

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH of ENGLAND (VA)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stoke Newington

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100271

Headteacher: Ms E Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock
21261

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th March 2002

Inspection number: 244514

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Juniors
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lordship Road Stoke Newington London
Postcode:	N16 0PP
Telephone number:	(0208) 800 2645
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. A Scott
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21261	Pauline Silcock	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and design History Foundation Stage English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
9079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
11021	Leonora Davies	Team inspector	English Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28320	Robert Willey	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is in the centre of Stoke Newington, just off a busy main road. It caters for four to 11 year olds. Children start in Reception the term after their fourth birthday. A full range of abilities is present on entry, although children are below average in their social, personal and emotional development, communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical development. The school is smaller than other primary schools. Currently, there are 184 pupils on roll, with gender imbalances in some years. Approximately 81 per cent are of minority ethnic origin. Around 47 per cent are learning English as an additional language.¹ Approximately 28 per cent are at an early stage of such learning, getting support through ethnic minority achievement grant funding. These figures are high. The main languages spoken, other than English, are Yoruba, Turkish and Ibo. Just over 36 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. About 28 per cent are on the Code of Practice register of special educational needs, most needing special help with literacy. This figure is above the national average. There are no pupils with statements of special needs, which is below average. While the number joining or leaving school other than at a normal time during the last school year seems relatively small (1.9 and 3.5 per cent respectively), this movement is a growing trend, higher than in other Borough schools. Pupils starting late in their schooling (including in Year 6) are frequently at an early stage of English language learning. There was one temporary exclusion in the year prior to the inspection. This represents a dramatic fall in the number of exclusions.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mary's is an effective school. It provides a satisfactory education for all its pupils. Over recent years, standards achieved by 11-year-olds in the core subjects of English and mathematics, especially, and also in science, have risen in statutory tests. Teaching is most frequently good. The school provides a welcoming ethos, informed by Christian principles. It is supported by parents, because each child is valued and given due importance. The school cherishes and celebrates the diversity within it and of the wider community beyond its gates. The recently appointed headteacher brings very good leadership skills to her work. Governors are fully committed to the school's aims and values and many give generously of their time in all aspects of its work. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children make a good start in the Reception class in all areas, but especially in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.
- The frequently good or better teaching stimulates pupils' enthusiasm and positive attitudes to learning.
- The headteacher's leadership gives a clear sense of direction to the future development of the school.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils are well cared for. They feel secure in their relationships with adults, which helps them progress.
- Parents value the school and what it provides for their children. They believe staff work hard on children's behalf.
- Governors' bring good talents and skills to the school and contribute positively to its life.

What could be improved

- The balance of curricular provision and the monitoring of classroom practices by all with management responsibilities, so that standards are raised further.
- Provision for special educational needs.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since its last inspection in 1997. It collects substantial assessment information for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Records of

¹ For ease of reference, English as additional language learners will sometimes be referred to as bilingual pupils. It is recognised they may have more than one language in addition to English. They may also have literacy skills in these.

achievement illustrate each pupil's progress in relation to National Curriculum levels reached. However, information does not yet inform teachers' planning in a structured way. Also, information gathered from other subjects is patchy and its systematic collection has not really been addressed. Teachers' clear intentions for lessons are shared with pupils at the start and frequently reviewed at the end of lessons to assess progress towards achieving them. Teaching has improved significantly and is now frequently good or better. The previous headteacher, along with her deputy, instituted a structured programme for monitoring teaching and learning across all subjects and (in response to government initiatives) especially in English and mathematics. The new headteacher has adopted this good practice and plans to extend it to involve all those with management responsibilities. Teacher appraisal is fully in place and is linked well to monitoring activities. A purpose-built Nursery, expected to be in use by the start of the next school year, will considerably enhance provision and help resolve issues linked to the lack of an outdoor play space for the Reception class. Teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to moving the school forward and raising standards further. The school has a good capacity for such improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	E	C	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E poor E*
mathematics	E	C	C	A	
science	E*	C	E	C	

The table shows that 11-year-olds did not do as well in statutory tests in 2001 when results are compared to those of pupils in all schools as when they are compared to those of peers in similar schools. On the latter comparison, pupils were well above the average in English and mathematics and broadly in line with the average in science. The table shows results when pupils' test scores are totalled in each subject and averaged out to give a points score. The picture is actually more complex than it first appears. Pupils did almost as well as their peers nationally in English at expected levels (Level 4) and did a little better at Level 5. It is the relatively large proportion falling below expectation that drags overall results down. In mathematics, and especially science, pupils did much better than pupils in all schools at expected levels. It is the poorer results at the higher level that affects results adversely, especially in science, although, to a lesser extent, results below expected levels also affect results. Over five years, the trend in the school's average points score for all three statutory tests at 11 is above that found nationally. Inspection findings echo the broad picture presented in test results. They show that pupils in Year 6 reach average standards in English and mathematics with a few doing better. In science, standards are below expected levels at this age. Insufficient time is allocated to the subject, which affects the way pupils can build on prior learning, especially at Level 5. The school missed its statutory target in English in 2001 by a small margin but exceeded that for mathematics. Compared to all pupils, seven-year-olds reached standards broadly in line with expectations in reading, writing and mathematics in statutory tests last year. They achieved well above the average in these tests compared to pupils in similar schools. Teachers assessed pupils as below average in science. Inspection findings show that pupils of all ages do well in reading, relative to their abilities. By seven, pupils reach average standards in writing and mathematics with a few doing better. Standards in science are below expectations, because, as with older pupils, too little time is allocated to the subject. Pupils of seven and 11 reach satisfactory standards in design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and physical education. While standards in music in Years 2 and 6 were broadly in line with those expected, standards overall are unsatisfactory. Year 2 pupils achieved in line with expectations in art and design. A scrutiny of work finds that they reach broadly satisfactory standards in history. The few samples of work seen in art and design in Year 6 suggest standards are below expectations for 11-year-olds. These pupils also have a poor knowledge of the historical periods they have studied and standards in history are below those expected. Children in the Reception class make

good progress. Most are in line to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils of all ages frequently have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy their learning. They like coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. In lessons, behaviour is often at least good and pupils concentrate well on tasks set.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities provided to work co-operatively with partners or in small groups.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory.

The poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in some classes affects the progress of lessons at times. Pupils do not always follow adults' instructions and this fact can exacerbate matters. Generally, however, pupils are polite and courteous to adults and make good relationships with them and with one another. Strengths are noted in Reception where pupils arrive looking forward happily to the day ahead. Attendance varies each day across classes and a number usually arrive late, preventing a prompt start to lessons. The school works hard to overcome problems of attendance and punctuality, seeing these as matters of priority deserving rigorous attention.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very 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.

Teaching is most frequently good throughout the school with strengths in the Reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6. In a very few lessons observed, unsatisfactory teaching was often due to teachers' lack of subject confidence (as seen in a music lesson) or to a lack of firmness when managing pupils' poor behaviour (as seen in a physical education lesson). Unusually, in a literacy lesson observed, a teacher did not make difficult content sufficiently accessible to pupils and this, too, led to poor progress affecting outcomes. Much more commonly, English and associated literacy skills are well taught. Very good teaching was seen in some lessons. For example, Years 2 and 6 teachers helped pupils grasp demanding content, stimulating them with challenging questions into wanting to do well. However, teachers do not insist consistently enough that pupils apply literacy skills to tasks generally. For instance, work is often untidy, although pupils learn handwriting skills. Nor do they always apply their good knowledge of spelling conventions. Numeracy is well taught so pupils build successfully on prior learning and make progress over time. Teachers plan to include all pupils fully in lessons. However, the needs of those on the Code of Practice register of special needs are not always clear enough in individual education plans, impairing teachers' planning generally. Pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactorily catered for, with specialist support deployed in line with their language needs, though targets for these pupils are also not explicit enough. Teachers' planning generally does not show how identified needs will be met. Also, distinctions between pupils whose needs are solely language-related and those with needs linked to broader difficulties in learning are blurred.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the Reception class. Satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 where statutory requirements related to the National Curriculum are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory in the Reception class, but unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6 overall. There is insufficient support to ensure pupils' needs are met appropriately and needs are not always clearly stated or matched to teachers' planning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Specialist support is allocated in line with needs identified and staff understand these well. Support teachers liaise well with class teaching colleagues to ensure that all pupils are included in all aspects of work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Good overall, with strengths in provision for moral, social and cultural development. The school celebrates its diverse community and the skills and knowledge pupils bring with them. Pupils are well supported in developing their social skills and in learning to tell right from wrong.

development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well in relation to pastoral care. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and are concerned at all times for their welfare and wellbeing.

The school works successfully at developing good relationships with its parents. While the curriculum is suitably broad, however, it lacks balance. As noted, insufficient time is allocated to science. The way it is allocated to some non-core subjects (such as history and art and design) also means that pupils do not build on key skills so as to develop progressively in ways helpful to learning. The school admits it has invested its energies in government initiatives over recent years, resulting in an imbalance in provision in other subjects and adversely affecting standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher brings very good leadership skills to her role along with a firm grasp of how to manage the school. Strengths are also evident in the way the management team includes an Early Years' staff representation.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Although governors bring very good expertise to work they understand well, they do not fulfil statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring activities by senior managers are extensive. They generate valuable information for identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is good. Governors ensure that finances are effectively deployed to meet the school's priorities.

Currently, the school has staffing difficulties, because a number of established teachers have recently moved on. Despite this, good expertise is well matched to curriculum demands and teachers are generally used effectively. There is insufficient support staff and accommodation is unsatisfactory. For example, considerable noise often comes from upstairs classrooms as chairs are scraped on uncarpeted floors, permeating to the rooms below. The school is aware of the urgent need to repair and refurbish the boys' outside toilets. Overall, there are sufficient resources to meet curricular demands with the exception of resources for science and information and communication technology. Some musical instruments also need repair and replenishment. There is a pleasant library, but it is not well stocked. Governors have a good overview of the school's strengths and where improvements can be made, but the school brochure is out of date and risk-assessment procedures are not suitably formalised. Currently, although the deputy head is not a class teacher, she does have a very wide range of duties (such as monitoring behaviour around the school). She also co-ordinates a number of substantial areas of work. While her responsibilities give her a good overview of the school's activities, there is some lack of focus in how these are managed. The school consistently seeks best value for money in terms of its purchases and the services it needs.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school. • Behaviour has improved a lot recently. • Teachers know children well and care about them. • Children make good progress because of good relationships with staff. • The headteacher and teachers are always ready to talk about concerns. • Information in a weekly newsletter keeps parents well informed about the school's work. • Reports on children's progress are good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour at the start of day is poor. • Too much emphasis is placed on English and mathematics at the expense of other subjects. • The school does not identify children with learning difficulties soon enough and does not give these children enough support. • Children do not use computers enough. • Homework is given out inconsistently. • There are not enough activities out of school time. • Children do not go swimming.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. However, they found behaviour at the start of day was good and the headteacher and other staff were on hand to supervise this and greet parents. They did find

imbalances in curricular provision, of which the school is well aware. They also agree that children have too few opportunities to use computers and this, too, is a school priority for action. The school identifies children with learning difficulties early in their schooling, but inspectors find flaws in provision for these children. Homework is given inconsistently across the school and the policy for this is ineffective. There are very few extra-curricular activities after school, but this matter is being addressed. So too is the matter of swimming, which is to be re-instated soon.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Reception class with widely ranging abilities. A significant number are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.² Assessments, following local authority guidance, show most are below levels expected for personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Inspection evidence reveals that all children, nonetheless, make good progress. Most should reach the early learning goals in all areas by the time they transfer to Year 1. These are (in addition to the three areas mentioned): knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. However, the wide divergence of ability in the class remains an issue for teachers. Some children find it hard to concentrate and to share toys when playing with others. Quite a few have difficulty accepting any responsibility for clearing away at the end of sessions. Children respond well to firm management in such matters, enabling them to join in and take part in ways expected. An emphasis on literacy and numeracy, too, ensures that children develop good skills in related areas of learning. For example, more able children can read most of a text alongside a teacher as she shares a 'big book'. All children recognise the initial letter sound of familiar words, as when they pick out 'm' at the start of 'mushroom'. All count confidently to 10 from zero and back again and the more able know numbers to 20, having a sound grasp of 'one more than' and 'one less than'. Children enjoy speaking up in whole-class sessions and answering adults' questions. They accept they must take turns and listen when others are speaking. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers and build successfully on prior learning. They gain much from the stimulating visual presentation of activities in whole class sessions and a teacher's very good use of body language and facial expression to underline important messages about the content taught.
2. In statutory tests in 2001, seven-year-olds' results were broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics when pupils' results are averaged across each test to give a points score. When scores calculated in this way are compared with those of peers in similar schools, pupils achieve well above average in all three tests. In fact, pupils did well in the three tests compared to their peers nationally at levels expected of them (Level 2) and they also did quite well at Level 3. It is the relatively poorer results at this higher level and the number achieving in the lower range of Level 2 or below that affect overall results adversely. Teachers' assessments show that pupils reached well above national expectations in speaking and listening at the expected Level 2 and broadly in line with these expectations at Level 3. Standards in science were assessed as below the national average both at expected and higher levels, a finding confirmed by the inspectors. Pupils reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics, with a minority doing better, although this minority does not lift overall standards. In science, pupils are judged as achieving below what is expected at this age, as a result of insufficient time being allocated to the subject. Insufficient time is, in turn, given to each strand of the science curriculum, so pupils do not build securely on previous learning.
3. In the 2001 statutory tests, 11-year-olds were broadly in line with national averages in English and mathematics, but well below average in science when points scores are calculated for each subject (that is, by averaging out pupils' scores in each test). They were well above the average of peers in similar schools in English and mathematics and broadly in line with peers' results in science, on these calculations. As with results for younger pupils, however, the picture is complex. For example, pupils did almost as well as their peers nationally in English at the expected Level 4 and a little better than peers at Level 5. It is the relatively large number falling below expected levels which brings results down. In

² It is recognised that children with English as an additional language may be proficient in more than one other language and may also have knowledge of literacy skills in their first language/s. For convenience, these pupils will sometimes be referred to as being bilingual.

mathematics, and especially in science pupils did much better than pupils in all schools at expected levels. In these subjects (and again most notably in science), it is the poorer results at the higher level that has an adverse impact on overall results. To a lesser extent, again, results below expected levels also affect average points scores. Inspection findings generally reinforce these conclusions, showing pupils in Year 6 reach average standards in English and mathematics with a small number doing better. In science, standards are below expected levels. As with younger pupils, this poor performance is judged owed to the time given to the subject, which affects the way pupils build on prior learning, especially at Level 5.

4. By Year 2, pupils speak confidently in a range of circumstances. They know it is important to listen to others and to take account of other views when giving their opinions. When pupils talk about a familiar story in a literacy session for example, their speaking and listening skills are very good. The more able pupils and some of average ability extend such a story effectively, using their own words when writing. They sequence ideas logically and choose words to make their stories more interesting. Pupils across levels of ability read aloud from their reading books, projecting their voices so everyone can hear. They read with understanding, making good use of punctuation. All know the letter/sound system for initial letter sounds when spelling and many build up words through this means to spell unknown words correctly. Pupils carefully form letters and suitable attention is paid to letter size, but the presentation of work is variable. All pupils count rapidly to 100 in twos as a class activity and most can count in 5s and 10s to 100, quickly opening up a hand and then clenching it in time to a fast rhythm. More able pupils add columns of two digit numbers accurately and can 'hold' the total for the units column in their heads, before calculating the final total by adding the tens. Below average pupils manage this with lower numbers, helped by a supporting adult's questions. All know the significance of putting a 'p' against numbers to show they are making money calculations. Most seven-year-olds have a secure scientific knowledge and vocabulary. They know the difference between "transparent", "translucent" and "opaque" and between man-made and natural materials. They are beginning to understand fair testing, but there is little evidence in their work of experimental or investigative science. An over-use of worksheets restricts the development of good presentational skills.
5. By 11, pupils deal with complex texts such as C S Lewis's "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" to extract suitable words for a 'wanted' poster. They know how speech bubbles can represent inner thoughts. Answers in response to challenging questions reveal that pupils have a good grasp of how to make inferences from such texts to hypothesise about how characters might feel. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are frequently good. In a personal social and health education lesson, most could listen to one another and talk sensitively about difficult matters. They used words such as "overwhelmed" to describe their reactions to an event. Above average pupils read with fluency and expression and enjoy talking about books. Those of below average ability find this hard, although they achieve creditable fluency and are gaining a good understanding of how to use punctuation appropriately. Pupils' presentational skills for written work are very varied. Frequently, work is untidy and shows little attention to correct spelling, although pupils throughout the school learn dictionary skills. Pupils of all abilities know the four number operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) and inverse operations involving, for example, multiplication and division. They work out the total grams in 17.6 kilograms and check 'reasonableness' for problems based on the consumption of snack foods by British children with calculators. They represent common fractions as decimals and count in intervals of 0.2 from 0.0 to 1.0 and beyond very confidently. In science, they know about food chains and what constitutes a healthy diet, tell differences between solids, liquids and gases and know that mixtures can be separated in different ways. There is less emphasis on worksheets by Year 6 and pupils' presentational skills for setting down science work have improved by this age. However, work still reveals little evidence of experimental or investigative science.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6 and achieve in line with their prior learning. No pupils with statements of special needs are currently identified. While the quality of individual education plans is satisfactory overall, these vary in their format and sharpness of focus. Some are well matched to pupils' needs, especially where these are language-related and can be supported through learning in literacy lessons, for example. At times, though, targets for learning in individual plans are not clear enough and a lack of focus in lesson planning reflects this, slowing pupils' progress in overcoming known difficulties. Support for pupils is thinly spread, especially in Years 3 to 6, and this also affects what pupils achieve, although class teachers, support staff and volunteer helpers work hard to overcome the problem.

7. Pupils learning English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress. They frequently achieve on a par with their peers. Support is suitably allocated across classes in line with identified needs to support individuals or, more usually, small groups. At times, though, bilingual pupils would benefit from support within larger groupings alongside their peers, since they generally have proficient speaking and listening skills as well as a good grasp of what is demanded by classroom work. In fact, there is a 'blurring' of distinction between support for special educational needs and that given for the acquisition of English language skills in the case of some pupils. This blurring is unhelpful in deciding the precise nature of children's needs so these can be supported. In addition, the needs of pupils who are not bilingual, but who come within the remit of ethnic minority achievement grant funding, are not well defined. So their learning is not supported by a consistently effective approach, understood by all concerned. For example, support staff realise boys of African-Caribbean heritage need special help with reading and with deciding on the choice of books open to them. While these pupils are included in groups supported in some classes, relevant targets are not set for their learning in teachers' planning.
8. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects, although a lack of care in the presentation of work is evident across subjects, especially in some classes. For example, key words related to a subject's content are frequently spelled wrongly, even when they could be copied easily or pupils could turn to their good dictionary skills learned in literacy lessons. At times, work is unappealing in appearance and there is a general lack of attention to this issue in ways of ensuring that pupils follow instructions. Because of a lack of resources, pupils have few opportunities to apply skills learned on the computer to other subjects, although this is an area the school is trying hard to redress.
9. Over a period of five years, standards achieved at 11 have risen above standards nationally when scores for all three subjects of English, mathematics and science are added together and averaged out. The school did not achieve statutory targets set in English in 2001 by a small margin (representing one pupil) but exceeded those for mathematics. While the number of pupils moving into the school after the Reception year is relatively small, this movement is a growing trend, higher than elsewhere in the Borough. For example, in the academic year 2000 to 2001 (that is, the year of the statutory tests quoted) two pupils moved in to Year 6, becoming a significant proportion of the cohort as a whole. Pupils entering late in their schooling are frequently at an early stage of learning English, which most affects standards in English. Inspection evidence did not reveal differences in standards between boys and girls.
10. Pupils of seven and 11 years of age reach satisfactory standards in design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and physical education. While standards in music seen in Years 2 and 6 were broadly as expected, standards overall are unsatisfactory. For example, pupils have too few opportunities to work at their own ideas, explore instruments or compose and perform their own music. Year 2 pupils met expectations in an art and design lesson and some pupils did better. Although no lessons were seen in Year 6, samples of work on display suggest that standards are below expectations by 11. Discussion with pupils reveals gaps, over time, for lessons in art and design in ways making it difficult to build on important skills so that pupils' knowledge and understanding grow progressively. This is also true of history, where 11-year-olds' understanding of the historical periods they have studied shows standards to be below expectations. The work of pupils in Year 2 shows that they have a reasonable awareness of famous people they have studied, in line with expectations. The school admits it has placed its energies and priorities into government initiatives over recent years, resulting in an imbalance of provision in other subjects. This imbalance continues to dominate planning.
11. The above picture is varied when comparisons are made to previous inspection findings. Standards achieved in the Reception year seem to have risen across all areas, although it is difficult to make direct comparisons because planning for these youngest children is now organised in relation to different curricular guidelines. Over time, results in statutory tests have risen markedly above standards noted in the last report in reading (especially), writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds and English, mathematics and science for 11-year-olds. No judgements were made about standards in the non-core subjects discussed above (such as history and music) in the previous report. Rather, the report talks in terms of the progress pupils made throughout the school, which was deemed satisfactory in the main. Inspection findings show an improvement here, echoing the improved quality of teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school and to their learning are good, having improved since the last inspection. From the Reception class upwards, they look forward eagerly to their day and its routines. Parents report that

children enjoy coming to school, which works hard to create an ethos where an appreciation for learning and good attitudes are fostered. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and cheerful, with a positive approach to lessons. They like to be helpful to adults and, mostly, endeavour to meet their teachers' expectations, especially where boundaries are made clear and unacceptable behaviour is dealt with firmly and in ways pupils recognise as fair. Pupils' enthusiasm and pride in their work are seen in many lessons. For example, in a Reception class literacy session, children showed obvious interest in the things a teacher drew out of a carrier bag. They were keen to answer questions linked to the theme of shopping. Good levels of concentration were also seen throughout a Year 4 music lesson, leading to improved performance, as pupils practised singing and gained confidence in keeping time while playing on a range of instruments. All pupils responded well to the considerable demands made of them.

13. Behaviour in and around the school remains satisfactory overall. Behaviour is often good in lessons and, at times, is excellent. For example, during a Year 3 registration session, pupils answered to their names politely and settled down very quickly to their work - a really good start to the day. The poor behaviour of a significant number of pupils in Year 1, however, can affect a lesson's pace detrimentally. This was seen on a number of occasions, when 'ripples' of inappropriate behaviour became problems in several classes, happening even where teaching was good and pupils were generally keen to listen and attend (for instance in the Year 4 music lesson). At such times, pupils accept 'time out', sitting at a separate table in the classroom to reflect on why their behaviour is unacceptable. Quite a few 'first warnings' for this purpose were issued from Year 1 upwards. Generally, this recently introduced strategy is effective. Pupils understand the choices open to them and normally prefer to be part of the class, especially where action is taken promptly with little comment. Outside lessons, when not directly supervised by an adult, pupils sometimes behave in rather thoughtless ways, upsetting others. For example, during playtimes, frequent outbursts of boisterousness showed how some pupils find self-discipline difficult. Even so, rewards and sanctions systems are well-established and familiar to pupils and there is a noticeable absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying, racism and sexism. Pupils trust adults, knowing they will react quickly and positively as soon as incidents arise or inappropriate behaviour is reported. For example, the headteacher dealt firmly with a bullying incident reported early in the term, ensuring that all involved knew what action was taken. The pupils concerned are now redirecting their energies very positively towards helping others during break times, serving the school community. The number of exclusions has fallen dramatically over recent years. There was only one last year.
14. Good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults noted at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils work and play together well. Relationships are especially good when under adult guidance. Pupils co-operate happily when opportunities arise. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils liked working in pairs and small groups at tasks concerning the many snacks commonly eaten by British children. Rules forming a 'code of conduct' for all pupils are displayed around the building (inside and outside). Pupils accept the need for such rules. Indeed, the vast majority comply with adults' expectations because they want to please. Similarly, they show great respect for the diverse languages and cultures in the school. Those with special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. From Reception to Year 6, pupils become aware of the way their actions affect others and the need to respect other feelings, values and beliefs. For example, Reception children know they need to take turns to offer ideas during class discussions, even though some find this hard. 'Circle times' when pupils can talk over matters of personal interest and sensitive aspects of their lives are well-established and contribute valuably to pupils' learning.
15. Pupils' personal development with respect to taking initiative and responsibility is satisfactory and the headteacher recognises that this as an area for further development. The school council met for the first time the week before the inspection, with plans to meet every two weeks. Plans are also in hand to re-organise the role of the school monitors and involve older pupils in helping younger ones more routinely.
16. Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below the national average. The school is very aware that, along with punctuality, attendance remains a problem. The headteacher plans to monitor and promote better attendance even more rigorously than before. The school follows appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day, with clear strategies for following up absences. Information is sent out to remind parents about the importance of good attendance, and letters go to individual parents whose children's absences cause particular concern. The headteacher meets with parents whose children persistently arrive late and the school receives regular visits from the Education Welfare Officer. Generally, its rate of absenteeism not only adversely affects pupils' learning, it imposes significant extra burdens on teachers and the

school's administrative staff. Those pupils who arrive late in the morning prevent a brisk, orderly start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when it was judged satisfactory overall. It is now mainly good, with 94 per cent at least satisfactory. Of this, 25 per cent is good, a further 22 per cent is very good and another eight per cent is excellent. Just 6 per cent of all teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching strengths are in the Reception class and in Years 2, 4 and 6.
18. Reception class teaching is never less than satisfactory. In fact, it is mainly very good, with 12 per cent judged good, a further 50 per cent very good and 25 per cent excellent. Teaching is securely based on an understanding of the needs of the youngest children and how to plan for these in line with the stepping stones for learning, so that children reach the early learning goals as set out in the latest guidance. At times, though, the tight nature of planning means that children have too few opportunities to explore ideas for themselves and so extend their learning in ways of interest to them as individuals. The class teacher works closely with the Nursery assistant to make sure that learners' strengths and areas requiring support are known. For example, the assistant commonly makes notes on children's responses during whole-class sessions so future planning is well informed about such matters. Both adults also make observational notes during the course of other activities so they can plan for individuals. During some lessons, both monitor children and intervene to push learning forward in line with planning, as seen for example in physical education and dance lessons in the hall. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy has high priority and is very well done. The teacher's knowledge of individuals is to the fore during whole-class sessions so questions are well aimed at helping all children move on. This was seen, for instance, in a discussion based on a 'big book', when children's knowledge of the shops on the local high street or near their homes was probed. Through this, they were helped to link the food they eat with the place where it can be bought. The knowledge and skills children bring with them are highly valued. Consequently, all respond positively to adults' high expectations. Teaching is seen as a matter of stimulating and challenging children's imaginations to promote successful learning.
19. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is mainly satisfactory. Twenty-five per cent of all teaching is judged good, 6 per cent very good and a further 6 per cent excellent, with 6 per cent also found unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall. Ninety-two per cent is judged satisfactory, with 26 per cent of this good, a further 26 per cent very good and 7 per cent excellent. Four per cent is found unsatisfactory and a further four per cent poor. Unsatisfactory or poor teaching occurs where teachers have insecure subject knowledge (as seen in a music lesson) or do not sufficiently interest all pupils in difficult content, which has to be highly structured to be taught (as seen in a literacy lesson). These factors affect progress as pupils become restless and bored. At times, too, pupils' behaviour is not managed with sufficient firmness so some poor behaviour mars a lesson's progress to an unacceptable degree (as seen in a physical education lesson).
20. More commonly, teachers demonstrate good behaviour-management skills, especially where clear expectations are held to throughout a lesson. For example, in a very good personal and health education lesson in Year 3, pupils were reminded at the outset of an important 'ground rule' that they listen courteously while others speak. When someone nevertheless chose to 'chatter', a classroom assistant accompanied the offender out of the room to reflect on this behaviour. Where 'time out' is given in these good or better lessons, teachers bring pupils back into activities within a set time-limit, which all pupils can see as fair. This was observed in a good Year 4 music lesson, where the strategy worked effectively. In these lessons, planning is well aimed at capturing and holding pupils' interest and involvement. Teachers make imaginative use of resources to this end and pitch content well to illustrate points. For example, in a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils had an immediate insight into the problems they were to solve because a teacher used snack foods commonly eaten by British children as a starting point for their investigations. A stringent focusing on the work in hand kept pupils on task and the teacher's pace brisk. All teachers share a lesson's learning intentions with pupils at the outset. In most lessons, this good practice is followed by exploring pupils' recall of prior learning and making sure that pupils across levels of ability are involved in question and answer exchanges. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 2, for instance, a teacher managed pupils' participation so that more able pupils did not dominate. Others were drawn in deliberately by questions asked specifically of them. Aware of this strategy, everyone listened intently. In less successful lessons, teaching is not so sharply focused. For example, in a satisfactory mathematics lesson in Year 5, many pupils kept out of class discussion for some time,

because one or two put up their hands and spoke out before being invited. When a teacher began to ask others from across the class to record their ideas on the board, interest immediately perked up. The lesson's pace improved.

21. Teachers most frequently plan well for pupils with special educational needs and make every effort to ensure they are supported during group and independent work, following a lesson's introduction. For example, teachers spend time with groups at the start of follow-up work so pupils grasp what is expected. Groups are monitored for any problems being encountered. This is to teachers' credit since additional support is not always available (especially in Years 3 to 6). In some classes, available support is well deployed and support assistants know what they are to do. In Year 2, for example, all additional help is well accounted for in lesson planning. In some classes, though, such good practice is missing and classroom assistants give generalist help with no real understanding of lesson plans and what is expected of pupils with identified needs. In whole class sessions, too, support frequently lacks focus. Adults sit near to or a little distance away from a class group without being engaged (without, for example, helping individuals participate more fully). A Reading Recovery programme is aimed at pupils expected to benefit from this intervention in Years 1 to 3. While records show that pupils make good gains from this programme, it does withdraw them from lessons, affecting other subjects (as seen in a music lesson in Year 3, for example).
22. Specialist staff for pupils with English as an additional language are deployed across Years 1 to 6 in ways related to pupils' language learning needs. Support teachers have good knowledge of individuals and plan for these within the context of lessons. They liaise regularly with class teachers to ensure that themes of work are known for the subjects where support is given. When working with groups, support teachers focus on bilingual pupils and work hard to keep them on task. Questions arise, however, about the make-up of groups (as noted elsewhere in the report) and whether some pupils might not benefit better from wider groupings. Class teachers are generally uncertain about the role of specialist support staff, even where liaison is regular. This uncertainty prevents them deciding properly how pupils' needs are best met. Class teachers frequently plan well for all bilingual pupils when additional support is not available.
23. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6, although strengths are to be seen in the teaching of mathematics throughout the school and of literacy and information and communication technology skills in some classes. As noted already, the teaching of the latter is hampered because of a lack of computers. Most pupils cannot have suitable 'hands on' experiences during lessons. Teachers frequently demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of relevant skills in literacy and these are at least soundly taught. But the impact of this teaching is lessened because insufficient attention is paid to insisting that pupils take care with presentation (for example, checking familiar spellings or those they can easily find and copy). Even where pupils are reminded of the importance of presentation, it is not clear how such matters are further pursued.
24. Teaching is good in English and mathematics, with strengths in Years 2, 4 and 6. In science and information and communication technology, teaching is satisfactory overall but, again, some good or better teaching is seen in some classes (notably Years 4 and 6). Only one lesson (in Year 2) was seen in art and design and the teaching here was good. Teaching in design and technology, geography, history and the strands of music and physical education observed was satisfactory – again with good teaching in some lessons. However, the teaching of music is at times adversely affected because of some teachers' insecure subject knowledge.
25. In good or better lessons, teachers make good judgements about pupils' understanding as they assess progress through question and answer strategies or while moving around the classroom helping groups and individuals. For example, in the Year 6 mathematics lesson mentioned, a teacher soon realised the problems pupils were encountering with recording work after a stimulating class discussion. A timely intervention re-directed attention on when to apply the inverse operations of multiplication and division so pupils could get on with problems. Teachers frequently take good account of prior learning in their planning, as when they speedily recap with pupils what they already know. At times, though, teachers *tell* pupils what was done previously, preventing such helpful recall. This was seen in a Year 1 physical education lesson, for instance, and led to pupils appearing uncertain of what was expected.
26. Homework was not seen being set during the inspection although it was referred to in one or two lessons. The general programme of homework agreed by staff takes account of pupils' needs relative to age and

what is being taught. For example, a structured programme of mathematics homework is set regularly in Year 2. However, the written homework policy is judged unhelpful in setting out expectations and the setting of homework is inconsistent across classes, although it is given regularly in some.

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

27. Curricular provision for Reception class pupils is good. With the exception of provision for outdoor play, the curriculum is broad and balanced, providing stimulating learning opportunities to satisfy the latest guidance for the Foundation Stage. Physical education lessons in the school hall ensure that children develop their gross motor skills to very good effect (for example, while climbing and balancing on apparatus). Nevertheless, the school is aware of the need for urgency in providing access to outdoor play as integral to planning for all areas of learning, including physical development. Generally, the quality and range of curricular provision for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum are met. The *balance* of provision is unsatisfactory, however. As the school admits, undue emphasis on English and mathematics in response to government initiatives has led to too little attention being paid to other subjects and this approach still dominates planning throughout the year. No clear judgement on curricular provision is given in the previous report, but the current picture would appear to represent an improvement in the Reception class and to be similar in many respects to that reported for Years 1 to 6.
28. Planning in the Reception class gives good emphasis to basic literacy and numeracy skills both for the teaching of these skills and as a way of helping children apply their knowledge to other areas of learning. For example, children learn letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make as they talk about the things a teacher brings out of her carrier bag. They recognise the letter “M” on the “burger bag” the teacher shows them and practise saying “mmm”, drawing the letter in the air. Later, a girl quickly writes her name on a painting after the teacher reminds her she needs to label her work. Planning is shared with a Nursery assistant, and adults know their daily responsibilities, ensuring that good links are made across areas of learning. For example, a favourite story became a vehicle for a discussion of where food comes from and where it can be bought, extending learning on the ‘shopping’ theme. A suitable balance is kept between whole-class activities and tasks giving children an element of choice. However, there is wider scope for such choice during afternoon sessions when children can opt, for example, to play with construction toys or engage in role-play in a home corner. At other times, activities are geared to specific curricular goals (especially as these relate to language and literacy development) and children are directed to tasks, unable to make their own decisions within the planned structure. This policy can be somewhat counter-productive. For example, after a very good whole-class literacy session some children found it hard to sustain interest when required to trace over food packages or round alphabet letters. They did not really understand the connection between these activities and earlier work, which they had enjoyed.
29. Planning for the teaching of basic literacy skills is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. In general, however, insufficient attention is paid to presenting work carefully and, at times, poorly formed handwriting detracts both from the appearance of work and the content being dealt with. It is not always easy to see how the spellings pupils have to learn help further the main purposes of literacy lessons. So, in Year 1, work on letter sounds and how words can be built up through these did not relate at all to what followed. Pupils apply relevant skills to other subjects and can develop these through their studies. For example, during a Year 4 history lesson, pupils worked in small groups, using their reading skills to interpret quite demanding texts about Tudor buildings. They explained they had to ‘scan’ the text to ‘locate’ helpful words and then read around these to complete a task. Planning for the teaching of basic numeracy skills is good. All pupils build systematically on relevant skills, applying these both to problems in mathematics lessons and to other subjects. For example, in a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson, pupils showed a secure grasp of data on spreadsheets and whether it was likely to be correct in light of information given (in this instance relating to weather patterns).
30. With the exception of music, the latest curricular guidance supports teachers’ planning for subjects other than English and mathematics, where national strategies are firmly in place. Again with the exception of music, a curricular map illustrates how subjects are planned across the school year (though it is noted that music is included in weekly time-tables and lessons were observed in most classes). Planning for music is hampered because the scheme of work used does not help teachers lacking subject confidence overcome their problems. The school rightly identifies the need to give the subject a higher profile. The

curricular imbalance already noted means insufficient time is allocated to science. It is hard for teachers to cover the subject in sufficient depth from Year 1 upwards to ensure that pupils build on necessary skills and grasp key scientific concepts. The school is well aware of this imbalance through the headteacher's thorough audit of the time given to all subjects. An especially noticeable imbalance in Years 2 and 6 during parts of the spring and summer terms means that time allocated to revision for statutory tests narrows curricular provision because not all subjects can be fitted to available time. For example, non-core subjects such as history and geography do not feature in Year 6 during the latter part of the spring term. These subjects are taught at other times of the year, but long gaps between topics are evident from discussions with pupils (see below). Some parents' written comments reflect concerns about what they see as a narrow focus in curricular matters, equated to a lack of "fun" in children's learning.

31. The current practice of 'blocking' time for history, geography, art and design and design and technology also leads to problems for pupils' building on prior learning to capitalise on this to best advantage. For example, Year 6 pupils recall they studied the Victorian period in history for part of the autumn term, but have little understanding of a time line. They cannot readily fit historical periods they have studied into a correct sequence. They see these periods as discrete topics with a 'history' label attached to them. Nevertheless, they do understand differences between 'then' and 'now' in terms of how people lived. Most vividly, they recall preparations for a whole-school musical production of 'Scrooge' from Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" last Christmas and see this as part of their Victorian studies. The headteacher highlights as a priority the need to improve information and communication technology. While the subject is planned for each week so that important skills are taught, a lack of resources impedes pupils applying and extending skills across the curriculum. Few instances of skills application were seen. The reinstatement of swimming in physical education, seen by parents as a weakness, is also being energetically pursued.
32. Equality of access to the curriculum is generally satisfactory. All pupils are suitably included in classroom activities and this is seen as an important priority. At times, though, pupils are withdrawn from lessons for long periods. A Year 3 pupil worked with a specialist teacher for 'Reading Recovery', missing most of a music lesson. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Pupils are supported in line with needs identified through procedures followed carefully by the co-ordinator for ethnic minority achievement-grant funding and by support teaching colleagues. Primarily, these procedures are meant to identify competences in English language skills from the Reception class upwards. Support is targeted from Year 1 to Year 6, taking note, especially, of pupils' literacy needs and the application of key skills to other subjects (such as numeracy). It is most effective when support and class teaching colleagues liaise closely on work to be covered. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, following class discussion, pupils at a relatively early stage of learning English worked at activities like their peers. A teacher's planning encompassed *all* pupils' needs and took good account of the additional support for bilingual pupils given in small group work. At times, though, it is not clear why pupils are separated from their peers. In a Year 3 extended writing lesson, three pupils showed a good grasp of the task set and two worked independently, suggesting they might well have gained from inclusion in a broader grouping.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is generally unsatisfactory. The fact that pupils make satisfactory progress testifies to teachers' and learning support assistants' good knowledge of them as individuals and to the encouragement they receive. But support is not well organised and there are not enough support assistants to work with pupils with identified needs. For example, one assistant is shared between Years 4 and 5 although significant needs are identified in both classes. Learning support assistants work under guidance from the class teacher and co-ordinator for special needs. Although assistants are involved in meetings and have access to pupils' individual education plans, they are insufficiently guided to helping pupils towards their targets in lessons. For instance, planning does not usually make clear how pupils' needs are met in relation to their individual education plans and a lesson's content and tasks set.
34. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. From the Reception class upwards, circle times effectively explore sensitive issues of a personal nature and help pupils listen to others and take account of differing views. Governors have approved sex education and drugs awareness policies. Planning is linked suitably to personal, social and health education sessions and to other subjects such as science, as appropriate.

35. Extra-curricular provision out of school time is unsatisfactory. It was a matter of concern for parents. The school accepts this as an area for development and a wider variety of activities will be available from next term linked to local authority provision. The Breakfast Club, which started in January, is proving successful. An after-school homework club is seasonal and has recently re-started while a governor runs a popular craft club for a small number of pupils. Visits to places of interest locally and further afield are integral to teachers' planning, especially in relation to geography and history. For example, Year 1 pupils talked enthusiastically about visits to two museums for their history studies.
36. Links with the local community are good. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were observed enjoying practising for the Borough music festival, taking place in July. This will involve collaborating with other local schools and will benefit pupils' learning in music, notwithstanding the problems with the music curriculum outlined above. The school has supported a member of staff through initial teacher training to newly qualified teacher status, linked to the Urban Learning Foundation.
37. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. A daily assembly with a planned programme focusing on mutual respect and understanding provides good opportunities for thinking about important matters, but gives pupils little time for reflecting quietly on their own thoughts. A local curate takes one session a week and pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and participate when invited. Yet, at times, many pupils find it hard to concentrate during assembly, even while watching their peers perform brief plays to illustrate a story being told. An artist and composer of the month are referred to during each assembly and information about these is displayed where everyone can see, although the relevance for choices made is unclear. Music by the composer, played as pupils enter and leave assembly, creates a pleasing atmosphere. Pupils sing enthusiastically and respond well to the supporting CD backing. No opportunities for pupils to reflect on the 'wonder of the world' were seen in lessons during the inspection, although the school's high regard for its own diversity is implicit in much of its work in classrooms and beyond.
38. Provision for moral and social development is good. A consistent approach from staff at all levels means that pupils see the importance given to all such matters in and out of classrooms. Moral development is well fostered during circle time when pupils think through their ideas and listen closely to others. For example, in Year 3, pupils discuss their rights and responsibilities at home with good understanding of these in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' behaviour and attitudes. A valuable discussion in Reception during afternoon registration, similarly, helped the youngest children see how their playground actions might affect others. For example, answering the question "Who had a happy playtime?" they described how they included another child in a game. Social development is promoted systematically throughout the school as part of a planned policy of helping pupils to respect one another and share their thinking as well as resources. Good opportunities for collaborative work are built in to many lessons. Pupils work in pairs in literacy lessons, using small 'white boards' to record their ideas. They engage constructively in group tasks, as in the Year 4 history lesson, while working as a team in physical education, as seen in Year 5. Teachers reinforce important messages about co-operation and sharing at the end of lessons when considering 'what has been learned?'
39. Provision for cultural development is also good. The school celebrates its cultural and linguistic diversity and that of the wider community. Pupils feel comfortable and valued, and parents speak positively about this aspect of school life. The youngest children in Reception enjoy choosing which language to answer the register with at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. Discussions about this help widen children's knowledge of the world, as when a teacher explains that Yoruba is one of the languages spoken in Nigeria. More generally, teachers plan lessons and use resources in ways reflecting different cultural traditions as far as feasible, drawing on pupils' own experiences to give impetus to learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. Its standards of pastoral care are good, with care for children as individuals frequently very good. For example, in the Reception class a well-established routine for afternoon registration reinforces important messages about taking responsibility for behaviour and personal relationships. Overall, the picture here is similar to that presented in the previous inspection report, with some improvements evident, especially in standards of pastoral care.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive

behaviour are good. Especially, under its new headteacher, the school is re-evaluating ways of dealing with challenging behaviour. A minority of pupils in a number of classes quite deliberately present very challenging behaviour at times. Strategies are being implemented to ensure a shared understanding between all members of teaching and support staff of the guidance given in school policies. It is evident that this approach is already beginning to work. For example, pupils know that a 'first warning' with a name written on the classroom board is a strong signal that an individual's behaviour is affecting a lesson unacceptably. It is therefore not to be taken lightly but can be redeemed by pupils working in ways showing a willingness to co-operate with adults and peers. Pupils know well that the alternative leads to a greater involvement of the headteacher and, ultimately, of parents. Staff members contribute significantly to a caring atmosphere and a safe environment for all. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal and social development are good. Strengths are seen in the way staff monitor pupils informally to support their learning needs. They know pupils and families well and respond sympathetically to individuals, taking good account of personal circumstances that may affect learning. Lunchtime in the dining area is well supervised. In a well-ordered, if noisy, atmosphere, pupils enjoy their meals in one another's company.

42. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the caring environment of the school. On entry to Reception, children are assessed in line with Local Authority requirements. This may highlight problems with learning, while adults' routine daily observations or discussions with parents may raise causes for concern. When pupils enter school after Reception, teachers also monitor their learning and note any difficulties. Where concerns continue, pupils continue to be monitored in line with the Code of Practice for special educational needs, with targets for improvement set and reviewed regularly. In some instances, group targets are set for up to six pupils rather than for individuals. While targets are realistically aimed at moving pupils forward in small, achievable, steps, it is not clear how group targets help the individuals concerned. Pupils requiring specialist help, such as speech therapy, physiotherapy or for a specific learning difficulty, are given necessary support and guidance. The school reinforces its specialist help well, with the co-ordinator in regular communication with several external agencies to maintain specialist guidance between the formal reviews to assess provision. However, and as noted already, insufficient basic support is given to pupils with special educational needs in classes, and available support is not always well-focused.
43. Routine procedures ensure that pupils with English as an additional language are assessed soon after entry to school. Information is collated in line with Local Authority guidance and a yearly audit updates it regularly. However, because of this guidance, pupils are generally assessed according to their competence in writing, which commonly lags behind their speaking and listening abilities. This procedure can accordingly lead to pupils working with support teachers at inappropriate levels, given their intellectual capacity. For example, in Year 3 and 4 classes it was not clear why pupils did not join larger groupings alongside their peers. Nevertheless, support teachers for bilingual pupils monitor progress throughout the year. They have a detailed and well-informed knowledge of individuals' abilities in relation to English language skills. They also take good account of assessments made in pupils' first language whenever possible. For example, a Year 2 pupil had difficulties with all aspects of learning. A support teacher assessed the pupil through the first language and discussed matters with parents. These strategies revealed a more general concern about learning, beyond the acquisition of English and led to assessment for special educational needs. It is not generally clear how pupils' different needs are catered for when there is an overlap between special educational needs and those having to do with learning English as an additional language. For example, a bilingual Year 3 pupil receiving special needs support sometimes works with the support teacher for bilingual pupils. In one lesson, at the start of group work, there was confusion about where the pupil should go. Some pupils listed as receiving support through ethnic minority achievement grant funding are the only pupils identified for special educational needs purposes on the Code of Practice register and, again, it is not clear why the latter does not encompass a wider grouping. Moreover, some pupils are not bilingual (for example, those of African-Caribbean heritage) but have needs linked to developing confidence and enjoyment of reading and so to improving writing skills, especially with regard to provision for boys. Such needs are not reflected in planning and it is not clear how they are met. Overall, the school gains valuable information about pupils with specific needs - both language-related and more generally designated. However, it lacks insight into how best to utilise information both to deploy support staff effectively and in order to set clear learning targets known by all concerned, including class teachers.
44. Indeed, the school gathers a substantial amount of assessment information on all its pupils. For example, it gathers information from statutory tests in Years 2 and 6, optional tests in English and

mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 and regular tests at the end of units of work in English, mathematics and science from Year 1 upwards. Assessment in other subjects is not yet in place. There is a lack of clarity in showing how available information informs planning and target-setting, although group targets are in place in literacy and numeracy lessons and are reviewed each term. The school has very detailed information on mathematics through its initial participation as a pilot school in the National Numeracy Strategy. Continuous monitoring by an outside body since then has provided feedback on individual pupils' results in each aspect of yearly tests. The co-ordinator for mathematics copies relevant information for teachers so that classroom planning takes account of weaknesses picked out for each cohort. As with other assessment practices, however, what practical impact this strategy has is unclear. There is a lack of rigour in deciding precisely how assessment information should be used and what purposes it might serve. A similar judgement was made in the previous report, although the systematic gathering of information in a limited number of subjects has improved since then. Teachers' marking is varied in quality. The best marking tells pupils plainly what they have done well and where they can improve, as seen in Year 6 pupils' mathematics books, for example. Quite often, though, marking across subjects is bland, consisting of 'ticks' showing that work has been seen.

45. As part of positive behaviour management, there is a stress throughout the school on raising pupils' self-esteem. Teachers frequently show a very good capacity for listening carefully to pupils and for insisting that others listen courteously. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, a teacher pursued pupils' thinking about problems posed in ways that showed how different strategies suggested could be of equal value. Together with support colleagues, teachers are good role models for pupils, and pupils deal with each other and with adults confidently. Teachers praise and encourage during lessons and achievements – large and small – are celebrated. Circle time helps pupils gain self-insights as well as grasp the viewpoints of others. There are few opportunities at the moment for pupils to take responsibility for daily routines around the school, although some act as door monitors and help with the overhead projector during assemblies. They are also quick to help others in the playground if someone is hurt and know how to seek help. The newly-resumed school council gives pupils a chance to voice their own opinions and become responsible members of their classes.
46. Although there are satisfactory systems in place for child protection, provision overall is unsatisfactory. The headteacher, who is the designated person in charge of this aspect, is not fully up-to-date with training, though the matter is being addressed as a priority. Appropriate attention is paid to ensuring that sufficient staff have up-to-date training in first aid and to the general care and welfare of pupils. The health and safety policy is also out-of-date and very brief. It still does not contain provision for detailed risk assessments. During the inspection, no evidence of the formal recording of risk assessments was available.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good - an improvement since the last report. The administrative staff follow up any unexplained absences or lateness promptly. Attendance figures are entered and checked regularly and the school works with an Education Welfare Officer. However, despite such practices, attendance figures are barely satisfactory and well below the national average. The headteacher has already seen the need for more rigorous procedures and has a clear plan of action to this end. She has introduced a successful 'Breakfast Club' and trophies are awarded to classes with the best attendance rates and for punctuality. It is evident that parents need to realise how absenteeism not only adversely affects pupils' learning but imposes additional burdens on teachers and the school's administrative staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school works hard at fostering good relationships with parents. Most have very positive views of the school's work and warmly praise what it achieves. They value its caring attitude and are satisfied that their children make good progress. They believe teachers know their children well and that good relationships between staff and pupils help the pupils succeed. All parents responding to the questionnaire stated that their children like school and those seen during the inspection agreed. However, a few were quite critical. This divergence of views was reflected in questionnaire and written responses and at the pre-inspection meeting.
49. A few parents were worried about the behaviour of children before entering classrooms in the mornings, but, during the inspection week, behaviour was found to be satisfactory at the start of the school day. The behaviour of pupils during playtimes was, nonetheless, judged to be over-boisterous on occasion and

there had, in the recent past, been an incident of bullying. The headteacher has dealt firmly with this and accepts that she has to continue to work with all members of staff on behavioural matters to achieve consistency across the school. There are already signs of improved behaviour, a fact noted by parents. Some felt that undue emphasis is given to English and mathematics. As outlined above, inspectors agree there is scope for the curriculum to be better balanced in terms of time allocated to science and to non-core subjects such as design and technology. Inspectors also agree with those parents who think there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills and extend these to subjects across the curriculum. They do not agree with concerns about the amount of time given to physical education since time-tabling arrangements are within recommended times for this subject. Also sufficient time was given to lessons observed. As parents noted, the lack of swimming is of concern, but lessons are to recommence in April.

50. A number of parents believe the school does not immediately identify children who might have learning difficulties. They are also worried about the amount of support children receive in lessons. Inspection findings show that pupils with learning difficulties are pinpointed early in their schooling, although some aspects of this identification process are unclear. Findings also show, as noted above, that there is insufficient additional support for teachers to meet the wide variety of needs in each class. The school is very aware of this deficiency and of its duty to see that support staff are suitably trained. Some parents were dissatisfied with the amount of homework given. Inspectors found that, as at the last report, the amount of homework set is inconsistent across the school, although some teachers do give regular amounts. Moreover, the homework policy is judged to be an ineffective tool. In addition, there is no clear structure outlining expectations about support with reading at home. Parents find the current system is 'one-way'. They show they have listened to their children read, but see no record of when a child is helped with reading at school. A number of parents were critical of the range of extra-curricular activities and it is agreed that provision in this area is unsatisfactory at the moment. However, plans are well in hand to boost provision. A few parents were worried about the unsuitability of 'hatted' classrooms, considering them unfit for children in the 21st century. The school is very aware of the dilapidated state of these rooms, but has to use them because accommodation is sparse generally. These classrooms are, in fact, relatively spacious and plans are in hand for their re-furbishment in the very near future.
51. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of most parents, reported through questionnaires, the meeting prior to the inspection and discussions in the school playground. The school does its best to work closely with parents in their children's education. Parents speak highly of the good, informal links with the headteacher and staff, whereby they can easily exchange information about their children. They feel welcomed in the school, seeing links as a two-way process, ensuring that pupils' interests are to the fore. There are effective formal mechanisms for exchanging information between school and home, too. Parents appreciate the informative weekly newsletters and are well informed about the curriculum, and topics their children will study. There is a home/school charter which parents are expected to sign and return to the school. Annual written reports are good, containing information on pupils' progress and where improvements can be made. Parents are appreciative of the effort involved in writing reports and say the reports describe their children accurately. There are also regular, well-attended parent/teacher consultation evenings. The school makes every effort to arrange appointments to suit individuals and is well aware of the need to organise interpreters for some meetings. It makes every effort to secure such arrangements. Minor omissions were noted in the School Brochure, which is out-of-date.
52. Generally, the school has effective relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents know the co-ordinator for special needs and teachers regularly contact parents of pupils with individual education plans to review their targets. At the parents' meeting, concerns were expressed by some parents about provision for pupils with special educational needs, in ways showing some uncertainty about what the school actually does.
53. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. Few can come into the school to help in classrooms but several members of the local church come in regularly as volunteers, for example, to hear children read. The Parents' Association is being re-organised and it is hoped more parents will be recruited. The Association has provided valuable assistance to the school in the past, raising money to buy microphones and curtains, for example. The school wants to involve more parents and promote a genuine partnership between home and school as a priority. The four parent governors make a valued contribution to school life.
54. Induction procedures for children entering Reception are good. Parents are pleased at how their children

settle in and enjoy school. They also like the way children are expected to work hard. They appreciate the good procedures for settling in new children throughout the school during the course of a year and the care taken when the oldest pupils transfer to secondary school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. Leadership and management of the school are good. Improvements are evident since the last inspection when the general picture seems to have been satisfactory. Good points were noted then in some areas of work, especially in the previous leadership of the school and the support given by governors. Strengths remain in governors' overview of the school and their involvement in its management.
56. The newly appointed headteacher brings very good leadership and management skills to her work. Her clear view of the educational direction of the school is informed by an audit of the school's strengths and where improvements can be made, as well as an ability to determine how best to achieve these. In less than one term, she has influenced behaviour management in the school and the planning of new priorities for school improvement. For example, she realises not only that resources for information and communication technology should be strengthened, but sees how necessary practical steps must be taken within the school's present capacity, given the cramped nature of accommodation.
57. There are strengths in the senior management team. For example, the co-ordinator for the Early Years brings very good expertise to work involved in setting up the new Nursery, ensuring provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is coherent and of high quality. She is a very good exemplar of classroom practice. Currently, the deputy head does not have a class teaching role, but does have a very wide range of duties (such as monitoring behaviour around the school). She is co-ordinator for special educational needs as well as for mathematics and assessment, each of which is a sizeable area of work. While such responsibilities give her a good overview of the school's activities, there is a lack of focus in how these responsibilities are managed. Her lack of a class teaching role also has budgetary and resource implications.
58. The senior management team work well together. Regular meetings are minuted, so everyone understands priorities and work to be done. The headteacher carefully monitors the outcomes of agreed tasks. Extension of the team is being considered to allow a full range of views from across the school to be represented. Senior managers are well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff and by a governing body whose members are highly committed, giving generously of their time and expertise. All show good levels of commitment to moving the school forward. The school is welcoming in ways appreciated by all in its community, including parents. Its Christian values are explicit in its mission statement, which aims to ensure that all pupils are catered for in ways allowing each individual to fulfil her or his potential.
59. The monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms by senior staff is good. It is systematic, ensuring that all subjects taught are observed regularly, with English and mathematics stressed in light of government initiatives. The headteacher appreciates the quality of the good practice she has inherited, retaining this successfully. Monitoring is meticulously recorded and teachers get feedback on strengths and where improvements can be made. Because the cycle of classroom observations is regular, senior managers are well informed of actions taken to improve practice and there have been substantial improvements in teaching since the last inspection. The headteacher rightly wishes to extend the role of subject co-ordinators so that all with management responsibilities oversee classroom practices, in ways helping them support colleagues in raising standards. She has already arranged twice-termly meetings with co-ordinators to review subject provision and pupils' learning outcomes with a view to assuming a fuller monitoring role. The implications of this in terms of non-contact time and training in classroom observation are well known. Currently, particular problems with geography and design and technology are that there are no subject leaders.
60. Teacher appraisal and targets for performance have been effectively implemented. Targets are suitably matched to individual's professional development needs and to meeting the school's priorities. There is a developing sense of teamwork among all in the school's community. Teachers' job descriptions clarifying areas of responsibility are to be reviewed to add targets, along with timescales and outcomes for which they are accountable. Newly qualified staff members speak highly of the good support they receive from mentors. Support is carefully structured and teachers also have necessary non-contact time for professional development purposes. Other new members of staff are similarly well supported. The headteacher is intent on ensuring temporary teachers are inducted into classroom practices so they are

aware of the school's expectations. She has devoted a considerable amount of time, energy and financial resources to this end, with governors' full approval.

61. The school uses specific grants for designated purposes. However, support for special educational needs is limited. Its impact is further hampered when classroom assistants do not properly grasp the targets to be met in lessons and how these are matched to pupils' needs as set out in individual education plans. In consequence, experienced assistants can find their roles unsatisfying. Also, spending on learning resources is driven by perceived needs of support staff rather than by needs prioritised by the co-ordinator, so provision lacks coherence overall. The co-ordinator, recognising she would benefit from appropriate training, began an accreditation course for special educational needs. Unfortunately, this was not completed due to the demands from her period of acting headship in the autumn term. The governor for special educational needs gives well-informed support to the school. She takes a keen interest in her specialist area and is knowledgeable about the school's work, meeting regularly with the co-ordinator to review what is being done. She is also well-informed about the implications of the latest changes to provision in this area of the school's work.
62. The school has had a succession of development plans over the past year. The initial document produced last spring is over-long, complex and structured in a non-uniform format, making it hard to gain an overview of what is proposed. It is not a user-friendly document. That produced by the headteacher since taking up her post is brief, clear and relevant, though uncosted. It gives teachers and governors a full picture of the school's immediate priorities and how these will be achieved. The headteacher will cost out the processes for addressing issues following the inspection.
63. Governors have acquired a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses from documents from the headteacher and through direct contact with the school during frequent visits. One governor, for example, supports classroom work in Year 6 very regularly and has known pupils really well since Year 2. Governors for information and communication technology, special educational needs and finance bring with them professional expertise that stands the school in good stead. Governors share the headteacher's commitment to raising standards and improving provision. From their links with subject co-ordinators, parents and visits to the school, they have learned how the school is progressing and improving. Governors ensure that finances are effectively deployed to provide adequate resources and accommodation. Much needed, purpose-built nursery accommodation is nearing completion and should be fully operative for the new school year. Governors have been very prudent in their budgeting in order to conserve funding for nursery provision when the building is complete and also for the planned refurbishment of 'hatted' classrooms. However, statutory requirements are not fully met in relation to risk assessment matters and omissions in the school brochure.
64. Financial planning is good. The headteacher and governors are intent on getting best value in terms of their purchases and the services the school needs. Procedures for financial control are good. The most recent audit of the school's accounting identified a number of minor areas for clearer procedures and accountability, all of which have been addressed. The school is well served by an efficient accountant who visits monthly to prepare returns, governors' reports and summary documents. His work is well supplemented by the school's senior administration officer who has a thorough grasp of the day-to-day running of finances. New technology is used well in the smooth running of the school. For example, pupils' absences are monitored efficiently, assessment information is now stored on disk and teachers' planning and time-tabling arrangements are made easily accessible.
65. Currently, the school has staffing difficulties, because a number of established members, including senior staff, have recently moved on to promotions or away from the area. The headteacher and governors have worked to overcome a degree of instability resulting from such movement temporarily, until new appointments are made next September. They know parents are concerned about their children being affected by staff changes, especially in some classes.
66. Despite these difficulties, good staff expertise is well matched to the demands of the curriculum and teachers are generally deployed effectively. Accommodation, however, is unsatisfactory. The cramped site is positioned just off a very busy main road, which creates a safety hazard. There is no outdoor play space for Reception children, although the new nursery should help to resolve this problem. There is a very pleasant 'Garden of Responsibility' laid down since the last inspection through the joint efforts of pupils, staff, governors and parents. Access to Year 4 is still either through another classroom or, awkwardly, from the outside. Neither is ideal. The passage of adults through Year 2 or Year 3

classrooms to reach Year 4 is unhelpful, especially when passers-by are unaware of the nature of ongoing work. Classrooms are, in any case, cramped. Some of the very narrow corridors are also used as cloakrooms, exacerbating problems of space, since it is difficult not to knock coats on to the floor when passing. There is often considerable noise from the upstairs classrooms as chairs are scraped on uncarpeted floors, which permeates to rooms below. The school is aware of the urgent need to repair and refurbish the boys' outside toilets. The playgrounds are also small and cramped.

67. Overall, there are generally sufficient resources to meet curricular demands for all age groups with the exception of resources for science and information and communication technology. Some musical instruments are also in need of repair and replenishment. Resources for mathematics and history are good. There is no space for a dedicated computer suite, but the headteacher sees this problem as surmountable, thinking pupils can ultimately have access to sufficient machines. There is a pleasant library situated in the centre of the main building, but it is not well stocked.
68. While unit costs are high, substantial improvements in teaching and good commitment from all staff and governors - led by the headteacher - to raising standards in all subjects, informs the judgement that the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- (1) the curriculum is planned so that pupils build on key skills, knowledge and understanding progressively, in all strands of National Curriculum subjects and areas of learning for children under five, as a way of raising standards by:
- allocating time to achieve a better balance in curriculum planning;
 - enabling subject-leaders to monitor classroom teaching and learning in line with planned developments so they know better where improvements can be made and how to promote these;
 - supporting teachers' professional development to improve their subject knowledge where this is insecure;
 - making sure that support staff are deployed to maximum advantage in classrooms and that these staff members are trained to undertake their roles more effectively, in line with best practice seen;
 - making sure that teachers' planning takes account of all assessment information, including marking, and that this, too, reflects best practice;
 - organising access to outdoor play for children under five so that teachers can take account of such play across all areas as part of their daily planning; and
 - improving the quantity and quality of resources especially, though not solely, in information and communication technology and science.

(Paragraphs: 2 to, 8, 10, 18 to 31, 42 to 44, 49, 40, 59, 67, 72, 87 to 91, 96 to 104, 106, 108, 109, 111, 113, 116, 117, 121 to 123, 126 to 129, 132, 134 to 137, 140 to 143, 147, 148)

- (2) Provision for pupils with special educational needs is improved by making sure that:
- all pupils with identified needs have the nature of their needs listed, as found in best practice seen;
 - a distinction is made when assessing bilingual pupils between needs related to their learning difficulties and those related to the acquisition of English language skills, so that everyone understands this distinction and support can be allocated to best advantage;
 - the format of pupils' individual education plans is uniform and targets set for improvement explicitly match identified needs;
 - targets help pupils move forward in achievable steps so that teachers know better how to work for these in lessons across the curriculum;
 - additional support is increased and support staff are suitably trained for the work they do; and
 - the role of the co-ordinator is reviewed, together with the possibility of resuming interrupted in-service training if this is deemed appropriate.

(Paragraphs: 6, 7, 21, 23, 42, 50, 52, 57, 61, 92)

- (3) Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is improved by making sure that:
- pupils' known language learning needs are explicit in ways that enable all teachers to take account of these in planning across subjects;
 - targets for supporting pupils are set in line with identified needs and known by all, focused on helping pupils to move forward in achievable steps; and
 - the management of provision for bilingual pupils is reviewed to ensure that it is integral to decision-making at senior management level and central to raising standards.

(Paragraphs: 7, 22, 32, 43, 69 to 71)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses³ should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 13, 16, 19, 41, 46, 47, 51, 53, 145, 149.

- Attendance and punctuality are improved in line with proposed measures.
- Behaviour management strategies continue to be pursued in and out of classrooms.
- The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

69. Two part-time support teachers work under the leadership of a co-ordinator, who is also part-time. They fully understand the individuals they work with and the nature of their own supporting roles. Generally, pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards in line with their monolingual peers. However, it is unclear how pupils whose needs are linked solely to the acquisition of English are identified and separated from those whose learning difficulties are owed to their special educational needs. Similarly, it is unclear how the needs of other groups believed likely to benefit from additional support are identified. For example, school development planning for the period 2001 to 2003 set a target of improving African-Caribbean boys' motivation for and enjoyment of reading, but it is hard to see how these issues have been tackled and what outcomes achieved.
70. Class teachers are uncertain about the precise role of support staff, beyond the general remit of helping some bilingual pupils in each class during lessons designated for such purposes. For instance, they seem uncertain about whether or not they can propose a pupil might work with a different group, where their own assessment of that pupil's abilities suggests this could be of benefit. However, liaison between class and support teachers ensures that the latter know the work to be covered through each year and that tasks for bilingual pupils are similar to those set for their peers, so that these pupils are included in all a lesson's activities. In some instances, liaison goes further than this. In some Year 6 mathematics lessons, the co-ordinator for minority ethnic pupils leads while the class teacher acts in a support capacity. Group work is then later targeted to match the bilingual pupils' identified needs. This practice was not observed, but it has obvious potential for promoting the positive views of all learners that support teachers strive for. At times, these teachers are seen as somewhat peripheral to mainstream work and not directly involved in whole-class sessions. In some lessons, though, a support teacher sits near to pupils who will benefit from quiet help. This good practice was seen in the introduction to a mathematics lesson in Year 2.
71. While systems and procedures work satisfactorily, some problems outlined are owed to the positions of support teachers relative to their full-time colleagues. Because they visit the school for only part of a week (and one support teacher wears other 'hats' when there), they have to make best use of relatively small periods for liaison with class teachers. All staff involved in such liaison strive hard to make it work effectively for pupils, but part-time staff's commitment is inevitably divided between the school and other responsibilities. However, support teachers do attend staff meetings and In-service days, strengthening their school roles. Otherwise, their work profile does not feature highly in the life of the school. Although the co-ordinator worked with the previous headteacher on a substantial part of past school development planning (directly linked to meeting the needs of minority ethnic pupils and their families), 'ownership' of this, and how targets have been met or are being worked on, are not clearly determined. More precisely, the management of the support team is not clearly worked out. For example, it does not have a structure or a remit to ensure it becomes integral to decision-making processes geared to raising standards. In part, problems are exacerbated by the many recent changes in staffing. Support staff have had to re-establish relationships with the class teachers they now work with. The headteacher is gaining a good overview of current provision through her analysis of the school's work and understands where improvements can be made.

³ It is recognised these are not, in fact, unimportant, but the school is already taking strong action in relation to behaviour management and even more rigorous measures to improve attendance and punctuality are firmly in hand.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

51

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

34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	11	13	20	2	1	0
Percentage	8	22	25	39	4	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	185
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	67

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	87
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
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	11	17	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	14	16	17
	Total	23	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (76)	89 (72)	100 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	14	16	14
	Total	23	27	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (62)	96 (66)	89 (62)
	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	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	15
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	21	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	83 (80)	90 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	11
	Girls	8	9	10
	Total	16	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (56)	66 (64)	72 (72)
	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	83
Black – African heritage	59
Black – other	3
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	35
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	494210
Total expenditure	547446
Expenditure per pupil	2684
Balance brought forward from previous year	17892
Balance carried forward to next year	53107

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	184
Number of questionnaires returned	22

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	27	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	45	0	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	41	14	9	5
The teaching is good.	55	27	5	5	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	18	9	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	18	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	18	14	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	14	23	0	9
The school is well led and managed.	45	36	0	0	18
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	41	0	5	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	36	9	23	5

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

72. Provision for children in the Reception class is generally good, with real strengths in the way children's literacy and numeracy skills are developed. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is most frequently very good, building on children's own experiences in ways that ensure successful learning. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress in all areas because work is carefully matched to every child's needs. Also, visual presentation skills and a very good use of body language and facial expression aid the teaching of important concepts. A strong element of 'learning as fun' pervades activities, inspiring children to want to do their best. Provision is excellently managed by the Early Years co-ordinator with the full support of the headteacher. The co-ordinator has a good overview of provision because of the keen interest she takes in all Reception class work, the close liaison she maintains with the teacher and her own early years' expertise. The school is aware that the lack of a suitable, separate outdoor space accessible to children restricts outdoor play, limiting aspects of physical development and curriculum planning because maximum use cannot be made of the outdoor environment. The school sees the new Nursery as potentially remedying this problem. It also expects to create better access to the outside when 'huted' accommodation (containing the Reception class) is refurbished. It is hard to compare provision now with that at the time of the previous report because staffing has altered since then; the curriculum is now tailored to quite different requirements. In so far as such comparisons can be made, provision would appear to be similar and possibly improved, with the exception of problems associated with outdoor play.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Children develop good personal and social skills in the Reception class, even though some find it hard to concentrate and join in play with their peers. They also often find it hard to take responsibility for such classroom tasks as clearing things away at the end of sessions. Most need help with this and some have to be supervised until they have made their classroom tidy. The youngest, starting at the beginning of term, already know classroom routines and are familiar with the pattern of each day. All settle quickly on the carpet for morning and afternoon registration, answering their names with a polite "Good morning" or "Good afternoon", or "Hola!", when Spanish is chosen for their response. They recognise one another's different languages and enjoy practising correct answers. They pick a member of the class whose language they agree to use, choosing a different person each time. At a teacher's signal, children get up quickly and organise themselves into a circle, as when they participate in mathematical games. At such times, they are keen to join in with turn-taking. Many can write numbers on a whiteboard to show everyone how these numbers are formed. At times, they need help sharing equipment and being kind to others. For example, an adult working with a small group planting seeds outside had to insist that children shared the gardening tools fairly and did *not* 'experiment' with scattering compost over those opposite as they dug with rather too much enthusiasm! Children know they must wash their hands after such activities and can manage this for themselves. Most can also dress and undress for physical education in the hall and do this quickly, although some need help with buttons. They settle happily on the carpet to play with construction toys when opportunities arise. A small group was observed co-operating very well when playing with these, talking about what they were doing and making suggestions to one another.

74. Children are well supported when learning how to respect and care for others. For example, in addition to daily conversations about what happens at playtimes, very good personal, social and health education sessions are structured around discussions aiming to help children talk about their personal experiences. Children talk about their feelings and listen to one another seriously. They explain what made them feel cross and how they dealt with this. They understand the rules governing such sessions and know they must not interrupt when someone else is speaking or react in a silly or inappropriate way. Teaching is very good, with the teacher an excellent exemplar in the way she cares for everyone in the classroom, adults and children. For example, she realised that the volunteer helper working with one group of children in planting seeds outside was not as happy as she had been with the first group. "Oh dear! You do not have such a happy face" she commented as they returned to the classroom. A brief discussion helped all to see that their behaviour affects the adults who work with them as well as each other. Important messages went to those who were still to plant seeds. Members of staff also take account of children's self-esteem, praising achievements and prompting help when anyone meets difficulties. All

children generally demonstrate behaviour and attitudes at levels expected for their age in this area of learning and most are set to achieve the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children thoroughly enjoy stories. Almost all read along with the teacher when she holds up the 'big book', and the more able recall most of the text. All read the main words connected with a list of food, linked to a theme of work. When the teacher asks what they notice about "legs" and "eggs", the children shout back in unison: "they rhyme!" Through careful questioning, children focus on the content of a lesson through their own experiences. For example, a child started to talk about cooking eggs when prompted by a picture in a book and the teacher's questions about where eggs are bought. After further thought and some probing, the child said "You can buy them from a shop." Children are helped to think about initial letter sounds by watching the teacher take fruit and vegetables out of a bag and naming them. They recognize mushrooms and can name and say the sound of the first letter that a girl writes on the whiteboard. Skilled questioning reveals children of all abilities can write letters linked to each food item. A more able girl sounds out the 'er' sound in 'burger' and works out that the letters 'e' and 'r' make this ending. Later, a below average child says the letters of her name correctly to herself as she labels her work, although capital and lower case letters are still mixed up.
76. Children have a good grasp of the purposes writing can serve. More able, older children who have been in school since September can write simple phrases and even sentences about things they do. Writing shows good attention to letter formation and word spacing. Children spell common words correctly. The less able work hard at recognisable words and letters and use 'emergent' writing, persisting at tasks and rising to the demands made of them. Younger children also strive hard to emulate their peers and fulfil their teacher's high expectations. Children put forward ideas in class discussions confidently and enjoy doing so. All respond well to the adults they know, initiating conversations and participating in talk around a table happily. For example, a group working with a Nursery assistant on a collage talked to her about choosing from a variety of pulses and how to stick these on paper with the glue. They were not so ready to explain to a visitor what they were doing. Children are heard talking 'in role' in the role-play area, using telephones (including a mobile) to give instructions to imagined listeners. Such opportunities, though, are limited, in that children have few opportunities to engage in spontaneous, language-related activities (such as story-writing), that are for their own purposes. Teaching in this area is, nevertheless, very good overall, especially during whole-class sessions, which are well-paced and extremely well-matched to children's needs. These lessons extend children's own experiences and previous classroom learning. Most children are set to achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy by the time they transfer to Year 1.

Mathematical development

77. Almost all children clap time as they count from zero to 10 and back again. A boy who appears not to be taking part later reveals he knows numbers to five when counting objects on the carpet and can count to 10 sequentially. More able children count correctly as the teacher sets out different groupings of numbers to 10, helpfully exaggerating her actions. Others can count objects one-to-one when invited to do so. They like being challenged with a 'secret number' game and a girl comes forward to whisper her number to the teacher that has to be "bigger than five but below 10". She selects the correct number of objects (nine) to display for someone else to check. An extension of this activity shows most children understand "one more than" and "one less than" a given number below 10. More able children (both older and younger) count numbers to 20. Some quickly see that it is easier to count objects set out systematically, as when a girl sets out six objects in two rows of three and the teacher adds another row. Most can 'hold' the first set of six in their heads and count on three more. More able children know the symbols for addition, subtraction and equals.
78. Children show a good knowledge of how numbers are written when tracing these in the air and writing them on a whiteboard. For example, a child makes a very good stab at writing the number 8. All match the correct number card to a set of objects when this becomes part of the class circle 'game'. Teaching is excellent. Teaching points cleverly build on prior learning, extending this in line with children's differing abilities. These are taken into account very well. For example, when a child with learning difficulties showed signs of restlessness after the first part of a whole-class session, a quiet signal from the teacher led the Nursery assistant to take him aside for individual number work. He enjoyed and benefited from this close attention. Key points are reinforced on the whiteboard, where children record their ideas and

the teacher shows them how to do so. Because teaching is consistently based on helping children succeed and celebrating each success, they try really hard, keeping high levels of concentration. It is clear from a scrutiny of work and planning documents that children cover a full range of mathematical activities. Evidence suggests they will reach the early learning goals in this area by Year 1, and most certainly in relation to number work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. In a lesson about growing plants from seeds, children recalled earlier learning in answer to a teacher's skilled questioning. Because this questioning was genuinely open and enquiring, children put forward their own ideas. They knew that seeds need the sun, water and soil to grow. They could name a rake the teacher showed them and some knew the name of the spade, although only a few realised it was used to dig a garden. One boy said "I've seen (the caretaker) using a spade!" recalling the caretaker digging over a piece of the school's 'Garden of Responsibility'. Most children knew what a watering can is for, although few could name it. Later, small groups of children seemed, nonetheless, unfamiliar with gardening activities as they enthusiastically dug over compost in parts of a large box, in which seeds were to be planted. Two or three girls in one group became over-excited when they spotted a creature, shouting "a snail, a snail!" and generally making a fuss about this. In fact, the first creature was a tiny worm and the second an ant. "It's only an insect" another child said scornfully. It transpired that all the class had been fascinated by a colony of snails on a playground wall some time ago and these girls were rather more determined to see snails than concerned about labelling their findings correctly. Children handled tiny seeds gently and knew it was important to cover them with compost and then water them before returning to the classroom.
80. Children talk knowledgeably about what they wear to school to suit the weather. They decide what someone should choose to put on from a rack of clothes set up in the classroom. On an especially cold day, a child chose a "warm woolly hat and a warm coat." When talking about where food comes from as part of their topic, some know that farmers grow food and keep animals for their produce (such as hens for their eggs), but most are unaware of this. When the teacher pats her back pocket briskly, they can all call out the name of a supermarket, remembering a television advert. They also recognize very familiar products such as beef-burgers and soft drinks from logos on packaging. Through questioning and listening to one another's answers, children are helped to list the kinds of shops where foods can be bought, as well as supermarkets. They think about the shops in the local high street and near their homes. Most know bread is bought at "cake shops", but very few know what a butcher's shop sells. Children were seen using the class computer during afternoon sessions. They used skills appropriate for programs, selecting colours and moving them over a screen by clicking on the mouse. Teaching is very good, extending children's knowledge and perceptions of the world from their own experiences. Imaginative resources link well to such knowledge at a level with which children readily identify. Learning about the wider world is taken seriously and is integrated into classroom activities, not only helping pupils' self-esteem but also adding to their knowledge of different countries, cultural traditions and beliefs. This is seen (as already discussed) during registration times when different languages are talked about and their countries of origin explained. For example, how the Arabic "Salaam alaykum" should be greeted was carefully explained and rehearsed, acknowledging a child's personal knowledge of this and respect for its proper form. In aspects of the work seen in this area of learning, most pupils are in line to reach the early learning goals by Year 1.

Physical development

81. Although children do not have access to outdoor play, they do have good opportunities for physical education in the school hall. At times, teaching and learning in these lessons is of very high quality. For example, all children performed floor movements and moved across apparatus much better than might be expected because of excellent teaching. They stretch, curl, roll, jump and twist with good control, trying their utmost to improve in response to the class teacher's and Nursery assistant's encouragement and interventions. All enjoy showing what they have done before the end of a lesson and are learning to talk constructively about each other's work. They know the importance of warm up exercises and of the need to wind down at the end. Following the teacher instruction "Put your hand on your heart. What's it doing?" after a brisk and exciting start to a lesson, they all know they should answer "BOOM-BOOM!"
82. Children are able to acquire important co-ordination skills through the use of tools such as pencils, pens, paintbrushes, scissors and glue spatulas and when manipulating the computer mouse. A wide range of

abilities is evident. For example, a few find it hard to spread glue within defined spaces when sticking pulses to a pattern. They also have difficulty holding pencils properly. Others, however, handle tools adeptly for a number of purposes. Children pat, roll and pull malleable material for a desired result. Some build models with construction kits skilfully, even though the pieces are quite small and fiddly. Most fasten their clothing when getting changed for physical education. The teaching of skills is good. Adults encourage children to do things for themselves, as with undoing and doing up buttons. They demonstrate appropriately and give good support to guarantee improvements. A Nursery assistant, for example, talked to children about their gluing and sticking, making practical suggestions (such as “try not to put so much glue on your spatula”) without actually doing things for them. In the main, children are set to reach the early learning goals in physical development by Year 1.

Creative development

83. Children listen quietly to music for their dance lesson. They can distinguish ‘fast’ from ‘slow’ parts and reflect this in their own movements to some extent, although they take more notice of verbal instructions. They try hard to join in singing in whole-school assemblies. Because of time-tabling, a music lesson dedicated to singing and instrument work was not seen. Nor were children seen painting, although displays of work suggest they mix colours and can control these on paper. For example, children have painted items of clothing for a ‘washing line’ linked to counting to 10. Colourful, stripey socks and other items show care in placing colours, making sure they don’t run into each other, and that attention is given to keeping brushes clean. Carefully executed drawings to accompany classroom rules (“we are kind to each other”) show that children take pains to keep an appropriate sense of scale. They have coloured these drawings with pencil crayons in a very pleasing way. They have glued patches of fabric to fill elephant shapes, based on ideas from a favourite story. After studying the work of a local artist, they glued narrow torn strips of coloured tissue paper onto small picture spaces, arranging contrasting or complementary pairs. A teacher’s writing explains children considered the effects of torn edges and realised such a technique leads to a “softer” edge that adds something to the finished product.
84. In connection with their food studies, children enjoyed printing with cut fruit and vegetables. Through discussion, they realised how to get the best results from an onion by placing the largest cut surface in the paint. They did this carefully then placed the onion equally carefully onto the paper, soon realising the need to remove it so as not to ‘smudge’ the overall effect. More able pupils saw they could manage a regular pattern if they printed at regular intervals. Some children were a little frustrated, though, because the paint was rather thick so distinctive patterns of some of the pieces didn’t show through clearly. As already stated, opportunities for role-play are limited, although a few children were observed enjoying such play. Teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory in one case and good in the other. A teacher gave good demonstrations of movements in the dance lesson, but missed opportunities for children to demonstrate or reinforce their learning by practising skills. In the main, most children are set to achieve the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.

ENGLISH

85. Inspection findings show that pupils of seven and 11 reach average standards in speaking and listening and writing. Standards are better than might be expected at times in lessons. For example, by Year 2, more able pupils and those of average ability can extend a familiar story using their own words, choosing appropriate vocabulary and using correct punctuation. Year 6 pupils answer a teacher’s probing questions about a challenging text well. They readily grapple with difficult words (such as “prejudiced”) because they are highly motivated by the teacher’s encouraging manner. In fact, excellent speaking and listening skills were found in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson about feelings. Pupils debated issues sensibly, using impressive vocabulary such as ‘overwhelmed’ and ‘inhibitions’. Standards in reading at seven and 11 are good. Year 2 pupils across levels of ability read aloud to the class from their reading books. They project their voices so that everyone can hear and read with understanding, making good use of punctuation. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when satisfactory standards at seven and 11 were noted, with some working below their abilities on occasion. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress relative to their prior attainment. Those learning English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their monolingual peers. During the inspection, no difference in standards was noted between the genders.
86. Year 2 pupils of all abilities spell common words correctly and will try to spell unknown words. They show a good insight into the letter/sound system, so most spellings are recognisable, even when incorrect.

Pupils of average and above average ability use simple dictionaries. Most are beginning to understand the conventions of punctuation. During a very well-focused lesson, average and above average pupils clearly saw when and when not to use speech marks. Pupils worked enthusiastically at creating and developing their own conversations between main characters from 'Little Red Riding Hood'. For example, they wrote sequences such as "Hello Little Red Riding Hood, where are you going?" " I am taking an apple pie to my Grandma". Most use appropriate letter formation, though this is much less secure in Year 1 where writing skills are still developing. Presentation and standards in handwriting vary across classes. In Year 1, pupils formulate simple sentences in response to an adult's questions and the more able record these with reasonable accuracy. Pupils of below average ability write simple words and phrases with adult support. Carefully copied work for history reflects these youngest pupils' different levels of ability well, showing, for example, that above average pupils can form interesting sentences linked to a museum visit.

87. Year 6 pupils of all abilities could manage collaborative tasks based on a passage from C. S. Lewis' "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". They could select words for a 'wanted' poster. They understand the use of thought bubbles to show a character's inner thoughts, sensing how a character might feel. For example, they were challenged by the question "What might you be thinking if you were the tramp?" and came up with many pertinent responses. Year 3 pupils offer interesting words when studying "The Pied Piper", as when a pupil suggested the word "allergic". They have a secure grasp of how to structure a story, shown when re-capping previous work in response to a teacher's questions. However, they find settling to follow-up tasks after a class discussion hard, because they are uncertain about what they have to do and a significant number seek help with spellings in ways showing poor capacity to work independently. The standard of handwriting in Years 3 to 6 is below what might be expected with a poor presentation of work in some classes. There is no evidence that pupils are challenged about this. They are not encouraged to re-do work, to improve its appearance and show pride in what is done, except where pieces are copied for public display.
88. Teaching varies from excellent to unsatisfactory, but is most frequently good or better. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils were keen to identify key words in a text about earthworms and complete the task set. A brisk pace and very high expectations that they would stay on task at all times meant they collaborated effectively in pairs throughout. They consolidated previous work, using a wide range of activities, reconstructing sentences into continuous prose, so that real gains in learning were made. Similarly, in a very good Year 6 lesson, a teacher's excellent questioning probed pupils' understanding and pushed them hard. They were stimulated into thinking up imaginative words to express ideas and opinions about a tramp in a passage from the story. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, pupils' progress is impeded. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on a poem by Robert Southey, a difficult text proved too hard for most to understand easily and a teacher's questioning did not engage pupils across the ability range sufficiently well. Only a few very able pupils could take part. At times, teachers' planning and the structure of lessons reveals a dependency on a commercial scheme used to support the literacy hour. Accordingly, pupils tackle the same level of task. More able pupils are not challenged, while below average pupils can be overwhelmed (as was the case with the poem in Year 5). In almost all classes, the marking of pupils' work is regular and up to date. Although teachers make encouraging, individualised comments on the work, there is no evidence to suggest that pupils have time to act on the corrections or practise incorrect spellings.
89. Pupils have opportunities to apply their literacy skills to other lessons and improve them through this means. For example, in personal, social and health education lessons (as noted above), pupils have very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. In mathematics, a focus on 'word problems' helps pupils think about the words being used and what they might mean in a mathematical context. Pupils have limited opportunities to use their computer skills for word-processing purposes since there are, at most, only two computers in each classroom and some 'turn-taking' in the use of these restricts easy access.
90. There is non-fiction material in the library, some recently purchased. It is classified under various headings, but pupils' skills at accessing books for their own research are uncertain and there was no evidence during the inspection that the library is used for such purposes. Frequently, it is used for small group teaching because of the pressure on space in the school. All classrooms have a 'book corner' with a range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils' use. Some of these 'corners' are well organised and attractive, although their use for 'silent reading' chosen by pupils was not seen. This does not appear to be part of the learning culture in classrooms.

91. The recently appointed co-ordinator for literacy and the governor for literacy take their roles very seriously and often meet to exchange information. The governor provides very good support, with a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision, because of her long-standing commitment to helping in school. The co-ordinator has undertaken a thorough review of literacy provision and knows where improvements can be made, including in relation to books. However, although senior managers have a good knowledge of classroom practices, the co-ordinator does not monitor classroom teaching and learning yet, to see where support is needed, so that standards can be raised further. This matter is now a priority for school development.

MATHEMATICS

92. Inspection findings show that pupils reach standards broadly in line with those expected at seven and 11. In both Years 2 and 6, a minority are set to achieve better than this, although it is not judged that these above average pupils will affect overall average standards reached. This picture fits with results from statutory assessment tests last year. No clear judgement was given about standards in the previous inspection report, but it would appear that they have risen since then alongside the quality of teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their prior attainment. To a large extent, this is due to teachers' planning, because additional support for these pupils is sparsely allocated, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their monolingual peers. No difference in standards between genders was found.
93. In Year 2, pupils can count in twos to 100 rapidly, as a whole class. Almost all count in fives to 100, holding up their open fingers and then clenching their fists in quick succession to illustrate each five. They repeat this exercise for counting in 10s. A relatively early-stage bilingual pupil tries hard to join in, showing good understanding of the task. Pupils know the denomination of coins to £1. A boy sees he needs another 15p to add to 25p for something costing 40 pence. Pupils know a 'p' denotes they are using money for their calculations. They can pick out the cheapest and most expensive products from a set of items they will use for their 'shopping sums'. About a third of the class quickly adds 30p to £1.90 correctly. A girl can explain her strategy for this, stating how she made the £1.90 into £2 with 10p and knew she had 20p left over. Generally, pupils have good strategies for 'collecting up' numbers to find a total. They add the tens together and 'hold' the resulting figure in their head and then add the units before working out the total. For recording purposes, more able pupils add columns of figures correctly. They understand place value and know how to carry numbers from the units' column to the tens.
94. By Year 6, pupils understand decimal notation. They know 0.5 equals a half. All can count from 0.0 to 1.0 in steps of two decimal places. They are helped in recalling previous learning by a teacher's good use of a metre stick to illustrate the number of places being counted, quickly moving on to count in quarters (or, as they know, in steps representing 0.25). Eventually, more able pupils predict the final number as a teacher indicates a point on the metre stick and names the interval to be used for counting. For example, a girl immediately realises the outcome will be 1.2 when counting in fours from 0.0, linking this to 3×4 , since three 'steps' were involved. Pupils are intrigued by problems about how much snack food British children eat in a year. In discussion, they grasp the relationship between 17.6 kilograms and 17,600 grams because they know how many grams are in a kilogram. About a third instantly see the relationship without the aid of a calculator. Others are helped by their teacher working through the process on the board, checking on their calculators pupils' answers to her questions. More able pupils soon realise the average annual amount of chocolate eaten by children is $176 \times 100\text{g}$ bars. All are impressed by this information. Orally, pupils show a good understanding of the four number operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division when applied to working out such problems and can explain inverse operations. They know how to use the latter to check answers involving multiplication and division. However, many pupils are insecure in recording this good knowledge. Even more able pupils make mistakes in calculating and do not check for 'reasonableness' as directed by the teacher. When questioned, all can explain what they have to do and some realise through this where they have gone wrong. Some pupils make quite elementary mistakes, such as entering the wrong digit (as when a boy recorded 1.2 instead of 2.2Kg).
95. Teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory, but is most frequently good. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and consistently stress correct terminology. They check pupils' understanding thoroughly in the course of lessons, especially where new work is being introduced or concepts revised. Planning is in line with the National Numeracy Strategy and some teachers' planning is very detailed, so it is clear how different levels of ability are being catered for. For example, all Year 2 pupils were included in whole-class work because of the different levels of demand stemming from a teacher's questioning strategies. Follow-up tasks, too, catered for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs worked on shopping lists involving small amounts of money and handled tins of food and packages labelled with each amount. They were well supported by a classroom assistant. In Year 4, pupils were kept on task by a briskly paced lesson and by a teacher's ongoing monitoring, checking that everyone was suitably involved. This had a salutary effect for one table's bingo game when the teacher commented "Some people are *still* not on task. I can see numbers uncovered that should be covered up. They could have won by now!" Teachers frequently push pupils hard to explain how answers are arrived at. This was seen

in a Year 1 lesson when a boy said he “guessed” there were 10 objects set out, but did not attempt to count them to check. Another said that he “knew one less than 10 is 9” because he remembered and believed there would be 9 when they were counted, which was the case. Teachers build well on pupils’ prior learning through the use of practical apparatus and real objects in all classes. Pupils help themselves to practical aids as necessary, as was seen in Year 1 when some pupils opted to help their recording work with cubes. In Year 6, a teacher’s sets of real snack foods (matching those in the text studied) illustrated problems being posed and helped pupils see how this linked to ‘real life’ in ways familiar to them.

96. Some work involving the use of computers was linked to mathematics, as when pupils entered data on spreadsheets. Mostly, this has to do with the teaching of information and communication technology skills rather than applying these to mathematics. Pupils do apply skills learned in mathematics to other subjects at times. For example, Year 1 pupils used their rulers to mark lines on card in design and technology and showed a good understanding of how to do this. Year 6 pupils extended their knowledge of how to measure mass and read scales in science. Good mathematics displays in all classrooms give a high profile to the subject. For example, mathematical vocabulary linked to the content currently taught is highlighted across the age-range and number lines and 100 squares feature in classes for younger pupils. Equipment is readily to hand and resources are sufficient for curricular requirements.
97. The subject is very well co-ordinated by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher. As she is also deputy head, she has a good overview of what is happening in classrooms across the school through regular monitoring, including the monitoring of teaching and learning. For example, she knows that teachers new to the school will benefit from training in the National Numeracy Strategy and has this in hand. She makes sure there are sufficient resources in classrooms and that these are of good quality. She collates all assessment information. However, the use of this to inform planning is unsatisfactory, since there is no overall strategy for ensuring that teachers know what needs to be done to raise standards further. For example, teachers know in general terms where assessments identify strengths and weaknesses in particular areas of mathematics in their classes, but they have no clear guidelines for deciding what action to take to raise standards.

SCIENCE

98. At the previous inspection, standards were judged to be average. Inspection evidence showed standards in science generally below national expectations for pupils at both seven and eleven years of age. Since the previous inspection, teaching has improved, but the amount of curriculum time for science has decreased as a consequence of the introduction of national strategies in English and mathematics. As a result, the volume of pupils’ work is less than expected and, while the curriculum is covered in line with requirements, a depth of coverage has been adversely affected, with a consequent ‘knock-on’ effect on standards. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and often make satisfactory progress, achieving at least in line with their prior attainment. Their learning benefits from the support of classroom assistants, parents and other volunteer helpers. Pupils with English as an additional language also progress satisfactorily and generally achieve in line with monolingual peers.
99. By seven, most pupils have good scientific knowledge and vocabulary. Year 2 pupils know the difference between “transparent”, “translucent” and “opaque” and are developing an understanding of “fair testing”. Pupils know about parts of the body, the senses, and the life cycles of animals and plants. They can separate man-made from natural materials, understand reversible change and discuss different light sources. Yet their tasks are too often geared to worksheets, inhibiting the development of their own presentation skills. Handwriting and spelling are weak, even where words are copied. There is a focus on work about life and living processes, but little evidence of experimental or investigative science as a feature of past work.
100. By 11, pupils know about food chains, what forms a healthy diet and the beneficial effects of exercise. They know the differences between solids, liquids and gases and that mixtures are separated in many ways. Year 6 pupils are beginning to grasp that weight is force, measured in newtons using a force meter. Pupils in Year 5 see that the amount of air in different kinds of soil is variable. Year 4 pupils examine, at first-hand, root structures of flowering plants. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are aware of helpful and harmful drugs and of the functions of major human organs. As with younger pupils, the volume of pupils’ work is relatively small because of the restricted time for science. There is much less emphasis on worksheets in Years 3 to 6, so presentational skills are improving by 11. But, again,

there is little evidence of experimental or investigative work in pupils' books.

101. Teaching in science is at least satisfactory throughout the school. Of the six lessons observed, one was good and one was very good. This marks an improvement on the last inspection. Lessons are often well planned, with pupils managed and organised well and a lively pace kept. Teachers in half the lessons observed used investigations in their lessons, with scientific language consistently to the fore. In a Year 6 lesson on force, pupils enjoyed testing out a force meter and interpreting measures by comparing newtons and grams. They talked of "up-thrust" and "gravity" with assurance. Pupils responded well to their task and worked co-operatively to measure and record their findings. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils faced a series of tasks about habitats. Initially, they matched statements to a number of creatures and ended designing an experiment to discover whether a creature preferred light or dark conditions. The increasing challenge such activities presented as the lesson progressed promoted growing interest, prompting perceptive discussions. As a result, pupils' learning was very good. However, this level of challenge was not present in all lessons. Most teachers are confident in the subject, using a scientific vocabulary skilfully. Where lessons are only satisfactory, this is due to limitations in subject knowledge and a lack of pace, with pupils generally undertaking the same task. These tasks sometimes do not sufficiently test the abilities of higher achieving pupils or are too demanding for lower achievers. However, pupils respond well to opportunities to be involved in investigations and mostly co-operate well. They value each other's opinion. A feature of good lessons is that they often enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills. Marking is variable and comments on pupils' books are often geared simply to encouraging pupils rather than suggesting ways of improving work or challenging their thinking.
102. Since the last inspection, there has been a review and updating of curriculum documents and schemes of work in line with the most recent national guidance. Science is taught as a discrete subject each week. Planning has improved noticeably and teaching is monitored regularly by senior staff. Statutory test scores are analysed to determine subject strengths and weaknesses. Also, assessments at the end of each unit of work give a clear indication of the levels pupils achieve, relative to National Curriculum indicators. However, assessment information is not well used to decide what pupils should learn next. In some classes, pupils' books contain useful target sheets, although few of these have been completed. Potentially, this is an effective tool to promote pupils' involvement in their own assessment, but its unsystematic application limits its usefulness.
103. The use of computers in science is a developing area, although few attempts to develop cross-curricular links are made. Science resources are poor and there are no plans to improve provision. The library has insufficient science books to support full delivery of the subject.
104. The enthusiastic co-ordinator took up her role in September. She is well qualified for the responsibility and the headteacher has arranged for her to attend a science co-ordination course. She has carried out a subject audit but is given little opportunity to gain an overview of classroom teaching and learning. She is aware that the school allocates only two thirds of the curriculum time most schools give to science. These facts are accepted in the school, as a result of the headteacher's recent monitoring activities. Matters relating to developing the role of subject co-ordinators are, as already outlined, in hand. The school has a designated science governor with a clear view of her role. She is very supportive of the school.
105. The headteacher is aware of the time, resource and co-ordination limitations that currently impede pupils' progress and is planning to address science provision as a matter of urgency. Despite known limitations, improvements in standards at expected levels and in the quality of teaching since the last inspection are an encouraging base for future subject development.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Only one lesson, in Year 2, was seen during the inspection because of time-tabling. Judgements are based on this lesson, on a scrutiny of work in classrooms and on talking to Year 6 pupils. Only two-dimensional work was seen, with no evidence presented of pupils working in three dimensions, although older pupils remembered enjoying such work in Year 5. By seven, pupils reach satisfactory standards in painting and drawing from observation. Some pupils do better than expected. A small sample of Year 6 work was below expectations for this age. This picture reflects that of the previous inspection, although, then, 11-year-olds were found to reach broadly average standards in aspects of work seen. Specifically, pupils' work was thought limited in scope, with little evidence of the study of famous artists, for example.

This remains true. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in line with their peers and achieve similarly to them. In fact, a pupil with learning difficulties was seen to make good progress during a Year 2 lesson.

107. Year 1 pupils build well on skills established in the Reception class. They make small-scale drawings of things seen during a museum visit for their history studies. Drawings are carefully copied from postcards and photographs to aid recall and are completed with a colour wash. Pupils control tools for techniques they use, with a good attention to detail and picture space. They have painted portraits and mixed colours to achieve a match to skin colour. They have obviously thought carefully about how to paint hair and place features, noting where ears and the pupils of eyes are positioned and studying details such as eyelashes. Year 2 pupils look hard at the cut surfaces of various fruits and vegetables. They select the one they want to draw and fill in quite a large picture space with their outline, showing the shape with fair accuracy. Some have a very good ability to draw the shape and patterning of seeds in a scale that is considerably larger-than-life (as when a boy draws a kiwi fruit in unusual detail). Others, inspired by their peers' successes and a teacher's use of the work as exemplars, succeed in emulating this. Later, pupils select colours to match a chosen item from a range of oil pastels. They know how to smudge these or draw with them delicately. Some pupils achieve remarkable effects, as when a pupil studies the different greens and 'dotty' pattern of a head of broccoli.
108. Year 4 pupils have drawn Tudor portraits with varying success. More able pupils have copied pictures of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, recognisably, in pencil. All can mix watercolour paints and use these in a controlled manner, so work stays clean. Attention is paid to suitable proportions in the available space and to facial expressions and details of dress. A pencil drawing of the Taj Mahal linked to geography is very well conceived and executed. It shows a developing awareness of how to create a three-dimensional effect on a flat surface, by studying a photograph. On the other hand, very simple monoprints of an elephant connected with a poem are below levels of technique that might be expected. In Year 5, pupils have made large-scale 'mosaic' patterns with oil pastels, taking care with the juxtaposition of colours, which are used densely. Their portraiture shows good development from that of younger pupils. Faces are carefully observed for shape, skin tone and features. They fill quite a large space effectively. In Year 6, a small display of paintings shows experimentation with brush strokes and colour, but the work is slight and below expected standards. Sketchbooks, used in some classes, are not consistently seen as tools for thinking about art and design activities. However, Year 4 pupils experimented in an interesting way in their sketch books with techniques 'after the style of' Vincent van Gogh.
109. Year 6 pupils say they have had limited opportunities for art and design activities this year. They realise how the demands of core subjects such as English affect what they do, in their final primary year, and how time-tabling for art and design alternates with design and technology. They enjoy both subjects, and say they would like to do more art and design activities. For example, they recall taking part in a 'workshop' approach to the subject last year with real enjoyment. So, they learned "all sorts of things like different kinds of printing, how to sculpt three-dimensional objects and how to paint with different materials".
110. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching, but, in the lesson seen, teaching was good. The wide range of fruit and vegetables available for pupils to choose from stimulated everyone's interest. These were chosen so as to match pupils' experiences of foods eaten at home. The lesson linked also to a class theme on food. Magnifying glasses aroused pupils' enthusiasm once they saw how to improve their work with these as an aid. The teacher kept pupils' attention on the task set while she helped individuals or made timely interventions to share instances of 'work in progress' with the class. Her comments helped pupils experiment with different effects ("Can you see how *carefully* ... has drawn the seeds and how well he has shown the pattern?"). Pupils were proud when their work was chosen and all became determined to succeed.
111. Some art-linked computer programs are available, but this is a still developing aspect of both information and communication technology and art and design. As noted, teachers make good links with subjects across the curriculum when feasible, so pupils can both apply and further develop relevant skills. There are a few books about art and famous artists in the library, but this area of the subject, as acknowledged by the newly appointed co-ordinator, does not feature strongly in the school's work. The school wishes to improve standards in art and design and the co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role and looks forward to opportunities to develop the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. At the previous inspection, little work in the subject was seen and no teaching was observed. Standards at seven and eleven were then below national expectations. Since that time, the policy document and scheme of work have been reviewed in the light of the latest national guidance. This has given a structure to the subject, which was previously lacking. As a result, standards have risen and pupils reach expected standards at seven and 11 years of age. Only two lessons were observed, in Years 1 and 4. Judgements about standards are, therefore, drawn largely from scrutinising pupils' work (both in lessons and on display), talking to pupils and from studying long and medium term planning. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their prior abilities. Bilingual pupils also make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their peers.
113. By seven, pupils are beginning to use simple tools to cut and shape materials such as fabric, paper and card. In a Year 1 class, they rehearsed cutting techniques with paper and scissors. They mastered skills of cutting straight and in curves, and of sticking strips together to give extra strength. They were aware of safety aspects of using tools such as scissors. Skills needed to fashion lever and slider cards, so that daffodils on Mother's Day cards move, were also being developed. Such skills will be used again later in the year to make pop-up cards and finger puppets. Pupils know that hinges and levers can help construct moving arms and legs. They make their own decisions about materials and tools they use. Evaluation of work with pupils aged seven and under is done in discussion with their teacher. There was no evidence of written evaluations.
114. By 11, pupils are beginning to design for particular purposes. In a Year 4 lesson, they designed a chair for a fairy-tale character, considering their design in terms of function, structure and the fitness for purpose of materials. By 11, pupils in Year 6 design slippers and consider which materials will make their product durable and comfortable. Pupils are familiar with design-briefs and construction but are less certain of evaluation processes. In the work seen, designs were well drawn and labelled, materials and tools carefully chosen. However, as at the time of the last inspection, little formal written evaluation is done. This is a weakness. Pupils throughout the school respond enthusiastically to design and technology tasks. They discuss their work with interest, talking about processes involved in designing and modelling. They enjoy corporate experiences afforded by the subject. They understand about using tools safely and the importance of hygiene when working with food.
115. The limited number of lesson observations makes judgements about design and technology teaching across the school difficult. The teaching observed was satisfactory in one lesson and very good in the other. The planning of lessons and teachers' questioning skills are good. Good subject knowledge ensures that pupils are challenged and well supported. Lesson plans are detailed and learning objectives well related to the new scheme. Pupils build well on what they have done and skills develop systematically.
116. The lack of a co-ordinator hampers effective development of the subject. Assessment procedures are linked to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance, recording pupil coverage of National Curriculum requirements. Future planning is not yet informed by assessment and the absence of exemplars of work (for example, in a subject portfolio) means there is no sure indication of what can be expected at different ages. There is very little evidence of the use of computers within design and technology. Resources are satisfactory and securely and safely stored.
117. Satisfactory improvement has been achieved since the last inspection and pupils achieve standards comparable with most schools. The appointment of a co-ordinator would give the subject a cohesion it lacks at present.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers show that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found in most schools. The satisfactory progress described in the last inspection report is being maintained. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, achieving at least in line with their prior attainment. Those with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their peers.

119. Year 1 pupils closely observe their surroundings, recording a walk through the locality on a simple map. They examine safety measures in the streets surrounding the school at first hand. They identify road markings and signs to restrict parking and ensure pedestrian safety. In Year 2, pupils build on this work by drawing plans of the school, detailing their routes to and from school. They look beyond the immediate environment in London by compiling diaries of holidays. They locate where they have been on world maps and receive cards from Barnaby Bear. By the end of Year 2, most can list similarities and differences between contrasting environments, by naming hot and cold places and saying what they would like and dislike about being there.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have sufficient skills to manage some research of their own. For example, they use information and communication technology, books and globes and maps to find out about major mountain ranges. From studying particular rivers of the world, they generalise about the stages from source to mouth. They recognise the effect of rivers on the landscape and on the settlement of communities. They understand the 'water cycle' and environmental issues such as flooding and drought. They are aware that people damage as well as improve their environments and relate this awareness to local issues. Pupils know about conservation, expressing concerns about pollution caused by traffic, factories and litter. They are keen to learn, enjoy looking at maps and finding out about distant locations. There are plans to introduce a residential Year 6 visit to allow pupils to compare and contrast environments as well as acquire social skills and develop independence. Pupils' knowledge of a contrasting location is derived from a study of life in India. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils compared and contrasted the daily routines of two pupils working in very different Indian schools.
121. Topics in geography alternate with history on the timetable, usually half-termly. Due to the organisation of the curriculum, only two geography lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. Teaching was good in one of these and satisfactory in the other. Discussions with teachers, a scrutiny of their planning and of the standards of pupils' work, indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' planning follows national guidance to ensure appropriate coverage of programmes of study and to build up skills progressively over time. There was little evidence in the examination of pupils' work of homework being set, but a Year 3 lesson on weather forecasting led to pupils being asked to collect newspaper cuttings for the next lesson. The marking of work in books is variable, but comments are generally encouraging. They rarely tell pupils how they might improve.
122. There is no curriculum co-ordinator to develop the subject further and provide an overview of provision. Classroom practices are monitored only by senior managers. The headteacher wishes to remedy this situation as soon as possible.

HISTORY

123. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection because of the way history is time-tabled. It alternates with the teaching of geography. Judgements are made on the basis of these lessons, scrutiny of the little work available and talking to Year 6 pupils and to the co-ordinator. By Year 2, pupils achieve broadly in line with what is expected. When talking about history, Year 6 pupils, however, have limited recall and work completed in the autumn term was not available for discussion. Notwithstanding this fact, standards for the age are below expectations. At the previous inspection, standards achieved by seven and 11-year-olds were found to be broadly average. Since then, the school acknowledges it has paid less attention to non-core subjects, such as history, because of its preoccupation with government initiatives in English and mathematics. Available evidence suggests that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers and relative to prior learning.
124. Year 1 pupils look carefully at a reproduction of a Victorian painting and notice everyday objects different from the ones currently in use. They are helped in this by a recent visit to a museum which they remember with enthusiasm. They pick out an iron in the picture, knowing it had to be heated by the fire, whereas, now, irons run on electricity and you "just plug them in." They know a cloth was placed on the iron's handle when in use because it got very hot. They are interested in the iron's stand and want to know what it is for. They realise candles are used to give light because "there is no oil lamp in the picture" and they recall seeing such lamps at the museum, remembering how they work. Later, pupils sort through photocopied pictures to decide which belong in the 'old' section of a work sheet and which in the 'to-day' section. They explain they have visited two museums which they can name, liking them both. In one, they found out about "old toys" that children played with a long time ago. Year 2 pupils have

written simple sentences about Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. These are copied so that all summarise the same information, but they are based on class work on the Victorians, which they have understood.

125. In Year 4, pupils recall a visit to All Hallows Church before going to the Tower of London, as part of their Tudor studies. Collectively, they demonstrate a detailed recall of these visits and relate the things that specially interested them. For example, they learned that Catherine of Aragon had 14 pregnancies but only one surviving child (Mary Tudor). A boy remembered being told how Henry VIII raised taxes because he needed more money and some talked about the plot to kill the king. In a task aimed at establishing what materials were used to build Tudor houses and whether there were differences between the houses of rich and poor people, pupils talk knowledgeably about the timber frames used for buildings. They list simple facts about differences between rich and poor, aware of how people's lives have changed since then. Year 6 pupils have a very poor understanding of time-lines in relation to the class work they have done, although they could recall the themes covered.
126. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory in one and good in the other. In Year 1, a potentially good lesson lost momentum after an interesting whole-class discussion as pupils turned to cutting out small photocopied pictures, which some found fiddly. Adults helped in order to speed things up, by-passing the real purpose of the lesson to a marked extent. So, pupils did not build on earlier work as much as they might have done. Worksheets, frequently of poor quality, dominate many recording tasks in a number of classes. For example, Year 1 pupils cut out photocopied images and Year 2 pupils completed formatted sheets when writing about two famous Victorian nurses. A more interesting approach was taken with some work in Year 3. Pupils had worked together in pairs and set down the questions they wanted to ask people who could help them find out more about their school (built about 150 years ago). Also, there is some evidence of these pupils' field study work. For instance, they have looked at window and door shapes and the kinds of bricks used in buildings, estimating how old the buildings might be.
127. No evidence of computer use with history studies was seen, but the school accepts this as an area for development. Good resources are enhanced by a small school 'museum' of artefacts, changed at intervals according to the focus of work in school. There is a reasonable supply of books for research purposes, although those in Year 4 were not recent publications. In fact, the teacher had found it hard to find different levels of text to meet the needs of all pupils for a task linked to their Tudor studies. Pupils were not seen using the library for their own research. It seems mostly to be used for small group work. The school expands its own resources with books borrowed from a local library when necessary. Visits to places of interest are also a good feature built in to teachers' planning.
128. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator has a good grasp of the work done in some classes, because of her role as a support teacher. She also influences the planning of lessons in these classes, seeing it as vital that pupils ask pertinent questions and use first-hand as well as secondary sources in their work. However, she does not have an overview of teaching and learning generally and so can make no sure judgement about where improvements can best be made. She has reviewed provision in light of the latest curriculum guidelines and themes are 'mapped out' across year groups in accordance with these. There are, though, quite long 'gaps' in history teaching in some years, most notably Years 2 and 6, and this certainly affects pupils' subject understanding, as evident in Year 6. The history policy is reviewed regularly and kept updated.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Standards in information and communication technology are close to national expectations for pupils aged seven and 11. This judgement is confirmed by the range and quality of work seen and through talking to pupils. At the previous inspection, seven and 11 year-olds were found to reach average standards. These standards have not been maintained due to raised national expectations and the school's lack of sufficient resources. Poor resources greatly restrict pupils' access to computers and lead to many having to wait several days to practise skills taught in weekly lessons. Also, pupils' work reveals that skills are seldom applied to other subject areas because of the very limited number of machines. Effectively, pupils have little chance to learn how computing skills might best be applied. The school does not have a computer suite because of severe space limitations within the building. Even so, National Curriculum requirements for the subject are fully met, a fact which reflects well on the quality of teaching and the level of pupil interest in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and frequently benefit from the good support of their classmates as well as adults.

They achieve at least in line with their prior attainment. Pupils learning English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and reach standards in line with their peers.

130. By seven, pupils use the mouse competently and are developing typing skills. They can log on, access programs, use a variety of fonts and generate pictures for cards and calendars. They produce, amend and print out stories and texts, use enter and return keys to produce line-breaks for poems and simple graphs for mathematical data. When Year 1 pupils amended a text for Mother's Day cards, by highlighting and capitalising, they used the mouse skilfully, changed colours and font size and knew how to access the printer. Their work was linked to making the cards in a design and technology lesson and represented one of the few examples seen of links made across subjects.
131. By 11, pupils access programs easily, locate and load files, collate data on spreadsheets and amend and edit work. They use terms such as "drag", "clipart", "icon" and "format" with understanding. However, pupils are often frustrated by their lack of keyboard skills and many pupils type with an index finger only. Increasingly, pupils improve their keyboard skills by practising on computers at home. More than 50 percent of pupils can do this. They also research other subjects on the Internet, bringing information to school in the form of computer printouts.
132. Pupils' attitudes to lessons are never less than satisfactory and in many lessons they are at least good. Pupils listen attentively to instructions and act on them enthusiastically. They willingly volunteer to demonstrate skills during whole-class work. They greatly value the time they have on computers and work very hard either independently or in pairs. Pupils help each other very well and, as noted, pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the support of their peers as well as from the teacher. Pupils treat equipment with respect. As a result of pupils' positive attitude towards the subject, they make satisfactory progress. Evidently, this could be improved with better resources, as the school well knows. Overhead projectors are frequently well used and older pupils enjoy operating these, with confidence and good levels of skill.
133. Teaching is at least satisfactory and almost half the lessons seen were good or better. Lessons are brisk, generally well planned and show that most teachers have very secure subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 4 lesson there was an excellent focus on relevant vocabulary. Pupils were able to explain "row", "column", "insert/delete" and "highlight". They also knew how to set up and modify a table to receive data. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and use challenging questions. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils revealed a good understanding of subject vocabulary and could demonstrate how to make various changes to information on a spread-sheet in response to a teacher's close questioning. Teachers know their pupils well and tasks are appropriately set, so that pupils build successfully on prior learning.
134. The school has recently reviewed its policy document and adopted much from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme. Year groups have their own files on computer which serve as useful on-going records of pupils' achievement in the absence of formal assessment procedures in the subject. Some teachers keep their own assessments and records of pupils' achievements, often relating them to National Curriculum subject requirements. However, such good practice is not uniform, and the school has no overview of standards reached and how these can be improved (for example, by organising a portfolio of exemplars of pupils' work).
135. There is a range of computers in school. Some are out-dated and need regular repair. Only some have access to the Internet. All classrooms have at least one stand-alone computer and a few have two. The distribution of the latter appears random and deployment is to be rationalised by the newly appointed co-ordinator. A range of control technology equipment is available, but little used at present. The co-ordinator has a special interest in this field and is checking out resources to ensure that they are used appropriately. He has worked very hard to bring all items of equipment, much previously overlooked, into everyday use. He has already made a marked impact on teachers' confidence. For instance, following his influence a teacher used a large screen in a Year 6 lesson, so that everyone could see key teaching points easily. The co-ordinator does not yet monitor teachers' planning or see pupils' work and there is at present no provision for observing classroom practices.
136. Links with other subjects are developing. This was seen in Year 1 and in a Year 4 music lesson where pupils worked in pairs on a computer program to select and arrange notes for a score with creditable accuracy. However, apart from small classroom displays showing computer-generated work (for

example, spreadsheets and databases) there is little evidence of cross-curricular computer work around the school. The school is well supported by a governor who brings enthusiasm and expertise to the subject. Headteacher and governors alike recognise the good work being done in school and the need to resolve resource deficiencies in order to raise standards further.

MUSIC

137. Music is not as prominent in the school as at the last inspection, since arrangements for teaching the subject have changed along with the substantial change in staffing. Whereas, previously, a visiting specialist taught music to all year groups, class teachers now do this. Commendably, some teachers work hard at this to good effect, in spite of difficulties experienced. Generally, however, the quality of teaching is varied and the fact that a number of teachers lack subject confidence affects standards, overall. Year 2 pupils reach satisfactory standards in singing. During a lesson observed, they maintained a steady pulse. Year 6 pupils, too, worked broadly within levels expected for their age in a music workshop taken by an outside specialist. In whole-school assemblies, pupils sing quite pleasingly with good diction and accurate pitch in time to a CD track. However, standards across the subject are generally below those expected for pupils from Years 1 to 6. At the last inspection, pupils of seven and 11 were judged to reach average standards. The headteacher is keen that the subject should regain its former profile so that standards rise. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and generally achieve in line with their peers.
138. In Year 2, pupils can clap the rhythm patterning their names. They sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They have had little opportunity to handle or explore percussion instruments. However, in a lesson observed, they settled quietly to listen to a song on the CD player and immediately responded by swaying in time to the pulse. The teacher then decided, wisely if a little nervously, to diverge from the recording because the tempo became too fast for them to follow in learning the words. The strategy was effective. Teaching involved pupils in repetition and coaching, so, on this occasion, they learned to sing the whole song through with its CD backing track by the end of the lesson.
139. Year 6 pupils are taking part in the Borough's music festival in July. During a preparatory workshop led by a member of the local authority's music service, they showed strong interest and enthusiasm. They maintained a cycle of eight steady beats, accenting these at different places in the cycle. After some coaching and rehearsing, they could sustain their own group cycle whilst fitting it to others. This way of working with specialist support offers valuable in-service opportunities to staff. The class teacher and teaching assistant were actively involved throughout and took full advantage of the workshop.
140. Teaching ranges from good to poor and is satisfactory, overall. Generally, teachers' subject knowledge and teaching methods inadequately meet the needs of the pupils. The published scheme being used does not offer enough explanatory support for planning lessons, so teachers try to deliver content and activities they themselves hardly understand. This results in confusion and, on occasion, misinformation being given to pupils. For example, a Year 3 teacher tried valiantly to sustain pupils' interest in learning part of a song and keeping a steady beat on untuned percussion instruments. While successful in this, she was foiled at times by her insecure subject knowledge. For example, she was uncertain about the pitch in a phrase and whether this was sustained on one note or changed. Nor was learning extended to the whole song as it could have been in the time available, since notes for the lesson restricted teaching to the content actually covered. Such problems are exacerbated by pupils' inexperience at handling instruments. For example, Year 4 pupils hit wooden blocks and chime bars extremely hard with beaters, showing they are unused to handling these. During a lesson, following adult intervention, some experimented with different qualities of sound and then pursued their set task purposefully, but a group continued to use their beaters inappropriately. When a teacher finally suggested diplomatically that they experimented with *clapping* the required rhythm, pupils complied and, in fact, succeeded at the task.
141. The most successful lessons are those where teachers have some subject knowledge or where they use good, general, class teaching skills. These help them move away from the published scheme, because they can then make informed judgements about what pupils understand and how their skills might develop. For example, notwithstanding the problems outlined above, the Year 4 lesson discussed was well planned and organised, so that pupils were engaged in many different activities, including singing and instrumental work. Effective coaching strategies and high expectations helped improve the singing. Instrumental activity was based on an ostinato pattern that eventually became an accompaniment to the song. Pupils realised that the notes "go up in leaps and there are gaps" (that is, they knew notes did not

go up step-by-step). During this lesson, pairs of pupils were allowed to take turns on a music program on the class computer. They selected and arranged notes with creditable success to create a melody. All made good gains in learning. In the least successful lessons, teachers' poor subject knowledge hampers learning with little, if any, progress made. This was seen in a Year 5 teacher's uncertainty about relevant musical terminology (such as *diminuendo*). The teacher also admitted ignorance about Beethoven, even though his version of the "Ode to Joy" formed a major part of the lesson, taken from the scheme of work.

142. Information about the composer of the month is displayed in the hall and music by this composer is played as the pupils arrive at and leave assembly. There was no opportunity for quiet, reflective listening to the music as part of assemblies, although, when questioned, a few pupils could name the composer and some were able to offer sensible suggestions as to what instruments they thought they had heard. Pupils have opportunities to perform in concerts given to parents and governors at times and older pupils talked with enthusiasm about their involvement in a school concert at the end of the Christmas term.
143. Although all elements of the curriculum are covered over time in line with the scheme of work, pupils have insufficient opportunities to work at their own ideas, explore instruments or compose and perform their own music. The school has not, yet, considered how the latest curriculum guidance might be utilised. Musical instruments, especially tuned instruments, are in need of replacement and replenishing. A new music co-ordinator is to be appointed and the school is mindful of the need to ensure that the subject is led in ways that will allow it to take the prominent role envisaged by the headteacher.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Standards at seven and 11 are broadly average. This is much the same picture as at the last inspection. There is currently no provision for swimming, though this is soon to be re-instated. Lessons observed covered gymnastics activities, both with apparatus and without, and outside games lessons, so judgements are based on these. While no lessons were observed in Year 6, because of time-tabling, standards seen in other year groups (including Year 5) suggest standards are generally satisfactory by 11. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with their peers.
145. In Years 1 and 2, pupils respond enthusiastically to the content taught. However, poor behaviour and lack of self-discipline of some Year 1 pupils interrupt the flow of learning at times and adversely affect the progress of lessons. Nevertheless, pupils are acquiring skills of balance and control when running, jumping and twisting as they travel round the hall or along a bench on to a mat. Although they have difficulty understanding the difference between a 'spinning' movement and one that 'twists', they can sequence a series of movements in line with planned learning intentions. Year 2 pupils have good balancing skills, sequencing movements together across many different kinds of apparatus. They find interesting ways of moving across mats and beams, though ropes present greater challenges. Many find it hard to control and co-ordinate movements for climbing up and coming back down.
146. In Years 3 to 6, pupils set out equipment for lessons and understand the rules and the need for safety controls governing such activity. In one lesson, Year 3 pupils co-operated in pairs at throwing and catching a ball, recapping on previous work. They showed reasonable control in this, but found it hard when the use of a bat was introduced and they had, then, to co-ordinate hand and eye movements to hit the ball accurately. Good teaching meant that they realised they should stand correctly and transfer their weight from one foot to the other, but many found it hard to position their bodies in ways demonstrated and to co-ordinate actions. Year 4 pupils created gymnastic sequences that involved rolls, twists and turns. They worked in pairs with sustained concentration, rehearsing, discussing and amending their sequences. In the final demonstrations, pupils watched each other's work closely and looked for "strengths and weaknesses". They were able to use words such as 'timing' and 'mirror image' when evaluating what they did.
147. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, but is most frequently satisfactory. Teachers generally dress appropriately, setting a good example for pupils. Because of their subject knowledge, they can demonstrate activities where necessary (as seen in the Year 3 games-skills lesson). They also use pupil demonstrations well (as when Year 4 pupils demonstrated gymnastics sequences). Lessons are well structured. They start with a brisk warm up and, mostly, end with a wind down. Even the youngest pupils can give reasons for these procedures. There were good examples of teachers' effective coaching skills. In Year 4, pupils were shown how to control their heads and carefully position their hands for a forward roll

and then reverse the process for a backward roll. In less successful lessons, pupils' poor behaviour dominates proceedings and behaviour-management is not enforced with sufficient firmness, so learning is affected. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson, where many did not respond to a teacher's instructions and so did not progress as expected in refining their balancing skills. A significant number miss lessons because they forget their kit. Often, teachers include these pupils by setting them relevant tasks, such as observing how work is done and writing down comments to share with the class in the final part of a lesson. This good practice ensures that pupils are involved at some level in understanding the content being taught.

148. The curriculum plan is taken from the latest subject guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Difficulties with swimming have arisen recently because of the availability of a pool, locally. This problem is now resolved and lessons are booked to start again next term. The school hall is adequately resourced with basic equipment for physical education. The new subject co-ordinator is aware of issues to be addressed, such as supporting teachers' planning to make sure that a lesson's objectives are matched to levels of ability, and making sure that a higher profile is given to dance. Currently, dance is inadequately represented in curriculum coverage. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning and so has no firm grasp of where strengths are to be found and where improvements could be made.