

INSPECTION REPORT

ROXETH MANOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

South Harrow, Middlesex

LEA area: 310 Harrow

Unique reference number: 102203

Headteacher: Mr. Chris McDermott

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Tusha Chakraborti
12603

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 April 2002

Inspection number: 244564

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8-12 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Eastcote Lane
South Harrow
Middlesex

Postcode: HA2 9AG

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. E. Harandy

Date of previous inspection: 5 February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9007	Rafael Salasnik	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19774	Maura Docherty	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Art Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
22542	Mary Farman	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Information technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered?
23434	Marie Gibbon	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Roxeth Manor Middle School is an average size middle school situated in the Borough of Harrow for pupils aged 8-12. It currently has 331 pupils on roll of which 170 are boys and 161 girls. The school shares the site with Roxeth Manor First School. It draws most of its pupils from the surrounding three wards, which have high levels of multiple deprivation. The levels of income are low in these areas and these are in the lowest eight per cent of wards nationally for housing deprivation. The majority of pupils come from a range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The largest ethnic group comprises families originally from India. There are 82 refugee pupils. Pupil mobility is an increasing concern for the school. In the past two years, 55 pupils joined and 41 left the school at a time other than the normal time of leaving and entry. A high proportion of pupils, over 51 per cent, come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language and many of them are at the early stages of learning English. Main languages spoken, other than English, are Tamil, Gujarati, Punjabi and Somali. The eligibility for free school meals is well above the national average. Twenty eight per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is above average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. Attainment on entry to Year 4 is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Roxeth Manor Middle School is a good school and serves all its pupils well. It provides good quality education and has many good features. The quality of teaching is good and much improved since the last inspection. The school is led and managed effectively by the headteacher and staff. As a result, standards are improving over time. The school has a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and all pupils are included in all aspects of the school life, effectively. It is an effective school and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in art, information and communication technology and physical education.
- The quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school.
- Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is supported well by the staff and the governors.
- Pupils' attitudes to work, and their relationships with others, are very good.
- Provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and enhances pupils' learning experiences effectively.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, especially in writing, are below average at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7.
- The provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is not effective.
- Assessment is not used effectively to plan future lessons.
- Attendance is below the national average and, therefore, unsatisfactory.
- Governors' statutory requirements are not fully met in the annual report to parents and the school prospectus.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1996, when it was reported that the standards of attainment in some subjects, curriculum planning and the quality of teaching were the areas for improvement. The current inspection finds that the school has improved significantly since then.

All key issues have been addressed efficiently and successfully. The quality of teaching and curriculum planning have improved significantly and are now consistently good across the school. As a result, standards have improved in all subjects, although they are still below the national average in English due to a large proportion of pupils being at the early stages of learning English. Assessment procedures and their implementation are developing satisfactorily. The school complies with the requirement for a daily act of collective worship. The governors are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the school's work. All these improvements and effective teamwork by the staff indicate that the school is well placed to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

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

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

The table above shows that the standards in the national tests for the year 2001 are well below the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. This is due to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, a large number of pupils requiring a great deal more support in learning English and some pupils leaving the school before taking the national tests. Compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment is average in English, above average in mathematics and below average in science. Attainment in the national tests meets the school's own targets. An analysis of test results over five years indicate that standards are rising gradually and that there was a good level of improvement in 2000 as this was a particularly able group of pupils. It also shows a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment. For example, due to the teaching of the accelerated groups, the percentage of pupils gaining higher levels has increased markedly since the last inspection in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment in gaining higher levels are above the national average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. These results are comparable with those in 2000, despite a drop in the numbers achieving the average levels.

The findings of this inspection are that, for the current pupils in Year 6 and Year 7, standards are below average in English and average in mathematics and science. They are well above those expected of pupils of similar age in art and above the expected levels in information and communication technology and physical education at the end of Year 7. At the end of Year 6, standards are above average in art, information and communication technology and physical education. In religious education, standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are average at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school in Year 4 is well below the average for this age group. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress across the school. All other pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all subjects and achieve well. The school's results are broadly in line with the rate of improvement found nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	COMMENT
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show high levels of interest and involvement in their work and apply themselves very well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous to visitors and show respect for the school environment. This helps to create a positive climate for learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good. This means that the lessons are productive and enjoyable. Pupils show good initiative and responsibility and make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average.

The school is working hard in implementing its good procedures for improving attendance and punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 8 –11 years	Aged 11+ years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with a high proportion of teaching being very good or excellent. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when a significant proportion of teaching was less than satisfactory. The main reasons for this improvement have been the highly focused work of the school's improvement plan, the effective monitoring of the teaching and learning and curriculum planning. The good quality teaching has a positive impact on the good progress pupils make as well as making a substantial contribution towards promoting pupils' enthusiasm in Years 4 to 7 for learning in all subject areas. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and the basic numeracy and literacy skills are taught well. Teachers' planning for the longer term as well as for lessons is detailed and effective. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and ensure that work is sufficiently challenging and builds on previous learning. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them and respond well to the challenges set.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources to good effect to support pupils' learning. As a result all pupils gain in knowledge and understanding effectively as they move up the years. Teachers' classroom management skills are consistently very good and ensure that pupils behave well and work hard at all times. They create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in which pupils are able to concentrate and learn well. Very good relationships enable teachers to help pupils become more confident learners. However, marking of pupils' work is not consistent and pupils are not always made aware of the mistakes they make in their written work.

Pupils with English as an additional language, particularly those at the early stages of learning English, are not supported well. Teachers' planning does not always indicate how newcomers to English will be supported in class. Some of the staff do not appear to be aware of the specific linguistic needs of pupils acquiring English, particularly in lessons where there are fewer practical and visual elements to support pupils' learning. Moreover, the information teachers gather from their own informal assessment is not always used effectively to plan lessons.

The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The very good relationships in the school and the trust and confidence pupils have in their teachers and the teaching assistants provide pupils with good motivation to be involved in lessons and in their work. The teaching of pupils in small groups, such as the Progress Units in Year 7, is very effective and

gives very good support for the literacy skills of these pupils. Teaching assistants are well trained and make good contribution to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal and social development. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are met well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Those who are proficient in English make satisfactory progress but not as good as they could. Pupils at the early stages of learning English do not receive effective support in learning English and, therefore, do not make satisfactory progress. However, the school has identified it as a priority for development in its improvement plan.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for moral and social development is very good and it is good for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are very well cared for. The provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance makes a significant positive contribution to their personal and academic development.

The school is a secure and safe place for pupils to learn. It works well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is led and managed well. The headteacher provides effective and strong leadership and a very clear educational direction. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher, the senior teacher and other senior staff in managing and improving the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The strategic role of the governors is developing well. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Some of the statutory requirements in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school evaluates its performance well. The analysis of test results and the monitoring of teaching are used well to see where improvements could be made.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of all its staff, accommodation and learning resources to enhance pupils' learning. Grants and other funds are used very effectively for their intended purpose.

The school has an adequate number of staff and they are well trained. It applies the principles of best value very efficiently in all spending decisions and monitors its impact on financial planning closely.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • Children are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school promotes good behaviour. 	<p>A very small minority of parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework. • The school does not provide an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. • Behaviour in the school is not good. • The school does not work closely with parents. • Parents are not kept well informed about their children's progress.

The inspection team supports parents' positive views. The team concludes that the pupils are provided with a good amount of homework and a very good range of extra-curricular activities which enhances pupils' opportunities for learning and physical activities. Behaviour across the school is good. The school does its best to work closely with the parents. It has an open door policy so that parents can approach the headteacher any time. Teachers are available in the morning when they go out to collect pupils and, also, whenever they are free or by appointment. The team also found that the school provides the parents with sufficient information about their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of pupils when they start at Year 4 is well below average in comparison to that expected of pupils of this age. Pupils make good progress as they move up the school and, although standards are below or well below average in the national tests, the overall results as well as the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels have improved in line with that found nationally. The current inspection confirms that, as a result of good progress across the school, standards are improving. Pupils attain standards that are average in mathematics and science. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls in these subjects. In English, attainment is below the national average but this still indicates an improvement in standards since they entered the school in Year 4. A relatively small number of boys achieve the higher grades in English compared to girls, however, the school is addressing this.

2. Standards of attainment are well above those expected of pupils of similar age in art and above the expected levels in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE) at the end of Year 7. At end of Year 6, standards are above average in art, information and communication technology and physical education. Standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus in religious education and in line with the expected levels in all other subjects, at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7. Girls and boys achieve equally well.

3. Standards in English are below average at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Most pupils listen well in class, although a small minority of boys do not pay appropriate attention. Pupils are confident in their responses in class but only a few pupils extend their answers to any length and use more complex vocabulary confidently. In reading, although most pupils have an appropriate range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, their understanding of the texts they read is insufficient. They do not always have a secure grasp of a broad range of English vocabulary and expressions and this inhibits their ability to read an increasingly complex range of texts independently. Standards of writing are below average at the end of Year 6 and well below average at the end of Year 7. Pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes, but do not use a wide range of vocabulary. Standards of presentation are generally good and most pupils use a clear, joined form of writing. They make good use of information and communication technology to present their work.

4. In mathematics, standards are average at the end of Years 6 and 7. Many pupils enter the school with a well below average range of skills in number. They develop and increase these effectively as they move up the school and achieve well. Pupils develop the use of accurate mathematical language effectively and work practically to solve problems. The vast majority of pupils are confident in explaining the reasons for their answers. They describe effectively from a net what the three-dimensional shape will be, using the correct language and demonstrate a clear understanding of the properties of triangles and angles. By Years 6 and 7 most pupils have very secure skills in their ability to use and apply mathematics.

5. In science, pupils attain standards that are average in Year 6 and in Year 7. Pupils make good progress across the school. They carry out investigations in all aspects of science and present their findings through labelled diagrams and charts. They are developing good skills as young scientists, for example, they understand the importance of reducing variables in a scientific investigation so that all are constant except the one to be tested. Pupils know that scientific diagrams are drawn conventionally, with internationally accepted symbols rather than as pictorial representations.

6. By the end of Years 6 and 7, in ICT pupils achieve standards that exceed those expected from most pupils of this age. Pupils combine information using a range of techniques, such as cropping and resizing, in preparation for powerpoint presentations. Throughout the school pupils

use a range of fonts and styles that increase their word processing skills. They use the school's digital camera effectively across the curriculum and are confident in adding sound to text. The school uses information and communication technology regularly across the curriculum. This increases the pupils' ability to see computers as an integral part of everyday work and learning.

7. In religious education, by the end of Year 6 and Year 7, pupils achieve standards that meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They gain a sound knowledge of the world religions and respond well to class discussions and confidently give more information about their personal experiences.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. Individual education plans are of a good quality and clearly identify exactly what a pupil must do to improve. As a result, they achieve well in relation to their identified targets. However, pupils who speak English as an additional language do not make such good progress, as the school's provision for these pupils is not so effective. This means that the pupils who are competent in English make progress which is only satisfactory while those at the early stages of learning English make unsatisfactory progress. The school is aware that this area is in urgent need of improvement and has identified it as a priority in its improvement plan.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, as was found during the previous inspection. Pupils' personal development and their relationships amongst themselves and with adults are very good. Pupils' behaviour is good and has improved since the last inspection in that incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour outside lessons, reported then, were not observed during this inspection. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

10. Pupils enjoy coming to school and a number mentioned this unprompted to inspectors, referring to the lessons they enjoyed. Pupils are very enthusiastic in lessons. Examples seen included a Year 4 lesson working with Logo software in information and communication technology; a Year 4 lesson in which they analysed their design of chairs; and a Year 6 mathematics lesson where, under the teacher's skilful and probing questioning, there was a high level of animated discussion about how to find the symmetries of a range of regular and irregular polygons.

11. Behaviour is good. Pupils are aware of the all-school golden rules, class rules as well as the whole-school dinnertime rules. Behaviour around the school and in the playground is also generally good. There have been three fixed term exclusions in the current academic year.

12. No racist or sexist incidents were seen during the inspection. Very good relations amongst pupils from different ethnic groups were observed. In interview pupils reported that there are some minor incidents of bullying, mainly at playtime, but they are effectively dealt with.

13. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and perform them conscientiously. The school council, with members and deputies elected by each class, meets regularly. Pupils make suggestions and express their concerns to the representatives to raise at the meetings. After the meetings the representatives report back to their classes during circle time. These may involve discussions on issues raised as well as voting on proposals. There is a magazine run by the pupils themselves and so many volunteered that two committees were formed, each producing an issue. These are well produced.

14. Some older pupils help younger pupils in the paired reading scheme. Pupils reported that those experiencing difficulties in a particular subject as well as newer pupils are often helped by their fellow classmates. There are some opportunities for independent learning. Pupils are helpful to each other. They listen with respect to the views of others and are able to make constructive comments about their own and other pupils' work. A borough-wide survey was carried out to elicit pupils' views about what they want. The school summarised those filled in by its pupils which

showed that nearly all wanted a quiet working environment, not to be distracted from their learning by others and a pleasant and attractive environment.

15. Pupil relationships with each other in classrooms and outside are very good. Older and younger pupils and different ethnic groups were seen playing and socialising in the playground. Relations between pupils and adults are very good. They are very friendly and polite to visitors and show maturity in conversations.

16. The attendance rate is below the national average. The unauthorised absences are above. This marks a fall since the last inspection when the attendance figures matched the national average. The figures from the previous and current academic years show little change indicating that this is a long-term problem. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with one in every four lessons being very good or excellent. It is particularly good in ICT, mathematics, and art in Year 7. Teaching has improved markedly since the last inspection when a significant proportion was less than satisfactory. The main reasons for this improvement are the highly focused work of the school's improvement plan, the development of the roles and responsibilities of the subject leaders and the rolling programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

18. In most classes planning for the longer term as well as for lessons is detailed and effective. This ensures that work is sufficiently challenging and builds on previous learning, particularly where lessons are planned in a sequence. For example, in a series of art and design technology lessons - "Take a Seat" - pupils first investigate a range of chairs designed for specific purposes in varied styles. They then design their own chair, using specific criteria, construct prototypes and evaluate against the original design specifications. Work in books indicates that pupils build up understanding progressively until they complete the unit with confidence and evaluate their work.

19. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good and the effective implementation of the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies supports teaching well. Pupils do not always transfer good writing and spelling skills to other subjects. Teachers do not always appear to expect pupils to present work with accurate spelling or a good standard of presentation. For example, in science workbooks there were misspellings of subject-specific words, sometimes more than once in a single exercise. This suggests that the key vocabulary is not made available for easy reference or corrected.

20. Improved planning in teaching is supported well by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work in all subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy's Framework for Teaching also provides a basic model for teaching in many lessons. This is helping staff give sufficient direct teaching for pupils to make good progress. In most lessons there are good opportunities for talk in the introductory sessions and in group and paired activities. This is particularly supportive for bilingual pupils who are given an opportunity to hear the language needed to report back to their classmates.

21. Teachers review previous work well and use good questioning techniques to check pupils' understanding. They support pupils effectively to help them to come to a better understanding through good use of the whiteboard or further discussion. In most lessons teachers review previous work to establish a common level of understanding on which to build new learning. At the end of most sessions teachers check pupils' understanding and use this to assess what needs to be covered in the next session and to judge pupils' readiness to move on to the next level of learning. This sequence is well established and is used as ongoing assessment and evaluation of lessons.

22. Teachers' classroom management skills are consistently very good and ensure that pupils behave well and work hard at all times. Relationships are strong. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them and respond well to the challenges set. In some lessons, for example in art and science where great care needs to be taken with resources, pupils behave with great self-control and work well, even when not directly supervised. The school deploys its staff creatively to ensure specialist teaching across a year group in art, science and ICT. The literacy co-ordinator supports pupils and staff across the whole school to raise standards in literacy and this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' levels of attainment. One teacher works for part of the week supporting bilingual pupils in class. The quality of teaching in this area is generally unsatisfactory but the school is aware of this shortcoming and is reviewing the arrangements to ensure that these pupils receive effective support in acquiring English language skills. In addition teachers work with booster groups in mathematics and English specifically, targeting areas of weakness shown by pupils in previous assessment tests. The test results for mathematics and English are analysed and used effectively to raise standards in these subjects.

23. Support staff, including teaching assistants and a bilingual instructor, are well trained and teach groups and individuals who need support in basic numeracy and literacy work, sometimes through their home language. This is an obvious benefit to a range of pupils and helps the school achieve its aim of providing equality of opportunity for every pupil, for example, one pupil with physical disability was able to take full part in an art lesson through the excellent support provided by the classroom assistant. These members of staff are able to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class lessons and make good progress towards targets identified in their individual education plan. Two bilingual teaching assistants worked effectively with pupils learning English as an additional language to ensure that they had access to the learning, including key vocabulary.

24. One of the few areas of inconsistency in teaching is in teachers' marking in some subjects. Some good overall annotation of pupils' work is evident and provides a clear picture of teachers' expectations and the progress pupils are making. In these instances marking contributes well to overall assessment and provides a foundation for both teachers and pupils for next steps. On the other hand, in some workbooks marking provides few pointers for improvement. Another area of weakness is in English as an additional language, where the lack of expertise means that support is less effective, as was seen in an English lesson on Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," where the support for pupils with English as an additional language was inadequate. No time was planned for teaching the key vocabulary. Teachers' planning does not always indicate how newcomers to English will be supported in class. They are not aware of the specific linguistic needs of pupils acquiring English, particularly in lessons where there are fewer practical and visual elements to give pupils access to meaning.

25. The school has clear policies for Equality of Opportunity and Inclusion which mean that it makes good provision for lower attaining pupils. There is suitably challenging provision for pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils.

26. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The very good relationships in the school and the trust and confidence pupils have in their teachers and those who support them, provide pupils with good motivation to be involved in lessons and in their work. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and work effectively together to give good support in lessons and to monitor pupils' learning carefully. The teaching of pupils in small groups, such as the Progress Units in Year 7, is very effective and gives very good support for the literacy skills of these pupils. Pupils' individual education plans have clear, achievable targets, which are regularly reviewed by all those who are involved in their support.

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

27. There has been good improvement to the curriculum since the previous inspection. The school provides full coverage of the National Curriculum and there has been an increase in the time allocation for religious education. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all the statutory requirements. However, the time allocated for geography, history, art and design and technology is limited. There are supportive schemes of work for all subjects, and the school takes positive steps to promote and develop independent learning skills. The school works closely with the feeder first school and the receiving high school to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress in their learning

28. There is careful monitoring of planning to ensure that the work is suitably challenging for all pupils. The teachers effectively group pupils in English and mathematics according to their specific needs and abilities. This is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. The school meets all the requirements for the ICT curriculum. It uses pupils' skills in this area very effectively across the curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection where the curriculum was unsatisfactory.

29. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. It has successful and sensitive strategies for including pupils with learning difficulties in all school activities. The science curriculum includes a suitable and relevant health education programme that encompasses sex education and drugs awareness. The school is successful in its implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and pupils' use their skills in writing and number effectively across other subject areas. The school correctly emphasises the investigative element of work in mathematics and ICT. This makes a positive contribution to the development of independent learning skills. Curriculum is further enhanced by the provision for teaching French in Year 7. The time allocation within the curriculum is adequate for all subjects, but it is at the lower end of the scale for subjects such as geography, history, art and design technology. This does not give pupils the opportunity to build effectively on their skills and restricts achievement. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. These include a wide range of sporting activities as well as music, maths, ICT club and visits to places of interest which broaden and enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils participate enthusiastically in these activities.

30. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they have full access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. There is good provision for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through the Additional Literacy Support and Springboard Programmes. Pupils' individual education plans are good and targets are clear and identify the next small stages of pupils' learning. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of pupils' needs and most plan appropriately and often well to match those needs.

31. The provision for pupils speaking English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. The school has a significant number of ethnic minority pupils of whom 52 per cent are learning English as an additional language, many being at the early stages of learning English. The school has no specialist language teacher to co-ordinate this area effectively. This is having an unfavourable impact on the learning of bilingual pupils, particularly those who are at the early stages of learning English.

32. The school's overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

33. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is good. The school provides ample opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship. Pupils reflect on feelings such as loyalty and trust as they consider the meaning of teamwork. This develops their awareness of the value of intangible things. The school incorporates spiritual opportunities naturally into many lessons. An example of this was seen when pupils applauded achievement spontaneously in

physical education lessons. There is an element of spirituality at the end of lessons when pupils reflect on what they have learnt.

34. The provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. The school teaches pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong effectively. This begins on entry to Year 4 and increases as pupils progress through the school. There is a strong code of conduct implicit in all adults' actions and dealings with pupils. All members of staff ensure that their dealings with issues are firm, fair and consistent. Pupils have many opportunities to explore and develop moral issues within the curriculum and assemblies. For example, in one assembly the pupils were asked to consider the effects of teamwork. They are made aware of the implications and consequences of their actions. Pupils learn to appreciate moral issues concerning other people's property. They respect their teachers and other adults who work in the school.

35. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils in Year 4 quickly develop independent attitudes to learning. Teachers build on and increase these opportunities as the pupils progress through the school. All pupils develop their ability to work co-operatively and collaboratively in lessons very well. The school prepares pupils well for their transfer to secondary school and for life in the wider community. An example of this is the very good use of residential visits to enable pupils to develop a sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour. All members of staff promote good relationships between pupils and between pupils and themselves. The school develops pupils' concept of citizenship through their participation in the work of the school and the wider community. For example, pupils take part in sporting events and support a range of charities.

36. The school makes good provision for the cultural development of pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history and geography. The school teaches pupils about other religions, cultures and beliefs through subjects like history, geography and religious education. Pupils learn about ancient civilisations in Egypt and India and compare them with present day life in those countries. The school checks books for gender and race stereotyping and the school takes care to ensure that it provides positive images of cultures other than western. The school teaches pupils to value and respect a range of faiths and beliefs and prepares them effectively for life in a multi-cultural society. It values the diverse cultural backgrounds of all its pupils, for example, in school assemblies, in the production of dual language books and through Indian and African dance. This increases self awareness and self esteem.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Procedures for the care and safety of pupils are strengths of the school. Roxeth Manor Middle School is a safe and secure place, with a very caring environment. A designated member of staff has responsibility for pastoral care. Staff know their pupils well and provide them with very good support. The welfare officers are fully involved in the life of the school. They are qualified in first aid, as are a number of other staff members. The school's care of pupils was noted in the last report as being high and this has been maintained.

38. Child protection procedures are very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the designated child protection officers. This means that there is always a named officer on site during the school day. Staff are well informed about the procedures for child protection. The welfare officers are also involved, co-ordinating child protection action within the school and liaising with relevant social service agencies. The arrangements comply with the local authority procedures.

39. The school has a good health and safety policy. The caretaker checks the site as he goes around it each day and follows up on items needing repair. Audits have been carried out involving the headteacher, caretaker and teacher representatives.

40. Appropriate training is given to the staff on health, safety and welfare matters at regular intervals. Lunchtime supervisors have just completed a course, held over several weeks, on strategies for dealing with pupils. Incidents and accidents are recorded and reported appropriately and these records are regularly monitored by the welfare officers. Where accidents may cause particular concern, for example, injuries to a child's head, notes are sent home. Class teachers and other appropriate staff have lists of pupils' specific health needs. The school works with a wide variety of agencies and medical services, such as the school nurse and dentist, to promote pupils' welfare.

41. The procedures for monitoring behaviour are very good and are very well implemented ensuring good behaviour in school. Teachers use a variety of strategies and reward schemes to promote good behaviour. The reward schemes are related to individual classes, some being unique to a class as the pupils themselves have a say in choosing them. The school works hard to prevent unacceptable behaviour such as bullying and racism and no such incidents were seen during the inspection. Where behaviour in class falls below the accepted standard teachers have used surveys to help pupils understand the causes and try to come up with strategies to improve behaviour. There are behaviour management cards for individual pupils, which involve the pupil commenting on their action. These are sent home each night for the parent's signature.

42. The pastoral care co-ordinator prepares the themes for promoting pupils' personal development during the circle time. For example, the current theme is: how to improve behaviour, socialisation and improving the use of space on the playground. A visiting drama workshop is due to present a anti-bullying play soon. The school council, which has drawn up the lunchtime rules, is consulted and involved in issues of behaviour.

43. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registers are filled in correctly and returned to the office promptly. They are now monitored on a daily basis by the welfare officers and entered onto the computer system on a regular basis. Absences and punctuality are monitored effectively. An action plan for improving attendance and reducing unauthorised absences was drawn up in the autumn term and is being implemented effectively. This has had the effect of improving attendance considerably over the past few years although it still remains below average overall. The educational social worker visits weekly and deals with the more persistent cases. The school follows the correct procedures in the few cases of exclusions that it deals with.

44. The school provides a very good level of care and support for pupils with special educational needs. Outside agencies are appropriately involved in pupils' care and support and the school maintains a good range of records of pupils' progress. Annual reviews are organised according to requirements and pupils' education plans are regularly reviewed by staff involved in their support.

45. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. There are good assessment procedures in mathematics and these are implemented effectively to chart pupils' academic performance. Assessment procedures in English are sound and are being implemented satisfactorily. In science teachers maintain their own records of pupils' progress but there are no formalised and assessment records kept. A similar picture emerges in all other subjects where assessment procedures are insufficiently developed and teachers do not have any consistent records of pupils' progress. This means that teachers do not always have a clear view of what pupils can do and what they need to improve. Moreover, whatever limited information teachers gather from their own informal assessment is not used effectively to plan lessons. However, test results are collated and this data and statistical evidence is used effectively to help set targets and monitor standards in English and mathematics.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The partnership with parents is good. Those who replied to the questionnaire and attended the pre-inspection meeting showed overall satisfaction with the school. The parents receive good quality of information. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school and the contribution that they make to their children's learning is satisfactory. The partnership with parents is similar to that found during the previous inspection.

47. Parents are supportive of the school and they feel that their children make good progress; that the school has high expectations; that it provides a tolerant atmosphere with no racism and that behaviour is in general good. Parents are less satisfied with the range of activities offered. Some parents feel that standards were high whilst others feel they varied in different subjects; similarly some are satisfied with the homework provided whilst others are not.

48. Pupils' annual reports are good. They relate to the individual child's achievements in most subjects and are very detailed. There is a separate sheet for the pupil to provide a self-assessment and these serve to confirm the teachers' views. There is room for parental comments but no comments were seen on the selection of reports seen. There is a link book in which homework is recorded which serves for written comments between parents and school. The home-school agreement, which is good, is pasted into the front of the link book.

49. The governors' annual report includes a summary of the school year. However, the report and the school prospectus do not fully meet the statutory requirements. The annual meeting is held together with parents of the adjoining first school. Newsletters are sent out regularly giving information about the life of the school and future activities. There are also letters from year heads and a brief summary of what their children will be learning in the academic year.

50. A few parents help out in the school on a regular basis. The school welcomes the involvement of parents and other adult helpers and has produced a small booklet explaining how they can support their children's learning at home. More parents assist with school visits.

51. The headteacher practises an open door policy and parents are welcome to see him or the teachers. Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school and are happy with the way the school responds to their needs and concerns.

52. There are three parents' meetings, one each term. The autumn term meeting is an opportunity for parents to meet the new teacher, the spring term meeting is for an interim report and the summer meeting is to discuss the pupils' annual report. The majority of parents attend these meetings. For Somali parents, a teacher acts as interpreter; for parents who speak other languages there is usually a family member who can interpret. The school provides English as an additional language lessons twice weekly for parents and grandparents who are interested.

53. The school liaises closely and effectively with the parents of pupils who have statements of special educational need and makes careful and appropriate arrangements to ensure that parents of other pupils on the register of special educational needs are kept well informed of the provision made for their children.

54. The school celebrates the linguistic and cultural diversity and different religious observances of the school community. In a very good assembly, on the theme of working together as a team, the headteacher drew on the linguistic repertoire of a particular pupil to acknowledge the importance of bilingualism. The linguistic diversity of Roxeth Manor is also recognised by a range of displays in the books that pupils have made and in greetings and number symbols in a variety of languages.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher provides strong leadership and a very clear educational direction in developing and managing the school. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher and senior managers. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of the teaching and learning effectively and ensure that the outcome is well linked to the school's performance management and staff development programmes. Subject co-ordinators regularly attend appropriate training courses. Their roles in monitoring teaching are developing well. Staff development is also effectively related to the school improvement plan. As a result of these measures, the quality of teaching has improved significantly and standards are beginning to rise.

56. The governing body has a clear structure with appropriate terms of reference. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher who reports to them regularly, keeping them well informed about the work of the school. Through its committees, the governing body has a satisfactory oversight of the standards attained by pupils, staffing and resources and has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Some of the statutory requirements in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are not met.

57. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is a senior member of staff who has a good understanding of her role and ensures that there is a good level of both formal and informal communication between all staff involved in the support for pupils with special educational needs. There is a designated governor who, although recently appointed, has undertaken a programme of training for special educational needs and who visits the school on a regular basis. The school meets the requirements of the current code of practice and has identified a timetable for familiarising staff with the requirements of the new code of practice.

58. The provision for pupils speaking English as an additional language is not adequate and the majority of these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. The pupils who are at the early stages of learning English do not receive effective support in gaining competence in English. Pupils who are proficient in English make satisfactory progress but not as good as they could. The co-ordinator of English as an additional language is not an experienced English language specialist and, while he works to ensure that the school achieves an inclusive education for its bilingual pupils, there is a need for the school to provide specialist English language teaching support to ensure that the appropriate strategies are used in withdrawal or partnership teaching. The school has employed bilingual teaching assistants to work alongside pupils in class and this is an effective resource which benefits pupils where it is available during lessons.

59. The school has a high commitment to equality of opportunity that permeates its ethos. All members of staff are aware of the policy and its contents. Adults respect and value pupils and their contribution to school life. All members of the school community take pride in the school and care for its environment.

60. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Over the last two years, four teachers have left and four have been replaced. The appointment of bilingual support staff has proved to be effective in providing support for pupils to learn English through their home language but this has yet to have a positive impact on standards of the pupils with English as an additional language. The good induction programme in place for the newly-qualified and newly-appointed teachers is consistently applied. New staff are also well supported by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.

61. The teaching assistants have a good range of experience and work well as a team. More experienced members of the team are well qualified and those who are new to the role are currently undergoing training and being given good support by the senior teaching assistants to develop their understanding. There is clear recognition within the organisation of the school of their significant role in the support of pupils with special educational needs; their professional needs are recognised and well met. The ethos of the school as a strong community working

together for the benefit of pupils is well reflected in the work of all staff who work with pupils with special educational needs.

62. Accommodation is just satisfactory at present. However, the school does not have changing rooms for the pupils to change before and after games. The outside environment, such as the courtyard and playgrounds, have been improved and recently painted with markings for games and play activities. Resources for learning have improved over the past year and are very good in ICT and good in mathematics, music and physical education. They are satisfactory in other subjects.

63. The school has a very thorough approach to financial planning. The headteacher manages the finances very efficiently and ensures that educational priorities are supported very effectively through the school's financial planning. The draft budget, carefully prepared by the headteacher in consultation with staff, is presented to the governing body for approval, and includes appropriate reference to the school improvement plan. The principles of best value are applied efficiently in all spending decisions and their impact on financial planning is closely monitored. The school has been audited recently and was complimented on the way its specific grants are used and monitored.

64. The deployment of teaching staff is effective and ensures efficient management of the school. Resources are used well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. Funds allocated for the provision for pupils with special educational needs are used to good effect. Good use is also made of visitors and outside visits to enhance pupils' learning. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. To raise standards further and improve the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- i. continue to improve standards of attainment in English, especially in writing across the school; (paragraphs 1, 3, 67, 70, 71)
- ii. ensure that all bilingual pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable by enhancing the expertise of staff in planning to meet the needs of all bilingual learners across the curriculum; (paragraphs 8, 22, 23, 58, 60)
- iii. improve assessment in all subjects by:
 - (a) fully implementing the newly developed assessment procedures in all areas of the curriculum,
 - (b) using assessment results consistently to inform planning; (paragraph 45)
- iv. improve attendance by fully implementing the new procedures for monitoring attendance; (paragraph 43)
- v. ensure that the statutory requirements in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are fully met. (paragraph 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	16	32	14	2	0	0
Percentage	6	24	47	21	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		331
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		70

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		97

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	168

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.6	School data	1.3
National comparative data	6.3	National comparative data	0.4

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	42	41	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	36
	Girls	24	24	28
	Total	52	52	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (76)	63 (66)	77 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	31	35
	Girls	23	25	27
	Total	50	56	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (69)	69 (70)	75 (80)
	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	29
Black – African heritage	26
Black – other	11
Indian	48
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	101

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: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	27.6

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	256

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	836,006
Total expenditure	772,289
Expenditure per pupil	2,292
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,090
Balance carried forward to next year	105,807

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	
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)	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	331
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	30	5	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	39	52	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	52	14	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	46	14	14	0
The teaching is good.	36	52	7	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	41	7	11	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	36	4	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	2	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	30	43	14	5	7
The school is well led and managed.	41	43	7	4	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	50	7	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	36	20	9	13

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

ENGLISH

66. The 2001 national tests at the end of Year 6 show that pupils are performing well below the national average in English but at the same as pupils in similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels in English was similar to the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. Standards were similar in 1998 and 1999 but improved significantly in 2000. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels has risen significantly in the past two years.

67. During the inspection, standards in lessons at the end of Year 6 were below those expected in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Standards in Year 7 were below those expected in reading and speaking and listening and well below in writing. This represents a fall in standards since the school's previous inspection when standards were in line with those expected in both Year 6 and Year 7. Differences in standards reflect changes in the standards of attainment on entry to the school and an increase in the proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language and are on the early stages of language acquisition. The current Years 6 and 7 entered the school with generally well below average standards in all aspects of English. In Year 6 pupils achieve well because teaching is good and often very good. In Year 7 pupils achieve satisfactorily, reflecting the satisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well because they receive good support from their teachers and teaching assistants. The school is proud of the exceptional progress of one pupil with special educational needs who achieved below average standards in the Year 2 national tests and achieved above average standards in the national tests in English in Year 6. Pupils who have English as an additional language and are competent in English achieve satisfactorily in English. However, pupils who are at the early stages of English make unsatisfactory progress. This is because teachers' planning does not sufficiently identify clear tasks and activities which would help them develop their understanding and use of English progressively.

68. By the end of Year 6, most pupils listen well in class, both in whole-class situations and in their work together in groups or pairs. In Year 7, although the majority of pupils listen appropriately, a small minority of boys do not pay sufficient attention in class and distract others as well as themselves. Pupils are confident in their responses in class and in their exchange of opinions and ideas. However, only a few extend their answers to any length and many need supportive questioning to explain further or to give reasons for their opinions. Most pupils use an everyday range of vocabulary and only a small proportion use more complex vocabulary confidently. They take part in role play with enthusiasm and some more able pupils represent the characters in their reading effectively. This was seen to good effect, when a pupil in Year 5 took the role of Aunt Marge from the class book 'My Brother's Ghost'. She sustained the role well and used her knowledge of the character to improvise dialogue with confidence. Although teachers' planning indicates that pupils are offered appropriate opportunities to speak at length to different audiences, there were limited opportunities during the week of the inspection. In their reading aloud or speaking to the whole class some pupils do not speak either clearly or audibly and need encouragement to do so effectively.

69. Standards in reading are below average at the end of Years 6 and 7. Although most pupils have an appropriate range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, their understanding of what they read is variable. Most pupils read texts they encounter in whole-class sessions with generally appropriate understanding because teachers use supportive questions and explanations effectively. However, in their more independent reading tasks, some pupils' levels of comprehension are insufficient for them to read all parts of their texts with good understanding. These pupils do not always have a secure grasp of a broad range of English vocabulary and expressions and this inhibits their abilities to read an increasingly complex range of texts independently and effectively. Pupils encounter texts in their literacy lesson which are appropriately challenging and extend their experiences. They are able to talk generally confidently

about aspects of their texts, such as the organisation of texts and the motivation and relationships of different characters in the fiction they read. This is because they have been carefully taught about these elements. They are less confident when it comes to talking about the use of language and different styles of writing. In their independent reading pupils tend to be reading comfortably within their range and only a few pupils read books which are challenging. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 keep detailed reading journals, which encourage them to develop their responses to reading and to extend their reading experiences.

70. Standards of writing are below average at the end of Year 6 and well below average at the end of Year 7. In Year 6 pupils write for a wide range of purposes, such as writing about different characters from the texts they read, biographies of significant moments in people's lives; retelling of well known tales such as the story of Romeo and Juliet; playscripts and comparisons of different film versions; writing stories and books for younger children; poetry in different styles and argumentative writing. Above average pupils write narratives confidently with an appropriate but not wide ranging vocabulary. They understand how to edit and draft their work to improve it and organise their writing consistently into paragraphs. They are beginning to use a more formal and discursive tone and range of expression in their discursive writing. In their work in the 'accelerated' group, pupils experiment with the creation of interesting metaphors to make their writing more effective, as a result of interesting and stimulating resources, and use imaginative expressions like 'a breath of colour;' 'the eye of the universe' and 'in the sombre velvet atmosphere.' Average ability pupils write confident narratives and develop some interesting detail in their discursive writing but the levels of accuracy are variable and there are weaknesses in the use of basic punctuation. Lower attaining pupils generally communicate meaning clearly in their writing but levels of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and expression are less effective.

71. In Year 7 pupils write for a generally appropriate range of purposes but there is limited range of work, providing them insufficient opportunities to develop ideas, vocabulary and expressions independently. However, pupils' work reflects their increasing understanding of the changes in English language since the time of Shakespeare and Chaucer, as was seen in their work of retelling The Canterbury Tales. They write about poetry they have read, such as Tennyson's Lady of Shallott, and create playscripts and formal letters of explanation. Above average pupils are confident, fluent writers and are beginning to adapt their expression and vocabulary to different purposes, although they do not use paragraphs consistently. Punctuation skills of the average and lower attaining pupils are not sufficiently developed.

72. Standards of presentation are generally good in Years 4-6 with well organised and neatly presented work. Most pupils use a clear, joined form of writing and take care to present their work carefully and attractively. They make good use of information and communication technology to present their work and to use a range of different format. In Year 7 pupils' work is not so organised; not all pupils complete and present their work well.

73. The use and development of literacy in other subjects is satisfactory. The school has identified the need to develop further supportive links for literacy throughout the curriculum. There are some effective links with subjects such as geography, history, religious education and information and communication technology and a good focus on using the specialist language of the subject. When the particular needs of pupils who have English as an additional language are taken into consideration, the profile for the development of vocabulary and range of expression across the school is not sufficiently high.

74. Teaching and learning in Years 4-6 is good overall and includes some very good and excellent teaching. Teaching and learning in Year 7 is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory. In most lessons planning is clear and detailed and meets the requirements of the literacy strategies well. The school has emphasised the communication of learning intentions as a key feature of planning and teaching. This is evident in almost all lessons and helps to create a clear sense of purpose and direction. When teaching is good or better, the learning intentions are used at the end of the lesson to evaluate what pupils have learnt and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning. Throughout the school there

are effective relationships between teachers and teaching assistants. This promotes a very positive ethos in lessons in which pupils feel respected and are confident to make contributions to class discussions.

75. The strengths of teaching are well illustrated, for example, in an excellent lesson in Year 6 where the average and lower attaining pupils were exploring the qualities of poems written by Benjamin Zephaniah. The lesson had been carefully planned with specific reference to pupils of all abilities and very clear description of each stage of the lesson. This enabled the lesson to proceed at a brisk pace and, consequently pupils concentrated very well. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and very good relationships with the pupils. As a result he was able to create a sense of real enthusiasm and intense interest in the discussion of the qualities of the poems and their link with the poet's own experiences. By the end of the lesson there was an atmosphere of enjoyment and celebration in what pupils had learnt and explored.

76. Where teaching has weaknesses they include the management of pupils' behaviour which is not fully effective and as a result the concentration of some pupils is not fully on their work. In some lessons overlong teacher explanations slow the pace of the lesson and the rate at which pupils learn. For some older pupils, expectations for the range of pupils' responses and their written work are not always sufficiently high. In a number of lessons the planning and activities for pupils who have English as an additional language do not meet their learning needs effectively.

77. Most teachers are secure in teaching the National Literacy Strategy and new members of staff who have not been trained in this system are well supported and their confidence is developed well. Effective use is made of the groupings in Year 6 which allows for specialist teaching for an 'accelerated' group, freeing the teacher and teaching assistants to work with other pupils and provide them with more focused attention. The effectiveness of this strategy is evident in the significant increase in the number of pupils who achieved the higher grades in the Year 6 national tests over the past two years. The school's analysis of test results has indicated that a relatively small number of boys achieve the higher grades in the subject compared to girls. They have begun to address the issue by ensuring that these boys receive focused teaching in the 'accelerated' group in Year 6. They have also purchased a wider range of texts to incorporate those which attract boys particularly. Assessment procedures in English are satisfactory but the outcome of assessment and the national test results are not yet sufficiently analysed to raise pupils' attainment. Whilst most marking in pupils' books is well detailed and clear about how pupils can improve their work, with clear links to the learning intentions, this good practice is not consistent in all classes. Pupils have individual targets but these are not closely linked to the next stages in pupils' learning.

78. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator has begun to monitor the subject very well. She has identified clear and relevant priorities for the development of the subject and provides a good model in her own teaching.

79. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school library offers a wide and attractive range of reading but the limitations on its opening times limits its effectiveness as a learning resource centre for the school. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

80. Standards in mathematics are broadly average. The results of the 2001 national test were below average but evidence from lessons shows that the achievements of pupils currently in Years 6 and 7 are now similar to expectations. This is similar to the level of attainment reported in the last inspection in 1996. Performance in the national tests has varied year on year but the standards being achieved now represent good progress. This is borne out by comparing the 2001 national test results with similar schools: here, pupils do better at Roxeth Manor than they do in similar schools. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, particularly in their investigative and problem-solving skills. The school is working hard to improve standards by identifying the needs of

individual pupils and providing suitably demanding work. This is having a positive effect on the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6. The school effectively meets the needs of higher attaining pupils. Evidence for this is in the number of pupils who achieve the even higher Level 6 in the tests. As a result of the school's focus on mathematics in recent years, pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics has improved since the previous inspection.

81. Many pupils enter the school with a well below average attainment in mathematics. They develop their number and mental calculation skills effectively in Year 4 and achieve well. They continue this good rate of learning as they progress through the school. Pupils develop the use of accurate mathematical language well and use effective strategies to solve problems which they explain confidently. By Year 6 pupils describe from a net what the three-dimensional shape will be using the correct language. The higher attaining pupils show a good level of understanding of what a vector is. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their identified targets. Many pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress but not as much as they could. Pupils at the early stages of learning English often make unsatisfactory progress.

82. The analysis of work shows that by Year 6, most pupils understand the relationship between decimals, percentages and fractions. They have a secure level of understanding in using metric weights and measures and find the perimeters of simple shapes accurately. The higher attaining pupils use their knowledge to work out the perimeter of irregular shapes. All pupils use bar charts accurately to represent collected data. The school makes suitable use of data handling in information and communication technology to support work in mathematics. By Year 7 the majority of pupils are competent in their ability to work out missing angles on a straight line. They use a suitable mathematical vocabulary and find different ways of solving problems, for example, a group of Year 7 pupils explored ways to find the sum of angles at a point. Most pupils use and interpret co-ordinates accurately and have above average skills in their understanding and use of probability. By Years 6 and 7 most pupils have secure skills in their ability to use and apply mathematics.

83. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and reflects teachers' increased confidence. This is very noticeable in the effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy that gives pupils a carefully structured session on all aspects of mathematics. No teaching is less than satisfactory; half of all lessons observed were very good and two out of 16 lessons were excellent. All teachers take care to explain mathematical vocabulary, such as reflex, acute and obtuse. This enables many pupils with English as an additional language to work confidently and achieve levels similar to others. Teachers ensure that all pupils build well on their previous work and use questions skilfully to involve all pupils in discussion sessions. This was evident in Year 7 where pupils discussed the properties of triangles and angles.

84. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs receive effective support that enables them to make good progress towards their mathematical targets. There is some inconsistency in the support for pupils who have English as an additional language. This results in limited opportunities, for example, to describe shapes in terms of attributes. The teacher challenges pupils to clarify and justify their work as the lesson progresses. This increases the pupils' self-confidence, enjoyment of maths and their ability to work independently. Teachers work hard to increase pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary specific to mathematics and how to do calculations efficiently. All teachers make effective use of the summing up session at the end of lessons to enable pupils to reflect on and explain their learning. For example, one pupil said, "I've learnt how to estimate an angle using facts I know".

85. The quality of learning reflects the quality of teaching. It is, overall, good throughout the school. A direct result of the teaching is the speed with which pupils acquire new skills and their ability to consolidate previous skills. They relate these skills to their current tasks and to other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 7 pupils use computers to plan recipes using a spreadsheet. The ability grouping for pupils has a positive effect on learning and standards.

Teachers value their pupils' contributions. This ensures that pupils behave well in lessons, and concentrate hard. All teachers have a secure knowledge and plan work carefully to consolidate and extend pupils' thinking and learning. All teachers make good use of formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills. They teach the basic skills of computation well. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievements.

86. The effective implementation of the national numeracy strategies provides a clear structure for the teaching of mathematics. All lessons begin with a short mental arithmetic session and end with a structured summing up session. This enables pupils to understand what they have learnt and helps teachers to assess what the pupils understand. They use this knowledge effectively to reinforce their teaching and improve pupils' standards. The school constantly seeks ways to increase further pupils' confidence and ability in decision-making, mathematical investigation and problem solving. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

87. The mathematics curriculum is broad, well balanced and relevant to the needs and interests of pupils. The scheme of work provides clear guidance and ensures that all pupils, including higher attainers, are sufficiently challenged. The school has clear and effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress. It analyses results of the national tests by gender and ability and uses the findings to provide work that meets pupils' differing needs and interests. This ensures there is no noticeable difference in standards between boys and girls. The subject leader is knowledgeable and provides very effective support for colleagues, ensuring that pupils enjoy their work and teachers are confident in their teaching. He organises a well-attended after-school class to improve pupils' achievement and raise standards further. However, there is inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work. It does not always give pupils clear guidance to enable them to see what they need to do to improve. The subject leader is aware of this and has plans to improve the quality of marking.

SCIENCE

88. Attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 and Year 7, as found during the current inspection, is satisfactory overall and this is a similar picture to the last inspection. Results of the 2001 national tests show that standards are well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. A higher proportion of pupils achieved the national average in the 2000 national tests which was not maintained in 2001. However, the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels in 2001 national test is close to the national average. The overall standards achieved in science have been adversely affected as the science co-ordinator left last year and consequently teaching and learning in science was not monitored effectively. Pupil mobility also has a negative impact on pupils' progress. The school has recently appointed a science co-ordinator who has implemented a Science Action Plan and placed a higher focus on scientific investigation. This is already having a significant effect on pupils' understanding of the subject contents. For example, pupils are now able to conduct a wide range of scientific experimentation, record their findings and make generalisations about their results. In one class, pupils hypothesise about the impact of two batteries on the glare of the light bulb in their electrical circuits, drawing on the data on circuits they had already collected. They were delighted to see that their hypothesis was proved to be correct, as they had predicted.

89. In Year 6, pupils are aware of a broad range of scientific principles and processes. They understand that some materials change when mixed with water and that this change can sometimes be reversed through filtering, sieving, evaporation and condensation. They are also aware that some of the changes are irreversible because of chemical reaction. They know that micro-organisms, which are too small to be seen by the human eye, can cause disease in humans which is harmful or decay in the natural world which is a positive aspect of the cycle of plant life. They understand that batteries are a source of power and that some materials can be inserted in an electrical circuit and will conduct electricity where others will not. They are developing good skills as young scientists, for example, they understand the importance of reducing variables in a scientific investigation so that all are constant except the one to be tested. Pupils are also aware that scientific diagrams are drawn conventionally, with internationally accepted symbols rather than

as pictorial representations. In one Year 6 class pupils considered a scientific diagram of a circuit, with switches, bulbs and batteries and were able to deduce whether this closed circuit will light a bulb. Pupils in Year 4 are coming to understand the importance of muscle, how it is attached to the bone and contracts and hardens, for example, when the arm bends. They are confident that the heart is also a muscle and raise interesting questions about muscles in relation to a body's skeletal frame. In Year 5 pupils know that flowering plants reproduce and that the reproduction cycle is continuous. They understand the importance of seeds and how they are dispersed away from the parent flower. They demonstrate a sense of wonder as they contemplate the growth of an apple tree from a tiny seed and the potential height of the sunflowers they are growing for a sunflower "charity challenge". They talk confidently about seeds in the fruit they are investigating and compare those found in the fleshy parts of fruit on the surface, as in a strawberry, against fruit with a single seed, as in a plum. One pupil who has seen bananas grow in the West Indies was able to contribute first-hand knowledge of how banana seeds germinate, which enhanced the learning of his group. In Year 7 pupils conduct investigations into a range of liquids to classify them as either alkaline or acid. Appropriate safety rules are applied and pupils wear goggles and use tweezers and pipettes carefully. They also draw on their family experience of locking away dangerous materials such as bleach at home. In a very good lesson pupils recognised that an over-simplified classification, "I think this is probably acid because it smells strong," is inadequate and that an investigation needs to be set up to check their supposition. Pupils make sensible links to real world issues from the science they are working on in class, for example, how to clean dirty water to prevent disease in the developing world through the processes of sieving, filtering, evaporation and condensation.

90. The quality of teaching in science is good. Teachers use a scheme of work and additional Key Stage 3 resources to ensure that work is planned to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding progressively. Teachers' subject knowledge in science is generally good and they intervene appropriately to help pupils make progress. In Year 7, very good organisation allows every pupil to gain practical experience through the scientific investigations. This is particularly supportive for the less experienced pupils, for pupils at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs. The visual and practical elements keep them involved as the lesson unfolds, so that the recording of results is understood because of this involvement in the tasks. Teaching in science is most effective where teachers use skilful questioning to check all pupils' understanding and to extend the more able pupils. Misunderstandings are picked up well, for example, when one bilingual Year 7 pupil said that one acid solution was "hard", the teacher was able to talk with her to establish that she meant "corrosive" or "harmful".

91. Pupils' learning in science is good. They are acquiring good scientific knowledge through a wide range of focused investigation. They are enthusiastic and interested in the work they are doing and are developing good attitudes in exploring the scientific world. They raise questions with confidence, for example, about the effect of an impact on the head if there were no neck muscles. They draw on previous work to help them understand their current investigations, for example, applying what they know of liquids, gases and solutions to their work on acids and alkalis. All year groups are keen to introduce their own experiences to enhance their learning, for example, one Year 5 pupil shared her sister's experiences of finding a caterpillar in an apple windfall. During a lesson on micro-organisms and how disease can be transferred, one pupil told of his own experience of hospitalisation as the result of salmonella poisoning because cooked and uncooked food were placed together. Pupils' learning was clearly enhanced by this personal contribution.

92. In science books there does not always appear to be an expectation to write up investigations with well presented handwriting and spelling. Poor spelling in some instances suggests that key words are not always available to help pupils write up their work. Marking, though positive, appears to be over-generalised at times, not giving real pointers to improvement or requiring pupils to finish or take pride in overall presentation. In some classes, however, teachers' marking links to learning intentions and emphasises progress made, and this is good. Worksheets are helpful models for ways of writing up investigations, though sometimes over-use of word-filling activities does not always indicate if pupils have understood the learning objective.

93. The science co-ordinator is recently appointed. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her subject, which she leads well. She has sensibly taken stock of where the school is and has phased in a number of new arrangements and resources. For example, the monitoring of planning of teaching and work in books has given her a good over-view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject, which she has fed back to teachers. This feedback is informing planning and has highlighted the need for more investigative work. She has introduced a scheme of work which will be reviewed to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils. She has organised resources to make them more accessible. She has rightly identified the key task for science to ensure that standards of achievement improve. Assessment in science is not sufficiently developed yet. The lack of information on pupils' progress since Year 4 now needs to be addressed so that the school can intervene appropriately where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in science. The school is putting together a portfolio of work which has been assessed against National Curriculum levels. This will help less experienced teachers to raise expectations for pupils in their class.

94. Work is planned for the environmental garden (conservation area), which includes work with the first school. This initiative will clearly benefit science work on life cycles of plant and pond life, weather-watching and the water cycle.

ART AND DESIGN

95. Standards are well above those expected for their age at the end of Year 7. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age. Attainment in art and design indicates that standards have greatly improved since the last inspection. It was only possible to observe a very small number of lessons in classes, so judgements come from displays of work on walls and from pupils' sketchbooks, as well as from talking to children as they worked. Pupils in all year groups achieve well and those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language make equally good or sometimes better progress than their classmates as they are supported very well by the good quality visuals, such as paintings by famous artists. For example, one pupil, a newcomer to English, painted a landscape in the style of the French painter Derain with exquisite colours and outline. Work on display and in sketchbooks by Year 7 is of exceptional quality. For example, they observe landscape paintings by different famous artists and create their own, using watercolour and pastels. Very good skills are demonstrated in interpreting the works of great artists, drawn from a range of artistic traditions from around the world. Pupils are able to demonstrate very good skills in the use of watercolour technique and observational drawings. Their work on self-portraiture in response to other artists' work is very good, demonstrating investigation of tone, shade, colour, depth and line. Pupils design and draw well. For example, inspired by the great architectural monuments of the world, one pupil created an imaginary marine science centre, using elements of the Sydney Opera House, the Kreisler Building in New York and the Taj Mahal in Agra. The impact of their investigations was obvious in the quality of work produced.

96. In Year 6, pupils drew slippers and shoes for a design and technology project with great skill. In one lesson, as preparation for another project, "What a Performance!" they sketched hats which will provide them with the inspiration for their cross-curricular project in drama, technology and art. The teacher provided an excellent array of hats, which pupils drew as a collage, exploring the outline shape, the style, the fabrics and the decorations. They demonstrate good observational skills and individuality in their sketches. Pupils across the school are developing skills in a range of media, pencil, wax crayon, pastels and clay, though there was less evidence of wider techniques of weaving, dyeing, printing or experimentation with different types of pencils and paintbrushes.

97. There was some evidence on displays of pupils experimenting with information technology capability, exploring the impact on photographic portraiture where images are distorted, enlarged, flipped, fragmented or with the negative image reversed. Pupils talked about this exhibition with enthusiasm and compared the work to the more traditional portraits produced alongside, using a collage of paper, coloured cellophane and foil. There is a high focus on portraiture throughout the school and this is extended in the work in sketchbooks and in the three-dimensional layered

cardboard sculpture of Munch's "The Scream". On another display pupils had produced gargoyle-like portraits in clay, stretching and pulling out the features with good effect. In Year 5 pupils take a simple outline idea, for example, from one of Picasso's flowers in a vase, and explore ideas of flower structure, vases, shadows and backgrounds, with powerful colour and subtlety to produce a tremendous overall impact.

98. Year 7 pupils are beginning to recognise conventions and codes in architecture, for example, the way bridges are designed can represent ideas of power, balance, faith and worship. They study perspective and line with excellent effect as they design and draw bridges to an imaginary "Rocket City".

99. Teaching overall is good. The co-ordinator is aware of the range of confidence, understanding and skills in the teaching staff, but also the time constraints on the overall curriculum which means that minimum time is allocated to art and design and to design and technology. The school is part of the Harrow Project, which encourages teachers to make links across subjects to make learning more coherent and relevant. This initiative is helping teachers to bring together different subjects of the curriculum in particular projects, and is already working well in some activities such as design and technology and ICT. Assessment procedures are not developed yet. The co-ordinator is aware that key elements of art and design need to be protected but that there are positive advantages from such integration.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Because of timetable arrangements across the school it was only possible to see design and technology being taught in one year group. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, study of displays and examples of work indicate that standards are broadly in line with expected levels by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. The standards have been maintained at the similar level since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and are well supported, particularly when teaching assistants work alongside them. For example, one pupil with a specific physical disability worked well with his classroom assistant to produce good quality work which raised his self-esteem and status within the class. Pupils learning with English as an additional language are also well supported by the visual and practical activities which are planned within the subject, and this enables them to achieve the learning objectives of the lesson. By working alongside their classmates they are offered the opportunity to hear the range of English needed to describe the work they are doing. This gives them an opportunity to rehearse the English required to give feedback to the rest of their class. In a Year 4 lesson pupils evaluate chairs that their classmates have constructed from original designs and against specific criteria. All pupils were able to make sensitive judgements, but also to hear their own work evaluated without feeling personally undermined. This was a good demonstration of pupils' confidence and understanding of the function of evaluation. Food technology and science work come together in a Year 5 project when pupils bake biscuits and make a package to contain them. Both aspects of the project are evaluated well. Pupils recognise that the introduction of extra sugar to the biscuit mix, for example, marshmallow and chocolate chips, has a noticeable effect on the way the material reacted to the heat in cooking. They also recognise that some of the ambitious package designs are not practical when applying technology skills to create them. The final packages and biscuits were evaluated appropriately. In Year 6 pupils designed slippers at the end of a long process of investigating styles and decoration, sketching and producing a prototype and finally evaluating their work against the original design specifications.

101. Teaching of design and technology from the evidence of work produced is satisfactory overall. The school has adopted a scheme of work which allows them to cover specific units of the curriculum over three terms. Teachers see the potential for bringing together art and design along with design and technology to give more coherence to pupils' work. The school has not yet developed tracking systems to ensure that pupils develop knowledge and skills progressively. The work on Harrow's "Broad and Balanced Project" is being explored to maximise the time available for their subject and to ensure that the full National Curriculum requirements are met. Work in

books suggests that weaknesses in the development of such areas of technology as mechanisms, control and systems identified in the last inspection have not been rectified.

102. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They talk confidently about the products and about the processes involved. They evaluate their work well and are able to suggest design modifications to improve the overall impression of the products they have made, for example, ideas to make the chairs more rigid or more upright to help with posture. They are able to evaluate their work against specific criteria, for example, one pupil's "dressing-table for my sister" was judged in terms of its aesthetic suitability, while a computer chair was considered purely for its utility. They use terminology like "design specification" and "prototype" with confidence, and can talk about the same product, for example "a money container" in separate terms of function and attractiveness.

103. The co-ordination of the subject is under-developed and this is due in part to the high priority given to mathematics, English and science. It is proper for the school to explore through the Harrow Project ways of covering more aspects of the design and technology curriculum through integrating work with other subjects. There are no formal assessments and recording systems, but teachers use the end-of-unit evaluations to keep track of progress and to report to parents at the end of each school year

GEOGRAPHY

104. By the end of Year 6 standards in geography are average and pupils have made good progress since they have started the school. Standards in Year 7 are also average and pupils have made satisfactory progress over the years. Similar standards were observed in the school's previous inspection in 1996. Judgements are based on lesson observations, pupils' recorded and displayed work and discussions with pupils and teachers.

105. The quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6 is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory. Teachers identify clear learning objectives, which are linked to the skills and knowledge they are expected to learn. This gives lessons a productive pace and helps teachers and pupils to understand how they have progressed during the lesson. Resources are well prepared and organised and support the purpose of the lesson effectively. These good qualities were evident in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were exploring aspects of community life in a suburb of Nairobi and comparing them with their own community in Harrow. Through effective questioning and a useful range of resources the teacher made clear links with their learning in an earlier lesson, to enable pupils to understand how different their lives would be without modern amenities. Teachers manage pupils well and there are very good relationships between staff and pupils. As a result when pupils were given opportunities to work individually, with partners, in groups, and as a whole class, they were able to maintain a high level of involvement and good attention to activities.

106. Teaching in Year 7 is satisfactory. Pupils explore a range of issues relating to the European Union with a particular focus on France. There are some useful links with their work in mathematics when they plot locations using reference to latitude and longitude and practise taking bearings from the sun. However, some of their work depends too heavily on undemanding worksheets and this slows down pupils' rate of progress.

107. Co-ordination in the subject is satisfactory. It is in a transitional stage and the current co-ordinator is 'caretaking' the subject for the year. The curriculum in both key stages is new this year and follows recommended guidance. These units of work are being trialled and evaluated as they are being delivered. The school is aware that the time allocation for the subject in Key Stage 2 is lower than in most schools and consideration is being given to developing more effective cross subject links and to extending the amount of time allocated to the subject. The allocation of time is currently shared with history and this results in long periods of time when pupils are not studying the subject. This has an adverse impact on the effectiveness with which pupils develop their skills and knowledge in some topics. Although there has been monitoring of teaching and pupils' work in the past this has not taken place recently. Assessment in the subject is not formalised but the

effective use of learning intentions in most lessons enables teachers to informally assess pupils' learning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural and social development.

HISTORY

108. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7 pupils achieve standards which are expected for those of their age. These are similar to those seen in 1996 in the school's previous inspection. Pupils achieve well through Key Stage 2 because teaching is good. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 7 and pupils make sound progress.

109. The good quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is exemplified well in the teaching in a Year 5 class. The lesson, based on the topic of the life of children in Victorian Britain, was well planned and organised with an interesting range of resources. These enabled pupils to use photographs and engravings from the time to make observations about the life of poor children and their living and working conditions. Guided by the teacher's effective use of questions, pupils were able to note how changes in the landscape reflected the changing face of industrial Britain and to make comparisons with their own lives. By the end of the lesson pupils were able to reflect their growing understanding of the topic in their recorded work. Pupils in Year 6 use their research skills and their skills in information technology effectively to compile individual projects on aspects of life in Britain in the 1930s and in the decades which followed. Through carefully constructed time lines they outlined the events which led up to the outbreak of World War 2, its progress and aftermath through the 1940s. In good links with literacy, pupils write letters to their parents as evacuee children during the war. Younger pupils combine their studies of Egypt in the past with their studies of Egypt today in their work in geography. These links with other subjects are still being developed.

110. Teaching in Year 7 appropriately reflects the areas of learning outlined in the Key Stage 3 scheme of work. However, pupils' recorded work in some topic areas is superficial and does not always reflect sufficient depth and details appropriate to their age. Sometimes this is the result of an overuse of worksheets which do not always provide sufficient challenge.

111. Leadership in the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and an interest in its development. New units of work are being trialled this year with a view to their further adaptation at the end of the year to more fully meet the needs of the school. Monitoring in the subject follows the whole-school cycle for monitoring and the co-ordinator has undertaken some interim sampling of pupils' work and teachers' planning to assess how effectively source materials are used. The school is aware that curriculum time for the subject is below that found in most schools and is currently reviewing the allocations of time and the further development of links across the curriculum. There is no formal assessment in the subject but teachers' comments in pupils' work generally reflect the learning objectives of the lessons and the skills pupils need to develop. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural and social awareness.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7, pupils achieve standards that exceed those expected for pupils of this age. This indicates very good improvement since the previous inspection. There has also been a significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology, including a well-equipped computer suite with e-mail and Internet access. The structured assessment of pupils' achievement and careful monitoring of work gives a clear picture of how well the pupils are learning. There is some very effective teaching of skills and techniques throughout the school. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

113. Pupils in Year 4 use logo confidently to give commands and test their predictions. All the pupils know how to select and give instructions and understand the use of computers in everyday equipment. Pupils in Year 5 apply their research skills successfully in finding out about Victorians. They combine information using a range of techniques, such as cropping and resizing, in preparation for powerpoint presentations. This good rate of learning continues into Year 6 where

pupils confidently move parts of a picture to change the image. Effective teaching of basic techniques that build on previous learning supports this rapid learning. Pupils in Year 7 construct and use spreadsheets accurately. They respond well to the careful teaching of skills and achieve above average standards. Throughout the school pupils use a range of fonts and styles that increase their word processing skills. They use the school's digital camera effectively across the curriculum and are confident in adding sound to text. There is no difference in achievement between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language learn and achieve well. The well-attended information and technology club enriches pupils' learning further as they practise and improve their skills. There is systematic monitoring of achievement and pupils have access to their own assessment disks. This increases their knowledge of what they have learnt. These are all improvements since the previous inspection.

114. The school uses information and communication technology effectively across the curriculum. This increases the pupils' ability to see computers as an integral part of everyday work and learning.

115. This quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Pupils benefit from very skilful teaching of computer skills. Careful planning of lessons ensures that the pupils develop their skills and ability to link their work with other areas of the curriculum. This makes a significant contribution to their learning. In the best lessons teachers show good subject knowledge. This allows pupils to gain rapidly in knowledge and understanding of computer skills. A strong feature of the teaching is the way in which pupils are encouraged to work together in pairs and provide each other with mutual support. Boys and girls work together successfully and all take a full part in lessons. Pupils concentrate well, persevere and work hard.

116. The subject leader is enthusiastic and shares his expertise with colleagues, supporting them to enhance their confidence and expertise. The subject is managed efficiently. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed yet. There is a detailed action plan that includes training and support for all members of staff. In addition, plans are in place to provide laptops for pupils and create a school website to strengthen learning.

FRENCH

117. Since the last inspection there has been a rise in standards in Key Stage 2. In both key stages, standards are in line with that expected for pupils of this age. Progress in listening is good. Speaking skills are not well developed and few pupils can answer in full sentences confidently without prompting. Some pronunciation is very good. Reading skills are satisfactory. Pupils demonstrate good levels of reference skills and are able to use glossaries and illustrated dictionaries. They have a good knowledge of vocabulary required for the topics covered. Some independent writing is being developed satisfactorily in Key Stage 3. The latter includes a small amount of reference to past and future events. Pupils have a sound grasp of the notion of gender of nouns and are developing an understanding of adjectival agreement.

118. There have been improvements in teaching since the last inspection. Teaching was satisfactory in both the lessons observed. The teacher uses an appropriate amount of French to introduce and consolidate the subject matter and for management of the classroom. The technique of asking individuals to translate instructions into English is good and enhances listening skills for all. The good management of pupils creates a secure atmosphere where pupils are able to sustain concentration during independent work. The range of activities is satisfactory, but lacks balance, with too long spent on whole-class work in one class and too long spent on independent work in the other. Pupils are taught to extend their knowledge with minimal support. There are opportunities for pupils with English as an additional language to make links between French and their heritage languages. Teaching assistants and the teacher ensure inclusion for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. They use specially adapted resources and support pupils skilfully and systematically in class. Classroom management ensures that boys and girls participate on equal terms in whole-class work. There are insufficient

opportunities to extend higher attaining pupils' knowledge and skills, however. The teacher's deployment of the teaching assistants is effective and flexible enough to allow them to take the initiative. In one of the lessons there was a good example of cultural awareness in the context of food, when pupils were introduced to the notion of eating globe artichokes. There is emphasis on aspects of grammar and pupils have a satisfactory grasp of gender and an understanding of adjectival agreement. The French used by the teacher contained some inaccuracies where she attempted to simplify the language for pupils. This detracted from the otherwise good quality of teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic. Resources are good. Assessment is satisfactory and comments are often in French, providing further incidental learning opportunities.

119. Teaching follows the local authority's agreed schemes of work designed to ensure continuity into high schools. These reflect the National Curriculum programme of study and are adopted from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's Key Stage 3 schemes of work. To make further progress, teaching needs to develop strategies to promote pupils' speaking skills and ensure accuracy.

MUSIC

120. The standards attained in music are in line with those expected at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils' achievement in music has improved since the last inspection when it was below the expected levels at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are fully included in lessons and make good progress overall.

121. Most pupils sing tunefully in unison. They recognise the beat and the tempo of music, sing familiar songs at different tempos and note the effect on the mood of the music. They listen well to different music and could evaluate each other's performance. Pupils are provided with opportunities to perform and appraise music regularly, but they have fewer opportunities to compose. This is an area which is planned for development.

122. Assemblies, hymn and choir practice are used as good opportunities for teaching singing, encouraging correct breathing and promoting pupils' performance skills. Pupils who are in the school orchestra are enthusiastic about performing while they practise. Music contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

123. The quality of teaching is good overall. The music teacher is enthusiastic and makes sure that all pupils enjoy the lesson and take a full part. Pupils are managed well and the balance between creativity and control is just right. Pupils made good progress in the lessons seen as teachers' expectations were high and the pupils responded well.

124. Resources are satisfactory, with an interesting variety of wooden percussion instruments, several from other countries. The current selection of CDs is adequate and provides opportunities for developing pupils' appreciation of a wide range of music and that from different countries.

125. Music is managed well by the specialist music teacher. However, assessment procedures are not appropriately developed yet. Resources are generally good and used well, with a wide range of musical instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7, pupils attain standards that are above those expected for pupils of this age. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There has been an improvement in pupils' standards and in their ability to build on previous skills. This is particularly noticeable in athletics lessons. Pupils throughout the school, including those who have English as an additional language, achieve well. The school places great value on the work pupils do in physical education and celebrates achievement. Clear evidence of this appears in the quality of pupils' and teachers' work in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs work hard to improve

their performance and make good progress in learning new skills. They benefit from working in small groups and teams where they receive effective support from classmates. The school teaches all aspects of the subject, including swimming and athletics. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils meet the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided. There is a wide range of extra-curricular sports provision and the school has many successes with its sports teams. These are open to all pupils, irrespective of gender or culture. The school is continuing with its outdoor and adventurous provision to maintain a good balance in its curriculum. These factors make a significant contribution to the standards pupils achieve.

127. In Year 4 pupils show good skills in running and they practise hard to improve their performance. This is a result of the very good teaching that makes effective use of direct teaching to increase the pupils' awareness of correct techniques. Teachers continue to build on pupils' skills. Pupils grow in confidence and work very well together in teams. By Year 6 all pupils make effective links with science in their understanding of the need for exercise. They practise to improve their performance and make critical self-evaluations of their techniques. For example when practising the long jump, one pupil said, "I need to rock more before I jump". This rate of progress continues through to Year 7 where pupils respond well to challenging tasks. They understand how to pace themselves whilst running and why pacing is necessary. All pupils learn and apply new skills successfully because of the careful and skilful teaching.

128. Teaching is consistently good. This has a positive effect on standards and on pupils' attitudes to their work. Strengths of the teaching include sustained and rigorous warm-ups that prepare pupils well for exercise. They also include the careful and systematic development of skills, where teachers support individual pupils effectively to improve techniques. The teachers assess pupils' progress against the lesson's learning intentions and use their findings to plan the following work. There is a brisk pace to lessons and a clear focus on activities.

129. The space in the hall is limited. The school does not have adequate changing and showering facilities for its pupils. This restricts the pupils' ability to apply their knowledge of hygiene. The subject leader is well aware of this shortcoming but there is no immediate plan to address it. The school has a clear policy and scheme of work for physical education. These give an effective level of support to teachers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7, pupils achieve standards that meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' achievement in religious education has improved since the last inspection when it was below the expected levels at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in lessons and make the same very good progress as their classmates.

131. Pupils are taught religious education from a multi-faith perspective. This helps them to understand the differences and similarities in world religions. There are good displays in the corridors and the hall about the traditions, customs, symbols and artefacts of the world religions.

132. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so judgements are based on the observation of this lesson, scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' workbooks and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress overall. For the majority, knowledge and understanding grow steadily. Assembly themes and aspects of personal and social education support teaching in religious education.

133. By the end of Year 6, pupils gain good knowledge of symbolism when they learn about Baptism and the Sabbath. They have clear understanding of Hannukah and learn about the rites of life ceremonies. They develop deeper understanding of other religions, such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Most pupils have wider understanding of the teachings of these religions and explore related moral issues through the study of the holy books, such as Qu'ran. In Year 7, pupils

continue to study world faiths in greater depth and explore the values inspired by religious leaders. They compare and contrast the three branches of Christianity and learn about the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, Five Pillars of Islam and Five Ks of Sikhism. By the time they are ready to leave the school, pupils have an appreciation of the main traditions and are able to identify the significance of each faith's symbolism and their meanings.

134. The quality of teaching, as judged from the lesson observed, teachers' planning and pupils' work, is good. Pupils are well managed and relationships are good. Pupils are encouraged to say what they think and teachers listen well to what the pupils say. In this way pupils build up enough confidence to contribute. Teachers plan well to ensure that pupils have the opportunities to gain in knowledge and understanding of major world religions progressively. Although teachers are aware of what pupils know, understand and can do, there is no written record of their progress.

135. The subject co-ordinator is working hard to establish a teaching programme that promotes good and progressive learning. Resources are good and are well used to support teaching. The environment for religious education is positive and provides a good basis for future development.