

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **OAK GREEN SCHOOL**

Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110206

Headteacher: Mrs Shela Rowan

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Pittman  
18275

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 245116

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southcourt Aylesbury Bucks
Postcode:	HP21 8LJ
Telephone number:	(01296) 423895
Fax number:	(01296) 431677
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Freda Roberts MBE JP
Date of previous inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18275	Mrs C Pittman	Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed?
14347	Mrs J Lindsay	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?
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	English Foundation Stage English as an additional language	
25203	Mr R Cooke	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Music Physical education	
14509	Mr P Mann	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
26232	Mr C Grove	Team inspector	Equal opportunity Geography History Religious education	

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7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Oak Green Primary School is a two form entry, nursery and primary community school. It is situated in the middle of a large council housing estate on the western side of the shire town of Aylesbury. Some of the housing is owner occupied. There is also a high proportion of social housing. The school is bigger in size than other primary schools. There are 385 pupils from three to 11 in mixed gender and ability classes. The attainment on entry is below average when children start their formal education at five years. However, when they first come to the nursery, attainment is often well below. Most but not all of the children attend the school nursery or a playgroup prior to coming to the school. The school draws most pupils from the immediate area, with a large proportion of pupils coming from backgrounds with social and economic difficulties. Pupil mobility is relatively high. There is a very low percentage of parents with higher education (6 per cent) and a high percentage of children in overcrowded households (19 per cent). The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is high (29 per cent). Similarly, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent) is high. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), including those with statements, is also high (41 per cent).

The school is an amalgam of four different schools brought together under the local authority's re-organisation of education in Buckinghamshire. As such, it has not been previously inspected.

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

This is an improving school which is responding well to the challenges it faces. Its aims and objectives are well targeted on raising standards and its capacity for improvement is satisfactory. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are below national averages, but most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Most of the teaching is satisfactory and a large proportion is good or better. This good teaching has begun to impact positively on pupils' learning. The school is very well led, cost effective and provides sound value for money.

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

- The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school's caring family ethos encourages good pupil attitudes and behaviour, and very good relationships. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn.
- The school cares well for its pupils; procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good.
- The headteacher's leadership is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and English as an additional language (EAL) is good.
- The school has good links with parents.

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

- The standards attained in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and history by pupils aged seven and 11 years; the standards attained in ICT and geography by pupils aged seven years and the standards attained in art for pupils aged 11 years.
- Teaching of basic skills, particularly literacy skills through the school, and how literacy and numeracy skills are taught through the rest of the curriculum.
- Subject co-ordinators monitoring teaching in their subjects and improving pupils' own knowledge of their learning.
- The curriculum provision in the reception class restricts the way children are learning and the co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is not consistent with guidelines.

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

## STANDARDS

Children have been integrated from four schools to form Oak Green Primary. This is the first year of the school operating in its present form. Because of the recent reorganisation of the school, it is not possible to make comparisons with previous years' national assessment results. Nor is there any comprehensive information to illustrate the trends over time of test results. Judgements on attainment are based on lesson observations during the week of the inspection, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of past work.

Most children when they start school are achieving standards well below what is expected of children of this age. By the time they reach Year 1, their attainment is below the expected standard in most cases. By age 11, pupils are attaining standards that are below expectations in English, mathematics and science. However, this is largely due to the high proportion of pupils with SEN in the school, the large number of pupils who have EAL and are at the first stages of language acquisition, and the high mobility of pupils generally. These factors are compounded by the recent unsettled past of the school and have had a negative impact on standards.

In the infant classes, standards are below expectations in English, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology, history and geography. They are in line with expectations in all other subjects. In the junior classes, standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects except design and technology, art and history, where they are below expectations. The school met and exceeded its targets in mathematics and science last year but missed its target in English. The targets were challenging when the capabilities of the group taking the test are taken into account. Most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, are making satisfactory progress according to their individual capability, although higher-achieving pupils are sometimes not sufficiently challenged.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and eager to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils respect each other and their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is sound overall. Relationships throughout the school are very good and older children are given specific responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show sustained interest in their work. They are polite and well mannered and show respect for property. Their understanding of the effect their actions could have on others is very good. There is no evidence of bullying or disruptive behaviour.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Just under half the teaching throughout the school was good and half was satisfactory. There was one very good lesson. The best teaching was in Years 1 and 2, where over

half the teaching was good or better. Most of the teaching in the junior classes was satisfactory or good although there was a small amount of unsatisfactory or poor teaching by individual teachers in Years 3 and 5. Two thirds of the teaching in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory; nearly one third was good with one unsatisfactory lesson.

The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons in Year 1 and 2, there is a brisk pace and teachers use skilled questioning to meet the needs of individual pupils. In the junior classes, teachers have good management skills. Pupils respond well to these high expectations and there is a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms. Where learning is poor, as in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were not given sufficient guidance and tasks were not well linked to their differing capabilities.

The quality of teaching of mathematics throughout the school is satisfactory. Teachers use terminology correctly, often writing key words on the board to help pupils learn. The better lessons are well planned, have a consistent structure with clear objectives and are usually linked to previous work. The use of resources is particularly good. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the resources were not fully understood by the teacher, the pace of work was too slow and pupils were not sufficiently challenged.

Teaching support assistants give pupils with SEN and EAL appropriate support. However, the teaching of basic skills, particularly writing, is insufficiently developed throughout the school. Teachers make effective use of test scores to track pupils' progress and to predict and target outcomes, although teachers' marking is variable.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory in the infant and junior classes but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and planning have not been sufficiently targeted on improving progress across the whole stage. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Throughout the school there is appropriate support given by the learning assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. With the support they receive, pupils with English as an additional language maintain satisfactory progress and are able to effectively access all areas of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The principles of right and wrong are actively promoted, and pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is good at caring for its pupils. Children are well known and this awareness is used effectively to support their personal development. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English.

The partnership between parents and school is good. Most parents are satisfied that the school works closely with them. Whilst the curriculum in the nursery is clearly planned and structured in line with the national recommendations for the Foundation Stage, there is no cohesion between what is provided in the nursery and that of the reception class, where the curriculum is planned and managed according to the National Curriculum. Whilst the reception teacher is aware of the National guidelines, she does not have the space or resources to effectively implement the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is inappropriate for the children's ages and stages of development and is beginning to have a negative impact on pupils' achievement by the time they start their formal education in Year 1. The effectiveness of the school's literacy and numeracy strategies is satisfactory in English and mathematics but insufficiently developed through other curriculum subjects. A great deal of work in planning and

monitoring has recently taken place and this is beginning to have an effect on raising standards.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures clear direction for the work and development of the school. Staff have a shared commitment to improving standards. However, the roles of some key staff are insufficiently developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school and takes an active role in forward planning and its day-to-day work. The governors fulfil their statutory duties and evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching is well monitored by the headteacher and the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching, learning and target setting by other subject co-ordinators. The school has effectively begun to use assessment data to guide curriculum planning in English and mathematics, although this is still a weakness in other curriculum areas.
The strategic use of resources	Decisions on spending are well linked to educational priorities. This ensures that satisfactory value for money is achieved and the best use is made of resources.

There is a good match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There are enough support staff and they are well trained. The accommodation is good, cleaned to a very high standard and in a good state of repair. Resources are adequate in most subject areas. They are inadequate in the Foundation Stage for reception children. There is no safe area to play with large climbing equipment and wheeled toys for children's physical development. The headteacher has worked hard to create a cohesive and committed team to take the school forward. The governing body is shrewd, effective and well aware of best-value principles.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school expects children to work hard to achieve their best.</li> <li>Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive comments from parents. There is an appropriate range of activities provided outside school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school is an amalgam of four different schools brought together under the local authority's re-organisation of education in Buckinghamshire. As such, it has attempted to raise standards by making changes to teaching, monitoring pupils' work closely and introducing booster classes for pupils aged 11 years in English and mathematics. It has recently completed these initiatives and is now in a position to improve its performance and raise standards steadily.
2. Because of the recent reorganisation of the school, it has not been previously inspected in its present form and it is not possible to make comparisons with previous years' national assessment results. Nor is there any comprehensive information to illustrate the trends over time of test results. Judgements on attainment are therefore based on lesson observations during the week of the inspection, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of past work.
3. Most children when they start school are achieving standards well below what is expected of children of this age. However, they make good progress and by the time they reach Year 1, their attainment is below the expected standard in most cases. By age 11, pupils are attaining standards that are below expectations in English, mathematics and science. The school met and exceeded its targets in mathematics and science last year but missed its target in English. However, this is largely due to the high proportion of pupils with SEN in the school, the large number of pupils who have EAL and are at the first stages of language acquisition, and the high mobility of pupils generally. These factors are compounded by the recent unsettled past of the school and are having a negative impact on standards. The targets were challenging when the capabilities of the group taking the test are taken into account.
4. In the infant classes, standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects except ICT, design and technology, history and geography, where they are below expectations. In the junior classes, standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects except design and technology, art and history, where they are below expectations. Most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, are making satisfactory progress according to their individual capability.
5. The tracking of individual pupils, from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, in English and mathematics is now in place. "Booster" groups have been created in Years 5 and 6 and an emphasis has been put on "literacy and mental maths skills" development. Advice has been sought from the local authority (LEA) and staff have been given the opportunity to observe leading teachers in the LEA. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
6. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English, standards seen at both age seven and 11 are below average for their age. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining below- average standards in speaking, listening and reading. Standards in writing and spelling are well below average. Although most pupils in Years 5 and 6 write in a legible joined hand, the skill of using joined handwriting is not taught early enough. As the skill of joined writing is closely linked to spelling patterns, the delay in teaching this skill also has an adverse effect on pupils' ability to spell. These factors, coupled with an inconsistent application of the school's marking policy, contribute to the low standards attained by the pupils in these aspects of English.
7. Standards in mathematics are below national averages in both infant and junior classes. Pupils' progress varies from year group to year group but is satisfactory overall. The attainment of most pupils by the end of Year 2 is below average. A large proportion of pupils with special educational needs within the key stage has a negative impact on standards. Pupils are beginning to understand inverse operations of addition and subtraction. Higher-achieving pupils are able to recognise common multiples of two, three, five and ten, and use these in simple multiplication problems. The attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Year 6 is below average. Within

the key stage, pupils are beginning to work confidently with numbers up to 1000 and have a sound understanding of the four rules of number and how to apply them. Their application of numbers to everyday situations is less developed, for example, in the use of railway timetables, menus or probability in considering certainties and impossibilities. Opportunities to develop numeracy skills in other subjects are limited. There is little evidence, for example, of the use of tables and graphs in science and geography. ICT, however, offers good opportunities for the development of their numeracy skills when pupils use databases, graphs and spreadsheets.

8. In Years 1 and 2, standards in science are below those normally expected for pupils of this age. Pupils' standards are satisfactory for a minority of pupils when they work individually, test and record by themselves and describe what they are doing. In Year 2, standards attained are unsatisfactory. Higher-achieving pupils are not adequately challenged and are working at levels that are below their capabilities. Standards in Key Stage 2 are generally below those expected of pupils of this age. Standards are lowest where work is not matched to take account of the pupils' different abilities, where standards of presentation and written work are poor and where the work is over-directed by teachers. Throughout the school, much of the work in science is heavily teacher-directed. There is an over-use of unchallenging worksheets and there are limited opportunities for pupils to carry out their own independent enquiries.
9. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected nationally for seven-year-old pupils, but by the age of 11, pupils have made good progress and standards for 11-year-olds are in line with national averages. The progress made by pupils with EAL or SEN is satisfactory overall in the junior classes, but unsatisfactory in the infant classes. The school has worked hard under difficult conditions to provide as full a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT capability. Access to the nearby computer centre in the grammar school has had a significant impact on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in Years 5 and 6.
10. There has been more improvement in numeracy than literacy, although the school's targets for literacy at the end of Key Stage 2 were not met this year. By the end of this key stage, many pupils are confident in the use of subject-specific vocabulary in their written work. While the literacy strategy has been appropriately implemented throughout the school, planning for the use of skills across the curriculum has been incidental rather than specific. Speaking and listening skills are not yet built carefully into planning.
11. The numeracy strategy is better established and is now set to make a difference to the standards achieved. During the inspection, most pupils were making appropriate progress in the development of mental strategies and their ability to explain their thinking. Teachers encourage pupils to approach mental calculations in different ways. This enables pupils to learn from each other when they explain their strategies in the end-of-lesson reviews. This is beginning to effectively raise standards.
12. By the end of Year 2, attainment in lessons is broadly in line with national expectations in all other subjects except design and technology, history and geography, where it is below expectations. The progress pupils make is satisfactory in most subjects, with the exception of design and technology, where progress is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 6, attainment is in line with national expectations in all other subjects and pupils are making satisfactory progress, except for design and technology, art and history, where it is unsatisfactory. Teachers are not monitoring standards in the non-core subjects sufficiently to improve attainment.
13. The standards attained by pupils with special educational needs are well below those normally expected of pupils of this age. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties and are making satisfactory progress.

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

14. Pupils of all ages have good attitudes to school. The great majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their child likes school. Pupils say that they enjoy

being at school. This is reflected in the good levels of enthusiasm they show for their lessons, especially when the tasks set for them are suitably interesting and challenging. For example, pupils in a Year 1 physical education lesson had great fun trying to throw a beanbag into a hoop whilst their partner tried to block it. Their enthusiasm was evident and they worked productively and sensibly in pairs so that they learned well in the lesson. The great majority of pupils show a satisfactory level of interest and involvement in different activities, although some pupils' independent learning skills are not yet fully developed and they need to have an adult to help them to concentrate. This was the case in a Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson where pupils had to estimate the capacity of different containers. Some pupils found it difficult to concentrate without the teacher or learning support assistant helping them.

15. Behaviour is also good throughout the school and, again, the great majority of parents feel this is the case. Pupils behave well in different circumstances. For example, in assemblies, they come in and leave in an orderly manner and sit quietly and listen well. In lessons, there is very little disruptive behaviour as teachers are largely consistent in applying the school's behaviour strategies of highlighting and rewarding good behaviour with praise, stickers or whole-class "marble jar" treats. Sanctions are effective, for example, if pupils do not behave at lunchtimes, they have to spend that time at home. Parents are supportive of this strategy and it works well as pupils do not like to miss this time at school. Behaviour in the playgrounds is good. The school takes a firm line on bullying and the recently-reviewed anti-bullying policy is clear. Pupils say that any incidents that concern them are followed up quickly and effectively and, as a result, there are few incidents of oppressive behaviour such as bullying or racism. There have been no permanent exclusions from the school.
16. Very good relationships are evident throughout the school and are seen at all levels amongst adults and pupils. Pupils are very welcoming and friendly to visitors, greeting them politely and opening doors, for example. There is often a good rapport in the class that has a positive impact on learning. Pupils are reminded frequently of the need to be polite and to respect the different beliefs of others. For example, an infant religious education lesson was looking at the washing ritual in a mosque. The teacher emphasised that Muslims washed before praying to show respect and pupils in the class were asked to talk about their own religion. At an infant assembly, the need for rules was emphasised so that everyone could be treated fairly. Pupils are encouraged to share resources from when they first come to school. As a result, they have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions and show a very good level of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Consequently, they all mix very well together, regardless of background, race or special educational needs.
17. The extent to which pupils show initiative and take on personal responsibility is satisfactory. Independent learning skills are still developing and there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to show initiative in class. However, pupils readily take on responsible roles when asked. For example, older pupils help in the office at lunchtime and there is an effective paired reading scheme linking Year 5 and 6 pupils with those from Year 2. Older pupils will help in assemblies and pupils of all ages help to tidy the classrooms and return the registers. There is no whole-school council, although there is a class council in Year 5. Pupils' personal development is enhanced further through a range of visitors to the school, for example, an Asian dance group, and visits out of the school such as to wildlife parks and museums. Year 5 and 6 pupils also benefit from a residential visit.
18. Attendance figures are satisfactory overall, although the school's unauthorised figure is slightly higher than the national average. Some of this is due to parents who condone absence and extended holidays. The school, in conjunction with the educational welfare officer, has done much to inform parents of the importance of regular attendance, with reminders in newsletters and other communications. Registers are called and marked correctly. Punctuality to school is generally good.
19. Pupils with special educational needs have good relationships with learning assistants and with their class teachers. They respond to the support they receive by concentrating well and making satisfactory progress.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Overall, teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. There is a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms. Just under half the teaching was good or better and half was satisfactory.

There was a small amount of unsatisfactory and poor teaching, mainly in Years 3 and 5. The best teaching was in Years 1 and 2, where just over half the teaching was good and the rest was satisfactory. Half the teaching in the junior classes was satisfactory and just over a third was good, with just over one in ten lessons being unsatisfactory or poor.

21. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall. The teaching of basic skills is unsatisfactory. This is evident in English, science, art, design and technology and geography, and is often reflected in the low level of attainment achieved in some of these subjects. However, there are good opportunities for the development of pupils' numeracy skills in ICT lessons.
22. Planning is good in most infant and junior lessons. There is some unsatisfactory planning in the Foundation Stage; the nursery curriculum is play-based and in line with the recommended early learning goals, but the reception class curriculum is based too much on the National Curriculum.
23. Teachers generally are well organised. They use a good range of questions to check pupils' understanding and knowledge. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and usually teach with firm discipline and control. Management of pupils is a strength of teaching. Across the school, teachers generally have high expectations of behaviour, but expectations of the standard of work achieved are not high enough in some junior classes. From the time children enter the school, they are expected to take responsibility for themselves and others. This results in very young children learning to be responsible and behaving sensibly from an early age.
24. In the very good lesson, such as literacy in Year 2, the teacher's style, fast pace, enthusiasm for the subject and constant challenge was most effective. Good listening skills were enhanced by the very good teaching strategies employed. Subject knowledge was combined with observational assessment of pupils' skills and development. Appropriate teaching points evolved from direct observation and clear practical demonstration, to guide pupils to a more skilful performance in their independent writing. Good lessons, such as literacy in Year 6, contain a good balance of varied activities, whole-class teaching, investigative work and opportunities for pupils to use their imagination. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities so that they can build on previous knowledge and understanding. Good features of teaching include enthusiastic and clear explanations, well-organised classrooms, established routines and opportunities for pupils to work in various ways. Resources are well used to motivate pupils and to extend knowledge. In most of these lessons, the work is demanding and time is used effectively for higher- and lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Adults in the classroom are well organised and work effectively to raise standards.
25. In the much less effective lessons, the pace of work is slow, insufficient demands are placed upon pupils and work is not well matched to the ages and attainments of pupils. Teaching is less dynamic so pupils are less engaged and become compliant rather than enthusiastic. In an English lesson in Year 3, the teacher's objectives for the lesson were unclear. Pupils consequently became increasingly disinterested and little learning was accomplished. The higher-attaining pupils, in particular, were insufficiently challenged.
26. Planning does not take the need of all pupils into account. Higher-achieving pupils are not always challenged appropriately. Too often, they are left to their own devices and a disproportionate amount of time is spent on pupils with special educational needs. Extra funding and the deployment of specialist staff are having a positive effect on raising standards. This is particularly so in literacy, where specialist resources are used effectively and learning support staff liaise effectively with class teachers.

27. There is a clear emphasis on developing pupils' skills of literacy and numeracy and these are beginning to be appropriately taught in literacy lessons, but are insufficiently developed in other subjects. All teachers are beginning to implement the national literacy strategy satisfactorily. However, the teaching of phonics is insufficiently developed in Key Stage 2, where some average and lower-attaining pupils do not have the strategies to work out difficult words. Pupils' spelling is improving but errors are not always identified in their books to help them to identify their mistakes.
28. Numeracy is appropriately taught in numeracy lessons, but is insufficiently developed through the rest of the curriculum. In some lessons, pupils work for extended periods on worksheets, and do not have sufficient experience of talking about mathematics and explaining their thinking.
29. Pupils with special educational needs learn well in the Foundation Stage, and satisfactorily in the infants and juniors. Some of their individual education plans are well written, although this is an area where there could be improvement. Not enough use is made of individual education plans when matching work to pupils' capabilities in mainstream classes. Learning assistants are effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Those who support statemented pupils often give effective incidental support to other pupils with special educational needs who are working at the same table. They offer caring, positive support and help in developing pupils' self-esteem and contribute well to their progress.
30. The day to day assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. In the better lessons, good verbal feedback is given. The use of homework to support pupils' learning and attainment is satisfactory.

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

31. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum that meets legal requirements in giving satisfactory coverage to all subjects, apart from the Foundation Stage, where coverage is unsatisfactory. Whilst the curriculum in the nursery is clearly planned and structured in line with the national recommendations for the Foundation Stage, there is no cohesion between what is provided in the nursery and that in the reception class. Whilst the teacher in the reception class is aware of the national guidelines, her planning is carried out in consultation with the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. As a result, the way the curriculum is planned and managed is too closely based on the National Curriculum than is appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children in the reception class. Consequently, children are taught discrete, unrelated lessons instead of through play-based activities by which young children learn best. The school has worked hard at providing relevant policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Some schemes are closely related to the national guidance materials, and are suitably adapted to meet the needs of its pupils. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are being appropriately met. There is a satisfactorily agreed programme of sex education and pupils receive support from the local police in connection with the school's drugs awareness programme.
32. The school ensures that all subjects of the national curriculum are accessible to all pupils. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully, but neither literacy nor numeracy skills are developed sufficiently through other subjects such as science, history and geography. The school has embraced ICT as a resource to support learning. It has ensured pupils have access to ICT even though there has been severe disruption due to the ongoing building programme. The school has ensured that plans for the new computer suite will provide very good access for pupils and ensure additional computers within classes, improving the computer-pupil ratio. The allocation of time to curriculum subjects is in line with recommendations. As the morning sessions are devoted chiefly to literacy and numeracy, the afternoons are crowded with the other subjects. Consequently, certain subjects are provided in half-term blocks; these include history with geography and art and design with design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language are given satisfactory consideration by the school and are able to take part in all the activities

offered.

33. The school provides a curriculum which is inclusive and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunity and access to it. The school is successful in its provision for all pupils. For example, it encourages the expression of non-English cultures in various ways, for example, through a recent workshop by an Asian dance company.
34. The curriculum is planned systematically and there is detailed long-medium-and short-term planning. This planning takes account of the varying abilities of all pupils, although the challenge for the higher-achieving groups is not always sufficient in some classes, and this has a negative effect on pupils' progress.
35. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities which are mainly of a sporting nature. These vary according to the time of year and include girls' football, cricket, tag rugby, cross-country, hockey and rounders. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils take part in a Saturday Swim School and the Buckingham Young University activities. The school is involved in several inter-school competitions within the local community of schools, and these include indoor tournament cricket, hockey and cross-country. Such activities serve to raise the profile of the school in the local community and to provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their sporting and social skills. Extra-curricular activities also include a breakfast club. This provides an excellent facility for pupils who may not otherwise have a comfortable and calm start to their day. Pupils in Year 2 are involved in Before School Paired Reading and are able to join a lunchtime Christian club run by a member from the community Baptist church. There is a weekly book club where pupils may purchase books and a first aid club which is run by a parent governor.
36. The curriculum is further enhanced by visitors to the school and opportunities for pupils to go on visits to places of interest in connection with their schoolwork. Visitors to the school include the local police, the fire brigade and various religious leaders. Other visitors include Searchlight Christians, who run an assembly once a term, live performances from the Spellbinder Company and football coaching by the Aylesbury United Football Club. The school recognises the importance of providing curriculum stimulus through class visits. All classes have been involved in such outings, including a Year 2 visit to a local mosque. Year 3 visit the Ashmolean Museum in connection with work on ancient Egypt, Year 4 visit the Police pond for a pond-dipping session and there is a PGL residential visit for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils where many different activities were enjoyed by the pupils. The school also gives several concerts throughout the year, including harvest festival, Christmas and a Mother's Day concert held in the nursery.
37. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is just satisfactory. There is a policy for this subject and, although lessons are timetabled weekly for each class there is no established scheme of work from which teachers can plan their activities. Issues to do with listening carefully, participating in group activities, behaviour and being part of the school community are dealt with, but there is little evidence of the impact of these sessions on the life of the school and on pupils' learning.
38. The school has undergone great change and it has yet to establish itself in the community under its new organisation. Historically, the school has had successful links with the community, and these have been maintained throughout the change. Opportunities within the community to support pupils' learning are good and include the use of local park, mosque, dancing at the Civic Centre, regular visits to the Sir Henry Floyd school for ICT sessions, Aylesbury College for design and technology work and links with the Aquapool. There are strong links with partner institutions, especially the Grammar School and Aylesbury College. Pupils in Year 6 visit Mandeville, their secondary school, prior to their transfer at the end of the summer term.
39. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. With the support they receive, pupils with SEN maintain satisfactory progress and are able to access all areas of the curriculum. There may be occasions when pupils with SEN are withdrawn from class for assessment purposes and for the setting of new targets. This is rarely more than once a term and does not adversely affect pupils' learning opportunities. Effective assessment takes place on a daily basis. The pupils' progress is

recorded on action sheets that are completed by class teachers and support assistants. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is used well in the planning of pupils' work and in setting targets. Overall, pupils with special educational needs have good self-esteem, concentrate well and make satisfactory progress.

40. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, with some good elements, although there is no whole-school policy for this aspect of pupils' life in school.
41. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Older pupils are encouraged to keep a "Reflection Diary" to think about what has gone well that day. There is a daily act of collective worship and pupils are given the opportunity for a short period of reflection during this time. There are links with the local Baptist Church, for example, a lunchtime club for Year 2 pupils. Visitors from other religions also come in to school regularly. This gives pupils the opportunity to think about and respect other religious beliefs. Some opportunities are provided to appreciate the beauty of art, for example, through a visiting artist showing her work. There is, however, scope for further opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wonders of music and art and to plan more effectively to include spirituality throughout the curriculum.
42. There is good provision made for pupils' moral development. From their first days in school, children are taught right from wrong. There is a consistent approach used by all staff, including support staff, throughout the school and pupils are frequently reminded of the school's code of conduct and the need to adhere to rules. Pupils are encouraged to think of the impact of their actions on others and are rewarded for being helpful and kind through public recognition in the weekly "Wow" assembly. Pupils are encouraged to share. For example, children in the reception class readily give up the tricycles when asked to, so that someone else can have a turn. Resources in lessons are shared amicably, as in a design technology lesson in Year 5 when pupils made musical instruments from a variety of boxes, bottles and string.
43. Pupils also have good opportunities to become socially aware. Older pupils are given the opportunity to work with younger ones and help by listening to them read. Pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. For example, they are welcoming, friendly and polite to visitors and different genders and races mix very well together during social occasions such as the breakfast club. Pupils are encouraged to listen to each other and this is enhanced through sessions of circle time. For example, in Key Stage 1, a short game was played where pupils could only mouth, not say aloud, various instructions to each other. They did this well and it was a good example to them of the need to concentrate on other people and to listen. Pupils have the chance to be made aware of the needs of others in society through organising charity collections and distributing Harvest festival goods to senior citizens.
44. The provision for pupils' cultural development is also good. The school does much to promote the understanding and celebrate the diversity of other cultures and religions by inviting visitors into the school, for example, from the Jewish and Muslim faiths. An Asian dance group has also visited. Some infants had recently spent time at the local mosque and were eager to talk about what they had seen there. Some library books celebrate other languages and nursery rhymes have been translated into Urdu for the youngest children. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their cultural awareness through art and music, although the artists studied tend to be European. An appreciation of local culture is enhanced through visits to nearby museums such as the Roald Dahl Museum and by watching performances at the theatre. Ethnic minority children are allowed to use their mother tongue with other speakers, but are encouraged to speak English to improve their contact with other children and their access to the curriculum.
45. Personal, social and health education lessons are used to raise pupils' awareness of issues of racism and sexism. Pupils with SEN are fully involved in all school activities, including educational visits and assemblies. They receive their full entitlement to all aspects of the curriculum, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, as for all other pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils with SEN feel secure and included. Other pupils are sensitive to the needs of pupils with SEN and show respect for their opinions and contributions in oral

work.

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

46. Overall, the school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and for child protection. Both the headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator have received in-depth training in child protection procedures and the majority of other staff members, including support staff, have been advised of school procedures. However, the policy, which is appropriately based on local authority guidelines, has yet to be ratified by governors. Other matters of pupil welfare are dealt with very well. For example, several staff members have had first aid training, there is a medical room and appropriate records are kept of any accident or illness. The school has a good health and safety policy. The caretaker is very aware of any health and safety issues and as he is also a governor and is fully involved in the maintenance and care of the site. All the necessary checks on electrical and fire equipment are carried out appropriately.
47. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good overall. Attendance is very well monitored and the school has taken very good steps to try to improve attendance. A member of the support staff has responsibility for monitoring attendance, particularly for pupils with a poor attendance record. The educational welfare officer visits regularly, checks registers and follows up any causes for concern. She also reports back to the school following spot checks on absences. Parents are required to get written permission for holidays during term- time and any time over 10 days is marked as unauthorised. Pupils who are taken out for very extensive trips overseas are now taken off-roll. There is still an element of parentally condoned absence, but the school tries to combat this by periods of telephoning on the first day of absence and through reminders to parents. Letters requesting reasons for absence go out to parents in other languages. Good attendance is promoted through the awarding of certificates at the end of the year.
48. Monitoring oppressive behaviour and promoting good behaviour are done well by the school and, as a result, intimidation has successfully been reduced to a minimum. Issues such as bullying are covered in personal, social and health education sessions and in assemblies. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to behave to each other and are confident that any issues will be resolved if brought to the attention of staff. Good behaviour is rewarded and richly praised and this strategy is used consistently throughout the school. All adults monitor behaviour. For example, the lunchtime supervisors keep a note of any incidents that occur, as do teaching staff and the headteacher, if a serious breach of the school's code of conduct occurs. The sanctions used, such as lunchtime exclusions, are effective. Parents are effectively involved at an early stage and if necessary a home/school report is instigated. Where additional support is required to improve challenging behaviour, the school uses the services of outside agencies such as the local Pupil Referral Unit.
49. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Much information and any concerns are passed on informally amongst staff, and teachers know their pupils well. A member of the support staff has responsibility for pupil welfare and is available for pupils to discuss any concerns with. However, there are no formal methods to record personal development. For example, the annual written pupil progress report does not contain a section on personal and social development that could be used to monitor this aspect of the pupils' time in school. The results from the pre-inspection questionnaire show, however, that well over 90 per cent of parents believe that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.
50. The school is developing a satisfactory ongoing tracking system that begins when the children enter the reception class and are initially assessed according to a baseline. Academic progress is tracked early and the information is used by staff to group pupils across the school and also to group pupils for literacy and numeracy in the junior classes. All teachers keep records of pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematical skills, and the weekly coverage of activities is closely recorded by teachers. This system enables teachers to record how well pupils have achieved in literacy and numeracy. The school complies with statutory requirements for testing pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and uses the optional tests in other year groups to monitor progress. The analysis of these results, mainly of literacy and numeracy, enables the school to

target areas for individual development and to set whole- school targets for improvement.

51. The school satisfactorily forges the links between assessment, target setting and marking to ensure that pupils are guided sufficiently in order to improve their work. There is no marking policy and the quality of marking is varied. A greater emphasis needs to be placed on the presentation of pupils' work. The growing body of useful information about individual levels of attainment is giving teachers helpful information, although not all teachers are using this information fully to plan future work. Both literacy and numeracy targets are agreed termly with pupils but are not always sufficiently well focused to ensure recognisable progress. In certain cases in numeracy, the wording of the targets is inappropriate.

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

52. The evidence from the parents' meeting and the questionnaires returned shows that parents have positive views of the school. For example, nearly all parents feel that the school is approachable, their child is making good progress and teaching is good. A small minority of parents feel that their child does not get the right amount of homework. The evidence from the inspection is that, although there may be some small inconsistencies, for example, in how much pupils are encouraged to take home reading books, in general, the amount and relevance of homework across the school are satisfactory. Similarly, a few parents did not have a positive view about the range of activities outside lessons. Again, this was felt to be satisfactory, although the number of activities fluctuates and thus are largely aimed at older pupils in the school.
53. Given the particular circumstances involved in combining several different schools, the headteacher and her staff have had to work hard to establish the good links with parents that are now in place. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and many, although not all, regularly listen to their child read at home and help with homework tasks. When parents are involved in their child's learning, this has a positive impact on standards, particularly in reading. An increasing number of parents volunteer to help in school, especially in the infant classes, and the school encourages more involvement by inviting parents to accompany visits. The partnership with parents is further enhanced through the home-school agreement that the great majority of parents sign. The parent teacher association is relatively new but has already made an impact by organising social and fundraising events and providing funds that have been used to purchase new football kits and for repairing instruments. There is, however, some duplication of effort, as the nursery has a separate parent teacher association that organises its own fundraising events.
54. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to Parents are both clear and informative and include all the statutory information. There are regular whole-school newsletters that keep parents up to date with forthcoming events and advertise facilities such as the breakfast club. In addition, parents receive information that lets them know what topics will be covered in the coming term, as well as any visits that will take place and how parents can help. The school also organises events to help parents understand the curriculum. For example, sessions have been organised to explain how the pupils are taught literacy and numeracy. Parents have three formal opportunities to discuss their child's progress during the academic year, but teaching staff and the headteacher are very accessible on a daily basis, should any concerns arise. The written report that parents receive telling them about their child's progress is satisfactory overall. One very good aspect is that it gives parents the results of the non-statutory SATs tests each year so that progress can be monitored. In addition, pupils have the chance to write about what they have enjoyed and where they would like to do better. However, the amount of information given, particularly for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, is limited and does not always give a clear picture of what has been studied and the progress made. In addition, individual targets in English, mathematics and science are not yet consistently reported on.
55. The involvement of parents from the Asian community has been encouraged through specially organised events such as a game-making workshop for mathematics teaching and an information event concerning the nature of the national testing arrangements at ages seven and 11, and

preparation for them. The full-time partnership teacher, who is Asian, acts as translator for any non-English speaking parents who visit the school.

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

56. The headteacher's leadership is very good and ensures clear educational direction for the school. Most senior managers work well together, have a shared commitment to improving standards and have begun to effectively monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses in terms of curriculum provision, teaching and learning. The school has clear aims and values and staff share these aims. There has been a good ethos established in which to implement these aims and policies in a positive way.
57. The governors are committed and actively involved in promoting the interests of the school. They have appropriate committees, enabling them to be effectively involved in decision-making processes. The school's improvement plan is very effectively used as a tool for strategic planning. Overall, governors work well in a committee structure, give their time willingly and meet their statutory obligations. They take an active role in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a very good knowledge of the school.
58. The headteacher has been effective in monitoring the work of the school and this has had a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching. Staff support each other appropriately, and policies and schemes of work are developed collaboratively. However, subject co-ordinators of the non-core subjects are not monitoring teaching sufficiently to help teachers assess outcomes and plan future activities which build on previous learning. Similarly, the roles of some senior staff are not adequately defined and monitored for example, the active roles of the deputy headteacher and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. The school improvement plan is costed and sets general targets. It is also specifically targeted to raising standards in particular areas of weakness.
59. The school is well managed, overall. Staff, accommodation and resources are deployed appropriately. There is an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers and enough well-trained teaching support staff. They are committed, work hard and are assets to the school. There is a very good induction policy and regular training for staff. School administration is very good; it gives clear support to staff and pupils alike and enables the school to operate in quiet, good order. Resources are satisfactory overall, and all the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice are met.
60. Effective procedures ensure good financial control. All spending is carefully monitored and regular financial statements are available for governors. All plans are costed and relate well to the overall budget, and the recommendations of the most recent audit have been implemented. Specific grants are used effectively for their designated purpose. Expenditure is managed very effectively so that the best value is achieved for the money spent. The school makes very effective use of new technology.
61. The accommodation is good. Other improvements include the re-arrangement of the secretary's and headteacher's offices. The new ICT suite is an excellent facility and the new extension will greatly improve the learning environment for the Foundation Stage. However, reception children still do not have access to a safe play area with climbing equipment and wheeled toys. Classrooms are generally spacious and the school is fortunate in having a number of additional areas in which lessons can be delivered.
62. The school is taking steps to improve the quality of education and is now systematically monitoring all pupils in English and mathematics, with plans to extend this to all areas of the curriculum.
63. There is good management and leadership of special educational needs throughout the school. The school makes every effort to ensure that the pupils with special educational needs are identified early and that they receive appropriate support according to the Code of Practice. The school policy for special educational needs was last reviewed in May 2000 and is due for further review and renewal once the new Code of Practice is established. The policy gives a clear outline

to teachers of the stages of the Code of Practice and the school's procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs.

64. There are good procedures in place in all classes for the support of the pupils with SEN. Support staff are fully aware of teachers' daily planning and pupils' individual education plans. Appropriate work is set for the pupils concerned.
65. The school has a well-developed policy on equal opportunities, stressing the unacceptability of any form of discrimination, and there is a strong commitment on the part of headteacher and staff to the policy. Overt expressions of racism are very rare, and are recorded in a central record. Various ethnic communities are represented on the staff.
66. A policy for gifted and talented pupils has recently been written, and a co-ordinator appointed. Although gifted and talented pupils have been identified, the school does not yet make sufficient provision for them.

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

**Raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and history by pupils aged seven and 11 years; the standards attained in ICT and geography by pupils aged seven years; and the standards attained in art by pupils aged 11 years by:**

- further monitoring, evaluating and targeting pupils' outcomes to improve their achievement and using monitoring and targeting more effectively to raise the performance of higher-achieving pupils at the end of both key stages;
- encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, and developing the use of self-assessment by pupils.

*Paragraphs: 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 17, 25, 49, 66, 97, 112, 120, 123, 125, 134, 138, 140, 141, 145, 146, 152, 156, 181*

**Improving the teaching of skills throughout the school by:**

- improving the teaching of basic skills, for example, literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and particularly writing skills through the curriculum;
- training co-ordinators to identify the specific skills necessary for individual subjects.

*Paragraphs: 10, 27, 28, 32, 100, 102, 104, 107, 108, 109, 118, 142, 156*

**Improving the management of the Foundation Stage and the cohesion of its curriculum by:**

- re-defining the role of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator to ensure continuity of learning from the nursery to the reception class;
- monitoring teachers' planning, particularly the quality and range of learning opportunities in both the nursery and reception classes so that they can be effectively merged into one Foundation Stage.

*Paragraphs: 58, 71, 77, 83, 85*

**Develop the roles of key staff and co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning to reinforce skills and improve achievement by:**

- regularly evaluating the use and contribution of staff with management responsibilities;
- consistently monitoring and evaluating teaching and pupils' achievement and setting achievable targets in science and the non-core subjects;
- devising a manageable and practical system of assessment for each subject to enable teachers to constantly evaluate what has been learned and improve pupils' progress.

*Paragraphs: 51, 54, 58, 131, 139, 144, 150, 177*

**Other issues for consideration**

- Consistent good quality marking and presentation.

*Paragraphs: 51, 109, 121*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	1	33	41	3	3	0
Percentage	0	1	41	50	4	4	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	55	333
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	127

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need	4	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12	146

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	95

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage1 (Year 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 6)***

Children have been integrated from four schools to form Oak Green Primary. This is the first year of the school operating in its present form. Because of the recent reorganisation of the school, it is not possible to make comparisons with the previous year's national assessment results.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	9
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	89
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	203
Any other minority ethnic group	11

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	25.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.5
Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	222
Number of pupils per FTE adult	3.2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1.0

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	737,473
Total expenditure	712,329
Expenditure per pupil	2,261
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,259
Balance carried forward to next year	45,403

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	330
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	32	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	45	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	39	8	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	40	9	3	8
The teaching is good.	68	30	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	33	4	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	1	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	40	51	3	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	51	41	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	49	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	39	13	1	13

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

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

67. When children start in the nursery, the level of their knowledge, skills and understanding is much lower than expected for their age. About a quarter of the children have English as an additional language. Most of these children are at the very early stages of speaking English but some do not speak any at all. These children make good progress in the nursery as a result of good teaching and the wide range of activities that promote the development of skills and knowledge. The bilingual support they receive helps them to acquire English and make good gains in all six areas of learning.
68. By the end of the reception year, most children have met the accepted standard in creative and physical development and have made good progress. They also make good progress in personal, social and emotional development; communication language and literacy; and mathematical development from the start of their time in the nursery through to the end of the reception year, although their attainment in these areas is below average. Their attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world is below expectations, although they make satisfactory progress in this area. Pupils with SEN make good progress from the time they join the school to the time they start their formal education in Year 1.
69. Staff work hard at developing links between the home and school. Children visit with their parents during the half-term before they start in the nursery. For those families who do not speak English, a teacher visits children at home and accompanies parents and children on visits to the nursery before they start. Several members of the staff speak the home languages of the children. Parents are welcome to come and help in the nursery, and a few do so on a regular basis, providing good extra support for staff and children alike. Teaching overall is satisfactory in two thirds of lessons; nearly one third is good and a small amount is unsatisfactory.

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

70. By the end of the reception year, most children are still below the standard expected for their age. They make good progress in both the nursery and reception class. Children settle into the nursery quickly. Most children play happily alongside one another when they first start nursery, although they often flit from one activity to another. The more confident and mature children are beginning to play co-operatively and to concentrate on a task for a reasonable length of time, especially when they are engaged in an activity that really interests them. When working with adults, the children learn to listen carefully, join in with songs and rhymes and to share. Opportunities for children to exercise their independence are limited. For example, the children have to sit quietly waiting for the register to be taken when they first arrive and the first half-hour of each session is dominated by adult-led activities and conversations which require very short contributions from the children. At snack time, whilst the children help get the room ready and distribute the milk, children have no discretion about when to have their snack.
71. The reception class timetable is organised into discrete subjects. This, and the lack of an additional adult in the classroom for much of the time, means that there are too few opportunities for children to use their own initiative, select their own activities and resources and often insufficient time to finish a task in one lesson. They have insufficient time to socialise informally with one another or with adults in small groups. This means that, in the reception class, children's speaking and listening skills do not develop as well as they otherwise would.
72. Throughout the nursery and reception classes the behaviour of the children is good. The calm, friendly supportive approach of the adults creates a positive response from the children, who try very hard to please.

## Communications, language and literacy

73. The skills of most children are below the standard expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Overall, however, the children have made good progress from the low level of children's spoken English on entry to nursery. Children for whom English is an additional language and those with SEN make good progress because of the planned, structured teaching in small groups. In the nursery, children talk most when adults are present to support their language and learning during their play activities.
74. Benefits of this kind were observed in the nursery. A parent was encouraging a group of children to go 'shopping' from the home corner to the 'garden centre' set up in the classroom. A child wheeled her doll in a pram to the garden centre, 'bought' a lot of plastic plants and wheeled them home. Later in the day, when children were playing outside, a nursery nurse was showing a child how to work in the 'snack bar' set up outside. Two other children were busy digging and planting the plastic flowers bought earlier. They worked silently for a long time, then one suggested a cup of tea. The other replied, 'I can't afford it. I spent all my money on these plants.' 'I've got money' replied the other, 'I'll treat you.' He went to the 'snack bar', ordered and 'paid' for the teas and asked the 'assistant' to bring them over.
75. Another example of sustained talk during children's self-chosen activities was observed in the reception class when three children were colouring in an owl picture together. The activity reminded one child of the owl mask he had been given at Halloween and he began to tell the others about it. A long, articulate discussion ensued about the activities the children had engaged in at Halloween. However, long conversations do not take place often enough between small groups of children in the reception class because of the nature of the timetable and the lack of sufficient adult help.
76. Children in the nursery are becoming interested in books and stories. They listen carefully when adults are reading to them and talking about the story. They talk about the pictures and turn the pages carefully. Children who are new to English use single words and short phrases in English to describe what is happening in the pictures, but when talking in their mother tongue, they are more fluent and animated. Many examples of children's early writing were observed among the samples of work provided. The children's writing skills are well below what is expected for their age. Many of the nursery children are slow to become interested in writing. Some children are happy to spend time experimenting with using a variety of writing implements; some are beginning to attempt to write their name and are at the earliest stages of writing. Looking at examples of the children's work showed that they are being given worksheets to complete. Worksheets are unsuited to the age and stage of development of nursery-age children.
77. The reception class children enjoy stories and demonstrate their understanding of them by answering the teacher's questions correctly. When reading out loud, most children know the function of full stops. Most children are, however, at the earliest stages of reading and do not yet know all letter sounds. The teacher has a very pleasant manner with the children; however, the pace of lessons is slow. Children are kept on the mat for too long to sustain their interest. The tasks provided for the children to complete are not always suited to their interests and abilities. In a lesson observed, the more able children used a story planner effectively to sequence pictures to illustrate a story and can construct simple sentences with the help of simple apparatus. Another group was working with the teacher on an appropriate task involving learning initial letter sounds and letter formation, but the lowest-ability group was left alone to work at a task, the relevance of which was not apparent to them so they simply did not do it.
78. The examples of children's writing seen show that most children are using a variety of writing implements with increasing control. However, most children find even very simple words difficult to write. About half the class are still unable to form all the letters in their first names correctly and use a mixture of lower-case and capital letters. A third of the class cannot write their name unaided. There is an over-concentration on the use of worksheets and too few opportunities for children to enjoy writing activities in their play.

79. Children for whom English is an additional language and those with SEN are achieving the individual targets set for them because they often work in small groups with adult support.

### **Mathematical development**

80. Although the children make good progress, they start from a very low level, but, by the end of the Foundation Stage, their level of attainment is still below that expected of most children of the same age. Teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and staff provide a range of practical and more formal activities to develop children's mathematical understanding.
81. In the nursery, staff pay good attention to teaching counting skills and children learn a variety of number songs and rhymes which they enjoy and try hard to join in the actions. Planned activities for mathematics fit well into the current nursery topic. For example, the current theme is 'In the garden' and children are taught simple addition skills using plastic insects. However, in the lesson observed, the teacher's talk dominated the lesson and opportunities for extending the pupils' own mathematical vocabulary were lost. As a result, the teacher failed to sustain the children's interest for very long.
82. In the reception class, lessons are based appropriately on the National Numeracy Strategy. In the good lesson observed, the teacher used clear, measured and appropriate language and graded her questions in difficulty to suit the ability of each child to whom they were addressed. In this lesson, the children made good progress in addition and the use of the correct mathematical terms.
83. Whilst the teaching of mathematics in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, too many examples of unsuitable worksheets were seen, both in the nursery and in the reception class, whilst too little attention is paid to number formation and the use of mathematics in play, especially in the reception class.

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

84. From a low starting point, children make satisfactory progress over the key stage as a whole in this area of learning. However, most will not achieve the level expected by the time they leave the reception class. In the nursery, the adults work hard to compensate for the low starting point of the children by providing interesting activities and a practical range of experiences, and the children make good progress. The nursery children explore a range of natural materials such as sand and water. They dig in the garden and study snails and insects. The staff engage small groups of children in discussion about the snails kept in the classroom. Children are encouraged to study them through magnifying glasses and the adults help children to capture the experiences in words by supplying appropriate vocabulary such as spiral and trail. The children also help to take care of the pet guinea pigs by giving them food and water. They know why they need to wash their hands after touching animals.
85. In the reception class, progress is unsatisfactory because of the way the curriculum is planned and managed. This area of learning is taught as discrete, unrelated lessons. In two of the three lessons observed, the teacher was on her own with the whole class. In a lesson demonstrating the use of a simple programme and operating the computer, the teacher's explanations were clear and she made good use of pupils to demonstrate the actions of 'clicking' and 'dragging' pictures across the screen. She asked the children questions to check their understanding of what was being taught. However, only those children at the front of the class were actively engaged in the lesson. Those at the back quickly became restless and fidgeted with their clothing and with one another. The walk up the corridor to look for things around the school which worked by electricity was done with the whole class following the teacher in a crocodile. One of the school governors was minding the rear of the crocodile. Again, there were too many children and they were too spread out for every child to hear what was being said and be equally involved. In the third lesson, observed a group of children was painting fruit and vegetables as a follow-up to a lesson on healthy eating held the previous week. After such a long span of time, the children

had forgotten what they had made and turned the bananas into sausages and one boy turned his pineapple into a garden.

### **Physical development**

86. At the end of the reception class, most of the children are achieving the standard expected for their age in this area of learning.
87. Fine hand control is developed well in both the nursery and reception classes through the opportunity to experiment with a variety of pens, pencils, crayons, paint, glue and scissors; and by using play-doh, clay and small construction toys.
88. Larger movements and games skills are also developed well throughout the Foundation Stage. In the nursery, there is a wide range of well-chosen resources, both inside and out, which are used effectively to promote the good physical development of the children. In the dance lesson observed, the adults encouraged the children to take part by joining in and demonstrating the movements to the children. The adults helped the children to understand the benefits of exercise and to notice the changes that happen to their bodies after exercise.
89. Children with special educational needs are supported well by the adults and helped to take an equal part in the lesson. Most children move freely with enjoyment and confidence and are beginning to experiment with different ways of moving. The children are learning to hop and are very proud of their achievements, exclaiming, 'Watch me!' and, from a child new to English, 'Look, I can do it on my leg!' Following the good example set by the staff, the other children provide praise and encouragement and show they appreciate the efforts made by their friends.
90. The nursery children are fortunate in having a well-equipped outside play area and regular access to climbing apparatus, which they use safely and with confidence.
91. In the lesson observed in the reception class, the teacher encouraged the children to take turns and share. Again, all children were fully involved in the lesson and helped to succeed. In this lesson, children were allowed to choose their own activities and the teacher helped them to improve their skills and competence. The children are learning to skip and several girls can skip competently. The boys are less skilled, but some persevere well and achieve some success. When using wheeled toys, the children are all very skilled at avoiding obstacles. Boys and girls play together well and were observed sharing two-seater tricycles in both the nursery and the reception class.

### **Creative development**

92. At the end of the key stage, the achievement of children is as expected for their age in most aspects of this area of learning, except for drama and role play.
93. While role play is given a high priority in the nursery, the nature of the reception class curriculum and the space provided for role play limit the opportunities for children to engage in work of any quality in this area. In the nursery, however, dramatic play is given an appropriately high status and children are helped, by skilled adult intervention, to develop their speaking and listening and their social skills. Role play also helps children to understand and make sense of the world about them and gain an insight into the lives of others. After observing a man on a tractor cutting the grass in the field next to the school, a little girl loaded a toy mower on the back of a trike with a trailer. Then she rode around the outside play area, systematically stopping to 'mow' the grass verges surrounding the building.
94. The nursery also helps children to develop their skills in dance. The lesson observed had a good, brisk pace and kept the children focused on what they were doing and the skills they were

learning. The resources for the lesson were appropriate and used well. The children worked hard, listened well to the instructions, imitated the movements made by their teachers and created movements suggested by the music. They enjoy taking part in dancing and ring games.

95. In music, the standards are as expected. In the nursery, the children also join in familiar songs and join in the actions. About half the children can clap in time to music. These children have a very good sense of rhythm. In the reception class, a good music lesson was observed. The teacher made good use of her voice to ensure that the children listened well and praised those who did. She had appropriately high expectations of the children's behaviour and involved the children actively in the lesson. The lesson had a very good shape. The teacher started from where the children were at and the children spent some time choosing their favourite songs and rhymes and singing them together. Then the teacher introduced percussion instruments and encouraged children to use the correct words to name them and to describe how to play them. By the end of the lesson, the more able children could identify the instruments by name and all of the children knew which action was needed to play the different instruments.
96. In art, the children are also achieving the level expected. In the nursery, the children make collages, paintings and drawings using a variety of tools and techniques. These skills are built upon appropriately in the reception class where children experiment with colour mixing and are introduced to further skills and techniques. In the lesson observed, children were learning that different materials and techniques can be combined to achieve a variety of different effects. They worked with tissue paper and food colouring and were excited by the results, especially when they achieved a colour they didn't expect. They are intrigued when paper absorbs the colours and appears as patterns when the paper is folded and then opened out. As the lesson progressed, most were able to choose the colours they needed to achieve a particular effect. This lesson had a good pace and maintained the children's interest well.

## ENGLISH

97. Standards seen at both age seven and 11 are below average, although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, for their age. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL also make satisfactory progress with the effective additional support they receive in class. Teaching is generally satisfactory, although it varies from very good to poor.
98. Inspection findings show that the present Years 2 and 6 are attaining below-average standards in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing and spelling at both key stages are well below average. This is partly due to the high numbers of pupils with SEN and a large minority who are learning English as an additional language. These factors are compounded by the recent unsettled past of the school and the large numbers of new staff.
99. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. By the age of seven, they are keen to answer the teachers' questions, are able to discuss stories they have heard with a partner and can explain their ideas for writing stories confidently to the whole class. For those learning English for the first time, questions often have to be rephrased by the teacher to ensure that the children have understood. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening, and by Year 6, they are much better at making their meaning clear. However, most still do not understand the meaning of unfamiliar words such as 'bore' and 'bough', even when the context of the sentence gives clues as to the meaning such as, 'the boughs of the apple tree bore delicious fruit'.
100. Pupils enjoy reading and make satisfactory progress. By Year 2, the most able are fluent readers who use some expression and appreciate the events in the story. However, many pupils are stilted, hesitant readers who look to adults for support with unfamiliar words. Most pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and how to use the contents and index pages. At the time of the inspection, however, the children did not visit the school library to borrow books or learn library skills, and very few are taken to the public library by their parents. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in reading, and most continue to enjoy it. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils are fluent and accurate when reading. They make reference to the text when

discussing stories they have heard and can empathise with the characters in stories. They read a variety of books, including non-fiction, in the course of their lessons. They use the school library regularly and can find and make use of information found in books. Many pupils, however, have not yet attained sufficient grasp of English to understand fully what they have read. As a result, they read in a mechanical way and, when asked, say they do not enjoy reading. These poor reading skills have an adverse effect on pupils' attainment in other subjects such as history, where they need to be able to read fluently to understand the lessons.

101. In writing, the level achieved by pupils in both the infant and junior classes is well below that expected for their age and, compared with pupils in most schools, they make slow progress in learning to write. In Year 2, the most able pupils are attaining the level expected for their age. They use full stops and capital letters correctly and can write up to five simple sentences. They write for a variety of purposes such as letters, factual accounts and stories. Sometimes, they use interesting descriptive words such as 'scary'. The words they come across regularly in reading and in literacy lessons are generally spelt correctly. A few children make recognisable attempts at spelling more difficult words such as 'addvencher'.
102. Many other pupils, however, are not yet producing many recognisable words. They can all write their own name correctly and sometimes recognisable words appear in sentences they have written such as 'up' and 'day'. In the examples of children's work looked at during the inspection, there were too few examples of pupils' own writing, and too many published worksheets which required colouring. Many of these were unfinished. None of the children in Year 1 and 2 use joined handwriting and the work they produce is often very untidy.
103. By Year 6, all pupils are using joined handwriting and the most able are attaining the standards expected for their age. Punctuation is good and they can spell even complex words correctly. They write stories, letters, labels and captions. They know how to present a balanced argument when writing a report, and how to manipulate language to good effect when writing poetry. In a poem about summer, a girl wrote.

Leaves of green and petals red  
Growing in the flower bed.'

104. Most other pupils, however, do not always use punctuation correctly and their spelling is often incorrect, although recognisable, such as 'misterierius' for mysterious. Pupils often use 'off' for 'of'. Some pupils with English as a second language find written work especially difficult and many of those who can read at a level appropriate to their age are attaining very low levels in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties need considerable adult support to benefit from English lessons. They are still at the stage of writing very simple sentences, often without full stops or capital letters.
105. Whilst the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, it varies within each key stage. In the best lessons in the infant classes, lessons are very well planned and work is carefully adapted to suit the needs of pupils of different capabilities within the class. The lessons move at a brisk pace to minimise restless behaviour and to maintain pupils' attention. The teacher uses simple, well-chosen resources and makes sure that all pupils are actively involved in the lesson. When the children move to working at the tables, the additional adult working in the classroom is used purposefully to support the least able children. As a result, all children make good progress.
106. The best lessons in junior classes have a similar pattern. They are carefully thought out and planned well. They have a brisk pace. Teachers check pupils' understanding with skilled questions that are worded to meet the needs of individuals. They have a good relationship with the children. They value pupils' contributions, praise good effort and correct pupils' errors with tact, courtesy and gentle good humour, creating exactly the right learning climate. They have appropriately high expectations of both behaviour and standards of work. They use well-chosen resources effectively. For example, in a Year 6 class, the children were asked to write an advertisement designed to sell a house or a caravan that had been described in books the children had been studying. The teacher used the help of the teaching assistant well to support

the work of the lower-attaining pupils. As a result, all the children completed the task. There were many interesting attempts made and the children thoroughly enjoyed the exercise and listening to each other's efforts.

107. When teaching is less successful, it is usually because the pace of lessons is slow. Work set for children is not always thought out well enough nor is it adapted sufficiently to suit their differing needs. Teachers rely too much upon published worksheets. They accept low standards of work, and sometimes the classroom assistants are not used effectively.
108. Literacy lessons are strongly based on national recommendations but do not always provide what the children really need. Not enough time is given to improving the children's speaking and comprehension skills in the attempt to meet the National Literacy Strategy goals. Often, teachers are pressured for time. For example, teachers sometimes accept short answers using simple nouns and verbs rather than spending time demonstrating more complex vocabulary or sentence structures. Similarly, the children are not always helped to improve their spoken English by using extended sentences. In writing, the overuse of published worksheets and formal exercises in writing stops children from writing creatively and producing extended pieces of writing.
109. Although most pupils in Years 5 and 6 write in a legible joined hand, the skill of using joined handwriting is not taught early enough. This hampers the flow of children's work and results in untidy presentation. As the skill of joined writing is closely linked to spelling patterns, the delay in teaching this skill also has an adverse effect on pupils' ability to spell. These factors, coupled with an inconsistent application of the school's marking policy, contribute to the low standards attained by the pupils in these aspects of English. The contribution of other subjects to pupils' competence in English is under developed. Literacy skills are not promoted sufficiently throughout the curriculum. Similarly, ICT is not used enough in English.
110. The management of the subject is, however, satisfactory and set to improve. Money has been spent on improving teaching resources and these are now good. There is a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books in the classrooms and the school library, including books with dual-language texts to support the children new to English. At present, however, although the attractive school library is used regularly by pupils in Years 3 to 6, it is underused by Year 1 and 2. The teaching of English has been monitored and standards analysed. Advice has been sought from the local authority and an appropriate action plan is in place.

## **MATHEMATICS**

111. Because of the recent reorganisation of the school, it is not possible to make comparisons with previous years' mathematics assessment results. Nor is there any reliable information to illustrate the trends over time of test results or to make comparisons with national results. Information for standards in attainment during this inspection was obtained from scrutinising pupils' work, discussion with the subject co-ordinator and from lesson observations. Standards in mathematics are below national averages in both key stages. In general, however, pupils are making satisfactory progress, although this varies from year group to year group. Pupils with SEN or EAL make satisfactory progress.
112. The attainment of most pupils at the end of the infant stage is below average. The large proportion of pupils with SEN, within the key stage, impacts adversely on standards. The majority of pupils are beginning to understand inverse operations of addition and subtraction. They can sequence numbers forwards and backwards in fives up to 100 and can round numbers to the nearest 10. They are able to add simple money sums up to 50p and are beginning to use partitioning to help them with their addition of larger numbers. Some of the pupils employ the four rules of number accurately. The higher achievers are able to recognise common multiples of two, three, five and ten and use these in simple multiplication problems. They understand simple fractions such as half and quarter and use them correctly when dividing objects and shapes. They recognise odd and even numbers, use a variety of graphs to display data and work confidently with numbers up to 100.

113. Progress in lessons is good where teachers provide clear instructions and work is appropriately matched to pupils' capabilities. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were creating a repeating pattern of shapes. Some pupils had difficulty producing a simple pattern, but the help provided by the teacher and her assistant enabled the majority of pupils to make good progress. Progress is unsatisfactory where the activity is inappropriate. In another Year 1 class, pupils had to recognise symmetrical patterns and create their own symmetrical pictures. This was an inappropriate activity for the age group and progress was unsatisfactory. Progress is also better where lessons are well organised. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were fitting stories to particular numbers. The majority of pupils could manage an appropriate story where addition was involved but had difficulty where subtraction was included. The teacher asked her pupils to turn to one another and talk about their stories. This helped them to compare and understand the process and progress was good. Throughout the infant stage, there is not enough emphasis placed on the presentation of work.
114. The attainment of the majority of pupils in Year 6 is below average. In Years 3 to 6, each year group is set into two mathematics sets. Where teacher availability allows, there may be three sets organised. This enables smaller groups of pupils to receive targeted work that is more appropriate to their needs and enables progress to be satisfactory throughout. For one term, the school provided for a mathematics booster class in Year 6, and additional Springboard Maths groups are provided for Year 4 and Year 5 pupils to help raise their attainment.
115. Within the key stage, pupils are beginning to work confidently with numbers up to 1000 and have a sound understanding of the four rules of number and how to apply them. They are becoming familiar with negative numbers within the context of temperature. They have a satisfactory knowledge of decimals to two places and recognise their application in money and measures. They work out equivalents between fractions, decimals and percentages and are beginning to use the information in the correct context. They understand the relationships between perimeter and area and can calculate both. Their application of knowledge of numbers to everyday situations is less developed, for example, in the use railway timetables, menus or probability in considering certainties and impossibilities.
116. Progress is better where opportunities for independent learning in mathematics are planned. In a Year 6 lesson where pupils were investigating different combinations of digits to make different totals, the teacher tended to give away too much information in order to help her pupils complete the task. This limited the pupils' learning. In a Year 4 lesson on angles, however, the teacher had clear expectations for independent work and organised her pupils to carry out an investigation into two-dimensional shapes and right angles. The pupils worked independently using appropriate resources and, as a result, their progress and learning were good.
117. Pupils' presentation of work is unsatisfactory. There is no accepted procedure for the layout of everyday work in exercise books and this has a negative impact on the accuracy of their work and hinders the understanding of place value and use of the decimal point. The use of appropriate mathematical notation, for example, when recording time digitally or areas in square units, is not well established. There are underdeveloped opportunities to express numerical information in other forms such as tables and charts or graphs.
118. Opportunities to develop numeracy skills in other subjects are limited. There is little evidence, for example, of the use of tables and graphs in science and geography. ICT, however, offers good opportunities for the development of their numeracy skills. Pupils use databases, graphs and spreadsheets. Additionally, throughout the school, specific groups of pupils use a system of computer-programmed learning activities to provide effective consolidation of basic number skills.
119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers display a satisfactory knowledge and level of understanding of mathematics and they use terminology correctly, often displaying key words to help pupils learn. The better lessons are well planned, have a consistent structure with clear objectives and are usually linked to previous work. Teachers make good use of questioning to establish their pupils' learning and they listen carefully to pupils' responses. The use of

resources is often good, especially where each pupil is involved using a whiteboard to write down their work. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the resources were not fully understood by the teacher and they did not enhance the pupils' progress. Additional support for children with SEN and for those with EAL is used satisfactorily and this support has a positive impact on the progress they make. Activities for these pupils are well planned and good support is provided by learning support assistants, many of whom have had specific training for numeracy activities.

120. In the best lessons, there is a high level of challenge and expectation, the pace is lively and the extension activity is used to challenge the higher attainers, as in a Year 4 lesson on angles. However, this is not the case in many lessons and higher-achieving pupils are not sufficiently challenged overall.
121. The marking of pupils' work is varied. Teachers are too accepting of poor presentation and there are no whole-school routines for the layout of pupils' work. There is very little corrected work by the pupils and a greater insistence by teachers on corrections being carried out would help pupils to consolidate their learning and skills.
122. A clear policy is in place and the school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy. There has been a recent change in the management of the subject but many successful systems have been put into place by the previous co-ordinator. In its drive to raise standards, the school has implemented a good system of monitoring pupils' progress in mathematics. Test scores are used to track pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 and predictions are made of their assessment scores upon which assessment targets are based. The school analyses the results of several tests taken by the pupils and areas of weakness in provision are identified. Recently, these findings have shown that data handling and word problem solving are weaker areas in Key Stage 1, and that data handling and analytical skills in problem solving are weaker areas in Key Stage 2. The level of resourcing is satisfactory, with equipment readily available and of satisfactory quality. The subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' social development through collaborative work.

## SCIENCE

123. In Years 1 and 2, standards in science are below average. Pupils' standards are satisfactory when they work individually, test and record by themselves and can describe what they are doing well, as in a Year 1 class sorting different types of paper. In Year 2, standards attained are unsatisfactory where the higher-attaining pupils are working at Level 2, not Level 3, and where the written work is of an unsatisfactory standard in both content and presentation.
124. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are generally below those expected of pupils of this age. Standards are lowest where work is not matched to take account of pupils' different abilities, standards of presentation and written work are poor and where the work is over-directed by teachers. This gives the pupils little opportunity to find things out for themselves. Throughout the school, much of the work in science is heavily teacher-directed. There is an overuse of unchallenging worksheets and there are limited opportunities for pupils to carry out their own independent enquiries. The standards seen in the drawing of tables and charts and standards in spelling, grammatical content and presentation are below those normally expected of pupils of this age.
125. By the age of seven, most of the pupils can sort materials, make simple predictions and explain what they have been doing. By the age of 11, most of the pupils make and test predictions and draw conclusions. Pupils have a good understanding of food chains and habitats and have worked with materials and physical processes. In a Year 5 lesson on sound, some pupils showed a good understanding of how to carry out an investigation and explain it to the rest of the class. The other pupils listened well and this took their learning forward, but they lacked the opportunity to achieve success in carrying out their own enquiries. In Year 6 classes, there is insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils to achieve the standards they are capable of.
126. Pupils' progress ranges from unsatisfactory to good, but is satisfactory overall. Pupils with SEN or EAL make satisfactory progress. In all lessons seen, all pupils have been included in all activities. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with an

additional language. In classes where there are no learning assistants, teachers are careful to ensure that all the pupils understand their instructions. The teachers circulate, giving individual support where it is needed.

127. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils make good progress. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall.
128. In Year 1 and Year 2 classes, the teaching is good where teachers plan lessons well, resources are ready and teachers give clear instructions. In a Year 1 lesson on sorting paper, the teacher's subject knowledge and good class control helped pupils to learn well. In a Year 2 class, pupils' learning was helped by good interactions between the teacher, the pupils and the learning assistant. Teachers in the junior classes generally plan their lessons well. However, learning is unsatisfactory when the whole class is given the same unimaginative worksheets and there is no opportunity for practical work or independent enquiry, as in one Year 6 science lesson. Teaching is good in a Year 4 lesson on food chains, where the teacher sets suitably challenging activities for pupils of all abilities and gives clear explanations.
129. Teachers make good use of constructive comments as they mark pupils' work in Years 1 and 2. Fewer comments are used, however, as pupils progress to Years 5 and 6 and there is little evidence that corrections are followed up by the pupils. The marking of key spelling words is insufficiently rigorous. There is little evidence of the use of ICT in pupils' work, although ICT is used effectively in labelling displays around the school.
130. In Years 1 and 2, the majority of pupils listen well, show interest and are keen to answer questions. They concentrate well and are fully engaged in their work throughout the lessons. In Years 3 to 6, pupils behave appropriately. There is some lively behaviour but teachers are normally effective in not allowing this to disrupt the pace of learning.
131. The science policy is up to date and guidelines in science give satisfactory coverage of the national curriculum. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning in the subject effectively. This is unsatisfactory. The raising of standards in science is a key issue in the School Improvement Plan. There is no monitoring system to check if effective use is made of assessment through the school. Some teachers use red, amber and green indicators and make notes on lesson plans to indicate progress, but this process is not rigorously applied in all classes. Year 2 and 6 pupils are given national curriculum levels at the beginning of the year and end-of-year targets. There is, however, no clear system for the regular checking of individuals' progress throughout the year. Pupils are aware of the targets they are expected to achieve. This is proving moderately effective in helping teachers to take pupils' learning forward.
132. There are good displays of science around the school, which creates an effective environment for learning. The displays often indicate cross-curricular links such as self-portraits in Year 1 that link art and science and use a variety of materials. Very good use is made of alcoves in Year 2 classes as science display areas and well-labelled displays about owls help pupils to learn key vocabulary. Good use is made of interactive displays in Year 3 and 5 with questions such as "How are magnets made?" and "What do we predict will happen..?" A recent visit to Aylesbury police station for pond dipping provides a stimulating display by Year 4. There are usefully labelled diagrams on the parts of a flower and on electricity to help pupils' learning in Year 6.
133. Some use is made of the local environment to support work in science, such as the use of the police station grounds for pond dipping. More use could, however, be made of the extensive school grounds. The excellent pond area within the school is in need of refurbishment and is not used at present. Science resources are adequate.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

134. Overall, attainment in art is in line with expectations by the end of the infants, but below expectations in the junior classes. From the time pupils start school, they are encouraged to

experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination, and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. Reception children have enjoyed pattern and paper weaving and have also experimented with colour matching. Most produced pictures which were colourful and bright and showed their enthusiasm for the project.

135. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standard of attainment is at the expected level. They are making satisfactory progress in drawing and sketching. This competence in using dry media, pencils and charcoal, stands them in good stead in the junior classes. Pupils' attainment in other aspects, such as painting, shows an average range of skill and understanding. There is sound development of practical skills in some classes, although this depends largely on the subject expertise of the teacher. Pupils in Year 1 have used wax crayons and a wash to create pictures of fruit, as well as experimenting with bubble-wrap printing, whilst those in Year 2 have created pictures using ICT and made a collage of fabric leaves and paint.
136. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent at colour mixing and matching, using pastels, and are able to use a variety of media, like charcoal, to achieve the results they want. Year 3 have created a montage linked to the topic of the ancient Greeks, and have made masks of characters from Greek legends. They have also enjoyed making string and straw prints. They are learning to evaluate their work. There is a readiness to question, adapt and modify their own work and learn from their own mistakes. However, standards achieved in painting are below the average range. Some higher attainers in Year 6 are beginning to compare methods and modify and improve their work to meet their intentions, for example, when pupils in Year 6 were experimenting with a colour wheel. Pupils with SEN and EAL make satisfactory progress overall and use the skills they acquire in art for other subjects.
137. Pupils enjoy their artwork and are enthusiastic about the practical nature of the tasks. Attitudes are satisfactory. Most pupils demonstrate concentration, collaboration and respect for the work of others. They work as individuals, and most can also co-operate well in groups when required to do so. Behaviour in lessons is also satisfactory.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Most teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the subject, although some lack confidence in certain areas of learning, and need more training in how to teach art skills as in Years 1 and 2. Where teachers' planning is good, it gives details of learning objectives and careful attention to the development of skills and techniques. In a good lesson with reception children, the teacher's good planning and use of time and resources enthused pupils to not only stay with the task of creating different colourful pictures with different materials but encouraged all abilities to challenge and develop their original ideas. Teachers are responsible for their own assessment. However, most are not assessing and recording pupils' individual progress in art regularly enough. Although appropriate learning is taking place at both key stages, there is insufficient monitoring of the quality of assessment and the standards being achieved and insufficient use of assessment to inform what is taught next. Examples of satisfactory learning and progress include a clear development in pupils' observational skills and in their understanding of artistic elements, as seen in Year 5 and 6. However, there is insufficient attention given to the work of famous artists. Pupils in Year 5 have attempted to depict the style of the impressionist George Seurat but famous artists are insufficiently used to develop art skills throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology for graphic work is also underdeveloped. Progress in the presentation of illustrative work in other curriculum areas is weak in the junior classes.
139. The subject co-ordinator is committed to reviewing the scheme of work. However, she does not have the time to monitor the teaching of the subject adequately. There is no whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress, and consequently assessment does not adequately inform curriculum planning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

140. Four lessons were observed in design and technology. Judgements were also made from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from discussions with the co-ordinator. As pupils reach the age of

seven, they have made unsatisfactory progress in design and technology and their work is below national expectations. As pupils reach the age of 11, progress has not improved and standards are below those expected nationally. This is also the case for pupils with SEN and EAL.

141. Although pupils are offered a satisfactory range of design and technology activities, they do not develop designing, making and evaluating skills as they progress through the school. Frequently in the infant classes, pupils make their evaluations verbally and this restricts the development of written evaluative skills. Similarly with the designing part of their activities, progress is unsatisfactory as there is a lack of emphasis on the design part of the task. Year 1 pupils had been looking at playground equipment and were making a slide from Lego. Their construction was satisfactory; they were able to construct steps forming the ladder, to join a cardboard slide using masking tape and to test their slide using a model man. Some were able to sketch their constructions and to describe how they had made them. Pupils were told what to do, however, rather than being given opportunities to think up and design from their own ideas. Seven-year-old pupils were beginning to make plans for their designs, such as the puppets being made in Year 2, and these designs were clearly labelled. They had also made Joseph's coat from card and coloured sticky paper. These were all similarly made with no individual differences apart from the colour of the sticky paper. Others made use of felt and sewed their coats. Pupils had opportunities to make sliding mechanisms from card such as the sliding mice to illustrate Hickory-Dickory Dock clocks and they had also used wheels and split pins in their construction of wheeled vehicles. The range of materials pupils use is satisfactory, however, they do not develop satisfactory making skills.
142. Within the junior classes, pupils' making skills are not sufficiently developed nor do they acquire satisfactory designing and evaluative skills. In Year 3, as part of a packaging activity, pupils had cut out patterns for a cube-shaped box. These were from paper and were flimsy and would not have suited the purpose of holding food. Their colouring and design were unimaginative and the colouring technique of using felt pens gave no visual impact. Year 4 pupils were designing an electric light in the 'Lighting It Up' activity. They were investigating how to make lampshades and were trying out layering, folding and cutting of coloured paper and card. They made good progress, helped by the useful support material provided by their teacher. This material helped them to make evaluations of their efforts and to decide which techniques best suited their purpose. Year 5 pupils were making musical instruments and, although they succeeded in constructing a variety of instruments, again, very little thought was given to planning, designing recording and evaluating.
143. The teaching of design and technology is unsatisfactory throughout. Teachers' subject knowledge is unsatisfactory. Where teachers provide clear guidelines for the design process, such as in the form of a design sheet, progress is better. Furthermore, helpful material to enable pupils to record their making and evaluating processes again enables pupils to progress more quickly. In order to improve designing and making skills, teachers need to ensure they have higher expectations with respect to these activities.
144. The management of design and technology is unsatisfactory. There has been effective planning for appropriate coverage across the age range and each class carries out one design and make activity every term. However, the important areas of designing, recording and evaluating have not received appropriate emphasis. Resources are satisfactory in both quality and quantity. Materials and tools are accessible. The existing policy is unhelpful to teachers. It does not inform them in detail how and when specific skills need to be introduced. Teachers need to look carefully at the units of work chosen to ensure that they offer greater cross-curricular relevance and that their pupils do build on previously learned skills rather than carry out the units in isolation. There is no portfolio of design and technology activities. A portfolio would help teachers and pupils to extend their understanding and offer clear expectations of outcomes. It would also help in the assessment of their work; at present, there is no assessment system in place.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

145. Because of the incidence of geography in the school timetable, it was only possible to observe

one lesson in the infants, but four lessons in junior classes were observed. Judgements on pupils' attainments have therefore been supplemented by an examination of pupils' work, and curriculum material on display in the school. The level of attainment for seven-year olds is below national expectations for this age group, but the attainment of 11-year olds is generally in line with national expectations. Progress made by pupils with SEN, EAL and by higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory.

146. The one lesson observed in the infants was unrepresentative of the geography syllabus and therefore of pupils' attainment in the subject. The scrutiny of work in pupils' exercise books shows that there is only limited evidence of work on geographical themes, for example, comparisons between the localities of Aylesbury and a Scottish island. An informative display in one classroom, however, showing that geography involves both physical and human features, serves to indicate some effective syllabus coverage.
147. In the junior classes, pupils show good knowledge and understanding of work on grid references and rivers. In their work in class, the oldest children demonstrate good recall of information and show that they are acquiring the language of the subject through the proper use of words such as 'estuary' and 'meander'. In their written work, they also use language flexibly to show good understanding. Many older pupils are more productive, completing basic set tasks in good time and moving on to extension work. However, there are differences in the standards of written work being attained over time, as revealed in a scrutiny of pupils' books.
148. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes, good in the junior classes, and is good overall. The content of the one geography lesson observed in the infants took as its focus the issue of road safety. As such, it might more accurately be seen as a lesson in personal, social and health education, and therefore only limited conclusions could be drawn. The planning was good in terms of focus, sequence and the use of time, and the lesson demonstrated strong interaction skills on the part of the teacher, including sensitive language use. In response, children produced thoughtful and well-constructed answers to the teacher's questions. Good understanding was brought about through good pacing and clear direction to the lesson. Effective match of the set task was achieved for pupils with SEN and EAL. However, higher-achieving children were set a relatively undemanding task.
149. In the junior classes, there is effective teaching about aspects of rivers. In one classroom, the display on river formation and processes is both eye-catching and informative. A lively approach and good questioning and interaction skills on the part of teachers lead to stimulating learning. Effective management skills, and the good use of opportunities to make regular checks on pupils' progress, result in good-quality learning. Teachers show good subject knowledge and make use of a range of different information sources, although the effectiveness of the match of pupils to tasks is more variable. An instance of very effective teaching and organisation was when one teacher provided tasks of varying difficulty, setting the most demanding work for higher attainers and ensuring that the lower-attaining pupils had success at an easier task with the assistance of an adult helper. The use of ICT is similarly variable. An example of good ICT use occurred in a classroom where the majority of pupils were learning about grid references on maps; those children who were assigned to the computer were able to make links successfully between photographs of places and their representation on an Ordnance Survey map. Other junior children learned about an aspect of environmental change by looking at the changing view of the school and courtyard as a result of the new buildings. The developments were recorded in a display on their classroom wall.
150. The school's policy for geography pays some attention to rationale and aims, but these are insufficiently developed. Planned coverage of the Programmes of Study is adequate, but there is insufficient consideration of assessment and matching work to pupils' needs. Teachers' medium-term planning and pupils' exercise books were scrutinised for coverage in the Autumn Term. In the Spring Term, resources were audited and the quality of provision of the subject was analysed. There is however insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning, for instance, in the two Year 6 classes, where there are differences in the standards of work achieved. The resources available for geography teaching are adequate.

## **HISTORY**

151. Owing to the arrangement of the school timetable, it was only possible to observe one history lesson in Years 1 and 2 and two history lessons in Years 3 to 6. Judgements on pupils' attainments have therefore been supplemented by an examination of their work and curriculum material on display in the school.
152. The standard of pupils' work is below average in both infants and juniors. By the end of Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history are limited by comparison with national standards. In their classwork, pupils demonstrate an evident interest in the Great Fire of London, for instance, but the presentation and content of written work are poor. They have only limited records of aspects of their history work from earlier in the year. More recent work on aspects of the Great Fire, however, shows greater range, but pupils are lacking in the writing skills needed to present the understanding which they show when they discuss their work.
153. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history are also unsatisfactory. In Year 5, pupils' understanding of the features of rich and poor homes in Tudor times is very variable. Many had no clear idea of the dates of the Tudor period and did not find it easy to find an appropriate match between particular crimes and punishments in Tudor times, although the higher attainers produced a more thoughtful match. Low-attaining pupils and those with SEN/EAL make appropriate progress because of the support which teachers provide for them. Progress made by higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory.
154. The quality of teaching is good in the infant classes, satisfactory in the juniors, and satisfactory overall. Teachers of infants use imaginative techniques to enable pupils to formulate questions and to move into role play, interrogating an eyewitness of the Great Fire of London. This approach creates strong involvement on the part of the pupils, and provides opportunities for extended oral work for children of all abilities. Higher up the school, teachers display adequate subject knowledge, for example, about aspects of the Tudor period in England. In order to enhance pupils' success, teachers discuss the meaning of reading material with them, and focus them on the set task. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to record their understanding of history in a variety of ways. Very often, pupils' written work consists of only short responses to worksheet questions; as a result, pupils are not gaining the experience of learning to write longer pieces of connected prose. Plenary sessions are effectively used to summarise learning. However, lessons would benefit from greater pace, a greater focus on the key concepts to be acquired, and the use of ICT to enhance learning.
155. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' medium-term planning and collected together samples of the work of pupils of different levels of ability. But monitoring does not yet extend to the direct observation of history teaching, nor to comparisons of standards across classes, for instance, the two Year 6 classes, where there are differences in the standards of work achieved. Continuity in the subject is achieved through discussion in meetings of teachers at each key stage and through the assessment information which is handed on at the end of the school year. Overall, resourcing levels are adequate. Children pay a visit to the Roman museum in Aylesbury as part of their study of this period.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

156. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected nationally for seven-year-old pupils and they are making unsatisfactory progress, but by the age of 11, pupils have made good progress and standards for 11-year-olds are in line with national averages. The progress made by pupils with EAL or SEN is satisfactory overall in the juniors, but unsatisfactory in the infant classes. The school has worked hard under difficult conditions to provide a full range of opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT capability. Access to the nearby computer centre in the grammar school has had a significant impact on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in Year 5 and 6 while the school's own suite has been built. The infants have

regular access to the re-sited computer suite within their part of the school. There are computers within classes as well and pupils use these to consolidate ICT skills and to support learning in other subjects.

157. Year 2 classes were learning how to use the computer keyboard 'Enter' key to separate out items in a long list. Progress was satisfactory but pupils needed more time to consolidate this process and the activity was more suitable for younger-aged pupils. Both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have carried out a range of activities on computers to illustrate learning in other subjects. In literacy, they have used the simple word processor to write about themselves and "My Magic Time". This explained a special moment in their lives that they particularly remembered. They have learned to use different fonts and to colour their writing. They have painted pictures of themselves and of firework displays, learning to use the spray and colour fill tools. Information-handling activities using ICT have included the making of bar charts and pie charts to illustrate proportions of eye colour and how many letters there are in each pupil's name. They use CD ROMs to support reading through the use of talking stories. Familiarity with the keyboard and with general ICT tools is below expectation for seven-year-olds.
158. In the junior classes, pupils keep an exercise book for their computer work and this helps them to value their printed-out material. From Year 3, pupils use the word processor as a resource to support learning in other subjects. They learn to insert clip art and to decorate their word-processed work, enhancing the presentation. Written work is presented effectively within the context of literacy, history and geography, and the use of the digital camera has supported pupils' artwork in Year 6. The word processing activities help pupils to develop their formatting and presentational skills. Year 4 pupils were using graphics software to help them to create an effective layering effect in the construction of their lampshades in a design and technology activity. As part of a modelling activity, Year 4 pupils were using Logo software to produce a sequence of commands to draw several squares on screen. They were well prepared before going to the computer suite as the teacher had produced supportive worksheets and so the pupils were able to settle to the task with confidence so that they made good progress. Year 6 pupils had used a desktop publishing application very effectively to produce a brochure within a geographical context on features of a mountain resort. Other areas of ICT activity are less well developed, such as control technology and the use of sensing equipment to monitor the environment.
159. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in the infant classes but satisfactory in the juniors. Teachers' subject knowledge varies. It is weak in the infants but is better further up the school, apart from the gaps in provision stated above. Teachers' expectations are too low in Years 1 and 2 and their organisation of ICT sessions does not help to offer maximum opportunity for computer access. The majority of teachers have undergone New Opportunities-funded training and this has had a positive impact on their knowledge and understanding.
160. The headteacher has taken on the temporary responsibility for the subject and the management of ICT is satisfactory. An appointment for the new co-ordinator has already been made. The school has embraced ICT as a learning resource and has continued to provide opportunities for its use in the light of difficult circumstances. Teachers have worked hard at maintaining a satisfactory provision in the light of building works and the removal of their old computer suite and installation of the new one. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils make good use of the facilities at the local grammar school and this has enabled pupils to work independently at computers and also to have fast access to the Internet. There has been little monitoring of the teaching of ICT. The school has implemented the LEA's assessment system which enables teachers to monitor progress across the scheme of work.

## **MUSIC**

161. At the age of seven and 11, pupils' standards of attainment and the progress they make are in line with expectations of pupils of this age.
162. At the age of seven, pupils' singing is tuneful. When they concentrate well they can interpret the mood of taped music effectively, using a variety of instruments. At age 11, pupils continue to

achieve a satisfactory standard. They can click their fingers to the rhythm of taped music, interpret the mood and rhythm of the music with a variety of instruments and use a computer programme to select appropriate rhythms and instruments. Singing in assemblies and hymn practices is tuneful and robust.

163. In Year 2, the pupils learn about long and short sounds. In one Year 2 class, the pupils are able to distinguish which instruments are best for making long and short sounds. Some pupils are able to interpret the mood of the music well using a variety of instruments. In Year 6, the pupils learn about a composer and his music. They learn about how the mood of the music reflects the different stages of a river and about using "glissando" in their singing to represent the smoothness of the river's sound.
164. The school provides opportunities for the older pupils to join the school choir during the lunch hour, participate in concerts and music festivals or to play a musical instrument. There are five keyboards, four cellos, two trumpets and eight violins that are on loan to the pupils who receive music tuition. Lessons are free and take place at the end of morning sessions. Overall, the pupils work well together in music lessons and behaviour is generally satisfactory.
165. Pupils with SEN and EAL are included in all musical activities, are well supported and make satisfactory progress. In one Year 6 class, a support teacher and a part-time teacher work well together so that some pupils may work in the computer suite. This is an effective use of ICT as the computer programme supports the work done in the music room.
166. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching is good where the teachers issue clear instructions and insist on good behaviour in the handling of musical instruments. This results in good concentration, better listening and higher attainment. In a Year 6 class where teaching was of good quality, the teacher shared the learning objectives with the pupils, led the children in their singing and had high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and response to questions. Teachers whose subject knowledge is insecure are supported well by the use of "Silver Burdett" tapes and other materials, which are designed to cover all aspects of the national curriculum for non-specialist teachers.
167. The music co-ordinator provides satisfactory management and leadership in music. Teachers' weekly planning and evaluations of lessons are seen on a regular basis and advice and support are available when required. There is at present no arrangement for release time for the co-ordinator to visit classrooms, either to support other staff or to observe teaching in music.
168. There are effective arrangements for peripatetic music tuition and the pupils are seen on a rota basis to ensure that they receive their full entitlement to the national curriculum.
169. There are strong links with other schools and the school plays an essential part in the annual Aylesbury Schools Music Festival. Students from the local grammar school have recently helped with drama work and arrangements are in hand for some 6<sup>th</sup> form instrumentalists to help in the school later in the year. There are good resources and accommodation for music. In recent years, a successful bid was made from the William Harding Trust, which provided funds for new keyboards and other instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

170. At the age of seven and 11, standards of attainment and pupils' progress in physical education are in line with those normally expected of pupils of this age.
171. At the age of seven, the majority of the pupils show an awareness of space and control the movement of their bodies in various activities satisfactorily. They can throw an object at a target avoiding an interceptor, dribble a ball, pass it and stop it with their feet. They evaluate their own performance and that of others. At the age of 11, the majority of pupils show satisfactory attainment in bowling, batting and fielding skills. Year 5 pupils learn to swim, each class having an appropriate amount of lesson time. Almost all pupils achieve 25 metres. Those who do not

are expected to achieve this target by the time they leave the school. Appropriate time is given to dance in Year 6, but insufficient time is given to this aspect of the subject in some year groups.

172. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good. In a Year 1 class, the teacher makes very good use of demonstration and appropriate challenging vocabulary to take the pupils' learning forward. High expectations of good behaviour and good class control lead to good progress and satisfactory attainment by the pupils.
173. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 ranges from poor to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. This is achieved when the teachers' instructions are clear, off-task behaviour is quickly and effectively checked and teachers have clear objectives. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils responded well when required to listen to a demonstration by one group. Poor teaching is typified by lessons where time is wasted at the beginning of lesson, there is a lack of pace and unsuitable equipment is put out, as in a Year 3 lesson.
174. Throughout the school, the pupils generally get on well together in physical activities and mix well in groups of varying sizes without regard to gender, ethnicity or ability. Pupils watch demonstrations by others with interest, as in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher made good use of demonstration by a pupil with special educational needs. This raised the pupil's self-esteem and reinforced social development. Pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported, included in all activities and make satisfactory progress. Activities are planned so that there are opportunities for pupils to develop skills at all levels of ability.
175. In Years 1 and 2, pupils behaved well in a lesson on throwing and carried out instructions as directed. In a lesson on controlling footballs, learning opportunities were lost when a minority of pupils did not conform and did not carry out the teacher's instructions the first time. In junior classes, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. In a Year 6 class, immediate intervention by the teacher ensured that inappropriate behaviour did not disrupt the lesson.
176. During the course of the year, the school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities, mainly for the pupils in Years 5 and 6. Sports clubs include girls' football, cricket, tag-rugby, hockey and rounders. The school takes part in a number of inter-school sporting competitions and has recently won trophies in cricket, cross-country, girls' football and hockey. An annual event which aids the development of physical skills is sponsored swimming for the British Heart Foundation, for which the school raised £816.25 in 2001. A residential visit for Year 5 and 6 pupils also provides good learning opportunities that include abseiling, archery, quad bikes, fencing and rock climbing.
177. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The school follows a scheme that indicates full coverage of the national curriculum. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor curriculum provision or teaching appropriately.
178. There is a good supply of hockey sticks and adequate footballs and rugby balls to meet the school's needs. There are sufficient bats and balls for two classes to use these for physical education at the same time, but the quality and range of small equipment are unsatisfactory. Storage facilities are unsatisfactory at the present time, although plans are in hand for improvements to take place as the present building programme progresses. The present storage of large apparatus on the school stage is unsatisfactory as this equipment is not readily accessible. The Parents' Association makes valuable contributions to school resources for physical education. Items donated in recent years include hockey sticks and sports kit.
179. Resources are limited and much small apparatus is in need of replacement. Accommodation is good and there are good outdoor facilities for a variety of sporting activities. The school also has good opportunities to use a number of local facilities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

180. The levels of attainment for seven-year olds and for 11-year-olds are broadly comparable with the

expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and they make satisfactory progress. The progress made by pupils with SEN, EAL and higher-attaining pupils is also satisfactory.

181. Pupils in the infant classes are eager to recall their experiences of a visit to the local mosque, including the removal of shoes and the expectations for Muslims' daily prayer. They show interest in aspects of Islam, for example, the Muslim washing rituals preceding prayer. They are able to communicate their understanding in discussion and by acting out their learning, and show respect for a Muslim boy demonstrating the washing ritual. However, children are not sufficiently productive when it comes to recording aspects of their understanding in writing, although they are learning to work independently. It is evident that there has been good coverage of religious topics during the year; among other things, pupils have learnt about religious leaders and festivals such as Guru Nanak, Joseph, Ramadan and Eid. They are aware of the Five Pillars of Islam and have made records of their visit to a mosque.
182. Pupils in the junior classes are similarly attentive and work with their teachers to produce effective learning, for instance, when they share with each other their experiences, or when they respond to questions about Mother Teresa and discuss aspects of her life. Lessons take place within a co-operative learning atmosphere. When written work is asked of pupils, many are able to write at some length, indicating more detailed understanding of the topic under consideration.
183. The quality of teaching is good at Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory from Years 3 to 6. In the infant classes, teachers show good rapport with their pupils, making effective use of praise to encourage them to listen and learn well. Teachers' use of questioning techniques is well developed, and the responses elicited from pupils are not over-directed by teachers. At one point a Muslim boy explained the pronunciation of 'Wudu', the Muslim practice of washing before prayers; this correction was gratefully accepted by the teacher, which enabled the child to feel that his contribution was valued. Lesson plans indicate clearly the purpose and sequence of activities, but teachers need to ensure that all key vocabulary identified is presented to the pupils. The visit to the local mosque has resulted in an effective corridor display in which pupils' written work is presented alongside visual material to help them recall the experience.
184. In Years 3 to 6, teachers also demonstrate good rapport with their pupils. In their planning, they identify some of the important vocabulary to be presented in lessons, but this needs further development. In one lesson, for example, Mother Teresa was described as a 'nun', and although the meaning was effectively discussed with the pupils, the term had not been identified previously and some pupils were left unsure as to what this really meant. Teachers are able to combine reading to their classes with a commentary on the material, and with effective discussion of the text through question and answer. Teachers encourage pupils to consider how their actions may impinge on others, but do not always explicitly relate such teaching to Christian or other value systems. The idea of writing a 'feelings diary' for a week, however, is one which helps children to become more conscious of their own responses to circumstances. Where pupils are asked to write about religious themes, they typically respond to worksheet questions, but teachers do not always set sufficiently high expectations as to the level of detail required in answers. This would help more pupils to develop the skills associated with more extensive writing, and move children on from the mere copying out of textual material.
185. The school's statement of policy on religious education is up to date and draws on the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. The rationale for the subject is clear, and the aims are effectively detailed. Management of the subject is good. Teachers' planning is monitored, and monitoring also involves the direct observation of teaching, as well as discussion of work with pupils. However, such monitoring could usefully re-visit the standards being achieved, particularly by higher achieving pupils in the Year 2 and the Year 6 classes, where in each case the variability in attainment for higher achievers is too great. The school is satisfactorily resourced for religious education, and wherever necessary and appropriate, the co-ordinator makes use of the Multi-cultural Centre in Aylesbury which loans materials and artefacts. As an integral part of their work in the subject, pupils pay visits to a church and to a mosque, but there is no easy access to the religious buildings of other faiths.