

INSPECTION REPORT

PLUMCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plumstead

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100140

Headteacher: Dame Sharon Hollows

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Shine
24254

Dates of inspection: 18th - 21st February 2003

Inspection number: 246036

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Plum Lane Plumstead London
Postcode:	SE18 3HW
Telephone number:	(0208) 854 1308
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Betty Weston
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
24254	Tom Shine	Registered inspector	Art and design	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
9974	Daljit Singh	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?
10373	Tony Dobell	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How well is the school led and managed?
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	
3574	Kanwaljit Singh		English Educational inclusion English as an additional language	
15011	Marion Wallace	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
29378	Ken Watson	Team inspector	Science Geography History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Plumcroft is a mixed three-form-entry primary school and is much larger than most schools of this kind. It caters for pupils aged three to 11 and has 534 pupils on roll. These include 58 children in the nursery, who attend on a part-time basis. There is a termly intake to the reception classes and another 30 children will be admitted after Easter, many not having attended the nursery, or other pre-school settings. There are slightly more boys than girls overall. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is much higher than in most schools; in Year 6, for example, 29 per cent of pupils joined at various times after the reception, including ten per cent in their last year. Approximately 60 per cent of the locality is made up of minority ethnic groups and this diversity is reflected in the population of the school, with a similar proportion being drawn from West Africa and Somalia. Over 40 pupils are refugees. Although the majority of pupils speak English as their first language, a large minority, over 35 per cent, come from homes where the mother tongue is not English. Here, the main languages spoken are Punjabi, Somali, French and Tamil. However, just over 20 pupils, of refugee status, are in the early stages of acquiring English. The school is part of a WRAPP¹ Excellence in Cities Action Zone and, as a result, benefits from some additional, although limited, funding. Children enter the school with language skills that are low for their age. The school has traditionally had a proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) that is above the national average for primary schools. The main needs arise from emotional and behavioural and communication difficulties and eight pupils have a statement of SEN. The area is a mix of private and council owned housing, but the majority of pupils come from backgrounds with a higher than usual level of disadvantage. For example, whilst the proportion of pupils entitled to free schools meals last year was well above the national average, it is even higher this year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an increasingly effective school. Since the appointment of the current headteacher the school has made great strides in improving the standards of pupils' work, although they are still below those expected. Teaching has improved and is satisfactory, overall. Pupils with SEN and those from minority ethnic groups are integrated fully and achieve as well as their peers. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is supported well by her senior management team.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively, and is working well in shaping the future developments of the school.
- Provision in the nursery is good, enabling children to make a flying start to their education.
- Relationships and provision for pupils' personal development are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching.
- Standards in geography, history and religious education.
- Attendance and punctuality.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in February 1998, it has made satisfactory progress overall and good progress since the current headteacher took up her post last September, when she put in place a clear strategy for improvement. Currently, they have not had sufficient time to make a full impact. However, the quality of teaching has improved, particularly since her appointment when nearly 50 per cent of teachers were employed on a supply basis, and the expectations of many others were low. Teaching has improved

¹ Woolwich Reach and Plumstead Pathfinder. The WRAPP education action zone provides support and training to schools in the scheme.

because the headteacher insisted that all staff should share her vision. As a result, there has been a significant change of staff, including a large reduction in supply teachers. There is also an effective programme to monitor teaching. Standards are better than the last national test results would suggest, and are on course to rise further, although currently they are below expected standards. Other improvements include those to the curriculum and SEN, and statutory requirements are met fully.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	E	B
mathematics	D	C	E	B
science	C	D	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 2002, at the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics were above average when compared to the results in similar schools, and in science were in line with those in similar schools. In all three subjects, they were well below the national average. The school points to a very high level of pupil mobility in this year group that adversely affected the results. The standards in English and mathematics were not as high as the relatively low targets set for this age group. The headteacher explains that before she arrived, a high degree of booster support was directed towards those pupils capable of achieving the higher Level 5, with less channelled towards those struggling to achieve the expected Level 4. In English, for example, the school performed well above similar schools achieving Level 5 but this was at the expense of a greater proportion achieving Level 3. The trend in the school's average points scores since 1998 has been broadly in line with the national trend. By the end of Year 2 in 2002, standards in English and mathematics were well below the national average, and were below average compared to similar schools. The school accounts for these low standards as the result of previously weak teaching.

Inspection findings show that children make a good start to their education in the nursery class but that this progress slows in the reception classes. This is partly because the teaching is less effective and also because over half the children have had no experience of nursery education, with a significant number having had no pre-school experience at all. With some exceptions, most children are unlikely to attain the standards expected in all the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are below those expected, but are improving and are better than the national test results would suggest, in response to improved teaching. By the end of Year 6, standards are also improving as the standard of teaching gets better, but are still below those expected in English, mathematics and science. Given their attainment on entry, their achievement is satisfactory, overall. In most other subjects, standards are at age-related expected levels, except in religious education, geography and history, where they are below expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory, overall. Most pupils enjoy going to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory, overall. Although most pupils behave well, there are pockets of unsatisfactory behaviour in some classes that disrupt learning for others.
Personal development and relationships	These are satisfactory. Pupils benefit from good opportunities to serve the school community in performing a number of tasks. Relationships with teachers and between pupils are good, although a small minority of pupils have negative attitudes towards one another.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and below the national average. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Some pupils arrive late, causing teaching time to be lost.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is satisfactory. There is some teaching of high quality in the nursery and in Year 6. In the reception classes, teaching is satisfactory but there has not been the stability of staffing in these classes compared to the nursery, and the teachers are not as experienced in teaching reception age children. Most teachers and learning support assistants meet the needs of all groups of pupils satisfactorily, including pupils with SEN and those in the early stages of learning English. However, some learning support assistants have yet to make a fully effective contribution in helping pupils learn. Most teachers manage their pupils well, some of whom are potentially disruptive. The teaching of English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory, overall. Teachers generally plan well together in year groups. The headteacher is keen to raise the quality of teaching to match that of the best to enable pupils to progress at a faster rate.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is reasonably broad and balanced, and the school day has been reviewed to allow the teaching of all subjects. Teaching time is lost because some pupils arrive late.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is satisfactory throughout the school. It successfully follows the recommendations of the revised national guidelines. The co-ordinator provides good support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. These pupils are appropriately supported and are making expected progress. This provision is developing well since the recent appointment of the co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and for moral, social and cultural development, good. There is appropriate emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for care and welfare that ensure pupils continue to learn in a safe and secure environment. Procedures for checking on pupils' progress have improved and are now satisfactory. The school has done much to promote a constructive partnership with parents and this is

	improving and is satisfactory.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. She has a very clear vision of what needs to be done and has already implemented effective strategies to raise standards. The recently augmented senior management team shares her vision and is committed to raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Following a period of uncertainty, the governing body works closely with the headteacher and shares her vision. Under a new but experienced chair, it now fulfils its statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The head and senior staff check effectively pupils' standards and progress in English, mathematics and science. In most, but not all, other subjects, the school's evaluation is satisfactory.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall, with the exception of the use of some learning support assistants. In using its funds well for most resources, the school makes sensible spending decisions and reviews the benefits appropriately. Staffing, learning resources and accommodation are satisfactory, although some areas of the school are in need of repair and decoration. There is no library and insufficient books.

The head is working in conjunction with the governors and the local education authority to draw up clear plans to reduce a large deficit in the budget over an agreed time scale.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable. • It has high expectations. • It is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' behaviour. • The right amount of homework. • The information about pupils' progress. • How closely the school works with parents.

Inspectors agree with most of parents' positive comments but found the overall quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress to be satisfactory rather than good. They found pupils' behaviour to be satisfactory overall, but a minority of pupils tend to disrupt some lessons. They disagree with the minority of parents unhappy about homework, although they agree it is not given consistently by all teachers. They found the annual reports on pupils' progress to be satisfactory overall, but they could be written more clearly. They also found parental involvement in the school to be improving.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Compared to the performance of pupils in similar schools when they took the National Curriculum tests in 2002, pupils in Year 6 were achieving above average in English and mathematics and were achieving at the same level in science. However, compared to the national picture, they were achieving well below the performance of most pupils in all three subjects. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science, when pupils are in Year 6, are below national age-related expectations and are better than the National Curriculum test results compared to the national picture would suggest. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily compared to their prior attainment, and standards are improving as a result of the highly effective leadership and management of the recently appointed headteacher. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are also below national age-related expectations, but represent an improvement on the 2002 results in the national tests. The school points to a much higher degree of pupil mobility than usual that adversely affects standards. The school is asked to admit pupils as it has vacancies in most year groups, and many families live in rented accommodation and move when they are re-housed.
2. The previous report judged progress made by children in the Foundation Stage to be good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes, and this remains the case. When they enter the nursery, the attainment of most children is below that normally found. As a result of good teaching and support, children make a flying start in this class. All children, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and those who come from homes where a language other than English is the mother tongue, make good progress in all the areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development). In the reception classes, progress is less marked, although satisfactory. The quality of teaching is not as good as in the nursery class, as the teachers are less experienced in teaching this age group. In addition, over half of the children joining the reception classes have had no experience of nursery education and a significant number have had no pre-school experience. As a result, the majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning by the time they are due to leave the reception classes, although a few higher-attaining children are on course to do so.
3. Inspection finds that by the end of both Years 2 and 6, most pupils listen well, although a minority of pupils have not yet developed good habits of listening and concentrating. However, their standards in speaking are below national age-related expectations and progress in this aspect of English is unsatisfactory. In the nursery, children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their language and speaking and listening skills. For example, children are encouraged to recall stories they have been told. In the rest of the school, opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills are replicated far less frequently in all lessons, although opportunities for pupils to practise their listening skills are satisfactory. Some lessons are too teacher-directed and pupils are insufficiently encouraged to expand on their answers to their teachers' questions, although they are frequently keen to do so. As a result, many opportunities to develop and extend pupils' speaking skills are missed and by the time they are in Year 6, most pupils, including those with SEN and those from homes where English is not the mother tongue, have developed a limited vocabulary.
4. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading are generally below national age-related expectations. Although all pupils benefit from the strong emphasis that teachers place on the learning of letter sounds and blends, their restricted vocabulary hinders their understanding of the texts they are reading. However, higher-attaining pupils read simple texts accurately and fluently. By the time pupils are in Year 6, the majority are reaching national age-related expectations and higher-attaining pupils are able to choose books freely and independently. Although most pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy in this year group, the limited vocabulary of many pupils hinders their understanding of their texts. This is very noticeable when pupils are asked to discuss the characters in their books or their favourite events, which they do rather hesitantly. Higher-attaining pupils, however, are able to talk sensibly about their favourite authors and are able to skim and scan

confidently when researching for relevant information in non-fiction books. Pupils with SEN and those from homes where English is not the mother tongue are achieving satisfactory results in relation to their prior attainment.

5. In writing in Year 2, standards are below national age-related expectations. Pupils build on the skills of letter formation they have learned earlier and are reasonably confident using letter combinations and common spelling patterns. Higher-attaining pupils have more advanced skills and are beginning to spell accurately, with an appropriate use of full stops and capital letters. However, the majority of pupils have difficulty in writing stories and non-fiction work in their own words as they spend too much time copying work. In Year 6, standards are also below the national age-related expectations, overall, although higher-attaining pupils are writing at standards above those expectations. Pupils are making good progress in developing their skills in grammar and punctuation and their spelling is improving as a result of the emphasis their teachers place on these aspects. Although pupils write in a range of styles, including narrative, letters and poems, they are not encouraged to write extended pieces and generally do not use their literacy skills enough in most other subjects. Most pupils' handwriting is generally good at this stage: they can write neatly and many develop their own personal style and consistently use joined-up script. Handwriting of lower-attaining pupils is less neat and much of their work is untidy.
6. In mathematics in Year 2, the standards of most pupils are below national age-related expectations, although they are increasing their confidence in using their numeracy skills. The work of higher-attaining pupils matches expected standards. They have a secure understanding of numbers to 100 and add and subtract two-digit numbers confidently. They know the basic two-dimensional shapes and understand time in hours and half-hours. The work of pupils whom the school describes as average is reasonably accurate but there are areas of insecure understanding. Lower attaining pupils are more prone to error and have a tendency to inaccuracy because their general understanding is insecure. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils are confident when working in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They also have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and are able to represent data in various ways including bar charts, pie charts and line graphs. Much of this work matches the standards expected and some of it is above those standards. However, the majority of pupils' work is not at this level. Much of it tends to be inaccurate and some work in pupils' books is not completed. Pupils with SEN and those from homes where a language other than English is the mother tongue are generally supported well and make sound progress.
7. In science in both Years 2 and 6, standards are below national age-related expectations. The skills of scientific enquiry have not been consistently taught throughout the school over the past few years. This is the main reason for standards that are below expected levels. This omission has been addressed following the appointment of the headteacher, but the current emphasis on scientific enquiry has not yet had time to have made a noticeable impact on standards. In Year 2, pupils have studied all aspects of science and are able to name parts of plants such as a leaf or a flower. Higher-attaining pupils are able to predict the qualities of a particular material, for example, whether it can be squashed or bent. An analysis of the work of pupils in Year 6 shows that a broad range of topics has been studied, including plant reproduction, and magnetism and gravity. Pupils use their skill in mathematics to present data using neat diagrams and charts, but few pupils have more advanced skills such as to devise their own test or to suggest improvements or modifications.
8. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are in line with those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, pupils are able to change the type and size of text and retrieve, process and display information. They use the cursor and the 'delete' and 'backspace' keys confidently to edit their work. These pupils are secure in the basic skills and treat the equipment carefully. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are beginning to use the technology to help them learn in other subjects. In a lesson in history, for example, pupils were confidently preparing a 'Powerpoint' presentation. They were able to insert a slide, add a text box and change the font colour for the text. However, there are few such examples and more could be done to use ICT throughout the curriculum.
9. In religious education, standards in Years 2 and 6 are unsatisfactory and fail to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Year 6, a few pupils have some knowledge of the ten Commandments and Moses, but their knowledge of religious education is limited. For

example, although pupils visit a Sikh temple, they are unable to explain any of the characteristics of the Sikh religion. In most other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to judge, standards are at expected levels and pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment when they enter the nursery and reception classes. In geography and history, standards are below national age-related expectations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. When children enter the nursery, many have limited social skills. They respond well to the calm and stimulating environment, and as a result they begin to feel secure and to develop positive attitudes to learning. Most of these children enjoy coming to school and readily leave their parents and carers. Because the teacher and support staff are very well organised, the children quickly begin to select activities by themselves and play with good levels of interest and concentration. Children learn to understand what is acceptable behaviour and what is right and wrong. Children are learning to share and increasingly work alongside each other in a variety of settings such as in the *'pizza café'*. In the reception classes, many of the children have not had the benefit of the good teaching in the nursery and some have had no experience of a pre-school setting at all. Many children find it difficult to work on their own for any length of time and are readily distracted when they find activities are not stimulating enough. A significant number of children in these classes have still not learned to share with others and the focus of their world remains themselves. Many of these children have to rely heavily on adult support in order to progress with their learning.
11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. In many lessons, pupils consistently approach their tasks with interest and generally sustain sound levels of concentration. Most pupils value the opportunity to show initiative and work on their own. They readily share ideas and information, particularly where the teachers ensure that their pupils know clearly what they are expected to learn and link the lesson objectives effectively to what they have learnt previously. In some lessons, a minority of pupils tended to lose concentration and began to talk among themselves. As a result, the teachers were forced to intervene to avoid disruption to the lessons.
12. Pupils also enjoy activities after school, such as playing football. During such a session observed, the activity enhanced pupils' moral, social and cultural development and contributed significantly to their social, physical and mental progress. Although some boys displayed negative attitudes during the game, the teacher used good management skills to reinforce the school's code of conduct, which emphasises respect for others. These interventions supported pupils' social and personal development, effectively.
13. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave well and conform to the school's code of conduct, particularly when being supervised by experienced teachers. Pupils are generally polite, friendly, and considerate and listen to their teachers. Whilst most pupils behave well during lessons there are instances of inappropriate behaviour. Although this is occasionally the result of ineffective teaching, it is usually because a small minority of pupils have not developed good habits of listening, find it difficult to concentrate, and resort to disruptive behaviour. Consequently, the learning of others on occasion is impeded and this affects the overall achievements of the class. The school points to the history of a large number of supply teachers, as a result of which pupils' behaviour had not been managed in a consistent way. Outside of the classroom, most pupils move around in an orderly manner and show consideration for other users. Pupils open doors for visitors and speak to adults in a courteous manner. In the playground, behaviour is generally friendly and often lively. Pupils enjoy their leisure activities and make effective use of games and the adventure play equipment. Younger and older pupils and those from minority ethnic backgrounds frequently play together in a friendly manner. These occasions support pupils' personal development effectively. In contrast to the generally harmonious atmosphere at playtimes, there were some occasions when instances of bullying and anti-social behaviour were observed, confirming the concerns of some parents. Although these incidents were dealt with appropriately, they caused concern and anxiety to the pupils as victims. There were 20 fixed-period exclusions in the year before the present headteacher was appointed.
14. Relationships are good and teachers act as positive role models. These pupils work effectively in groups, when they share ideas, information and resources. Teachers establish good relationships

with pupils, promoting mutual respect and a good working atmosphere inside and outside the classroom. The quality of relationships has a positive impact on the quality of learning and standards attained by pupils. However, a small minority of pupils have a negative attitude to others and this affects their relationship with their peers. For example, two pupils, one black and the other white, were observed using abusive and racist language to each other and this temporarily affected their relationships with other peers and lunchtime staff, and adversely affected their social and personal development.

15. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities for personal development. For example, they act effectively as members of the school council, class and school monitors, delivering and collecting registers for teachers, and at lunchtime, helping the supervisory staff with clearing up and serving water. Pupils also raise funds for the wider community through activities organised by the Friends of the School. These opportunities develop their sense of community and citizenship and enable them to serve their school and wider community in a mature and responsible manner.
16. Attendance of a significant minority of pupils is unsatisfactory and authorised and unauthorised absences are well above the national average. Although the school works well with the educational welfare service to investigate and discourage absences, some parents take holidays in term time and others condone the absences of their children. As a result, attendance levels have significantly declined since the last report. Many of the teachers take registers at the prescribed time and this complies with legal requirements, but the recent introduction of a new electronic system, which some teachers are not yet used to, occasionally results in the use of incorrect symbols. Irregular attendance is exacerbated by persistent poor time keeping of a minority of families, particularly when pupils are escorted to school by parents and older brothers and sisters. Poor time keeping severely affects teaching and learning, and consequently a number of lessons start and finish late. The new headteacher is aware of these problems and is taking positive action to improve attendance and time keeping. For example, a home-school liaison officer has recently been appointed to work with parents.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when, although it was satisfactory overall, 12 per cent was unsatisfactory. In this inspection, there was much less that was unsatisfactory – four per cent – although there were also fewer lessons that were good or better. Since then, the school went through a period of decline, to the extent that the Local Education Authority (LEA) felt it necessary to intervene, and it became part of the School Improvement Programme. As a result of this programme, the current headteacher, who is employed by the LEA in an Advisory Headteacher capacity and has a track record of school improvement, was deployed to the school in September 2002. The plan is that she will remain at Plumcroft to raise standards, especially by improving the quality of teaching. She reports that, when she arrived at the school, the quality of teaching was poor and staff expectations were low. There was staff complacency and many of the permanent staff were resistant to change, including resistance to government initiatives such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In addition, nearly 50 per cent of teachers were employed on a supply basis.
18. The headteacher attributes the improvement in teaching to a number of factors, including the following:
 - new members of staff have been appointed; at the time of the inspection the number of supply teachers had been reduced to three, with two covering for long-term absences (with an additional supply teacher in one of the reception classes during the inspection week);
 - a strategy of deploying good teachers in all year groups to provide appropriate role models so as to facilitate teamwork and planning;
 - the continued introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, with support from consultants and other staff from the LEA;
 - high-quality training from both LEA and school staff, combined with an effective teaching and learning policy that makes the school's expectations clear;
 - increased monitoring of teaching and planning; and
 - the setting of curricular targets in English and mathematics and the provision of additional support to accelerate the progress of targeted pupils.

19. The inspectors agree that these elements have been crucial in improving the quality of teaching. However, they have not been in place long enough for their impact to be felt fully in driving up standards. The headteacher and the senior management team are keen to maintain the above measures, where they are relevant, in order to raise the quality of teaching above the current generally satisfactory level and to raise standards further.
20. Most teachers and learning support assistants take account of the needs of all groups of pupils satisfactorily. The teachers plan work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities, so that they are able to make suitable progress in their learning. Some learning support assistants would benefit from further training in order to make their contributions more effective. But others work well with pupils with SEN during group activities. On these occasions, pupils are supported appropriately, and as a result they progress and achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment and in meeting the targets in their individual education plans. When they are supported by the SEN co-ordinator, they benefit from her high-quality teaching and her expertise, and make good progress. Teachers generally manage pupils with behavioural problems well, but there are times when these pupils cause some disruption, which adversely affects their own and other pupils' learning. Pupils' behaviour is generally managed in a consistent way, but this has not always been the case, particularly when the school had a very high proportion of supply teachers. The good quality of behaviour management currently in the school has not yet been established long enough to have made a full impact on all pupils.
21. The teaching of pupils who come from homes where English is not the mother tongue is satisfactory. The support staff work closely with class teachers and help pupils appropriately. Pupils are responsive to the teaching provided and they are generally enthusiastic and highly motivated learners. Successful teaching strategies such as repetition of key vocabulary and presentation of work with a strong visual content support pupils effectively, and as a result pupils achieve satisfactorily. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils who speak a common language to support each other. The teachers' positive acceptance of a diversity of languages in their classrooms fosters bilingual pupils' ease significantly. They become willing participants in lessons and are keen to express their ideas. New learners make good progress in developing basic skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
22. Teaching is good in the nursery, satisfactory in the reception classes and is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage. Throughout this stage, all staff have good relationships with the children. In the nursery the teacher and two nursery nurses are very experienced and committed, and teaching is good in all the areas of learning. Staff promote learning experiences that are enjoyable and develop children's personal, social and emotional awareness well. The teacher and nursery nurses are encouraged to succeed in all their activities, as a result of which all children gain in confidence. In communication, language and literacy the teacher uses quick-fire questions effectively to stimulate their mental processes and children respond well. Support staff make a good contribution to learning and support children well. In the other areas of learning, the teacher and nursery nurses support children's learning well, including mathematical development, where the high staff ratio enables adults to monitor children's good progress in their understanding of mathematics and number effectively.
23. In the reception classes, staffing has been much less stable. There have been many changes of staff and these have had an adverse impact on the quality of teaching and children's learning. In both classes, teachers are new to the school and have less experience teaching reception-age children. During the inspection a supply teacher was teaching one of the reception classes to cover an absent teacher. Overall, her teaching was having a noticeable and positive effect on the children in her class. It is not possible to judge whether the teaching the children normally experience in this class replicates this standard. In personal, social and emotional development, the reception teachers do not consistently apply the class and school rules that are in place. These teachers still struggle to meet the needs of so many children who lack the expected skills and experience for full-time school attendance. In the younger reception class, children are immature and have not yet learned to listen when the teacher is talking; some children are not yet aware that they should not call out. However, children take books home, providing good links with parents and giving guidance on how they can help their children to read and write.
24. The teaching of English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory, overall. In

English it ranged from very good to unsatisfactory, and was of a good standard in the classes in Year 6. In mathematics, teaching ranged from good to satisfactory, with no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Teachers had previously received training in teaching the national strategies for literacy and numeracy but because of large numbers of staff changes, there are some recently appointed teachers who would benefit from further training. Teachers plan together in year groups and as a result, planning of the curriculum is generally good. Most teachers ensure that pupils know clearly what they are expected to learn and link this effectively to what they have previously learned. In most lessons, teachers work well with support staff and manage pupils' behaviour well. However, some of the support staff do not show enough initiative and do not take action when it would be appropriate so to do. For example, when a group of pupils began talking across the teacher, some of the support assistants were not pro-active enough in taking the initiative. Instead they waited for the teachers to intervene, and this involved disrupting the lesson. In a very good writing lesson in Year 6, the teacher had secure subject knowledge and constantly challenged pupils through probing questions, and had high expectations of both behaviour and literacy skills. In an unsatisfactory lesson in literacy in Year 1, there were weaknesses in the teacher's planning and when she asked questions of her pupils, she did not adjust her planning to take account of their lack of readiness to move to an aspect of learning about phonics. Although the majority of teachers meet the needs of all groups of pupils well, in a few lessons, teachers did not give enough attention to ensure that work matched the needs of pupils of different abilities. Some teachers do not allow their pupils sufficient time to expand on their answers to questions and tend to anticipate the ending to their sentences, or accept one-word answers. This tends to diminish their confidence, as pupils are generally keen to answer questions, and represents missed opportunities for pupils to improve and use their vocabulary.

25. In science, teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory and is satisfactory, overall. In a very good lesson in Year 2, planning was very good and the teacher used very skilled questions that involved all groups of pupils. Good links were made with literacy and numeracy and pupils' speaking and listening were emphasised well. The learning objectives were made very clear and all pupils were very well challenged. In most lessons, teachers' class management is usually good and pupils respond well and do their best. In an otherwise satisfactory lesson, the objectives were not made clear and there was a lack of focus on the tasks because the teacher was uncertain that the pupils had the necessary understanding to be able to work on their own. As a result, the pupils were too dependent on the teacher and were not able to exercise their own initiative.
26. In most other subjects, including ICT, teaching is satisfactory. In religious education, although teaching is satisfactory, teachers are less secure in their subject knowledge than in other subjects. In music, teaching is good. There was insufficient teaching seen to judge its quality in design and technology. Although teaching was satisfactory overall, in art and design, some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This was because of the teacher's poor planning, weak subject knowledge and a lack of clear focus on identifying the learning objectives of the lesson.
27. In the questionnaire, most parents were happy with the quality of teaching, and the majority, including those at the meeting, were happy with the homework given to their children. Inspectors agree that homework is generally given appropriately, although not consistently by all teachers. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable. In some classes, the work is well marked and the teachers' comments explain to pupils what is good about it, with helpful suggestions on how to improve it further, but this standard is not consistent throughout the school.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the nursery and reception classes are satisfactory overall. They are good in the nursery, where there is a stimulating and imaginative learning environment, and address all of the areas of learning, enabling children to make a flying start to their education. In the nursery, the outdoor play area provides a very rich learning environment and includes a wildlife area that enables children to observe and care for animals. In the reception classes, the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory, but the experiences offered to the children are not as rich as those in the nursery. The teachers are less experienced in teaching this age group than the nursery teacher, and in addition, the majority of these children have not attended the nursery and many have had no pre-school experience at all. There is currently no

dedicated outdoor play area for reception children and their classrooms are cramped and contrast poorly with the generous space in the nursery.

29. The curriculum for the rest of the school is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements in all subjects. In religious education, more time is provided for teaching the subject than previously, and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are now met. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to ensure there are policies now in place in subjects where before they were absent, such as geography, history, art and design, music, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. Aims are clearly stated in all policy documents. All long-and medium-term planning is in place and all subjects have an appropriate allocation of curriculum time. The school has reviewed the timing of the school day to ensure that there are enough sessions to teach all the subjects of the curriculum. Although the planned teaching time meets the recommended minimum, some actual teaching time is lost because pupils arrive late, causing the teacher to repeat parts of the lesson.
30. There is a clear and comprehensive curriculum map, which ensures progression in all subject areas of the National Curriculum. All year groups have a topic focus each term for science, history or geography, and visits and visitors are planned to reinforce and extend learning opportunities. National recommendations and guidelines have been adopted in all subjects and these plan for progression in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. A computer suite allows pupils to receive appropriate access to ICT. The subject is well planned and implemented and is beginning to be used effectively to enhance learning in some subject areas.
31. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies is effective and has contributed to sound progress in English and mathematics by the time pupils are in Year 6. The school has worked hard to introduce a new planning format that identifies clearly what the pupils will learn. All teachers have a planning folder for short-and medium-term planning.
32. Overall, equality of access and opportunity is satisfactory. The curriculum provides satisfactory access for all pupils to learn and make progress. Provision for pupils with SEN and pupils whose home language is not English is satisfactory. Teachers match work for pupils with SEN appropriately, and their individual educational plans contain relevant and manageable targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive a broad and balanced curriculum and take part in all school activities. All test and assessment data is analysed to determine how well boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds and different abilities are achieving. Pupils are given additional support from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and make satisfactory progress. The school has developed a policy for gifted and talented pupils and is in the process of identifying these pupils. There are currently seven pupils who come from travellers' families and the school's overall provision to support these pupils is satisfactory. The LEA team for pupils from travellers families provides a half-day of learning assistant's support, although the arrangement to teach two pupils of a wide age-range together was unsatisfactory.
33. The extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular clubs, including football, netball, cricket, gymnastics, ICT, music, choir, board games, homework and library skills. The clubs are well attended and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge, understanding and experience. There are a significant number of booster classes and the school has plans for an after-school and breakfast club. The extra-curricular provision is enhanced by educational visits linked to learning in all subject areas. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn a range of musical instruments and the school provides regular opportunities for pupils to perform in end of term concerts and art events in the community. The curriculum is enriched with visitors, visits to local museums and art galleries, and places of historical interest, and these visits enhance learning in subjects such as history and art. There is also an annual residential trip to Swanage in Dorset, which contributes to personal development. There are satisfactory links with the local community. Pupils visit the local churches and Sikh Temple, enriching their religious studies. Regular visits from the local church representatives, health authority and police extend learning in PSHE and citizenship. The school is currently involved in developing links with community projects and a teacher is responsible for links between home, school and the community, including partner institutions. There are good links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer, ensuring they make a smooth transition. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy their dance from 'West Side Story', taught by a teacher from the local secondary school. The school is involved with a 'People

Symphony' project with Middlesex University.

34. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and this is linked to assemblies and religious education. Weekly circle time (in which pupils discuss a range of issues important to them without interruption) is timetabled throughout the school. Most lessons provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of important issues such as caring for others and the exploration of personal feelings. The local nurse, dentist and policeman teach relevant aspects of health education. Drugs education is covered in science and circle time, and is taught formally in Year 5. Sex education is taught within the context of marriage and the family. The school council meets regularly to discuss issues and work towards improving their school, such as the playground areas.
35. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been sustained since the previous inspection. Much of the provision for pupils' social and cultural development is having a significant impact on the attitudes and personal development of most pupils.
36. The school provides sound opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. Many themes are closely linked to topics in religious education and PSHE. Displays around the school recognise the contribution of other faiths and display symbols which illustrate the importance of spirituality in faiths, particularly Buddhism. Others highlight the importance of conservation and the environment, stimulate, inspire and raise pupils' appreciation of important issues, and teach pupils to value their heritage. In Year 4, pupils proudly display millennium banners using Sikh and Islamic symbols, acknowledging spirituality from other faiths represented in the school. Some assemblies provide useful opportunities for pupils to offer prayer and thoughts in response to a story or theme, as well as recognising and valuing the contribution of a Higher Being.
37. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Throughout the school, most pupils respond well to the teachers' expectations of appropriate behaviour and this contributes significantly to pupils' relationships with teachers. The focus of discipline procedures is consistency and fairness and the majority of teachers are making serious attempts to apply these procedures. The school is beginning to encourage pupils to take ownership of their own behaviour from an early age. As a result, most young children have a clear understanding about what is acceptable in their school. Older pupils are encouraged to consider global issues and how people's behaviour affects the lives of others. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others and support both local and national charities. This helps them to become mature and responsible.
38. The social development of pupils is also good. In most lessons, pupils work together, sharing ideas, information and resources, and relationships between pupils from a wide variety of social and ethnic backgrounds, with a few exceptions, are a strength of the school. There are good links between the school and the wider community and this supports the work of the friends of the school and contributes significantly to pupils' social development. Teachers are positive role models and their constructive interaction with pupils throughout the school contributes effectively to their full involvement in all aspects of it. The school council is beginning to take shape and provides sound opportunities for pupils to develop their inter-personal skills. Older pupils benefit from good opportunities to help around the school that develop their social skills effectively.
39. The provision for cultural development is good. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of Christianity and makes equal reference to other faiths and cultures. The main festivals of the main world faiths are celebrated and older pupils have reasonable understanding of Sikhism, Islam and customs embedded in the Indian culture. These experiences are supported and developed by visits to the local Gurudwara and Mosque. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a strong understanding of their local heritage through some geography lessons, regular visits to museums and other places of interest, as well as input from provisional musicians who support music in the school. Displays around the school illustrate the importance of their own and other cultures, such as the display of instruments from around the world in the main hall. There are many notices, signs and books in other languages to show that the school values other cultures and languages. The staff comes from a range of ethnic backgrounds and provides pupils with good role models.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The overall provision for pupils' care, support, guidance and arrangements for child protection are good. These arrangements enable the school community to learn in a safe and secure environment. Much of the pastoral provision has been maintained since the previous inspection and is appreciated by most parents.
41. The child protection arrangements are clear and satisfactorily implemented by a caring, well-informed and committed designated teacher. She continues to provide clear leadership and co-ordination which ensures that all staff are informed and understand their role in relation to the issues. All incidents of concern are effectively pursued, recorded and monitored. Governors and the new headteacher are arranging further training for all staff, including the designated teacher, to further the safety and wellbeing of the school community.
42. There are satisfactory procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Accidents are recorded and systematically investigated. There are regular fire drills and pupils have a clear understanding of the school emergency and evacuation procedures. The governors and staff, including the site manager, work as a team to ensure pupils learn in a safe and secure environment.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Most teachers and support staff continue to enjoy trusting and purposeful relationships with most pupils. Assemblies, registration time and extra-curricular activities are used appropriately to celebrate and reward pupils' achievements. Most teachers, particularly the new headteacher, provide effective supervision during breaks and lunchtime, enabling pupils to feel safe and secure and form constructive relationships. Staff listens to pupils' concerns and responds well to their problems, an approach that supports pupils' emotional development effectively. Class teachers and the senior management team provide good-quality educational advice and guidance. As a result, their pupils feel secure, and are becoming increasingly confident and self-assured. An Afro-Caribbean pupil who has recently arrived from Jamaica complimented the school's pastoral system and the care and sensitive nature of some teachers. However, some of the supervision at lunchtimes is inadequate and can adversely affect the overall care, support and welfare of some pupils and lead to inappropriate behaviour.
44. There are sound procedures for monitoring attendance, but the action taken to raise attendance is still underdeveloped. The headteacher and other staff work very closely with the educational welfare service and most parents to ensure that persistent poor attendance is identified and investigated. The school is currently reviewing its policy on attendance and intends to improve the existing levels of attendance and punctuality. The new head and governors have recently employed a home-school liaison officer to work closely with disaffected families and mediate between school and home to ensure improved attendance and time keeping.
45. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure that all incidents of anti-social behaviour are investigated, recorded, monitored and reported, but there is some inconsistency in using these systems. For example, some incidents of racism are not consistently and thoroughly investigated by all staff.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Procedures for checking on children's progress are good in the nursery, where they are well established, and all staff make good use of daily observations of children's academic and personal achievements to help them to plan work and activities that match children's needs. In the reception classes, they are broadly satisfactory, but they are not as well established because of instability of staffing. Procedures for checking on pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in the rest of the school are now good. Their progress in these subjects is tracked as they move up through the school and information is used to group pupils within classes and for setting for mathematics. Because of staff changes, they are not implemented consistently across school, but the practice is developing well. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in most other subjects are satisfactory but are unsatisfactory in history and geography.
47. The school sets both the statutory and optional National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics

and science in Years 2 to 6. The information gained from formal testing and teachers' own checks is used effectively in some classes, particularly in Year 6, to identify pupils who are not achieving age-related standards or those pupils who are not making sufficient progress. This enables the school to provide extra support through the school's special needs provision, EAL provision and the additional literacy and early literacy programmes. The school also tests pupils in ICT using the LEA procedures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Overall, the school does much to promote a constructive partnership with parents, and as a result, the impact of parental involvement in the school, particularly through the parents' association, is improving. The school has a generally satisfactory relationship with most of its parents and is making serious attempts to build on the productive and purposeful relationships reported at the last inspection. Parents value the quality of teaching and the efforts of teachers, who ensure their children are well cared for. Parents think highly of the leadership and management of the new headteacher. The head, the senior management team and most teachers ensure that parents' concerns are addressed and their child's achievements are celebrated. They approach parents in a constructive and positive manner. Parents have rightly raised some concerns about the behaviour of some older pupils who disrupt learning and teaching. Some incidents of inappropriate behaviour were observed during the inspection. The school is taking appropriate measures to discourage anti-social and aggressive behaviour.
49. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and annual reviews and many parents make an active contribution when they attend. Most parents bring their child to school and take the opportunity to meet and talk with the new headteacher and deputy, who make themselves available in the playground at the start and end of the school day. This ready access to senior staff gives parents the opportunity to express their views and ensures their concerns are addressed. Parents also have access to the school office and an opportunity to browse at the displays around the school. Such opportunities enable parents to acknowledge their achievements and understand the topics being taught. Many of the displays have information attached in a variety of languages and some school documents are translated into the community languages spoken in the school. Staff are used as translators at parents' meetings to ensure more effective communication with parents from minority ethnic backgrounds. Parents also receive clear and purposeful written information in an easy-to-read style through the school prospectus, and an informative annual report from governors. Both these documents comply with statutory requirements. This information is complemented by correspondence from the school to ensure that parents support their child's personal and social development. A regular newsletter from the parents' association keeps parents informed of events in the school and community.
50. The annual reports of pupils' progress meet statutory requirements and complement the information that parents receive during the effective consultation evenings. Parents value this source of information, although a minority were not entirely happy with them. Inspectors have some sympathy with this view, as evidence indicates that many of the reports are written in a style and format that affect the quality and clarity of information provided for parents. Many of the comments are generic, and are not always 'user-friendly' to all parents, especially those who speak a main language other than English. Some tend to describe what their children are learning in their lessons, without saying very much about the standards they are achieving.
51. Parents are consistently encouraged by the school to support children's learning in the classroom and home, particularly through their involvement with the parents' association. The Friends of the School support numerous social and recreational events, for example, the pupils' disco, and Christmas and summer fairs. These enhance learning by raising significant funds for the school. These funds are used to buy educational resources and help to raise standards, besides ensuring productive and purposeful links between the school and home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. At the time of the school's previous inspection, the headteacher was providing effective leadership and a clear educational direction for the work of the school. She was supported well by her colleagues

and the governing body. However, difficulties then arose between the headteacher and the governing body and the school went through a period of uncertainty and decline. Following intervention from the LEA, a new chair of governors and, subsequently, a headteacher were appointed the school and is now purposeful and forward-looking.

53. The headteacher took up her post in September 2002 and is now providing outstanding leadership and very clear educational direction for the work of the school. She is fully committed to improvement and to ensuring that the school does its best by all of its pupils. She is determined to raise her pupils' levels of attainment while providing them with a secure and stimulating learning environment, which will enable them to develop into confident and caring individuals. Her vision is for a school "*which supports and meets the needs of our rich diversity of pupils and ensures the highest achievement for all.*" The headteacher recognises that, if this is to be achieved, provision in the school, including the quality of teaching, needs to be improved. She has a strategy in place to achieve this, but is flexible and is developing this further as the school makes progress. To this end, the school has established clear aims and values and these are becoming increasingly reflected in its work. While the headteacher recognises that much remains to be done, an impressive start has been made, and the leadership of the headteacher is a major strength of the school.
54. The headteacher leads a senior management team (SMT) of five, two of whom took up their posts in January 2003. The team has an impressive range of experience, both within the school and elsewhere. Whilst the team is very new and is only beginning to develop a corporate identity, it shares the headteacher's vision and clear commitment to raising levels of attainment and developing the school into a successful force in the life of the community. The SMT meets weekly and has a flexible organisation so that other members of staff will join meetings if their areas of responsibility are being considered. Although it is relatively new, the SMT suggests clear promise to be a major element in improving and developing the school.
55. After a period of uncertainty and conflict, the governing body now shares the headteacher's vision for the school, under a new but experienced chair, who was appointed last year. Under her shrewd and experienced leadership, it is now functioning effectively, setting overall aims and objectives within which the headteacher can lead and manage the school. Governors now have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have a strategy for moving the school forward and believe that a good start has been made. While there is scope for the effectiveness of the governing body to be developed further by training in aspects of governance, it is now participating effectively in shaping the developments of the school and is confident and optimistic for the future. The governors' annual report to parents meets legal requirements.
56. The headteacher has a clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has established effective strategies to improve the standard of teaching in order to raise attainment, to improve the learning environment in the school, and to build up a strong concept of corporate responsibility for all that happens in the school. The school improvement plan for 2002-03 includes action plans for each subject and a series of steps to be taken to raise attainment. These plans establish targets, identify the people responsible and any costs or training needs, state what is expected for the measure to be successful and describe how progress will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated. This plan is written in the context of longer-term developments projected to 2004. The school has established very effective systems to identify key priorities for development and to take the necessary action.
57. The headteacher recognises that, if attainment is to improve, it will be necessary to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning is now more secure. All subjects are the responsibility of individual teachers. Some are managed effectively, for example, English and mathematics, but the quality of management in some other subjects and areas, such as the Foundation Stage, is variable. The school recognises that this needs to be more consistent. The headteacher places a high priority on the professional development of staff and this is carefully linked to priorities identified in the school improvement plan as well as to the needs of individual teachers. The school has very good systems for introducing new staff to its procedures and is an enthusiastic supporter of the initial training of new teachers. In particular, the school is successful in developing teachers whose initial training was overseas. Professional development has resulted in a good level of unity of purpose in the school and a purposeful commitment to improvement. The headteacher is determined to develop this further.

58. The school works satisfactorily on a day-to-day basis and its routines are straightforward and easily understood. However, some pupils in most classes arrive between five and ten minutes late so that the start of the day is disrupted. Other, although fewer, pupils arrive in school between 30 minutes and one hour late. This consistent lateness results in a substantial loss of teaching time in the school year. The school appreciates that, if attainment is to improve, this loss of time is unacceptable. The timing of the junior assembly to coincide with the infants' afternoon play means that the assembly is disrupted by pupils in Year 2 going in and out of the building and by the noise of the infants in the playground.
59. The school uses new technology well in administration and its use is being developed further, for example, in the introduction of an electronic registration system. Pupils learn the skills of using computers satisfactorily and the well-stocked computer suite ensures that there are adequate resources for this purpose. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in some subjects, such as history and geography, but there is scope for its use to be extended in subjects such as English and mathematics.
60. When she took up her appointment, the headteacher was aware that she was inheriting a budget deficit of approximately £97,000, which is approximately eight per cent of the original budget. This deficit arose in the current financial year partly because there were a number of vacancies in most year groups that reduced the income the school attracts through formula funding. The headteacher and the chair of governors are fully aware that the current roll cannot sustain economically the staffing requirements to support three forms of entry. However, the main reason for the dramatic increase in the deficit, in a relatively short space of time, was the use of supply teachers employed through agencies. Each of these teachers comes with significant additional costs and at the beginning of the financial year there were 12 agency staff being employed at the school. When the new headteacher arrived, there were eight of these teachers. By the time of the inspection, this number had been reduced to three. The headteacher ensures the budget is monitored well and is working effectively with the governors and officers from the LEA to produce a viable budget deficit recovery plan. The main strands to the draft plan include: a) a further reduction of agency staff by replacing them with good young teachers; b) a review of the teaching responsibilities of the senior management team, to ensure value for money; c) a significant increase in the school roll by making it the first choice of all parents. The school intends to achieve this last strand by enhancing its reputation in the community for good standards, by improving the quality of teaching. The headteacher and governors intend to prepare the detail of the recovery plan, by the end of term, in conjunction with, and for approval by, the LEA.
61. The quality and number of teaching and support staff are satisfactory overall. In general, teachers are deployed effectively and many support staff are effective, particularly in supporting pupils who have learning difficulties of various kinds. However, there are occasions when classroom assistants are inactive and spend time merely watching what is happening, and this is an inefficient use of their time. The school recognises that some support assistants would benefit from further training.
62. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school has the benefit of three halls, but the playgrounds are arid, unexciting areas with few trees or plants to stimulate pupils. The school has no playing field. The accommodation in the reception classes is cramped, compared to the nursery. Some of the accommodation is in poor condition as a result of long-term neglect. The school has a strategy for improving this accommodation, but the speed with which this can be achieved will depend on the health of the school's finances. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in subjects such as mathematics. However, in some areas, such as geography and the quantity of books, they are inadequate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To raise standards and improve the quality of teaching, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

I. raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- giving pupils more opportunities to develop their vocabulary and speaking skills in English and other lessons;

(paragraphs 3, 4, 24, 87, 88, 91)

- reducing the amount of copying pupils are asked to do; encouraging them to use their imaginations; providing opportunities to write at length and developing pupils' writing skills in other subjects;

(paragraphs 5, 90, 91, 125)

- ensuring all pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and emphasise accuracy in their work;

(paragraphs 6, 96, 99)

- ensuring pupils complete all the mathematical work in their books; and

(paragraphs 6, 99)

- continuing to teach the skills of scientific enquiry consistently throughout the school.

(paragraphs 7, 102)

II. raise the general quality of teaching up to the level of the best by:

- deploying good teachers in all year groups to provide appropriate role models for other teachers;

(paragraph 18)

- providing high-quality training where appropriate, including training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and monitoring of teaching; and

(paragraphs 18, 57, 91, 99)

- ensuring that all learning support assistants are adequately trained to play their full part in managing pupils' behaviour and intervene appropriately on behalf of the teachers.

(paragraphs 20, 24, 61, 91)

III. raise standards in geography, history and religious education by:

- ensuring that in geography and history the planning of the curriculum continues to provide for the development of a secure progression of skills and knowledge as pupils move through the school;

(paragraphs 116, 118, 122)

- providing training for teachers whose subject knowledge is insecure, as well as appropriate resources;

(paragraphs 119, 125, 146)

- ensuring sufficient curricular time for religious education continues to be provided to enable it to be taught regularly;

(paragraphs 29, 142)

- improving teachers' subject knowledge; and

(paragraphs 26, 146)

- monitoring the quality of teaching.

(paragraph 147)

IV. raise the levels of attendance to match the national averages and improve punctuality by:

- reviewing its attendance policy and continuing to work with the educational welfare service to ensure that persistent poor attendance is identified and investigated;

(paragraph 44)

- ensuring the recently employed home-school liaison officer works closely with parents to reduce the levels of irregular attendance by dissuading some from taking holidays in term-time, and with others who condone the absence of their children; and

(paragraph 16)

- encouraging parents to develop a culture of sending their children to school on time.

(paragraphs 16, 29, 44, 58)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- ensure a viable deficit recovery plan is produced by the end of term;

(paragraph 60)

- improve provision in the reception classes and the co-ordination of the Foundation Stage;

(paragraphs 22, 23, 28, 66, 67)

- extend the use of ICT to enable pupils to support their work in other subjects of the curriculum;

(paragraphs 8, 92, 101, 138, 146)

- provide library facilities and improve the quantity and quality of books; and

(paragraphs 62, 89)

- ensure there is more consistency in the setting of homework and teachers' marking.

(paragraphs 27, 92, 99)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	101
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	54

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	5	34	58	4	0	0
Percentage	0	5	34	57	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	505
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	263

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	101

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	180

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	101
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	95

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	44	38	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	28	31
	Girls	30	33	35
	Total	54	61	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (64)	74 (59)	80 (79)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	33	35
	Girls	33	35	35
	Total	60	68	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (65)	83 (81)	85 (71)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	49	38	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	26	37
	Girls	19	27	31
	Total	42	53	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (72)	61 (58)	78 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	36	36
	Girls	29	30	30
	Total	57	66	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (69)	76 (75)	76 (75)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
269	19	0
0	0	0
23	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
42	0	0
34	0	0
8	0	0
3	0	0
22	0	0
27	1	0
87	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.92
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.1
Average class size	25.25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	300

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	1,340,936
Total expenditure	1,366,057
Expenditure per pupil	2,573
Balance brought forward from previous year	134,142
Balance carried forward to next year	109,021

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	15
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	504
Number of questionnaires returned	127

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	25	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	44	4	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	4	12	7	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	44	13	4	3
The teaching is good.	50	38	4	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	39	16	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	2	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	36	7	1	5
The school works closely with parents.	35	39	12	6	8
The school is well led and managed.	41	35	4	1	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	47	9	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	38	12	4	17

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Inspectors found the quality of teaching and pupils' progress to be satisfactory rather than good. They found pupils' behaviour to be satisfactory overall, but agree with the minority of pupils in the questionnaire and the views of parents expressed at the meeting that a few pupils have a tendency to disrupt some lessons. They found homework to be satisfactory, although it is not given consistently by all teachers. They found the annual reports of pupils' progress to be satisfactory overall, but they could be written more clearly. They also found the involvement of parents in the school to be improving.

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

64. During the inspection there were 58 children attending part-time in the nursery class and 54 children in two reception classes. There is a termly intake to the reception classes and another 30 children will be admitted after Easter. Children are admitted to the school in the term following their third birthday or according to need. The nursery is currently too small to cater for all children in the area and as a result, the majority of children entering the reception classes have not attended the school nursery. A significant number have experienced no pre-school education and some have recently entered the country. There is a qualified teacher and two nursery nurses in the nursery and a qualified teacher and learning support teacher in each of the reception classes. During the inspection a supply teacher was teaching one of the reception classes to cover an absent teacher. Staffing, has been very stable in the nursery and teachers are very experienced and committed. In the reception classes there have been many changes of staff that have had an adverse effect on the quality of teaching and children's learning.
65. Children spend between one and three terms in the reception classes, depending on their date of entry. Teachers ensure children and parents are well prepared before they enter the nursery, and this careful preparation enables children to make a smooth transition into full-time education. Children about to enter the nursery receive a home visit and visit the school with their parents. Attainment on entry is below that normally found. There are clear procedures for the identification of children with special educational needs (SEN). Three children have been identified with SEN in the nursery and one in a reception class. One-fifth of the children come from homes where the mother tongue is a language other than English. The recording of children's progress is inconsistent. It is done well in the nursery and in one of the reception classes, but there is little evidence of these procedures being implemented in the other reception class, and this reflects a lack of strong co-ordination in the Foundation Stage.
66. The nursery provides a stimulating learning environment and children make a flying start to their education and are on course to achieve the expected standards. Children with SEN and those for whom English is not their home language also make good progress. This rate of progress is not maintained in the reception classes, partly because many of the children have not had previous nursery or other pre-school experience, and also because the teachers are less experienced teaching this age group. Consequently, resources and the quality of teaching and learning, whilst satisfactory, lack the richness of those in the nursery, although both classrooms provide an acceptable learning environment for younger children. One of the teachers was a supply covering for the absence of the regular teacher. The children in her class were less mature and settled compared to the parallel class, but in the short time she had charge of the children, she was having a positive effect on them. In the nursery, resources are good. The outdoor play area provides a very rich learning environment, whilst a wildlife area provides children with the opportunity to observe and care for animals. There is currently no outdoor area identified for reception children. The very generous indoor space in the nursery contrasts with the limited and often cramped conditions in the reception classes. There is a family literacy support group who meet once a week; this is a well-attended and informative session for parents that gives them the opportunity to talk about aspects of learning.
67. By the end of the reception year a few higher-attaining children will achieve the standards expected for their age but the majority are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory; there is too much disparity between the quality of provision in the nursery and the reception classes.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Children enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers as they become involved in the wide range of activities available, selecting one that interests them, and playing with good levels of involvement and interest. The children respond well in the calm and stimulating environment and are guided to understand what is acceptable behaviour and what is right and wrong. The staff explain

the consequences of actions sensitively and firmly, encouraging children to think about the feelings of others. Children learn to share and work alongside each other in a variety of situations such as making a pizza. In both the reception and nursery classes, they are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility by taking the register to the office with a learning support assistant, and collecting the daily fruit for the class.

69. In the reception classes, children are encouraged to understand the consequences of their words and actions, and are rewarded with smiley face stickers. There are clear rules in both of these classes and children are reminded to move, listen, look and share well. A significant number of these children are still reluctant to share with others and grab toys and resources for themselves. Many children have still not learnt to be quiet when the teacher is talking, and a significant number show little sensitivity to the needs of others. Many need adult support and intervention to ensure learning continues. Higher-attaining children are able to work on their own for reasonable periods of time but a significant number are easily distracted when their activities do not stretch them enough.
70. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. In the nursery, teachers are very experienced and well organised, and provide learning experiences that are enjoyable and develop their personal, social and emotional wellbeing effectively. Children gain in confidence because they are helped to succeed in all they do. In both reception classes, teachers are new to the school and have less experience teaching reception-age classes. Although class and school rules are in place, the teachers do not always reinforce them strongly enough. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals.

Communication, language and literacy

71. The nursery provides a wide range of effective experiences and activities to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. Whilst emphasis is placed on listening carefully to adults, standards in speaking and listening are low. The nursery nurse skilfully encourages children to recall the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears' using toy bears. Children develop confidence in speaking to others because adults intervene and use questions sensitively and skilfully. By the time the nursery children move into reception, they are becoming attentive listeners, listening to stories and rhymes, and they take books home from the lending library.
72. In the reception classes, children lack confidence in speaking and their listening skills are still underdeveloped. Many find it difficult to concentrate and have a limited range of vocabulary. Many of these children tend to give one-word answers to questions. However, most of these children have a positive attitude to books and enjoy listening to stories, whilst higher-attaining children are able to identify the main characters in the story 'Elephant and the bad baby.' When doing so, they find it difficult to identify the beginning, middle and end of the story. These children take books home once a week and know books communicate meaning and print goes from left to right. They are encouraged to recognise their own name and are taught letter sounds in a systematic way, but many children have difficulty linking the letter sounds with forming the letter shapes. The majority of children are able to identify the letter sounds at the beginning of words and with adult support can identify that the elephant starts with the letter 'e.'
73. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but is good in the nursery class. The ratio of adults to children is less generous in the reception classes. All teachers have good relationships with the children and use questions well. Support staff make a good contribution in helping children well. In the better lessons, pupils respond to the quick-fire questions. In the younger reception class, children have not learnt to remain quiet when the teacher is talking, and lower attaining children tend to call out, slowing down the pace of learning. Children in the reception classes take contact books home and these provide good links with parents, providing them with clear guidelines on how to help their children read and write. However, most children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical development

74. Children experience an interesting range of activities in the nursery class and make good progress. Higher-attaining children are able to identify and draw basic shapes such as a circle, triangle or

square on the salt table. They rise to the challenge of making a picture such as a face on the circle. Adults help them to draw a triangle and this learning is reinforced well when the children are shown how to sew a triangle, using fabric. Children sing and count 'eight green bottles' and know how many have fallen from the wall, because they help to knock them down and enjoy this activity. These children are guided to instruct a programmable toy to move from one shape to another, and in this way, they learn to listen to instructions and are developing an awareness of right and left.

75. In the reception classes, higher-attaining children are beginning to add numbers to make five, such as two and three, and write and count objects up to ten accurately. These children also count down from ten and end with 'Blast off.' The majority of children in these classes need adult support to count numbers over ten and to compare lengths. Lower-attaining children build a tower with bricks but do not really understand how to measure and compare the height. Although these children are beginning to write numbers, they rely on help from adults. When children are not stretched enough they become distracted and their learning deteriorates. Singing rhymes are used well to reinforce learning, and children enjoy singing 'ten fat sausages sizzling in the pan.'
76. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. In the nursery the high staff ratio often allows adults to give one-to-one attention to children and enables them to make good progress in their learning. Many of the children in the reception classes have not had pre-school experience and staff struggle as the staffing ratio is less generous. All teachers have good relationships with the children. On occasions the pace of lessons is too relaxed and the teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough. Consequently, by the end of the reception year, the majority of children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Children in the nursery enjoy their activities and their learning about the world around them. They are guided to make a pizza and to observe how the ingredients change when they are mixed and cooked. Children are beginning to understand the needs of animals and how to care for them, whilst the older children take turns feeding the fish, gerbils, the guinea pig 'Tatters,' and the rabbit 'Fluffy.' They know 'Fluffy' likes cabbage and carrots. An attractive wildlife area in the nursery encourages children to use magnifying glasses to observe frozen water in the tank.
78. There are no animals in either of the reception classes. In these classes children observe and know it is a sunny day but they are unable to identify the day of the week, the season or month of the year. During their walks around the playground, children are guided to observe the features of their environment as they begin to use their senses well to learn about the world around them. They are encouraged to draw things they can see, touch, smell and hear, such as the cars, the soil and the wind. The teacher encourages them to listen to the sound of the cars and smell the soil in the garden. In the better lessons, the teacher draws their attention to the prickly and spiky plants and increases their awareness of vocabulary. There are appropriate opportunities for children to have access to the computers, and mouse control is developing well in both the nursery and reception classes. Higher-attaining children in the reception classes click successfully on the mouse to move the cursor. Higher-attaining children use 'Lego' to make a home for the animals, although children of average and low attainment need adult support to complete this task.
79. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. The records of children using the computer are not consistent in the reception classes because the teachers have only been responsible for their classes for a short time.

Physical development

80. Standards of work are in line with those expected in the nursery, but are below those expected in the reception classes. Opportunities for developing their skills using large equipment are satisfactory. Children climb with confidence and control. Nursery children enjoy outdoor play daily, but the reception classes visit the nursery twice a week and also have two physical education lessons in the hall. The co-ordination of children in the nursery is well developed, as they kick and throw large balls and aim beanbags into buckets. Teachers in the reception do not build sufficiently on this development and progress in the reception classes is not as good as in the nursery. Teaching is

satisfactory overall and is good in the nursery. Nursery children develop their ability to jump into, out of and over hoops. In the hall, the reception children are not given the opportunities to learn to carry equipment safely, because the gymnastic apparatus is already set out ready for the lesson and children are excluded from this process. The outdoor area provides good opportunities for children to develop their balancing skills. Nursery children develop their confidence climbing onto and sliding down the climbing frame. There are appropriate opportunities for them to use the pedal bicycles and improve their skills, but many of these bicycles are too small for reception children.

81. In the reception classes, most children change by themselves for physical education lessons, although some lower-attaining children need support. Their awareness and control of their own and others' space are not yet well developed and many children do not fully understand the concept of finding a space. Children are not aware of what happens to their body during exercise. Children achieve well and make satisfactory progress in using small equipment, and improve their dexterity as they use pencils, crayons, and scissors and paint brushes effectively and with confidence. Most children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they are ready to leave the reception.

Creative development

82. In the nursery, children explore how to mix colours, and use potatoes to print, in pink and purple. They use pencils, crayons and complete simple collages. In this class, there is an exciting range of instruments, and one child was highly motivated as he created music on the keyboard, banged the drums and the xylophone and danced rhythmically, responding well to the music he had created.
83. In the reception classes, higher-attaining children are beginning to use paint to represent animals such as a tiger and a lion, whilst pupils attaining at expected standards and lower-attaining children mark paper and mix paints. In these classes, children are given plasticine to mould and form animal shapes, and more ambitious children attempt to make an elephant. Most children enjoy the feel of rolling and pressing plasticine. Higher-attaining children are beginning to draw objects that resemble items such as houses and animals. Teachers give their children appropriate opportunities to explore and handle a range of musical instruments. Singing is well developed, and children are learning the words of new songs and are beginning to sing a range of other songs from memory. Opportunities for reception children to use their imagination are less well developed than in the nursery class. For example, there are limited opportunities for children to use the 'travel agents' role-play area. Very few children select these activities and tend to play on their own.
84. Teaching is good in the nursery, sound in the reception classes and children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. They experience an appropriate range of activities and these are well organised. However, most children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

85. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were well below those found nationally. The proportion of pupils attaining standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age was also below the national average. However, standards are above those in schools in similar circumstances and, compared to these schools, are well above the proportion achieving higher levels. On these measures, and compared to their attainment when they enter the school, pupils are achieving well. Inspection finds that the standards of pupils in Year 6 are improving and are better than the 2002 results compared to the national picture would suggest, but are still below national age-related expectations. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily compared to their attainment on entry. In the national tests in 2002 for pupils in Year 2, standards in reading and writing were well below average and were below the standards achieved in similar schools. Inspection finds that standards in reading and writing are below national age-related expectations but are better than those in the national tests. Although standards are below those reported in the previous inspection, this inspection finds they are improving. This is because, since the recent appointment of the headteacher, the quality of teaching is improving. It is good in Year 6 and satisfactory in most of the school, and the head is keen for it to continue to improve and to make a full impact.

86. All pupils, including those from ethnic minorities, make satisfactory progress in English during their time at the school. Teachers are skilful in managing behaviour and have positive relationships with their pupils. Pupils with SEN receive appropriate support within classes from teachers and learning assistants, and make satisfactory progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and those who are on the first stages of acquiring English benefit from the satisfactory support they receive from specialist teaching. Other pupils who are making slower progress receive extra support through strategies such as additional literacy and extra literacy support.
87. The listening skills of most pupils are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6, although a minority of pupils find it hard to listen and concentrate for any length of time. However, their speaking skills are below the national age-related expectations for pupils of these ages. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop their speaking skills in many English and in other lessons. Generally, when pupils give one-word answers or speak in phrases only, they are not encouraged to expand on their answers. In addition, many opportunities to develop and extend pupils' speaking and vocabulary skills are missed as some teachers take too long to introduce their lessons and insufficient time is left for pupils to explain their work, to ask questions, and to widen their range of vocabulary.
88. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading are below national age-related expectations. Teachers place strong emphasis on teaching letter sounds to help pupils read. The higher-attaining pupils read simple texts fluently. Their reading is usually accurate and they understand the text, but due to their lack of vocabulary skills, they find it hard to explain what they have read. A significant minority, however, have some grasp of letter sounds, but are unable to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them, and are hindered by their limited vocabulary. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, pupils were finding it hard to identify the initial letter sounds of objects such as 'dominoes', 'material' and 'zip'. In Year 6, standards in reading are in line with national age-related expectations. Higher-attaining readers enjoy choosing their own books and read with increasing fluency and accuracy. These pupils are able to talk insightfully about their favourite authors and have a critical appreciation of a range of books. They are able to skim and scan to find relevant information and use books to find information. They show a growing understanding of more complex language, as well as identifying the underlying meaning or appreciating the subtleties of humour. However, many pupils in Year 6 still have a fairly limited vocabulary, and do not always understand the text well enough to be able to discuss the characters in the stories or talk about their favourite episodes at length. A minority of pupils find it hard to explain the text literally. For example, a pupil achieving below age-related expectations could not understand the humour in a story because of a lack of understanding of 'baboon' and 'radishes'.
89. The school has no library provision and the books in classrooms are insufficient for the number of pupils. The resource room has very few books, and some encyclopaedias are very old and are not relevant or appropriate for pupils to develop their research and study skills. Contact books for reading at home are well established and have a positive impact on pupils' interest and attainment. Guided reading sessions at school also help pupils' progress in reading.
90. Although standards in writing are below those expected when pupils are in Year 2, they are making satisfactory progress over time. In Year 2, pupils build on the skills of letter formation they have learned in Year 1 and extend them further as they learn about letter combinations and common spelling patterns. As a result of good support from their teachers, the higher-attaining pupils have mastered these skills and are beginning to think about the overall structure of their writing, such as the setting, characters and plot, when writing stories. They are beginning to spell accurately and to use full stops and capital letters. However, the majority of pupils still experience difficulty in writing imaginatively and spend too much time copying work, which hinders their creative writing skills. In Year 6, attainment in writing for the majority of pupils is below national age-related expectations. However, the higher-attaining pupils are achieving above expected standards. These pupils are able to present their arguments clearly and succinctly, as in this example against the existence of zoos: *"Animals probably find it distressing to be in cages and have people staring at them all day. It is not very fair to take animals from their natural habitat and their families."* Pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spellings are developing well, as a result of good emphasis on teaching these aspects. They are beginning to write for a range of purposes, including narrative, description, letters,

poems and instruction. However, the majority of pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length or develop their writing skills in other subjects. Most pupils' handwriting is good at this stage and they are able to write neatly and many are developing their own personal style. They use joined-up script consistently, although the majority of pupils' writing is in pencil.

91. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. All teachers had previously benefited from training in the National Literacy Strategy but as there have been a large number of staff changes, some newly appointed teachers have not had the benefit of this training. Teachers plan together effectively in year groups and their planning is consistently good. They make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and relate the objectives well to what they have previously learned. In most lessons, there is a teacher and a learning support assistant present. Teachers make good use of these support assistants to support pupils and keep a good overview of pupils' progress during lessons. Most of them help to manage pupils' behaviour well, although some could take a more active part in intervening on the occasions when there is inappropriate behaviour. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and encourage good manners and social skills. In a very good writing lesson in Years 6, the teacher had secure subject knowledge and constantly challenged her pupils through incisive questioning. She had high expectations that her pupils would do their best and moved the lesson along at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils of all attainment levels played an active part in the tasks and put a great deal of effort into meeting the teacher's expectations. Teaching in Year 6 is generally good, but most is not up to this standard. Some teachers tend to direct their lessons too much and do not give their pupils sufficient time to develop their answers and improve their vocabulary and confidence in speaking. However, pupils have positive attitudes that contribute well to their learning. Most are attentive and keen and persevere to complete their tasks.
92. In some lessons teachers do not give enough attention to setting work that matches the needs of pupils of different abilities. In Year 2, for example, pupils were asked to place five words in alphabetical order and then copy the words and their definitions. Pupils of all attainment levels were given the same task but many pupils were unable to read these words. Although the use of computers to draft or word process is currently less advanced compared to many schools, it is now developing. The marking of pupils' work is variable. In some classes the work is well marked and the teachers' comments explain clearly what the pupils are doing well and what can be improved. However, some teachers' marking is rather perfunctory and does not show how the pupils could improve their work.
93. The implementation of the literacy strategy has been satisfactory and the school is evaluating and adapting its effectiveness to meet its pupils' needs. For example, time is taken in addition to the literacy hour to improve pupils' story-writing, reading and handwriting skills. The school has not yet developed strategies to promote reading and writing skills in other subjects, such as reading and writing about events in history, and explaining and recording scientific experiments. The school points to the implementation of the strategy in helping to improve pupils' phonic skills and older pupils' writing is generally improving.
94. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning throughout the school and takes effective action to support improvements. Teachers' planning, teaching and learning are monitored and support is provided as required. The procedures for tracking and recording pupils' progress as they move up through the school are currently being developed. The test results are effectively analysed and information is used to implement strategies for improvement. Class and group targets are set, but this practice is not yet consistently implemented throughout the school. The funds available for the development of the subject have been spent wisely on purchasing materials for teaching literacy. However, the quantity and quality of books are still inadequate to meet all pupils' needs.

MATHEMATICS

95. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2002, standards were well below the national average. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, standards were below average at the end of Year 2, but were above average at the end of Year 6. Attainment in Year 6 was adversely affected by the high proportion of pupils with SEN and a high level of pupil mobility, with

pupils joining the school after the usual entry times. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels or above in Year 6 was above average compared to the performance of pupils in similar schools.

96. Standards are improving but remain below national age-related expectations. At the last inspection standards were reported as being in line with those expectations. In Year 2, higher-attaining pupils have a secure understanding of numbers to 100 and add and subtract two-digit numbers confidently. They apply their understanding of number to problems expressed in terms of money up to £1.00. They have a clear understanding of what is meant by odd and even numbers and successfully continue number patterns. They measure reasonably accurately in centimetres and understand the concepts of length and width. They know the basic two-dimensional shapes, understand time in hours and half-hours, and how to weigh in kilograms, understanding the concepts of lighter and heavier. They also have an early understanding of multiplication and division. The standard of the work of these pupils is at the expected level. For most other pupils, their understanding is less secure. For example, many make simple mistakes when adding up to ten, twenty and fifty, whilst others struggle to add money using coins up to £1. With a large number of SEN pupils in this year group, the average attainment of the cohort is depressed.
97. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils use the four rules of number – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division - well, and double and halve accurately. They understand that fractions, decimals and percentages are three different ways of expressing the same concept. They are able to interpret data expressed in bar charts, pie charts and line graphs, and competently represent data in these forms. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and calculate their perimeters accurately. They have a clear understanding of how to measure length and weight using metric units. Work is secure and accurate and at least at the standard normally found. Other pupils' work tends to be more inaccurate, for example, they are unsure when multiplying decimals by 10 and 100 and in data handling are insecure in studying averages, and in distinguishing between mean, median and mode. Below average pupils struggle with doubling and halving two-digit numbers. Higher-attaining pupils present their work neatly, although average and lower-attaining pupils are less neat in their presentation and their carelessness leads to errors in their work. In class, pupils throughout the school tend to lack confidence in using their mathematics to solve problems. Pupils with SEN, and those who speak English as well as another language, are generally supported well in their learning and make sound progress.
98. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are variable and are satisfactory overall. Most pupils have good attitudes, behave sensibly and are keen to work and make progress. However, in most classes a few pupils have poor concentration spans and have a tendency to be disruptive. In a few classes, there is an undercurrent of chatter throughout the lesson. Overall, this disruption is managed well, but the flow of the lesson is interrupted as the teacher has to interject frequently and this inevitably affects the learning of others adversely, and slows their progress.
99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and, in about one quarter of lessons, teaching was good. In these good lessons, teachers had high expectations of pupils' effort and behaviour. They provided interesting tasks that ensured pupils worked with interest and maintained good levels of concentration. As a result, they made good progress in their learning. In lessons that were otherwise satisfactory, the pace of the lessons tended to slow and some pupils' concentration wandered. In a few lessons, pupils were given too much time to complete their tasks. As a result, they were not stretched as much as they might have been, and did not make the progress of which they were capable. Some teachers, new to the school, have not had the benefit of updated training in the numeracy strategy. Work is marked regularly and much of the teachers' comments is supportive and indicates how pupils can make further progress. However, there are also occasional examples of inaccurate work being marked as correct. There is a significant amount of work in pupils' books that is not completed. Numeracy is used in some other subjects such as science and design and technology, but there is scope for this to be extended to other subjects.
100. The subject is managed by an experienced and enthusiastic teacher, who is keen to continue to raise standards. The quality of teaching, planning and pupils' work is monitored, some of it by the senior management team. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and of

the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 are analysed to identify areas of weakness, and teaching is adjusted accordingly. Pupils' progress is tracked through the use of assessment sheets and class targets are based on this data. However, targets are not yet set for individual pupils.

101. Resources for learning in the subject are good and are readily accessible. Opportunities exist for ICT to be used to support learning in mathematics, but its use is inconsistent and the co-ordinator understands that staff training is needed to ensure these resources are used fully. The time available for the subject is adequate, but, since mathematics lessons follow morning play, they usually start a few minutes late, resulting in a significant loss of teaching over time.

SCIENCE

102. The results in the 2002 National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well below the national average. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6, the results were well below average, although they were in line with the performance of pupils in similar schools. When they are compared with schools that achieved similar standards in their teacher assessments when they were in Year 2, their progress is comparable. Standards have slipped since the last inspection and the key reason for this and the low standards compared to the national picture is that the skills of scientific enquiry have not been consistently taught over the past few years. Since the appointment of the new headteacher in September, this has been addressed and there is much investigative and experimental work being undertaken in the school. However, because this has not been happening consistently until recently, many pupils have not yet acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to tackle the tasks with independence and confidence. Inspection finds that standards are improving but are still below national age-related expectations when pupils are in Years 2 and 6.
103. By Year 2, most pupils are able to name parts of the human body and of plants such as a leaf or a flower. They name and describe some of the mini-beasts found in the school's wildlife area. They study materials to see if they are man-made or processed and some of the higher-attaining pupils are able to predict the qualities of a particular material, for instance, whether it can be squashed or bent. They are able to describe in pictures and writing the different effects of pushing and pulling, and carry out with help a simple test to see which surfaces enable a toy car to roll freely down a ramp. However, many still struggle to describe their observations using scientific language, or to say whether what happened was what they expected. Very few show much understanding of more advanced concepts such as recognising and explaining why a test is fair.
104. Even many of the older pupils are still unsure about the importance of a fair test when carrying out investigations. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, on micro-organisms, the pupils were investigating the conditions that allow yeast to grow, but many did not understand the importance of varying one factor, for example, the temperature of the water, whilst ensuring others remain the same. On the more positive side, the work in pupils' books shows that they are experiencing a good range of topics covering living things, materials and physical processes. For example, during the current year, pupils in Year 6 have learned about how plants reproduce and the conditions necessary for their growth. They have also studied different habitats and food chains. In studying materials and their properties they have mixed various solids in water to see which would dissolve and which would separate, and some were able to predict which changes were likely to be reversible and which were not. They are familiar with different forces such as magnetism and gravity, and how friction acts on these forces. However, there is little evidence of more advanced skills such as pupils devising their own tests or suggesting improvements and modifications. Pupils' work is usually neatly presented using clear diagrams and charts.
105. Although most pupils have a level of scientific skills below that expected for their age, all pupils, including those with SEN and those whose first language is not English, are making satisfactory progress because of the quality of teaching. Some of the teaching was good, and in one lesson it was very good. Teachers' class management is usually good and pupils respond well by trying to do their best. In the best lessons teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they make the learning intentions clear to the pupils. Towards the end of the lesson they check on how well pupils have learned and what remains to be done. Teachers often use good questions to check on their pupils' levels of understanding, such as, "*How can micro-organisms help us?*" They also encourage the development of scientific vocabulary such as 'microbes', 'fungus', 'mould', and 'bacteria'. In one

class in Year 2, pupils were aware that the scientific symbol for water is H₂O. Where teachers are confident, opportunities are exploited to promote literacy and numeracy skills. For example, when a Year 2 class was deciding how to record the results of an ice experiment, the teacher highlighted the importance of accurate measuring and referred to previous learning about 'ph' words when talking about graphs. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the work was very well planned and prepared. The teacher had a lively, positive manner that engaged her pupils' attention and she used skilful questioning involving all the pupils. She used the learning support very effectively throughout the lesson. In this lesson, pupils' attitudes to learning were very good, and were good in the other lessons, overall.

106. The co-ordinator has made a sound start on monitoring and evaluating standards in the classroom. He has analysed samples of pupils' work and reported back to staff on areas for development such as the need for pupils more often to record their observations in their own words. A system to check on the understanding of all pupils at the end of a unit of work has been introduced this year, but as these assessments are not analysed by the co-ordinator, their use is not as effective as they could be in the planning process. Resources are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN

107. At the last inspection, standards were reported as being in line with national age-related expectations, and pupils' progress was satisfactory. It was possible to see only one lesson in the age range for younger pupils (Years 1 and 2), and there were few samples of pupils' previous work to analyse, in order to judge standards. It is therefore not possible to assess either the quality of pupils' work in this age range, or the quality of teaching. For the older pupils (Years 3 to 6), lessons were observed in all year groups and pupils' standards are broadly in line with national age-related expectations and pupils are making satisfactory progress.
108. There is very little work in pupils' sketchbooks, which were introduced last September. Their use is very variable and generally the work available is below the standards expected in terms of both quality and quantity. Although the co-ordinator provided staff training in the autumn term on the use of sketchbooks, their limited use suggests that most teachers have insecure knowledge of this aspect of the subject.
109. In the one lesson observed in one of the classes in Year 2, the objective of the lesson was for pupils to plan and design a symmetrical pattern using grid paper. This objective was not fully achieved, as the lesson had started ten minutes late. This was not the fault of the teacher, but occurred because the lesson immediately preceding it, a literacy lesson, had been interrupted on several occasions because seven pupils had arrived late. All pupils made good progress in creating a symmetrical design, using crayons in an imaginative way with inventive use of colour. They made very good symmetrical designs of creatures such as lions and tigers. All pupils worked hard and enjoyed the tasks and responded to the good teaching. The teacher used good questioning to establish, for example, that the class understood the meaning of 'symmetrical' and felt it was time to move forward when the class answered, "*The two sides are the same.*" The teacher managed the class very well and used her voice to good effect, maintaining her pupils' interest and concentration.
110. In Year 3, pupils studied prints by David Hockney to learn how to use their brushes with paint and water in the most effective way. They responded well and listened attentively to their teacher. Some of their drawings were very immature but most were broadly in line with national age-related expectations. Most showed sound skills in applying their paint in a careful and controlled way. In one class in Year 4, the pupils responded well to the stimulus of their teacher's experiences on a visit to the Alhambra Palace in Granada in Spain. The pupils used their print blocks with enjoyment, as they used pattern templates they had cut out in the style of those in the Alhambra. Their standards were broadly in line with those expected. In this lesson the teacher made good use of music, 'Sketches of Spain' by Miles Davis, to create a Spanish atmosphere in the class. In Year 5, pupils worked with fabric to investigate and combine the visual and tactile qualities of the fabric. The pupils had earlier made sketches linked to the books they had been studying of Mexican myths. Their work in a variety of materials and processes was of a satisfactory standard. Lessons were observed in all

three classes in Year 6. Pupils studied perspective using the urban landscapes of L. S. Lowry. In two of these classes the pupils showed satisfactory skills in drawing lines of perspective of a playground landscape in pencil, ready to paint in the next lesson. They enjoyed the lessons and worked well. In one class the pupils' understanding was less well developed because of unsatisfactory teaching. In this lesson the pupils became restless and made unsatisfactory progress.

111. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory and was satisfactory, overall. In the most successful lessons, the teachers planned well, placed good emphasis on developing pupils' skills and managed their classes effectively. In these lessons, learning support assistants were encouraged to make an effective contribution to the success of the lessons. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's planning was poor, her subject knowledge was weak and there was a lack of clear learning objectives to her lesson, leading to a restless atmosphere in the class.
112. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. He believes that the strengths of the subject lie in two-dimensional art, drawing, painting and colour mixing. Inspection confirms this view. He is keen to develop three-dimensional work and to introduce fabric and screen-printing. He is aware that some of the staff are in need of more training to improve standards further. He monitors teachers' planning and is compiling a portfolio of pupils' work for teachers to judge standards appropriately. Resources are adequate.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. As only two lessons were observed there was insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgements on pupils' standards, or on the quality of teaching, although teaching was satisfactory in the two lessons. As a result of the teacher's clear explanation, pupils in Year 1 made satisfactory progress in learning how to make a moving picture, based on 'Little Red Riding Hood' or 'The Frog Prince', by using a simple lever mechanism. Pupils in Year 4 were given suitable support by the teacher to enable them to design and make a pop-up character, by using a lever and linkage system.
114. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about the properties of different materials and how best to shape, assemble and join them. They also have the opportunity to develop their skills in making models out of construction kits and to make simple evaluations of the finished product. In Year 2, pupils have drawn a design for a hand puppet and then used it as a pattern to cut two pieces of material. They have sewn features on the puppet and used running or blanket stitches to sew the material together. Older pupils are given the opportunity to develop their skills in using a wider range of materials and tools. They are also given the opportunity to develop their ability in evaluating their work, as well as making modifications as it progresses. In Year 3, the pupils have made vehicles that incorporate a simple electrical circuit for lights, and in Year 5 they have made 'Pandora's Box' out of recycled materials. In general, the pupils' designs and products are of basic quality and suggest that the teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not high enough.
115. The curriculum is satisfactory, and is linked to other subjects such as science and history. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, but the monitoring of teaching and learning has been given a low priority. Planning arrangements based on national guidelines are appropriate and ensure suitable coverage of National Curriculum requirements. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, with teachers filling in a record of key skills for each pupil. There is the intention to build up a portfolio of appropriate examples of pupils' work to ensure all teachers are aware of the quality of work that is required. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, particularly in providing a wider range of materials for pupils to use.

GEOGRAPHY

116. At the time of the last inspection, standards in geography were judged to be generally in line with national age-related expectations. Since then there has been a decline in standards because the subject has had a very low priority at the school and coverage of the curriculum has been patchy. However, since last September there have been improvements. Nevertheless, standards in geography are below national age-related expectations in both Years 2 and 6. This is not just because of pupils' low attainment on entry, but more importantly, because pupils have not acquired

the skills and understanding to enable them to make steady progress as they move through the school. This is now being addressed, and in the lessons observed, most pupils, including those with SEN and those for whom English is not their first language, made satisfactory progress. Behaviour in lessons is usually satisfactory and often good, particularly when teachers succeed in engaging the pupils' interest and attention.

117. Pupils in Year 2 are able to make satisfactory observations about the physical and human features of the locality. Some higher-attaining pupils are beginning to comment on features that may give rise to problems, such as children playing in the roads or obstacles caused by a one-way system. They have carried out a traffic survey and recorded their findings in diagrams and graphs. They are beginning to show an awareness of places beyond their own locality, but many find it very difficult to use this knowledge to form their own opinions and ask appropriate questions about places and environments.
118. By Year 6, pupils are looking at a wider range of environments around the world, and are beginning to develop an understanding of scale, and skills such as the ability to interpret symbols on maps. They are using different sources of evidence such as photographs, books or the Internet to find out about different countries, and are beginning to understand how people try to develop and improve the areas where they live. Many, however, do not have the depth of knowledge to express opinions and present arguments about issues affecting the lives and activities of people in different parts of the world. Information is presented in immature forms. For example, when showing the round-the-world voyage of Sir Francis Drake, even the higher-attaining pupils were only required to stick pre-printed information in the correct location.
119. In the lessons observed, teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory, overall. In the best lessons the activities are well planned and organised so that they maintained pupils' interest and enabled them to make good progress. In a lesson where pupils were considering the impact of flooding in ancient Egypt compared to this country today, they clearly understood why it was of benefit in one era and not in the other. The teacher skilfully prompted a discussion that led to comparisons between the Aswan Dam on the Nile and the Thames barrier in London. Pupils were engaged and interested and were helped to increase their understanding of how these issues can dramatically affect people's lives. In other lessons the teachers had less secure subject knowledge and some had insufficient resources to fulfil the lesson objectives. For example, in a lesson on finding places on a map using grid references, the poor quality of the maps during group work adversely affected learning. Pupils were unable to see that the names of towns in the area were not necessarily printed on top of the town symbol as many of the grid references were inaccurate.
120. Sound use is made of visits to enrich the curriculum, for example, the residential trip to Swanage where pupils in Year 5 experience activities such as map-work and orienteering. Satisfactory use is also made of the local environment by younger pupils with activities such as looking for 'nice' or 'nasty' features of the school site. Such activities help young children to be aware of the need to care for their environment.
121. The new co-ordinator has made a good start towards remedying the weaknesses in the subject. She has written a draft policy and produced a sensible action plan outlining priorities for development. She has also adopted a published scheme of work that ensures that all pupils in the school receive their statutory entitlement to the curriculum, although there is work to be done in establishing a consistent progression of skills and understanding throughout the school. This aim is her main priority. She is beginning to improve resources, such as ensuring all classes have sufficient globes. Currently, procedures for checking on pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

122. Although there have been recent improvements, standards are below national age-related expectations in both Years 2 and 6. These standards are lower than those reported at the last inspection. This is because until very recently, planning of the curriculum did not provide for pupils to develop a secure progression of skills and knowledge as they move through the school. Whilst this issue has now been addressed, there still remains much to be done.

123. In Year 2, most pupils are able to use their developing knowledge of chronology to place put in the correct order the main events in an historical moment such as the great fire of London. Higher attaining pupils are able to answer questions such as, “*Why did the fire spread so quickly?*” They are beginning to express simple opinions, for instance, about what Florence Nightingale might have looked like, and to understand how clothes, such as nurses’ uniforms, have changed over the years. However, most pupils are unable to identify ways in which the past is represented, or why people may have acted as they did.
124. In Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of the periods of history they are studying. However, the more advanced skills, such as giving reasons for some of the main events and understanding that they can be interpreted and represented in different ways, are not well developed. For example, in their work on the Tudor period, most of the work in exercise books concentrates on information about the main characters such as Henry VIII, but says little about why he acted as he did or what people on different sides of the political divide may have thought. There is some interesting writing from a particular point of view, where pupils who assumed the character of one of Henry’s wives wrote a diary explaining her thoughts and fears. But work of this nature is rare. Pupils are beginning to make use of various sources of information and know about primary and secondary sources, although they are not clear about their use in practice. For example, pupils in Year 6 did not understand that writers of history books would have derived their information from a variety of sources, not all of which might be totally reliable.
125. The subject now receives a reasonable share of curriculum time, and since the introduction of a published scheme of work, the curriculum is reasonably covered. Teaching in the limited number of lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good and was satisfactory overall. All pupils, including those with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language, made sound progress. In the most successful lessons the teachers succeeded in inspiring the pupils to be enthusiastic and to want to find out about the past and to compare it with life today. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, skilled questioning encouraged the pupils to think about how much safer cities are now than they were at the time of the Great Fire. In other lessons, there is a tendency for teachers to ask for too much re-writing of factual information, often copying directly from textbooks. In a lesson on rich and poor people in Ancient Egypt, many pupils, particularly those of lower attainment, did not have the necessary skills to identify the relevant information in history books that could lead them to a deeper understanding.
126. Some good links are made with other subjects, for example, a study of the geographical characteristics of coastlines is linked to a study of the seaside, past and present. Pupils in Year 6 are preparing a presentation on the Tudors, using pictures and sound in their ICT lessons. An assembly with the older pupils had as its theme ‘Heroes and Heroines of the Tudor period’. These activities, together with a good number of visits to museums and other places of interest, enrich the curriculum and make an effective contribution to pupils’ personal development.
127. The newly appointed co-ordinator has prepared a sound action plan that rightly highlights the need for information on pupils’ progress to be used in guiding teachers’ planning. He is aware of the need to check samples of pupils’ work to ensure that there is a systematic progression of skills throughout the school. Resources are adequate, but more use could be made of primary sources of evidence to increase pupils’ understanding of how they find out about the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. There has been good improvement in the provision for ICT since the last inspection, with the creation of a computer suite that allows for teaching skills to the whole class. Each class is timetabled to use the suite for one session a week, with more time being available if needed. Staff have been trained and have improved their confidence and expertise. As a result, the attainment of most pupils in Years 6 and 2 matches national age-related expectations.
129. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with teachers planning their lessons well and showing secure subject knowledge, enabling them to ask relevant questions to develop pupils’ learning. Lessons are carefully prepared and place emphasis on pupils learning and practising the basic skills. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils practised their skills in using the mouse by selecting and then clicking

on the attributes of different mathematical shapes. In Year 2, pupils learn how to change the type and size of text and to retrieve, process and display information. Their attitudes to learning are positive and, when working in pairs on the computer, they work together well, which makes a positive contribution to their social development. In a lesson on developing their word processing skills, they used the cursor to create finger spaces between words, and the delete and backspace keys to edit their work. In this lesson, as in others, the teacher and support staff worked well as a team, so that all pupils received a high proportion of direct teaching. The pupils treated the equipment carefully and were well behaved.

130. Older pupils continue to develop of their expertise, as a result of the direct teaching of basic skills. In Year 3, pupils are able to draw flags by using 'LOGO' commands. As a result of the teacher's clear explanations, involving the use of a 'smart-board', they followed the instructions and confidently created the flags. By the time that they are in Year 6, pupils use ICT to enhance some of their work in other subjects, although the school has identified this as an area for further improvement. In these activities, the pupils use the technology appropriately to organise and present their ideas and are confident and enjoy doing so. In Year 6, pupils were preparing a 'Powerpoint' presentation about the Tudors as part of their history project. The teacher reviewed the previous work well, to ensure that her pupils could recall their previous learning, and were ready to move on to the next stage. They were able to insert a slide, add a text box and change the font colour for the text. They were able evaluate their presentation with reference to background format, picture inserts, animation and font colour of key words. However, there is a tendency for teachers to download the information and distribute it to pupils, instead of giving them the opportunity to access it for themselves.
131. The co-ordinator is on long-term sickness leave, and a temporary co-ordinator is providing secure leadership in the interim period. She is to be trained to develop her role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning through the school. Planning procedures are secure and enable teachers to set work that builds on previous learning. Arrangements for checking on pupils' progress are satisfactory and include a useful pupil-friendly assessment sheet that helps them to understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Resources are adequate and access to the Internet enables pupils to research a variety of information, for example, in history and geography.

MUSIC

132. Standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages. These are similar standards to those reported at the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were heard singing together in assembly. They sang sensitively and tunefully and their performance was good. In their assembly, they learned a new song quickly and sang it enthusiastically. In Years 3 to 6, singing is less enthusiastic, and a significant number of older pupils do not join in. The quality of this singing is unsatisfactory.
133. During the inspection, lessons were observed in Years 1, 3 and 5. In Year 1, pupils were extremely careful when passing percussion instruments such as tambourines around their circle without making a sound. This prepared them well to follow their teacher's visual signals to play loudly or quietly, slowly or quickly. They understood the signals for picking up and putting the instruments down. After their teacher had demonstrated the signals, pupils took turns to 'conduct' and clearly understood how to do this. Some pupils were adept at recognising the sounds of different percussion instruments being played out of their vision.
134. In Year 3 all pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder. This is a good feature of the school's provision. In the lesson observed, pupils were able to play three notes – A, B and C – and could read them in the treble clef. They played a range of tunes successfully to a taped accompaniment, and followed instructions well. They took part in a hornpipe which required some complex responses with a good level of success. Two lessons were observed in Year 5. Pupils followed rhythmic patterns introduced by the teacher well, and had a secure understanding of pulse and rhythm. They successfully 'composed' three different rhythmic patterns, recorded them by writing them down on paper, and performed them to the rest of the class. With support, pupils successfully maintained their own pattern against two others, while incorporating crotchets, quavers and rests. In one very

good lesson, attainment was above the standard normally found, while, in the other, standards were as expected.

135. Pupils enjoy music lessons overall and respond with high levels of interest and enthusiasm. Most pupils are courteous and co-operative. They enjoy each other's contributions and show good initiative when 'composing'. In one class, they applauded each other's performances. These positive attitudes provide a good learning atmosphere that helps pupils in their learning.
136. The quality of teaching in music is good overall, and ranged from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, planning was very good and the lessons were well organised with good resources. They moved at a brisk pace so that pupils' attention was always engaged. The good relationships and the teachers' high expectations ensured that the management of behaviour was not an issue. In a satisfactory lesson, whilst most pupils responded well to the tasks given, a few pupils did not concentrate well so that the flow of the lesson was disrupted and less was achieved. Overall, teachers have a secure understanding of the subject, have access to adequate resources and question pupils skilfully to test and extend their level of understanding.
137. Pupils' learning in music is enhanced by a range of opportunities for music making, out of class. Early one morning, 11 pupils attended a choir rehearsal taken by the subject co-ordinator. They sang tunefully and with a good awareness of what they were singing. Good attention was paid to technique so that pupils made a good sound and enjoyed their work. There are opportunities to learn woodwind instruments and guitar, and to perform music either in school, or in the community, for example by performing carols at Christmas. Each year, some pupils have opportunities to participate in large-scale concerts with a number of other schools locally, and a recording of a recent concert demonstrates that this was a worthwhile experience. A weekly music club meets after school and offers pupils in Years 4 to 6 opportunities to broaden their experiences in music.
138. The subject is managed well by an experienced and enthusiastic teacher who views music as a central means of developing pupils' potential and confidence. Music contributes well to pupils' cultural awareness. Resources for learning are adequate overall, but there are some good features, for example, there is a wide range of African percussion instruments. The use of ICT to support learning in music is developing but software for music is not yet available in the recently developed computer suite. There was a period of decline after the school's previous inspection when instrumental teaching was discontinued. This decline has been reversed and the criticism in the last report, that work on composition was underdeveloped, no longer applies. The quality of pupils' musical experiences is improving and the school has the capacity to improve these further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. By the time that they are in Year 6, most pupils attain standards that match the national age-related expectations and have made satisfactory progress throughout the school. All pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress. Inspection finds that the standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained.
140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with teachers having secure subject knowledge. The planning of lessons is thorough, with clear learning objectives in place linked to appropriately challenging activities. Teachers set good examples by dressing appropriately for lessons and, as a result, are able to demonstrate techniques in an effective way. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher was able to show how pupils could develop their skills in throwing and catching balls, beanbags and hoops, by demonstrating herself. As a result, the pupils consolidated their throwing and catching skills effectively and also showed confidence in moving around the hall by a variety of methods, such as running, jumping and hopping. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 benefited from the demonstration by the teacher of how to hold a hockey stick correctly, to enable them to dribble the ball around objects. As a result they made satisfactory progress in improving their hockey skills. In these lessons, the pupils were able to move in a variety of ways with a satisfactory awareness of space. The pupils' attitudes to learning were positive, showing enjoyment and enthusiasm in their activities, as in a dance lesson in Year 3, when pupils worked in pairs to create a dance in response to different kinds of music. They co-operated well and recognised the need for safety in their activities. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils are able to practice, improve and refine their skills and make evaluations of their

own and others' performance, along with suggested improvements.

141. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to all pupils. Pupils in Year 3 have swimming lessons and, by the time that they leave school, nearly all pupils are able to swim the nationally expected 25 metres, as well as having a secure knowledge of water safety. Leadership is satisfactory, although the co-ordinator would like to improve his knowledge of outdoor adventurous activities. Because recording and assessment procedures are unsatisfactory, teachers do not yet have a clear view of pupils' standards in the subject. There is a wide programme of extra-curricular activities that includes netball, football, cricket and gymnastics. Pupils' skills in football and cricket are enhanced by the work of coaches from Charlton Athletic Football Club and the London Schools' Cricket Association respectively. There are also beneficial links with the local secondary school, with a specialist teacher visiting the school to develop pupils' dance skills in a lesson based on 'West Side Story'.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. In Years 2 and 6, standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In the lessons observed, all pupils, including those with SEN and pupils with English as a second language, made satisfactory progress in their learning. There is a clear plan for teaching and learning but an analysis of pupils' work suggests it is not taught consistently well in all year groups. Since the last inspection standards have slipped. The school has recently increased the school day and the timetable now enables the subject to be taught regularly to ensure a more consistent progression in pupils' learning.
143. In a Year 1 class, pupils have a sound understanding and knowledge of the Diwali festival and more able pupils can identify some of the characters involved. They make divas and Rangoli patterns but this knowledge and understanding is not developed and reinforced in Year 2. Here, pupils complete worksheets about Diwali but their knowledge, previously acquired in Year 1, is not extended. Most pupils are unable to talk about other religions and cannot describe what happens during the festival of Diwali. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge to everyday life situations. When considering Lent and the significance of Shrove Tuesday, most pupils discuss what they like about themselves and what they would like to change. Higher-attaining pupils can identify these aspects. For example, one pupil said he would change his attitude and not fight with his brothers and sisters when deciding what television programme to watch. Average and lower attaining pupils need help and are unclear about the difference between what they like and what they would like to change.
144. In Year 4, higher-attaining pupils know about and can explain how Jesus was tempted in the wilderness and they are able to apply the messages found in St Matthew's Gospel to current day life. They talk about resisting the temptation to become involved in the crime of burning dustbins. Pupils of average attainment are able to talk about Jesus' temptations such as jumping off the pinnacle of the temple but are unable to apply the message to every day life. Pupils with SEN and lower-attaining pupils need help to identify and remember the temptations.
145. In Year 6, a minority of pupils have heard of the 10 Commandments and Moses. Higher-attaining pupils can talk about the ten plagues in Egypt before the flight of the Israelites. They draw pictures and write about the different plagues. Although most pupils know the Bible is a sacred text for Christians, their knowledge is superficial and is below expected standards. For example, whilst pupils visit the Sikh temple, they are unable to explain the main characteristics of the Sikh religion.
146. Although teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, most teachers are less confident teaching the subject and their knowledge is less secure than in other subjects of the curriculum. In one lesson about Shrove Tuesday, the teacher emphasised the making of pancakes but made very little reference to the religious significance. Lessons are well planned and include opportunities for pupils to apply what they learn to everyday situations in school and at home. In the better lessons, puppets and video snippets are used well to reinforce learning. However, pupils are given too little opportunity to acquire knowledge in depth and to build progressively on that knowledge. Pupils with SEN and English as a second language are well supported and complete work alongside other pupils. In most lessons the pace of learning is too slow and higher-attaining pupils could be stretched more. Pupils are given clear instructions, and questions are used well to check understanding and knowledge. Literacy skills are used well in most lessons and there are some links with geography. The use of ICT to enhance learning is not well developed.

147. The co-ordinator is conscientious and provides satisfactory leadership. She attends courses and has developed a useful collection of resources for all six religions. Pupils have good opportunities to visit a variety of places of worship. The co-ordinator monitors planning but has not monitored lessons. The subject does not have as high a profile in the school as other subjects.