior years can be attributed to both the good attitudes pupils have to their learning and to good levels of teaching and learning which show considerable improvement over the previous inspection.
125. Because curriculum planning in the subject is thorough, this ensures all aspects of the subject are appropriately covered. Teachers promote scientific enquiry very effectively through well-planned investigations. This allows pupils to gain a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the subject (life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes). For example, Year 1 pupils can sort and classify materials into natural and man made and, by the age of eleven, most can classify substances into solids, liquids and gases and can apply their investigative skills in order to test the strength and the insulation properties of different materials. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in understanding physical processes as they study electricity and magnetism.
126. From an early age, infant pupils begin to understand life processes and living things as they study how human beings grow and change and they sequence accurately pictures that depict the different life stages of a human being from a baby to an old person. In Year 2, pupils are able to identify and label different parts of the body. Throughout the junior years, pupils make good progress in understanding life processes and by the age of eleven can recognise that there is a great variety of living things and understand the importance of classification. This was clearly evident when Year 6 pupils were able to use keys based on observable external features to help them to identify and group living things systematically.
127. Through practical investigative activities, pupils gain a good sense of how to conduct a test that is scientifically fair and show they are able to plan, carry out, record and evaluate their own scientific experiments with confidence. For example in Year 5, pupils measure out, read, and record water levels on a large test tube accurately in millilitres when investigating how much air is in different samples of soil, and know that each time the amount of water put into the test tube must be the same in order to make it a fair test and to obtain accurate results.

128. The scrutiny of pupils' work and the observation of pupils working in lessons show that pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work co-operatively in groups while carrying out investigations, and their written work is well set out and recorded, particularly in the juniors. For example, when writing about their experiments they often include well-drawn and labelled diagrams, tables and graphs. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 lesson where the teacher had asked pupils to draw and label and explain the different parts and functions of a tooth.
129. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed in infant classes. When teaching is most effective, lessons have clear learning targets which are meaningfully shared with the pupils. Resources are well prepared and are used effectively to support learning. Group work and tasks are well planned and organised in order to develop pupils' investigative skills. Lessons are brisk and skills are taught in a progressive way. Good subject knowledge, skilful questioning and clear explanations, effectively extends pupils' thinking and develops well pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good relationships between teachers and pupils enable pupils to respond to activities with confidence and enjoyment. When there is weakness in teaching, teachers have insufficient subject knowledge to be able to question pupils effectively in order to develop their scientific vocabulary, skills, knowledge and understanding. Weak organisational skills and management of pupils significantly slows the pace of learning and teachers do not give pupils sufficient directives or instructions about what they must do in order for them to complete tasks. The formalised arrangements for assessment are satisfactory, but the use of day-to-day assessment in science lessons is sometimes weak with insufficient attention paid as to how and what pupils have actually learned.
130. The subject is well managed. Appropriate in-service training has been effective in developing further teachers' subject knowledge and appropriate monitoring of standards, teaching and learning in the subject by the co-ordinators helps to ensure that standards in the subject are maintained. Resources are satisfactory overall although even more support work for science could be offered through the successful use of computer software.

ART AND DESIGN

131. Standards in art and design are above those required by the end of Year 2. In Year 6 standards are generally at the expected level, but with strengths and weaknesses. Girls and boys attain equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make the same rate of progress in the subject as that of many of their peers. Few lessons were observed and evidence is based on these, on a scrutiny of photographs of artwork, of work displayed and of pupils' sketchbooks. Standards were judged sound in the previous inspection, thus there is some measure of improvement in the subject.
132. Towards the end of Year 2, pupils have developed skills using a wide range of media. They create designs using correct drawing pencils using the illustrations of Raymond Briggs to stimulate ideas. They produce well-finished work using charcoal and pastel. They experiment with texture using both paint and fabric, produce a high standard of self-portraits in the style of Picasso, learn printing skills and create imaginative large-scale models using modelling materials. Work is well balanced between the development of design and artistic skills, collaborative work and opportunities to use the imagination.
133. By the end of Year 6, pupils have had opportunities to study the work of artists, sculptors and architects, both past and present and try out a wide range of techniques. There is, however, a lack of consistency in standards attained. For

example, for all pupils regardless of prior attainment, some collage work is below the standard expected, but creative and imaginative masks created in the style of revellers are at the expected level. Pupils demonstrate a good range of skills in their studies of buildings, with some above average work in, for example, painting on wood, and pictures of houses in the style of Van Gogh. An above average standard of glass painting was seen in Year 4. Sketchbooks are used appropriately to try out ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and any with English as an additional language are generally well supported and make at least sound progress in their everyday work.

134. Due to the timetable arrangements, art and design lessons were only observed in Years 1, 3 and 5 and did not give a clear picture of teaching across the school or clearly reflect the standards attained in the work samples. The one lesson seen in Year 1 was unsatisfactory; those in Years 3 and 5 were mostly good. All lessons are carefully planned and it is clear what pupils are expected to learn. Where teaching is ineffective, too many pupils spend too long not knowing what to do; the task is not appropriately managed and insufficient attention is given to the health and safety of pupils. In all but the unsatisfactory lesson, behaviour is good and pupils enjoy their work, hence they stay on task throughout the lesson. In one very good lesson in Year 3, the teacher demonstrated the process of stencilling so well, both through looking at the incorrect method and the correct method, that the pupils gasped with astonishment at the teacher's finished product and were very keen to start their own designs. This was one of a sequence of lessons to learn about methods of creating patterns and the skills associated with those methods. During some sessions, the work of individual pupils was shown to the class and discussed, helping pupils to become self-critical and improve their work. In a parallel lesson in another Year 3 class, the teacher linked the work to mathematics well, reviewing pupils' vocabulary and understanding of symmetry, thus making efficient use of time.
135. In both lessons the good quality and quantity of correct resources for the task helped pupils learn skills effectively and they discussed past techniques, linking their work to history. Teaching techniques and influences on learning were carefully considered by the teacher, generally at the planning stage. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to work collaboratively, and make decisions in their groups. They were challenged to think about their designs and refine them. They responded to the challenge well and wasted no time. Well-prepared sample boards of different materials helped pupils make sensible choices. In all lessons in Years 3 and 5 ongoing assessments helped pupils improve. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English made the same progress as others in the class.
136. The subject manager was absent during the inspection, but documentation was well organised to demonstrate the good action taken to check provision and teaching throughout the school. A good policy and scheme of work support teachers well. Computer software is used satisfactorily but could be extended further. There is a good photographic record of activities undertaken in each class, although these are not matched to National Curriculum targets. Records relating to individual progress and attainment are very brief. There is a good range of good quality resources to support learning and these are effective in helping pupils improve their standards and develop a broad background of knowledge. Art and design makes a good contribution to all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

137. The previous inspection reported serious concerns and obliged the school to take action to raise standards and to ensure that work in design and technology met national requirements. Actions taken since then, and most particularly by the present subject manager since her appointment a year ago, have brought about the necessary improvements. The introduction of a nationally approved scheme of work ensures that all pupils have good, balanced and regular learning experience across all branches of the subject; also that they develop relevant knowledge, understandings and skills as they move through the school.
138. Standards are similar for girls and boys and all levels of ability make mainly good progress set against their previous learning, including those with special educational needs and any with English as an additional language. The co-ordinator has worked well to develop the quality of teaching in the subject, which is now good overall, and to purchase and organise good resources to support all units of work. Effective management of the subject has achieved rapid improvements. The co-ordinator monitors work in design and technology by examining teachers' planning, observing lessons, sampling pupils' work and compiling a good photographic record of completed projects in each class. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have yet to be introduced, but monitoring activity has identified several areas for development, including assessment.
139. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are as expected nationally in relation to age, and are much better than they were at the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress because the overall quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum is good.
140. A good lesson with a Year 2 class gave pupils very well-resourced opportunities to examine and consider different wheels, axles and types of vehicle. Pupils were able to draw on their first-hand experience as they examined wheeled toys such as scooters, skate boards and roller blades. The teacher showed pupils how to examine made objects systematically, and used questions well to develop understanding of the relationship between wheels and axles and body, and the function of the vehicle. A very well-designed display reinforced these understandings and also helped pupils to recognise their importance in the ensuing process of designing and making a vehicle. Pupils were excited by a task which asked them to design a vehicle that would solve a problem faced by a character in the story they were studying. They showed a secure grasp of the essential stages and processes required by the task, and their learning was enriched by the links with other subjects that the teacher skilfully introduced. The lesson was very effective in raising pupils' awareness of the role of technology in their lives.
141. Very good lessons in Year 6 required each class to devise and carry out a test to identify which of a range of materials it would be best to use for the soles of the slippers they were making. Very good joint planning challenged pupils to apply their learning in science, mathematics and English to the task in hand. Very clear instructions and excellent resources and organisation ensured that all pupils were equipped and extended. Pupils worked enthusiastically but responsibly and productively. They used their very good collaborative skills to take full advantage of their opportunities to work in independent groups. Some unpredicted results prompted further thinking. For example, when one group discovered that different surfaces of the same material had different grip properties, they began to consider the implications for design. Teachers' good subject knowledge enabled them to extend such opportunities and to support the learning of all groups effectively. Previous experience and learning in design and technology have been very mixed for these older pupils, but their good attitudes and progress confirm that the subject is now in sound health.

GEOGRAPHY

142. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with age related expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. The progress made by all groups of pupils is satisfactory overall including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Overall, such groups or individuals are supported satisfactorily. There are very few notable differences between the standards attained by girls and boys.
143. Pupils in the infants make particularly good progress in early mapping skills and by the age of seven they can draw simple maps and create a simple key in order to identify many human and physical features on it. For example, in Year 1 pupils had produced a large map, with a key, of the local area and had successfully marked on the correct position of several human and physical features such as the local park, the church, roads, the post office and shops. In Year 2, pupils show they are able to apply and extend these skills further as they identify the human and physical features of different places further afield such as a Scottish island as they studied the fictional story of 'The Isle of Struay'.
144. By the age of eleven, pupils can interpret maps and plans with a range of scales successfully. For example, in their study of mountainous regions around the world, Year 6 pupils use maps of the British Isles, Europe and the world to identify accurately mountain ranges and can successfully use the key to identify the main agricultural and industrial areas of France.
145. Across the school, pupils gain a sound understanding of a range of places and environments and are able to compare different contrasting localities. For example, the Year 6 study of mountainous regions around the world leads successfully to pupils making a comparative study of the geographical features in these areas with that of the local environment. In Year 4, pupils study environmental pollution. They can identify several sources of pollution in the local area such as rubbish and gas emissions from local factories and can suggest some ways of preventing pollution, for example, through rubbish recycling. Older pupils study a river environment and can correctly identify features of a river such as its tributary and its meander in order to accurately draw a section diagram of a river.
146. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. No lessons were observed in the junior classes during the inspection. When teaching is most successful, lessons are well planned and a range of resources is used effectively to support pupils' learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they use this well to promote and reinforce proper geographical vocabulary through questioning and discussion.
147. Curriculum planning in the subject is satisfactory but there is an imbalance in the time allocation given to the subject across the school and this adversely affects the rate of progress pupils make. For example, there is a long gap in learning caused by the blocking of time. This is particularly pertinent for pupils in Year 3, as during the course of the academic year these pupils do not experience geography until the summer term. At the time of the last inspection resources for the subject were inadequate. Resources for the subject have not been improved sufficiently since the last inspection and still remain overall unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is recently new to the responsibility and has rightly carried out an audit of resources and written an appropriate plan of action for the development of the subject.

HISTORY

148. The standards of attainment towards the end of Year 6 are those generally expected for the age of the pupils. In Year 2, standards of almost all pupils are also those expected. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make sound progress overall, although better levels of support would increase attainment and progress in the infant years. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
149. Towards the end of Year 2 pupils with all levels of attainment, and those in the early stages of learning English have a good sense of past and present. They identify key features of old and new. They name some famous people from the past. They understand what hospitals were like in the time of Florence Nightingale and make interesting comparisons with hospitals today. Those with higher attainment give reasons for Florence Nightingale's actions and have a detailed knowledge of life in hospitals during her time as a nurse. Those with low attainment show some understanding of how hospitals have changed over time.
150. Towards the end of Year 6, pupils have suitable background knowledge of ancient Celtic, Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Aztec cultures. They discuss the effects of World War Two on people's lives and try to make inferences from the data they are given. They relate their learning to the local area. In one lesson, pupils tried to imagine what it would be like in different types of shelter used during bombing raids, drawing their ideas from photographs. Pupils use simple research programs to find out information using the computer, but as yet the use of information and communication technology in the subject is relatively underdeveloped. Those with high attainment write in different forms, and find information from a variety of sources, though there is little evidence of pupils writing at length. Those with low attainment have good background factual knowledge, but written work is very limited.
151. Only one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2. This was satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is generally satisfactory with some good and very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are consistently carefully planned. Where teaching is clearly impacting well on learning, the subject knowledge of teachers is at least very good and practical demonstrations catch pupils' interest and stimulate their learning. A very graphic demonstration of the process of mummification kept a whole class engrossed. Those in the early stages of learning English also easily understood it. As a result of the pupils' interest, the teacher had little need to control or discipline pupils, and they willingly remained on task. In another lesson the teacher's very good subject knowledge about the area and the effects of World War Two, together with high expectations of behaviour and very good questioning skills, kept pupils' interest and made them think.
152. In a less successful lesson behaviour management was not effective and some pupils lost interest at times. Although resources were used well initially, the final activity was time wasting, and merely colouring in a picture, hence there was little learning. Similarly in another lesson those with lower attainment and in the early stages of learning English completed a different task from the rest of the class. Although appropriate for a small number, some of these pupils were capable of higher order activities and thus they made insufficient progress. On this occasion the teacher had not fully thought through the detail of what pupils were expected to learn and the implications of this on her teaching. Marking and ongoing assessment of pupils' work and its use to help pupils improve and raise standards, is inconsistent and sometimes unhelpful.

153. The role of the subject manager is clearly defined but the holder is in the very early stages of developing the subject. There is, as yet, no clear vision of how to improve overall standards in the subject. There is a secure policy and the most recent government guidelines are used as a basis for planning, ensuring that all the required elements are covered. Good use is made of a local library system to provide enough books for pupils to use, but there is no school library to encourage independent research. Other resources are well organised, suitably audited and satisfactory to support learning, including the use of computer technology. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils benefit from visits to regional museums and places of interest such as a Roman site. They stimulate much discussion and writing. These visits and many lessons make a significant contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY(ICT)

154. There has been significant improvement in both the standards pupils achieve and the school's curricular provision for ICT since the previous inspection. This can be attributed to good leadership in the subject since the previous inspection. Good curriculum development, such as well planned and targeted in-service training led by the subject co-ordinator, has successfully improved teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. This has impacted positively on raising standards and by the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are reaching standards in line with age related expectations. Girls and boys share equal opportunities in the subject and their attainment is broadly similar. Pupils of all abilities make at least sound progress across the year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and any with English as an additional language make satisfactory and sometimes good progress set against their previous learning and experiences. This all represents good improvement, as standards and provision were below expectations at the time of the previous inspection.
155. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make sound progress in learning keyboard and mouse skills and by the age of seven most can create text and combine pictures in order to develop and present their ideas.
156. In the juniors, with the exception of Internet use, pupils experience all aspects of the subject, including controlled technology. They continue to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils gain a sound knowledge of the place of information and communication technology in everyday life. For example, this was evident during a lesson in Year 6, when pupils were asked to write an appropriate set of commands and program them into the computer in order to switch on and off a set of traffic lights on the screen. In Year 5, pupils combine graphics and text in order to design an improved playground for the school. Year 4 pupils can use an art program skilfully to design an abstract picture and can change font, colour and size in text and can combine texts and graphics well in order to present their work.
157. Teachers provide several useful opportunities for their pupils to use ICT in other subjects across the curriculum, although there is scope for improvement and extension. In religious education, Year 4 pupils use software to create Islamic patterns. In mathematics, Year 1 pupils use the computer to consolidate their number bonds and in science, pupils collect data and represent their finding on ICT produced graphs and charts.
158. Teachers are now sufficiently confident in the use of ICT to be able to teach it effectively and imaginatively and consequently the quality of teaching and learning in the subject is now satisfactory across the school. Planning is effective and the

management of pupils when they are at work on the computers, is both safe and productive. Resources for the subject have been appropriately developed and the school now has sufficient hardware and software for pupils to use. However, due to the reorganisation of classrooms and some major building work that will take place in the school later this year, the setting up of a computer suite has been delayed until the autumn of 2002. This has meant that the school is not yet connected to the Internet, which currently restricts pupils' experience of how to use the Internet to search for information and send e-mail. This is due to be effectively addressed when the computer suite is established later in the year. Curriculum planning has improved significantly since the previous inspection and consequently the subject now meets statutory requirements.

MUSIC

159. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in music is broadly similar to that expected nationally. Girls and boys attain broadly similar standards and there are no issues relating to equal opportunities. Pupils of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress and any pupils with English as an additional language are not restricted in any way. The subject is at a similar level to that reported during the last inspection but some improvements have been made in relation to the overall management of the subject including the addition of a useful scheme of work that supports the non-specialist teacher extremely well.
160. Pupils make satisfactory progress up to the age of seven. The progress made in Years 3 to 5 is more rapid, leading to a gradual raising of standards across several key elements within the music curriculum. By the age of seven, the satisfactory teaching has helped pupils to build securely on their early musical experiences begun in the Foundation Stage. Most pupils are aware of musical terms such as pitch and dynamics, and can illustrate these when listening to selected pieces of music or playing their own tuned instruments. Year 2 pupils show good understanding of different rhythms and can tap these out with their hands or on a tambourine or drum. Singing is tuneful and most simple songs are committed to memory. A lack of teacher expertise leads to some lack of pupil knowledge and experiences relating to musical composition.
161. By the end of Year 6, pupils show good listening and appraising skills and although their overall standards are broadly average, there are elements in composition and performance that are frequently good. Pupils sing well during acts of worship, showing an understanding of diction and musical expression. The lack of a trained pianist in such sessions leads to some loss of singing quality as their efforts are accompanied by mainly pre-recorded music. By Year 6, pupils understand the importance of pitch, dynamics and tempo and talk sensibly and accurately when comparing music from different cultures or settings. Most pupils recognise the names of different instruments and know the different moods and sounds each instrument can help to create. In one particularly well taught lesson, Year 3 pupils were able to explore a range of action songs and fit different rhythms around everyday words and sayings.
162. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory among infant pupils and is consistently good in Years 3 to 6. In a Year 2 lesson, although satisfactory, the teacher tended to put too much content into a single session and too many technical words were introduced. Pupils were left a little confused and there was some loss of enjoyment. The expected quality of learning had not been firmly thought through. Teaching among the older pupils is characterised by the exploration of a single theme, but in considerable depth, allowing pupils to explore the potential of their own experiences and growing knowledge. In an extremely successful lesson in Year 6,

the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to create their own group pieces around the theme of space. The response of the pupils was also very good and they worked hard when performing their finished music in front of their friends. The teacher also encouraged pupils to make positive suggestions for improvement and this too was a highly successful part of overall learning. In another good lesson, Year 4 pupils made good progress when linking the music of different countries to a range of instruments illustrated on sheets. Year 5 pupils were taught successfully to record reactions to musical stimuli using simple graphic scoring.

163. The provision for music has been strengthened by the introduction of a well established commercial scheme that provides the ideal support to the non-specialist music teacher. Teachers have rapidly grown in confidence using the many enjoyable themes introduced in the manuals, despite an inability to play a recognised instrument themselves, a fact that has minimal impact on pupils' progress. As an additional support, some year groups benefit from a visiting specialist who works alongside the established teacher and broadens the pupils' experiences still further. A few Year 4 pupils are able to benefit from guitar lessons and junior pupils enjoy a recorder club. The subject is led satisfactorily by a co-ordinator who is quietly giving all staff the confidence to teach music to their own classes and also extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject. The co-ordinator and a visiting musician run an established choir on a weekly basis. The resources for music are satisfactory, enabling all pupils to experience a wide range of musical instruments during their time in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

164. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are at the level anticipated for their age. Most pupils achieve well set against their previous learning in the subject, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Standards have remained at broadly the level reported during the previous inspection. This is a subject that illustrates very well the school's common approach to the equality of opportunities offered to boys and girls. Although as pupils get older, there are the inevitable preferences expressed for different sporting activities. There are no marked differences between the attainment levels of boys and girls, particularly in gymnastics, dance and swimming.
165. By the end of Year 2, pupils are well aware of the impact of healthy exercise on their bodies. They also explore space well, developing sequences involving balances and travelling over short distances. Their agility work using mats, benches and other small apparatus is satisfactory. Most pupils of this age show sound ability to link sequences together and are able to transfer their weight successfully and adapt their finished work following constructive help from either their friends or the teacher.
166. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are at least at the level expected for their age, although several excel in aspects of gymnastics and dance. It was not possible to make a judgement, for example on standards in minor games. In gymnastics, pupils show sound techniques in their rolls, balances and high and low movements. Most successfully travel at different speeds and directions whilst preserving the quality of their movements. In two extremely well taught dance sessions, Year 6 pupils reached very good standards when creating sequences to old-time music and showed good awareness of timing, beat and working in synchronisation with others in the group.

167. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory among infant pupils and good in the junior years. The management of pupils is a good feature in most classes, particularly among those staff working with the oldest pupils. Teacher knowledge and expectation are generally high and these factors have a marked influence on pupils' progress. Pupils learn well when teachers concentrate on the specifics of technique and give pupils ample opportunity to build up and then refine their work. In all observed lessons, the teachers used pupil examples well to illustrate emerging good practice and sensibly provided opportunities for groups of pupils to constructively criticise the work of others. Good attention is paid to health and safety matters, including the importance of warm up and cool down. There is little organised assessment of pupils' standards, particularly in written and recorded forms. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and work hard during their sessions and this is an important contributory factor to their steady progress. Pupils and staff dress appropriately for physical exercise. In a swimming lesson, the enthusiasm of Year 6 pupils added to the flow of their learning as they proved to be good listeners and followed instructions quickly and accurately when attempting the front crawl.
168. The curriculum planned for the subject meets statutory requirements and provides a wide range of health-giving and challenging activities for pupils of all ages. There is a strong emphasis on gymnastics and dance and pupils' progress in these areas is clear to see and follow. The subject is well supported by a small range of extra-curricular clubs such as netball and football activities, although some parents felt that the actual amount of competitive sport was on the decline and regretted this trend. The subject has undergone rather too many changes in relation to its management in recent times and so lacks a coherent form of organised development. The current co-ordinator is undertaking a detailed audit of priorities and this is what the subject requires, despite its relatively strong standing in the school. Resources for the subject are now good, easily accessible and used sensibly by the pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

169. From observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with teachers and pupils, standards are judged to be in line with local expectations by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6. Standards are favourable set against the targets outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of spirituality has improved to a satisfactory level. Teachers' planning shows that their knowledge and understanding of the locally agreed syllabus has again improved and the co-ordinator has given good leadership to guide teaching and learning. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about different religious beliefs and custom and visibly enjoy much of the work.
170. Younger pupils visit the local church and develop a sound understanding of Christianity. They know Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God and know about the Bible stories of His life on earth and how He was special. They know about the activities that take place in churches such as christening and marriage, and how these are special to the faith. They can talk about festivals of Christmas and Easter and relate them to Bible stories about the birth and death of Jesus. They have knowledge of similar ideas for Buddhist values and Jataka stories, but their knowledge about Islam is stronger. This is because the very good relationships between the pupils allows those of different faiths to be confident in sharing an understanding among others about their beliefs. Pupils have sound knowledge of the Mosque, the customs associated with the building and the importance of the holy book, the Qur'an, for Muslims to know the will of Allah. They know about the customs related to clothing and prayer and the special periods in the year such as Ramadan and Eid.

171. Older pupils build on previous learning well to achieve a good understanding of the similar features of different religions such as values and then how these are different, comparing these features. For instance, in a good Year 4 lesson they confidently use previous learning from their infant years to make Eid cards. They draw patterns and use symbols such as the crescent and the five pillars and know why they are important. They know about right and wrong and the moral values embedded in religion, and can consider the views of others and share feelings about thoughts and reflect on events. Most have good knowledge of the places of worship for major religions, the roles of religious leaders, and the symbolism and purpose of the different areas in the holy place. They widen their knowledge of faith, for example they learn about the festivals such as Diwali and Hanukkah. They know about the Creation stories for Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs. Similarly, they learn about different beliefs concerning life after death.
172. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in the junior classes. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory although some could have been improved with additional teacher thought as to what and how pupils are most expected to learn. Where lesson aims are clearly shared with pupils, their understanding and interest in the work grows visibly. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the infant years. In the one good lesson seen, the teaching was strong because the planning and resources were good and the pace of the lesson allowed pupils to finish their drawings with time to spare. Further writing about Muslim clothing for worship, helped consolidate their learning. The teachers' questions targeted and valued all pupils and learning generally was at a good level. The clothing and its importance were confidently explained by pupils, sometimes with the very good quality input of the classroom assistant in translation. High levels of interest, confidence in the adults, and good relationships ensured that pupils were able to talk about the topic and learn from each other.
173. In most junior classes, the teaching and learning are good overall. In a satisfactory lesson the teacher planned well and selected good resources to promote learning about the life of Moses and the Commandments. She set clear expectations of pupils in their writing. However, her questioning did not challenge pupils of all abilities and did not quite give enough opportunity for pupils to retell and extend their speaking skills to consolidate learning. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils knew of the customs and ritual of prayer for major religions and successfully explored the meaning of prayer. The teacher's own input through good knowledge, understanding and skills in questioning, soon had pupils thinking about differences between needs and wants. Pupils are confident in expressing such ideas because they trust the teacher to value their individual response. She models prayer and leads pupils to an understanding that it is for all of us, and different faiths have different rituals to relate to God. The pace of the lesson is measured against the rate that pupils are learning and good assessment keeps it at a maximum. The written work is of good quality because pupils know that they have to meet the high expectations set and that the teacher values and recognises the best efforts of all her pupils.
174. The leadership of the co-ordinator has been the spur to the improvements in this subject. She has managed her own training and the monitoring of pupils' work very well to assess learning and produce action planning and policy. Greater emphasis is given to Islam in Key Stage 1, as is allowed by the syllabus, to reflect the cultural background of pupils. The resources for the subject have been improved, such as artefacts for multifaith teaching, and CD-Roms, just coming into use with junior pupils. The range and quality of books available to pupils needs to be improved. There is satisfactory provision for learning for pupils with special educational needs, and support for pupils with English as a second language is particularly sound and

meaningful. The subject overall gives good support for literacy, both in the expectations set by staff and in the quality of pupils' recorded work.