

INSPECTION REPORT

ROBERT BROWNING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southwark, London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100809

Headteacher: Mrs H Mbakwe

Reporting inspector: Mr G R Logan
11810

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th February 2003

Inspection number: 246084

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: King and Queen Street
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Appropriate authority: Mr M Rosen for W S Atkins, on behalf of Southwark
Council

Name of chair of governors: Ms K Gordon

Date of previous inspection: 10 – 13 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11810	Mr G R Logan	Registered inspector	Mathematics	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9736	Mr J Brasier	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
26514	Ms A Tapsfield	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Special educational needs</p> <p>Educational inclusion</p>	
21066	Mr B Bowen	Team inspector	<p>Art and design</p> <p>Physical education</p>	
23658	Mr S Parker	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Design and technology</p> <p>History</p> <p>Geography</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>

16982	Mr P D Nathan	Team inspector	English as an additional language	
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	17
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	25
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	26
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	30
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	32
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	37

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Robert Browning is a community primary school for pupils aged 3 to 11 in Southwark, London. The surrounding area has very high levels of social deprivation. There are 290 pupils in the main school: 142 boys and 148 girls, together with 50 children, 21 boys and 29 girls, who attend the Nursery part-time. Children enter the Nursery in the academic year when they become four. Most children's attainment on entry to Nursery is very low; on entry to Reception it remains very low. One hundred and twenty-two pupils have special educational needs, mostly moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average. Seven of these in the main school and a further child in the Nursery have Statements of Special Educational Needs. This is above the national average. There are 158 pupils with English as an additional language (43 per cent), of whom 113 are in the early stages of learning English. There are 9 refugees and asylum seekers. Around 60 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average. Pupil mobility is quite high, with around 24 per cent of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal admission and leaving dates. Many children are housed temporarily on the adjacent estate. In common with many urban schools, there are considerable difficulties in recruiting staff in the area. The delegated powers of the governing body have been withdrawn by the local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Although the school has a positive climate for learning and pupils' attitudes are good, neither standards nor progress are as good as they should be. Pupils do not have equal access to the curriculum. The structure of classes at present significantly disadvantages some pupils. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are not adequately met. The leadership of the school is unsatisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The school is highly funded; in that context it provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- This is a racially harmonious community.
- Relationships between pupils are good and this creates a positive climate for learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.
- The learning environment is increasingly attractive.
- Teachers make school a welcoming experience for pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards and progress are not as good as they should be.
- The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory.
- There are weaknesses in planning; individual needs are not met appropriately.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have equal access to the learning opportunities available.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of information gained to guide teachers' planning, are unsatisfactory.
- Induction procedures for new or temporary staff are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.

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

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was last inspected, a number of areas for improvement were identified in a broadly positive report. The progress made on these issues has been patchy. The curriculum still lacks breadth and balance and is currently unsatisfactory. Some subjects have a very low profile. Assessment remains a weakness; work is ill-matched to the particular needs of pupils in, for example, mathematics. The school has dealt with the detail of the issue relating to special educational needs. Nonetheless, provision remains unsatisfactory and pupils make insufficient progress. Standards are no longer as high as those reported at the last inspection. In spite of the relative strength of the teaching observed, the positive climate for learning and the progress made in areas such as information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and music, the overall level of improvement has been unsatisfactory.

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	E*	E	E*	E
Mathematics	E*	E*	E*	E
Science	E*	E	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The 2002 test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below average in science. They were very low in English and mathematics compared with the national average, and in the lowest five per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in science and well below average in English and mathematics. Relatively few pupils attained the higher Level 5 in any subject. Very few pupils made the progress expected, based on their performance in Year 2. The school did not achieve its targets in English and mathematics in Year 6 in 2002. Currently, standards in Year 6 are below average in science and well below average in English and mathematics. Pupils have had a varied prior experience. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were very low in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing in relation to those achieved nationally. Standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics in relation to similar schools. Teacher assessment indicated that attainment in science was well below average. Very few Year 2 pupils achieved the challenging Level 3. Currently, standards in Year 2 are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and below average in science. Pupils' skills in ICT are developing satisfactorily. Opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills are unsatisfactory. Recent development work in the Foundation Stage is ensuring that pupils have a satisfactory start. However, the progress that pupils make even from the very low levels of attainment when they enter Nursery, though improving in Years 1 and 2, continues to be unsatisfactory overall. Few children achieve the Early Learning Goals in areas other than personal and social development. Progress is particularly poor for pupils with special educational needs, for those with English as an additional language and for those currently in the mixed-year classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and work well together. They show consideration for each other and participate readily in lessons and other activities.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils generally behave well in most lessons and in the playground. Exclusions are rare – only one in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively, but there are few opportunities for independent learning. Relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils are good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. In spite of the school's efforts, levels of attendance are still too low. Unauthorised absence has increased. This affects pupils' learning. Lateness is a minor problem.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some good teaching observed. Around half the staff are on temporary contracts. Not all are working in the phase of their greatest expertise. Teaching in around two-fifths of lessons observed was good or better. Just under a tenth of lessons were unsatisfactory, although key weaknesses mostly related to planning or management issues arising in the mixed-year classes. There were significant levels of good teaching in English and mathematics. Teaching is most consistent in Years 2, 5 and 6 and in the specialist teaching of music. Pupils' recorded work, however, does not consistently reflect the quality of teaching observed. Overall, there is a good working atmosphere. Staff manage pupils well and establish good relationships. A positive climate for learning has been created. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their learning. However, the mixed-year classes generate some challenging situations and behaviour can deteriorate rapidly. Where teaching is best, the pace is brisk, pupils are challenged and the teacher's management skills are good. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage this well. Questioning is used well and promotes learning effectively. However, too often, tasks are not accurately targeted to pupils' needs. This significantly affects learning over time. Expectations are too low, there is insufficient challenge and pupils do not develop as independent learners. Literacy and numeracy skills are not developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. The support for pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, is unsatisfactory and this has a negative effect on their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The National Curriculum is not implemented fully and planning does not meet the needs of all pupils. Gaps in coverage lead to unsatisfactory progress. Time is not managed rigorously. Literacy and numeracy skills are not consolidated across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. Tasks are not sufficiently adapted to enable these pupils to extend their basic skills. Pupils remain very dependent on direct adult support. They make unsatisfactory progress overall.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. The management of provision is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not make enough progress because teachers have insufficient awareness of the strategies needed to support their learning.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The overall provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall, the school takes good care of its pupils. It monitors personal development effectively, if informally, and gives pupils good personal support and guidance. However, no formal records of pupils' personal development are kept. The school has good procedures for encouraging pupils to behave well. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.

The school has a satisfactory partnership overall with parents. The quality of information in English is at least satisfactory. Not enough is done to communicate with parents who do not read or speak English fluently. Home-school links make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. While the headteacher appreciates the issues that face the school, the pace of change is too slow. Key weaknesses have not been tackled. The senior management team lacks the cohesion to take the school forward. There is an urgent need for a more rigorous approach to raising standards. Not all subjects have co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the governing body in relation to the budget and staffing is the responsibility of the Intervention Officer and this is handled very competently. Governors discharge remaining responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Although the school is now monitoring and evaluating its performance, it has been less successful in taking the necessary action. The governing body has a growing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources are used effectively at present. The school environment is being enhanced. Specific grant is used appropriately.

The school improvement plan identifies a wide range of priorities. Greater prioritisation is needed so that fundamental weaknesses are tackled resolutely and promptly. The improvement plan is matched closely to the school's budget. The school is adequately staffed, with efficient administration. Support staff make a satisfactory contribution to children's learning. The accommodation is being refurbished. However, there is no library at present. Otherwise, the school is adequately resourced.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good; children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • They feel able to approach the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel that there is insufficient homework.

Inspectors agree that behaviour is good overall and that children feel at ease in the school environment. They feel, however, that teaching is satisfactory rather than good overall; many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Provision of homework is similar to that found in many primary schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There are significant weaknesses in pupils' attainment. In the 2002 national tests for Year 2 pupils, standards were well below average in reading and writing and very low in mathematics in relation to schools nationally. Standards were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics in relation to similar schools. Teacher assessment indicated that standards in science were well below average. In the 2002 tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were very low in English and mathematics, and well below average in science in relation to schools nationally. Standards were well below average in English and mathematics, and average in science in relation to similar schools. Very few pupils achieved the challenging Level 5. The school did not meet its challenging targets for Year 6 in 2002. Girls performed significantly less well than girls nationally, particularly in reading and writing in Year 2. The discrepancy was less evident in mathematics. At Year 6, girls again performed less well than boys in English, mathematics and science, though both boys and girls performed significantly less well overall than their counterparts nationally.
2. A range of negative contextual factors adversely affects attainment. The catchment area of the school is one of significant social deprivation. On entry to the Nursery, children have very poor skills, especially in the key areas of communication, language and literacy (particularly speaking and listening) in English, in mathematics and in personal and social development. Much of the input in the Foundation Stage is focused on remedying these basic disadvantages, although the underlying difficulties are rarely resolved by the time children enter Year 1. Around 42 per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Around 60 per cent of pupils receive free school meals. The school experiences significant levels of pupil movement into and out of the school. This affects the continuity of children's learning. In addition, around 43 per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are refugees who arrive with little or no English and may stay for only a short period. The proportion of pupils with little or no English is increasing steadily.
3. In spite of these disadvantages, standards remain too low. There is considerable work to be done to improve the rate of pupils' progress. Recent input to the Foundation Stage teaching, curriculum and facilities by the local education authority has enhanced pupils' learning, particularly in the Nursery, so that progress has now improved to be satisfactory overall.
4. Although the benefits of that initial boost have not yet had time to feed through to Year 1, the satisfactory teaching in Year 1 and good teaching in Year 2 are securing better progress for these pupils. Although much of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is at least satisfactory, there is abundant evidence of weaknesses in teaching, low expectations and poor learning in the past so that progress overall remains unsatisfactory. There are still too many inconsistencies in pupils' performance. Data analysis by the local education authority indicates that of the Year 6 group tested in 2002, too many had not made the expected progress since the end of Year 2. The overall progress made was also below the local education authority average. Girls

performed further below the expected level than did boys. Attainment remains too low and progress is still too erratic. The management recognises that this is the key priority at present.

5. Inspection evidence indicates several key factors, which together account for the restricted progress made by pupils:
 - the variable quality of Early Years' provision until recently;
 - weaknesses in lesson planning so that work is not matched well to the needs of pupils and which significantly affects progress;
 - unsatisfactory provision for pupils with English as an additional language;
 - weaknesses in the support for pupils with special educational needs;
 - the recent creation of mixed-year classes that have high concentrations of pupils with special educational needs, including behavioural issues, and those with limited English. The progress made by pupils in these classes is very poor.
6. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language together constitute a high proportion of the pupils in the school. The quality of support for these groups is unsatisfactory and this has a significant bearing on the overall progress made by pupils across the school.
7. Currently, the standards attained by Year 2 pupils are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, and below average in science. At Year 6, standards are well below average in English, mathematics and below average in science. Only a relatively small number of pupils are working at the expected level for their age. The proportion of very able pupils identified on entry to the Reception class is small and this remains the case as they move through the school. The school is providing for the needs of potential higher attainers through, for example, an after-school booster club, although this is very recent.
8. Although children are now making better progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress overall in Reception, few children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals¹ for the Foundation Stage by the time they enter Year 1, other than in personal, social and emotional development. This is largely because they enter Nursery with very low skills in all areas of learning, many are not fluent in English and there is a great deal of ground to be made up. Attainment in Reception is still well below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in creative development. There are weaknesses in the opportunities provided for children's physical development. Staff work well to ensure that children settle into school life and routines quickly, feel valued and establish acceptable behaviour patterns. This helps them to get along with adults and other children and establishes a good climate for learning. Overall, children now have a satisfactory start to their education in the Foundation Stage.
9. Standards in English are well below average, overall, by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils make insufficient progress, overall. Although phonic skills are broadly satisfactory, younger pupils are hesitant in sounding out new words and older pupils

¹ Early Learning Goals – these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy, children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write sentences. In this school, Foundation Stage refers to the nursery and reception children.

have restricted vocabulary. Their skills in interpreting stories, discussing characters and justifying choices are limited. Standards in speaking and listening are below average. Pupils listen attentively, but not enough are ready to contribute orally in lessons. Teachers do not always expect pupils to respond in extended sentences or provide enough time for them to put their thoughts into words. Pupils' communication skills in English are restricted. Standards in writing are well below average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Overall, however, progress is picking up in Years 1 and 2, where many write legibly in sentences and use simple punctuation accurately. However, there are weaknesses in the grammatical construction of their written work. In Years 3 to 6, there are too few opportunities for extended writing to enable pupils to develop confidence in applying the writing techniques they have been taught. The standard of pupils' spelling is unsatisfactory. Many are insecure in applying spelling rules. Handwriting is practised regularly but, as pupils seldom write at length, they do not develop a confident personal style.

10. Standards in mathematics are well below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The pace of learning is improving for some pupils in Years 1 and 2. Overall, however, progress is too slow. Although there is a systematic approach to the teaching and learning of basic mathematical skills, and pupils acquire a secure knowledge of place value, as well as procedures that enable them to add and subtract one- and two-digit numbers, work is not planned effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. This significantly affects standards. Pupils have occasional, but insufficient, opportunities to apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
11. Standards in science are currently below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improving picture, which results from a more structured framework for planning and coverage of the curriculum, and from the more frequent opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations. This enables pupils with limited English to make better progress, though tasks are still not sufficiently challenging for the potentially higher attainers. Restricted writing skills adversely affect the quality of pupils' recorded work.
12. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is around the expected level by the end of Years 2 and 6. The focus has been on improving pupils' skills. There is an appropriately structured programme to meet this need and this is working well overall. A weaker aspect, and the next step in moving the subject forward, is the restricted range and frequency of planned opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects.
13. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average in music and physical education but below average in design and technology, and well below average in geography and history. No judgement is possible on standards in art and design. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in music and physical education, but well below average in history and geography. No judgement is possible on standards in art and design or design and technology at Year 6.
14. The literacy and numeracy strategies have not been implemented satisfactorily. Standards are not high enough and there are too few planned opportunities for the use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This is a crucial area for development if the curriculum is to be covered efficiently and pupils' skills developed successfully.

15. Pupils with special educational needs do not make similar progress to their classmates. In lessons they achieve satisfactorily because of the sound support they receive. However, their ability to apply the skills learned when an adult does not support them is not extended well enough. They do not make adequate progress towards the targets set within their individual education plans for literacy and numeracy. This is because the targets are not used sufficiently to adapt lesson assignments to address pupils' specific needs. The day-to-day progress of pupils with special educational needs is not monitored closely enough for tasks to be adapted quickly as their needs change.
16. On entry to the school, standards of attainment for pupils with English as an additional language are very low because many pupils arrive in the Nursery speaking little or no English. Standards are low by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and some groups of pupils do less well than others. Pupils of Turkish and Bangladeshi heritage, for example, achieve low standards, although Chinese speaking pupils are achieving well. The school has also admitted a number of pupils throughout the school who speak little or no English and who also have low levels of attainment.
17. Progress is unsatisfactory for pupils for whom English is an additional language across the school because teachers have insufficient awareness of strategies needed to support their learning. New induction classes are, however, provided in which pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their early language skills. Pupils with English as an additional language have positive attitudes to school and are well integrated into the school community. They are keen to learn in lessons but sometimes are unable to sustain concentration because of the low level of the activities provided.
18. The school is setting up systems to enable it to track pupils' progress, and is beginning to use available data to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. There is much more work to be done to ensure that pupils' potential is identified from an early stage and, in particular, that their progress is monitored closely and promoted effectively. This is a significant weakness at present. Challenging targets were identified for the standards pupils were expected to attain in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002. These were not achieved. More appropriate targets (in line with the characteristics of the group) are in place for 2003.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are good. This is a similar situation to that at the last inspection. Attendance is unsatisfactory, also similar to that at the last inspection. Unauthorised absence has increased by one third.
20. Pupils enjoy school, are keen to start lessons and settle down to work well. They show much enthusiasm, for instance in a Year 6 history lesson in which Victorian photographs were being analysed. Pupils participated with gusto and the group discussions produced a number of perceptive comments. Pupils demonstrate their good attitudes in the friendly way they talk to visitors, the care they take of their environment, and the consideration they show for each other. These good attitudes reflect the good relationships between teachers, classroom assistants and the pupils, teachers' enthusiasm and their good classroom management. In activities outside lessons, pupils show enthusiastic participation and relish their involvement.

21. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school. They try hard in lessons, particularly when a member of staff supports them. However, many find it difficult to concentrate in lessons and do not have sufficient strategies to help them develop self-discipline. Other children give good support to those with special educational needs.
22. Behaviour is good in most lessons, and very good in a quarter. It needs to be well managed. Where good management skills are needed, such as in the mixed-year classes that contain many of the pupils with special educational needs, behaviour is usually satisfactory. However, on occasions, behaviour in the mixed-year classes can deteriorate to the point where the learning of all pupils is significantly affected, and this is a considerable concern. On the playground, behaviour is generally good but occasionally simulated rough play goes unchecked. Around the school and at lunchtime in the dining hall the behaviour is good. Exclusions are rare (one in the last academic year) and never permanent. Parents are involved long before the exclusion option is exercised and targets are agreed on a pupil's return to school. Records of bullying and behaviour incidents are maintained. Oppressive behaviour is an infrequent occurrence. There are no records of racist incidents, but all the indications are that they are rare.
23. Parents report that behaviour is good and only one comment was made about bullying. The consensus of opinion among staff and pupils is that behaviour has shown a substantial improvement in the last eighteen months.
24. Relationships are good. Teachers and classroom assistants know their children well and enjoy working with them. Pupils are confident in speaking to members of staff about problems. Pupils help each other and give support. For instance, in a Year 5 physical education lesson pupils were required to work together to practise dodging and passing in rugby. The pupils responded very well and produced some good work despite the somewhat restricted space available. Racial harmony is very good. It is one of the strengths of the school.
25. Personal development is good and pupils' respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs is very good. This is particularly well fostered in religious education, personal, social and health education and in assemblies. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Some participate in the school council, support charities and act as monitors for a variety of tasks. In lessons, however, there are few opportunities for pupils to do their own investigation or find things out for themselves because there is no library.
26. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It was 93.4 per cent in the last full academic year and 92.6 per cent in the recent autumn term, the latter being similar to the level of attendance recorded at the last inspection. Unauthorised absence has increased from 1.8 to 2.5 per cent in the full academic year. The school day starts on time and there is good timekeeping through out the day. The registration system is efficient. Lateness is a relatively minor problem, with about ten pupils arriving late each day. In the autumn term two classes had attendance levels of less than 90 per cent. Both were due to long term absences, one being a hospitalisation for the whole term and the other being an eight week visit to Bangladesh.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

27. For some time, the school has found it difficult to recruit suitable permanent teaching staff and there has been a reliance on temporary and overseas-trained teachers. At the time of the inspection, almost half of the staff were on temporary contracts. Most contracts covered at least one term, so ensuring reasonable basic stability for pupils. At present, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some strengths. Where weaker aspects exist, these more often relate to curriculum, the school's structures for planning or the consequences of how classes are organised than to basic teaching competence.
28. Teaching in just over two-fifths of the lessons observed was good or better, leading to effective learning. Teaching was unsatisfactory in just under a tenth of lessons. The proportion of good or better teaching was highest in Years 2, 5 and 6. In each of these year groups, teaching in over half the lessons observed was good or better. In the school as a whole, around half the teaching observed in English and mathematics was good or better. The quality of teaching in the other subjects is more variable. It is broadly satisfactory in science and the Foundation Stage, but a significant strength in music, which draws on the expertise of a specialist teacher. No lessons were observed in art or geography. Almost all of the unsatisfactory lessons related to the mixed-year classes. The decision to concentrate a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs or in the early stages of learning English in mixed year groups has created a very challenging mix. Behavioural issues arise from time to time and these have a marked effect on the quality of teaching and on pupils' learning.
29. In some classes, the quality of teaching observed is not reflected in the quality of recorded work, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Planning is not, overall, sharply-focused on the needs of individual pupils. The pattern of achievement is uneven at present, because pupils have had a wide range of prior experiences and the benefits of the improved Foundation Stage provision and the good teaching in Year 2 have not yet begun to feed through the school. However, although some pupils are now making better progress from an extremely low starting point when they enter the school, there are significant issues relating to the overall pace of progress that pupils make.
30. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, all but one lesson being satisfactory or better. All staff are overseas-trained and on temporary appointments and do not necessarily have prior experience in this phase. Nonetheless, they have worked hard to extend their understanding and to effect a significant improvement to the environment of the Foundation Stage unit. The teaching in the Reception classes is satisfactory, with minor weaknesses. Teaching in the Nursery is satisfactory, overall, with some strengths. The focus on children's personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength, enabling them to make good progress. Staff manage children well. The planning is based on local good practice, while assessment systems have been developed by the staff. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory. Teachers question pupils well to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. All areas of learning are taught satisfactorily, other than physical development in Reception, where pupils do not currently have access to the safe play area. Staff make satisfactory use of initial assessments and maintain effective on-going records.
31. In Years 1 to 6, relationships are usually very good and are a reflection of the successful efforts to create an orderly learning environment. Teachers have good management skills overall and deploy both support staff and resources satisfactorily.

They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. However, their expectations of what pupils could achieve academically are less appropriate. In a number of subjects, including English, mathematics and science, expectations, particularly of the potential high attainers, are too low, and teaching sometimes lacks pace and rigour. Work is not always matched well to pupils' needs, particularly in mathematics and English. The key weakness and the reason why standards remain low in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is that pupils are normally all given the same tasks. This provides little challenge for the more able pupils in particular. Similarly, tasks set in investigative science provide insufficient challenge for able pupils. Pupils in Year 6 claim to have repeated a unit of work in design and technology over a three-year period. In addition, in the mixed-year classes, the planning of tasks tends to default to the curriculum for the younger pupils. Older pupils are unable, in consequence, to access an appropriate curriculum. Too little thought has been given to how, for example, Year 6 pupils are to be adequately prepared for the end-of-year tests. Teachers do not yet have a clear fix on what can be achieved by the potential higher attainers. At times, there is a focus on the social needs of the pupils at the expense of the academic. However, where subject knowledge is good, as in music and aspects of physical education, this has a very positive effect on the standards attained. Standards are low in those subjects that appear to be taught infrequently or where teachers' understanding of how to develop the skills crucial to pupils' learning is weak. Across the school, teachers' efforts to develop pupils' independent learning skills are constrained by the lack of a library. The quality of written work, generally, is negatively affected by overall weaknesses in pupils' writing skills.

32. Planning is a critical weakness. There is no standard format for lesson plans and this leads to considerable variation in quality. Too often, lesson plans are no more than the brief outline given in nationally recommended schemes of work. They rarely set out in enough detail what provision is to be made for different groups of pupils and how they are to be included in the activities. Too often the same task is given to all pupils, regardless of their needs. Those with low attainment are generally successful when given extra adult help but they are not trained to become independent over time by tasks that they can do by themselves. Pupils with the potential for higher attainment are not consistently challenged by the difficulty of the work set or the pace expected of them.
33. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily, overall. Standards in reading are not high enough because the school is not rigorous in helping pupils to develop higher-order reading skills. Pupils are given too few opportunities to extend their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' skills in numeracy are unsatisfactory. Although the Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented, standards have not yet moved sufficiently and there is limited scope for the use of pupils' skills across the curriculum. Teachers generally make satisfactory use of learning objectives as a benchmark for success. ICT skills are taught effectively and pupils are becoming confident in basic procedures. However, the use of computers to support learning in other subjects varies considerably.
34. Teachers try to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in class activities. Support staff help pupils effectively when undertaking individual tasks during literacy and numeracy sessions. However, their role during whole class discussions is less well developed, leaving pupils with special educational needs sometimes lacking the confidence to contribute. Teachers do not find it easy to plan activities that promote the independence of pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, they do not make satisfactory progress in securing basic skills.

Pupils with special educational needs are positive in their response both to classwork and to the work they undertake with the learning support assistants. They try hard with their own tasks and when they work with other children. However, they do not readily work independent of adult support.

35. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory in the induction classes and unsatisfactory in subject lessons, particularly for early stage learners of English. A feature of good teaching in the induction class was the effective use of visual aids, such as alphabet and phonic charts and big books. Class teachers have not received sufficient training to be able to meet the learning needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. As a result, they rely too heavily upon the specialist teaching undertaken in withdrawal groups and do not plan adequately to support and extend the learning of these pupils in class. Liaison is weak and class teachers do not reinforce work covered in these specialist sessions within mainstream lessons. Teachers do not vary the presentation of lessons sufficiently to ensure that all pupils understand what they are asked to do. For example, not enough use is made of visual prompts and picture clues. This is a significant weakness.
36. Pupil groupings in lessons do not always support learning effectively. In a Year 3 and Year 4 science lesson, early learners of English were dominated in their groups by other pupils while trying to test conductivity using a circuit. They had little opportunity to practise scientific language nor to take part in a practical science activity. Planning did not show that the needs of pupils with English as an additional language had been considered before the lesson. When the specialist teacher is supporting classes, she is not involved in joint planning and this means that the effect she has on the quality of teaching is inevitably limited.
37. Teachers use satisfactorily a variety of teaching methods. In most lessons, the combination of whole-class teaching and opportunities for pupils to work on their own or in small groups is used satisfactorily, but there is sometimes an imbalance, with too little time for pupils to work independently. The overall support provided by the support staff is satisfactory and promotes pupils' progress adequately, particularly those pupils with special educational needs. However, there is a need for further training to extend the skills of these staff members.
38. Everyday arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, overall. The quality of marking is variable across the school. Prior knowledge of pupils' strengths and areas for development have little influence on subsequent planning. Too often, teachers do not take the opportunity to provide developmental guidance for pupils and are content with ticks and brief generic comments.
39. Homework is used satisfactorily to extend pupils' learning (although this is a stronger feature, particularly in mathematics in Year 2). It usually takes the form of reading or mathematics and a record is kept on the progress made by each pupil.

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

40. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. All expected areas are covered, although Reception children do not have full access to the outdoor play area. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory. The National Curriculum is not implemented in full and planning is not adjusted appropriately to meet the needs of

all pupils. Both of these weaknesses were noted in the previous report and there has been a further decline. The school has made some progress in that planning for all subjects is now based on official guidelines. This has corrected a weakness in provision for art, music and religious education. There is a helpful diagram that shows when units within each subject are to be taught through the school. However, inspection evidence indicates that these intentions are not being carried out in full. For instance, halfway through the school year, pupils in Year 6 have studied no geography and little history. They have not produced enough work in art and design or design and technology for a judgement to be made on the standards they have reached. Work produced by other year groups indicates gaps in coverage in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall as a result.

41. The school is failing to cover the National Curriculum in full because time is not managed rigorously enough. For instance, on two days per week, junior age pupils begin the day by sitting on the hall floor for ten minutes waiting for assembly to start, with no useful activity in that time, while teachers take the register. The whole of each morning is given to English and mathematics. This is considerably more than recommended in the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, but the additional time is not always well focused or used with determination to raise standards. Opportunities to teach literacy and numeracy targets through other subjects have not been identified clearly enough in planning. As a result, the strategies are not having their intended effect. Other subjects are taught in the afternoons, but class timetables are too flexible, resulting in slow pace and uneven balance of time between subjects. On several occasions during the inspection, lessons did not take place as indicated on the timetables.
42. There are some useful links between subjects to make efficient use of time and strengthen pupils' understanding. For example, the making of model houses by Year 2 covered targets in science and design and technology. Teachers are beginning to use ICT applications in other subjects, though more is needed in science and mathematics. The school reports good results in pupils' attitudes and learning during project weeks in the summer term, where activities and visitors are focused on one subject, such as literacy or science.
43. The curriculum does not provide equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. Pupils within the mixed-year classes do not receive the same learning opportunities as their peers in the single year-group classes.
44. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' individual education plans are written by class teachers and then discussed with the special needs co-ordinator. These plans focus mainly on reading, writing, spelling and elements of numeracy and some pupils also have behaviour targets. Within lessons, tasks are designed to ensure that pupils are usefully occupied, but they are not sufficiently adapted to help pupils extend their basic skills. Teachers do not make use of a broad range of approaches and strategies to meet each child's needs. The support staff work with the pupils assigned to them and with those close by, effectively promoting the full involvement of their pupils in group activities. However, too often tasks are not sufficiently adapted for pupils to be able to complete them without adult support. Within small group lessons that take place outside the classroom, support staff make sound use of special learning programmes such as Reading Recovery and phonic awareness training. However, there is insufficient focus on ensuring that the learning in these specialised sessions transfers into pupils' classwork.

45. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the provision of induction classes to support their learning. The support teacher, who has responsibility for English as an additional language, had only been in the school four weeks at the time of the inspection. She has not yet had her teaching or planning monitored by the school despite the crucial impact of her work on the overall curriculum provision for these pupils. It also means that the school is not fully aware of what provision is being offered to these pupils.
46. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It includes relevant aspects of citizenship, health education and drugs awareness, and involves contributions by the police and school nurse. Pupils are able to discuss issues of concern in class 'circle time' discussions.
47. The curriculum is extended through a good range of out-of-class activities. They are popular and make a good contribution to pupils' interest in school. There is an 'activities club' for younger pupils. Sport is well served, and includes clubs at different times of the year for athletics, basketball, football, netball, rugby and swimming. School teams play successfully in local competitions; a few past pupils have gone on to reach high standards. There is tuition in guitar and keyboard.
48. The school makes good use of the community to extend the curriculum. A wide range of visits, visitors and other experiences is used well to stimulate interest. For example, staff of a professional football club run coaching sessions. Visitors from the church and other walks of life present role models of citizenship. Pupils study the neighbourhood for geography and visit local museums. A recent museum visit by Year 5 pupils shows how a well planned experience can benefit standards, because it focused pupils' attention on the design of stringed instruments, and they produced good quality drawings as a result of their interest. There are satisfactory contacts with the main receiving high schools to ensure that pupils make a smooth transfer.
49. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision. The strengths identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained.
50. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. All classes have lessons in religious education. This includes study of the beliefs and practices of the world's major faith communities, including those represented in the pupils' own backgrounds. School assemblies are concerned with themes that are relevant to pupils' lives such as 'friendship' and 'achievement' and these are related to religious belief in a non-denominational manner. Some of the assemblies are conducted in a formal manner that is not very inspiring, with pupils' responses being dull and restricted, for example in miming out friendly gestures. They are better when discussion takes place in a lively manner, and the theme is then related to a Bible story, as in an assembly that took 'perseverance' as a theme. However, the school does not pay sufficient attention to the spiritual responses that pupils can derive from art and music. Although, music is played at the beginning and end of school assemblies, this is not related to the assembly theme and pupils are not asked to listen closely to the mood and emotions it can engender.
51. There is good provision for pupils' moral and social education. Each week, they have lessons in personal education, which assists their understanding of right and wrong actions and their effects on those around them. Often a class will engage in 'circle time' where pupils take part in extended discussions about issues such as friendship, with special rules to ensure that everyone's contribution is accorded equal respect.

The school has established clear rules, and has developed a behaviour code about which all pupils have an opportunity to have their say. A democratically elected school council meets to give pupils a voice in the management of matters such as playground rules and equipment. The council meets only once a term at present and its effect is limited as a result. The school has developed a system of giving pupils responsibilities around school, such as acting as book monitors or ringing the bell for playtime. This is open to all pupils and helps engender a sense of community.

52. In lessons, teachers act as good role models, showing respect and courtesy to all pupils. Positive behaviour is always praised first. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate, often being asked to discuss and plan their response to the work. A minority of pupils display anti-social attitudes, but they are given good support, often by non-teaching assistants who have received training in counselling skills. The school has, however, recognised the need to provide further training in dealing with very emotional disturbed pupils. Pupils who enter school with a restricted knowledge of English, are given a 'friend' who has the responsibility of seeing to their welfare, for example in ensuring that they join in with playground games. Pupils support a local charity, raising money through the privilege of attending school for one day without wearing school uniform. The school provides a room for parents and hosts community training courses. This enables the pupils to see that education can be a life-time pursuit.
53. There is also good provision for pupils' cultural development. There is a wide programme of sporting activities. There are musical opportunities for pupils to learn to play guitar, keyboards and the recorder. Visiting specialists support the end of summer term topic weeks, for instance by leading poetry and science workshops. Pupils visit the local museum and library, but the school does not take the opportunity of organising visits to the near-by places of worship. Each year, older pupils are offered the chance of going on a residential visit where they can engage in a variety of sporting and adventurous activities, such as archery and rock climbing. Many of the school's activities have a multicultural dimension. In mathematics, pupils study the symmetrical patterns in Islamic designs. They study Hindu festivals in work on India. Many of the attractive displays around the school have a multi-ethnic theme, for instance African models and games. Pupils learn Irish folk dances. Many of the staff in school serve as role models for the pupils, as successful, educated people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. In music, visiting specialists have demonstrated and taught pupils to play instruments from different cultures, for example African drums, and resources have been deliberately chosen to represent a wide variety of cultures. However, the work of famous artists and musicians does not enjoy a high profile in the school generally.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. Care of pupils is a priority of the school and staff are understanding and supportive, but their efforts are undermined by five aspects of care that are unsatisfactory. These are: assessment and its use, training for child protection; the recording of pupils' personal development; the support for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language.
55. The school is a happy place. Parents say that children are encouraged to mature and work hard and no parent considers their child to be unhappy.

56. The school is a safe environment with all the expected safety measures in place. Safety inspections are undertaken regularly and defects remedied quickly. Internet safety procedures are very good. Equipment is checked regularly. Child protection procedures are in place. The nominated person, the special educational needs co-ordinator, is experienced in this field, but she is the only teacher in the school to have been trained. This is unsatisfactory. In her absence there is no trained teacher available to take her place. Other teachers have not yet been trained in recognising signs of abuse (though training has now been arranged for all staff). The nominated person has good contacts and knows the local procedures well. The children of families on the 'at risk' register are carefully monitored as are those who are looked after other than at home. Some classroom assistants and midday supervisors have had training in child protection issues.
57. Welfare facilities are good and children with health problems are identified to those who need to know. There is a number of first-aiders and an appropriately-equipped medical room. Medicines are administered by the office staff. An after-school club is in operation.
58. The support for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Staff are very caring and promote the involvement of pupils with special educational needs in most aspects of school life. Class teachers use the general assessment procedures to identify pupils' learning needs. However, the information is not used effectively when writing individual education plans nor to support the planning of assignments to meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are supported well in class and make appropriate progress.
59. The school has information provided by the local education authority on the performance of ethnic minority groups and English as an additional language pupils. The system of record keeping on pupils who have English as an additional language is, however, unsatisfactory. The specialist teacher has put in a lot of effort in the few weeks she has been in the school and the system is improving, but the register was started only this term. The register contains inaccuracies, such as some English-only speaking pupils being given a language stage as if they were pupils with English as an additional language, while the Nursery and Reception classes have not yet been assessed. It is clear that children who are beginners in English have been appropriately targeted for the induction classes, but it is not apparent how support is targeted on other pupils.
60. The school has an informal system of admission and induction for mid-term English as an additional language pupils, which provides for a delayed admission to school to enable the class teacher to prepare. There is no formal written policy or process for this and interpreters are not consistently used. This may mean that important background information on children is missed. The school has a policy of not putting children who arrive mid-term and who speak little English on the special needs profile for one year. This policy means that if some English as an additional language pupils do have a special need, which is very likely, they are being denied appropriate support.
61. Procedures for the promotion of attendance are satisfactory. The school makes telephone calls to parents on the first day of their child's absence if no reason has been supplied. Letters are sent home requesting reasons for absence if none has been provided but this is not very effective as unauthorised attendance is high. Attendance is analysed by class but not by ethnicity. There is scope for further analysis. It would reveal whether letters in other languages are required. Rewards

are given for 95 per cent attendance and above, and treats are provided for full attendance. The effect of poor attendance on a pupil's education is stressed to parents in the prospectus and annual report. The education welfare officer handles the attendance performance of a few families; the school appreciates this support.

62. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are good. The headteacher takes a strong lead on this and it was her first priority on appointment. Her objectives are very clear rules uniformly applied, rewards on a liberal scale, staff modelling the behaviour expected of pupils, good training, especially for support staff who are also midday supervisors, and promoting concern for others' feelings. These objectives are largely met, although there are some inconsistencies in management techniques between classes and a need for further training in management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The latter is being arranged by the headteacher. There are good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, through assemblies, circle time and encouraging pupils to confide in adults if they have problems.
63. There are very few records of pupils' personal development and this is unsatisfactory, particularly in the light of the high proportion of temporarily appointed teaching staff. Teachers joining the school receive no information on pupils' personal capabilities or on the challenges, if any, that they provide. This has an effect on management of classes and on the initial support that is given to pupils. Otherwise teachers show interest in their pupils and want to see them succeed. Teachers talk sympathetically about their pupils, especially the ones causing them concern. Every term, the school notifies parents of the targets that have been set for their children.
64. Procedures for observing, measuring and recording what pupils know, understand and can do were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, and remain so at present. While some adequate systems are in place to assess mathematics and English, there is minimal tracking of achievement and progress in science. Apart from a satisfactory system used to assess ICT, and informal assessment of music by the visiting specialist, assessment of the foundation subjects is non-existent. The staff in the Foundation Stage have devised and implemented their own assessment system, linked to the six areas of learning and the early learning goals, and use it appropriately to guide future planning. There is evidence of assessment linked to government guidelines in English, mathematics and science in the infant department. Teachers assess progress informally during oral sessions, and the marking of work is of variable quality. In some cases it is informative and developmental, but literacy skills are not marked sufficiently in subjects other than English. Spelling and grammatical errors remain uncorrected and, therefore, pupils are not given sufficient information on how they might improve their work and learning. Systems that are in place are not used to inform future planning nor to differentiate work adequately for pupils who need specific support, such as those with special educational needs or English as an additional language.
65. The school has recently introduced a computerised assessment programme, which enables individual and group progress to be measured and recorded. It also enables the setting of individual and group targets. It is planned that pupils' results in national tests will be analysed and the results used to identify specific needs and where particular support is needed. Effective use of the procedure would ensure that the needs of individual pupils are being met. Early analysis of data has led to some identification of the need to further challenge pupils at the top of the ability range, but planned targeting of higher attaining pupils is not in place and therefore does not have any positive effect on their attainment and progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66. While the school makes good efforts to involve parents, the results are limited because little effort is made to use the languages with which they are most familiar in written communications. For example, although the inspection questionnaire is available in many languages, the school only sent out the English version. This was not an issue that was reported at the last inspection.
67. Parents have very positive opinions of the school. They appreciate the teaching, feel that the school is approachable and that their children are expected to work hard and thus make good progress. They consider behaviour to be good. The inspection team agrees that there is some good teaching, but overall teaching is satisfactory. The team agrees that the school is approachable, that children are expected to work hard and that behaviour is good. The team judges that progress is satisfactory for the youngest children, but unsatisfactory for the rest. This is due to a lack of teacher expectation and staffing instability. Parents have few adverse criticisms of the school, although some were critical of the provision for special educational needs and a small number felt the level of homework was not what they expected.
68. The quality of information provided for parents has weaknesses in that it is limited to one language. There are regular and informative newsletters. The prospectus is well presented and contains useful information. The annual report by the governors is full of information, although the language could be more parent friendly. However, although every subject is reviewed in both publications, there is no mention of the provision for pupils whose first language is not English, and there are no offers of translation or interpretation in either publication. School reports have good analyses of achievements in English, mathematics and science and good descriptions of work done in other subjects. There are, however, no levels of attainment reported, except for Years 2 and 6, and very few targets for improvement. Reports do not advise parents on how they can help their children, although this occurs during the parents' evening. Only a few reports make space for English as an additional language and there are no offers of help with translating or interpreting in any of the reports seen. These are all examples of satisfactory procedures for keeping English-speaking parents informed. Neither the contents pages of the prospectus or the annual report, nor principal items in those reports, are provided in languages other than English.
69. Progress meetings, at which parents can discuss how their children are getting on, take place every term. Information has been supplied on the school's support for the development of numeracy and literacy skills, and family literacy sessions are available. One session on English as a foreign language was held last year and an information and communication technology course will be run in the summer term.
70. The involvement of parents in the provision for special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Individual education plans are shared with those parents who attend parents' evenings and meetings with the special education needs co-ordinator. However, parents are not invited to contribute to the reviewing of targets or the setting of new ones. At times, targets are not expressed in language that is easy for parents to understand and insufficient efforts are made to help parents who do not easily read English to support their children.
71. The school is very approachable, parents being made to feel welcome when they come into school. For instance one mother, who was worried that her son was not eating a good dinner, was invited to sit with him during the lunch hour.

72. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. There are some good aspects, but these are offset by some parents' failure to maintain good attendance or to supply reasons for absence. A few parents help in class, particularly with the younger children. They help with swimming and trips and support awards assemblies and concerts. Parents are invited in to help tackle behaviour and attendance problems. Parents help with reading at home and with homework, where they can.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. When the school was last inspected, a number of areas for improvement were identified in a broadly positive report. However, the progress made on these issues has been patchy. The curriculum still lacks breadth and balance and is currently unsatisfactory. Some subjects have a very low profile. Assessment is still a weakness; work is ill-matched to the particular needs of pupils. The school has addressed the detail of the issue relating to special educational needs. Nonetheless, provision remains unsatisfactory and pupils make insufficient progress. Standards are no longer as high as reported at the last inspection. In spite of the relative strength of the teaching observed, the positive climate for learning and the progress made in areas such as ICT, physical education and music, the level of improvement has been unsatisfactory.
74. The school has suffered a period of instability since the last inspection. Leadership has been a significant issue, with several headteachers in post for short periods and internal difficulties in relation to the membership and effectiveness of the senior management team. It has become increasingly difficult to make permanent appointments to the staff; up to half the teaching staff at present are overseas-trained or agency teachers on temporary contracts.
75. The headteacher has been in the school for three years and in post as head for just under two years. She inherited a school with growing problems. The quality of the learning environment was poor. Standards and morale were seen to be in decline. Shortly after taking up her post, other issues prompted the majority of the governors to resign. At that point, the local education authority withdrew the delegated powers of the governing body; that remains the position at present.
76. There are shortcomings in the leadership and management of the school at present and the school is receiving intensive support from its local authority. While the headteacher has a clear view of where the weaknesses are, progress has been slow. The school's needs are not appropriately prioritised and there has been reluctance to take the action necessary to move the school forward. Key areas where weaknesses exist, and which directly affect standards, have not been resolutely tackled, for example the weaknesses in planning that significantly constrain standards in mathematics, the unsatisfactory practice in relation to English as an additional language and the management of special educational needs, a key post in this school. Some decisions by the headteacher, such as the establishment of the mixed-year classes (against advice), have been misguided, have served to exacerbate, rather than resolve, problems, and have directly and adversely affected pupils' learning. There are still too few formal structures in place to enable the school to manage transient staff effectively. The headteacher has not established an effective senior management team. Relationships within the senior management team have not facilitated a cohesive approach to the issues that face the school.

There is a divergence of perspective between the headteacher and some members of the senior management team. Delegation is a weakness at present and responsibilities are not sufficiently shared. Senior staff are not able, or willing, to provide the level of support necessary, so that major responsibilities fall on a very small number of people. The permanent staff do not work consistently as a team. Some subjects lack co-ordinators and this affects progress within those areas. The advice provided by the local authority advisors is not always acted upon promptly and this slows progress further. The school, though belatedly, has begun to tackle some of the staffing issues that exist.

77. The headteacher has been successful in creating a positive ethos in the school. Attitudes and behaviour are now good and the school is calm and purposeful. However, although there is a shared commitment to taking the school forward, the management lacks the capacity to do so at present.
78. There is an urgent need now for a clearer view of how standards are to be raised, greater pace and expectation in the implementation of effective strategies and rigorous monitoring to ensure that these are successful. Teachers work together well and show commitment to the school. Some co-ordinators have limited experience. While some monitor planning and support colleagues satisfactorily, most, other than those for English and mathematics (where monitoring has been fairly intensive), have few opportunities for direct monitoring of teaching and learning or to have a positive effect on standards. Co-ordinators are not sufficiently aware of how well pupils are progressing or of the standards they are attaining. It is important that co-ordinators are enabled to be effective, and to use their expertise to tackle areas of weakness that have been identified, so that greater progress is made across the curriculum.
79. The school's aims are satisfactorily reflected in its daily work. The good relationships and good behaviour of most pupils, their concentration, motivation and care for one another are significant strengths.
80. The governing body is being re-established at present. Only the chair and vice-chair are not directly connected with the school, either through employment or as parents. It is intended to draw in other governors to ensure that the governing body is broadly based and representative of its community. Governors visit the school regularly and have a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. They are committed to doing what is necessary to make the school better. They look at performance data and are aware that there is a need for further improvement. They now need to monitor more closely the effectiveness of the senior managers and the level and pace of improvement that is being achieved. They are not yet sufficiently involved in development planning. It is not possible to make a judgement on the extent to which the governing body fulfils its statutory requirements.
81. Although there is a commitment to the inclusion of each pupil in the life of the school, the management decision to place the majority of pupils with special educational needs, challenging behaviour and those for whom English is an additional language within the mixed-year classes was ill-founded. As a result, the learning needs of most of the pupils in these classes are not met.
82. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator maintains all the necessary paperwork and gives helpful support to class teachers in writing individual education plans and the

technical requirements of the Code of Practice² are met. She is knowledgeable and has worked well with staff to review the progress made by individual pupils and to draw up manageable development plans for the special needs provision in each class. However, the non-contact time she has from her class responsibility is insufficient for her to oversee the provision effectively, particularly in view of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. As a result, she is unable to monitor the implementation of individual education plans through observing or working directly with pupils. In consequence, pupils' needs are not dealt with adequately and they do not make satisfactory progress.

83. The management of English as an additional language provision is unsatisfactory. There is no school policy or action plan for provision. Within the school improvement plan, targets are more than a year out of date and there is little mention of English as an additional language provision in school documentation. The headteacher's annual report to governors did not mention English as an additional language provision despite the high proportion of pupils in the school requiring such support.
84. A newly appointed agency teacher has been given responsibility for English as an additional language. When she came into the school she found little in the way of pupil records or monitoring. Since then, she has worked hard to build up this information. At the time of the inspection, her timetable was not clear although induction classes had been set up. Value for money is not being given when support is provided in classes, because there is no joint planning. This means that the effectiveness of in-class support is limited. The school has not provided any recent staff training on strategies for working with pupils who have English as an additional language. This lack of training has had a significant effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
85. Educational priorities are well supported by the school's financial planning. Atkins Educational Services, on behalf of the local education authority, manages the school's budget effectively. Income is well matched to expenditure, although several planned building improvements have been brought forward to improve the learning environment. Specific grants are well used for their specified purposes. A recent audit resulted in only minor financial issues for attention. Day-to-day financial control and administration are efficient and the office is a welcoming point of contact for visitors. There is satisfactory use of new technology, with most potential uses being explored or employed.
86. The principles of best value are well applied. Options for expenditure are challenged and evaluated, particularly in the budgetary process and in drawing up the development plan, in which co-ordinators have an opportunity to put their views. An example of challenging the present practice is the decision taken to reorganise the arrangements for looking after the school premises. Comparisons are not only of a statistical nature, but include visits to other establishments to see and discuss their arrangements, a recent example being a series of visits to compare the modernisation of toilet facilities in other schools. Competitive quotations are sought routinely.
87. At present, the school has a satisfactory number of teaching assistants and suitably qualified teachers. However, the situation is precarious because the school has serious difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers, and almost half of its present

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001.

teachers are temporary. The senior management team is incomplete and there are no co-ordinators for some subjects. This is affecting standards. It is a tribute to their energy and commitment that some permanent teachers have taken on wide ranging responsibilities to help the school in its continuing difficulties.

88. The temporary teachers bring a wealth of talent and experience to the school and make a valuable contribution to its work, but procedures for guiding them are unsatisfactory. The staff handbook is much too limited in scope and detail. There is too little recorded information on the personal needs of pupils in their class for new teachers to respond appropriately when difficulties arise. Subject plans are not filed systematically enough in each class to give ready access to past and future coverage. Class records do not give enough detail on pupils' academic needs to guide new teachers in planning appropriate teaching methods and tasks. As a result, the school does not make best use of the contributions of new staff and the lack of clear guidance increases stress on themselves and their colleagues. Parents have expressed concern at the level of disruption to their children's learning caused by frequent staff changes. This concern is justified, in spite of the sound teaching seen across the school during the inspection.
89. The required procedures for performance management are in place and targets have been set for the permanent teachers. Teachers have satisfactory opportunities for professional development linked to their needs and those of the school. However, it is a significant weakness that they have not been given recent training in the key areas of child protection and inclusion for pupils with English as an additional language. It is a good feature that teaching assistants are also offered annual reviews and training opportunities. The training of general assistants is complete and that for assistants who support pupils with special educational needs has begun recently.
90. The quality of the accommodation has improved since the last inspection. All areas are now attractively decorated and staff have worked hard to make classrooms and open areas interesting with displays of pupils' best work. A computer suite has been developed and is helping to raise standards in information and communication technology. However, there is no school library. As a result, pupils do not develop the library skills expected for their age or confidence in independent study. Children in the Reception classes do not have access to the outdoor play area.
91. Resources for teaching the National Curriculum are satisfactory overall, with a strength in the range of musical instruments available. Storage rooms are not used well. They are cluttered and resources are not properly shelved to allow easy access or auditing for quality and usefulness.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

92. Although there is a positive climate for learning in the school and some progress has been made, the pace of change is slow. A number of significant weaknesses have yet to be tackled. Most of these have already been identified by the school and the local education authority. In order to move the school forward, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

1) Raise standards and improve the progress made by pupils in subjects across the curriculum, but particularly in English, mathematics and science, by:

(a) in English:

- ensuring that lessons build progressively upon pupils' previous learning;
- ensuring that teachers have a clear understanding of national expectations for all aspects of English;
- providing pupils with regular practice of extended and independent writing, underpinned by marking that provides pupils with enough advice to help them to improve;
- planning assignments that better meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those for whom English is an additional language;
- developing pupils' speaking skills to include a focus on the use of Standard English to better inform writing accuracy;
- creating more opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing assignments in subjects across the curriculum;

(b) in mathematics:

- making more effective use of assessment information in the planning of future work;
- ensuring that planning reflects the needs of pupils, so that higher-attaining pupils in particular are able to make better progress;
- ensuring that the learning needs of pupils in mixed-year classes are met more fully;
- identifying more opportunities for the use of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum;

(c) in science:

- making more effective use of assessment information to provide more challenging work for the higher-attaining pupils.

(paragraphs: 1-18; 104-121; 122-140; 131 - 137)

2) Provide equality of access to the full breadth of the curriculum for all pupils by:

- reviewing the structure of the mixed-age classes to ensure consistently good standards of behaviour across the school;
- ensuring that the learning needs of the older pupils within those classes are fully met;
- ensuring that all subjects are taught to the expected standard for an appropriate amount of time;
- significantly improving provision for pupils with English as an additional language and ensuring that all staff have a better understanding of the learning needs of early language learners;
- ensuring that staff are confident in their use of assessment strategies, so that lesson planning reflects more consistently the diverse needs of pupils in each class.

(paragraphs: 5-6; 16-17; 28; 31; 35-36; 40-41; 64-65; 83-84)

3) Ensure, as a matter of urgency, that the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are improved and that the many weaknesses identified are tackled without delay. Action should include:

- securing, without delay, a more effective, cohesive senior management team, with clear roles, responsibilities and priorities, a coherent, shared vision for the future and the capability of implementing change within agreed timescales;
- ensuring that the co-ordinator of special educational needs has sufficient time and opportunity to fulfil her role;
- enabling subject co-ordinators to have a greater impact on their area of responsibility;
- implementing clear structures to facilitate the induction of staff new to the school.

(paragraphs: 73-84)

In addition to the main issues identified, a number of other weaknesses exist, which governors should include in the action plan:

- Reception pupils do not have access to the full physical development curriculum and this is a weakness in provision.
- The school does not maintain records of pupils' personal development. This is a particular disadvantage when temporary staff join the school.
- The school does not have a library.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory; this affects their learning.

(paragraphs: 26; 63; 90; 102)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	16	28	4	1	0
Percentage	0	13	29	50	7	2	0

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

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)	25	290
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	157

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	122

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	158

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	51

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	20	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	13	17
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	30	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (70)	64 (48)	77 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	11	11	16
	Total	27	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (70)	69 (73)	85 (64)
	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	19	22	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	14
	Girls	10	10	14
	Total	20	20	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (60)	49 (37)	68 (77)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	15
	Girls	9	8	12
	Total	18	18	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (51)	47 (49)	66 (77)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	40	1	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	19	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	35	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	28	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	28	0	0
Black or Black British – African	23	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	30	0	0
Chinese	11	0	0
Any other ethnic group	47	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	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)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	334

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,137,168
Total expenditure	1,149,785
Expenditure per pupil	3,483
Balance brought forward from previous year	(1,492)
Balance carried forward to next year	(14,109)

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	7
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	7
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	315
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	16	0	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	26	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	61	28	7	3	1
The teaching is good.	71	26	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	26	7	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	35	0	1	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	21	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	56	35	4	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	59	29	1	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	31	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	27	5	1	17

Other issues raised by parents

Only a small number of comments were included with the questionnaires. Predominantly these were positive. However, a few parents expressed concerns about issues related to special educational needs.

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

93. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, which reflects the findings at the previous inspection. However, in the period following the last inspection, provision had declined significantly and there has recently been significant support and investment from the local education authority in an effort to raise standards. The input is beginning to have a beneficial effect on the Foundation Stage provision. At present, all the teaching staff in the early years department are agency staff in temporary employment. Teaching is generally satisfactory and, in the absence of initial structured guidance, staff have developed their own planning and assessment systems, which they use effectively. The development of a dedicated outdoor area has had a beneficial effect on provision in the Nursery, but it is not accessible to pupils in the Reception classes.
94. There is good liaison between the Nursery and the Reception classes and the majority of the children in the Nursery progress to the Reception class in the year in which they are five, with staggered entry in September and January. This ensures that most children are comfortable with their new surroundings and settle into school with a minimum of fuss. The teachers are developing purposeful links with parents and carers, many of whom give support to their children's learning at home. For example, they share books with them or support them in their early learning. Parents and carers are invited into classrooms at the start of the session, or day, and this gives them a good opportunity to share with the teachers and support assistants any concerns they may have. Although parents of children in the Nursery are provided with some information about the structure of the department, they do not receive written information about the Early Years curriculum or the Early Learning Goals, and this affects their ability to support their children fully. The information that is provided is in English, which does not reflect the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the children entering the school.
95. While the current classes have only a small number of pupils identified as having special educational needs, the overall attainment of the children on entry to the school is extremely low. Few enter the school confident in their use of language, and there is a significant number of children with English as a second language. Few have a good understanding of the world in which they live. They make broadly satisfactory progress in the Reception classes in most areas of their learning but, by the time they move into Year 1, their attainment is still very low and few are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Additional support to meet the needs of these early language learners is planned.
96. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The developing knowledge and experience of the teachers ensures that the planning of children's learning is matched to the guidance materials given to schools nationally. They have an appropriate understanding of the needs of young children and choose activities that will extend and challenge them. There is a good relationship and liaison between the teachers, and this extends to the support assistants who work alongside the children. This ensures that all the adults have an understanding of what the children are to learn, and there are effective strategies to achieve this. Resources are of good quality and

well organised and hold the children's interest well. The management of the children is good and adult relationships with the children are supportive, perceptive and purposeful. This ensures that they settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of the school and become aware of the expectations that adults have of them. These are appropriate both in terms of academic performance, and in how children are expected to treat one another.

97. Teachers, and other adults, make effective use of the regular assessments that are made of the children as they progress through their early years in school. The assessments are used to group pupils and to plan their learning. Day-to-day assessments are generally effective, and the information is evaluated carefully to gauge what skills the children have mastered and what modifications to teaching are necessary in order for them to master fully the skills being taught.

Personal, social and emotional development

98. By the time children transfer to Year 1, many are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is effective in ensuring that children make progress in this aspect of their learning. Children are confident in their approach to their work and are beginning to establish effective relationships with one another, the class teachers and the learning support assistants. They generally behave well and are learning to be considerate of others when moving around the classroom, or playing with resources and equipment. Children work well together when part of a group and some can concentrate effectively when they are asked to work independently. Children are polite and are learning that they need to wait patiently if the teacher is working with other children. All adults give due praise and encouragement when they notice children who have done something kind for one of their classmates. This is effective in building up the children's esteem and personal confidence in their approach to each other and in their work.

Communication, language and literacy

99. By the time they transfer to Year 1, a few children are likely to achieve standards in line with the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children make satisfactory progress in their understanding and use of literacy during their first year at school. Teaching is satisfactory and varied opportunities are provided for the children to develop their skills. Suitable opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through other areas of learning. They enjoy listening to stories and nursery rhymes that are read to them. In discussions about books, some are able to express their ideas about what they have heard and to express their views. However, many children's speaking and listening skills are underdeveloped. Teachers and learning support assistants are sensitive to those who need a little more time to think about what they want to say, and this helps to boost the children's confidence in knowing that their ideas are appreciated and valued. Many of the children have an understanding of the conventions of books and can explain what an author is, and the purpose of an illustrator. A few are beginning to read simple words and talk about the main characters and events in the stories that they read. Classrooms have a good range of books, which are accessible to the children, and they have opportunities to look at, and share, books. They are able to listen to story tapes to enhance their enjoyment of stories, and some have the confidence to use the equipment without adult help. Those who have been in Reception for more than a term are beginning to write their names unaided. Letter formation is usually

correct. Use is made of the classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills, such as in the recognition of letters and their corresponding sounds.

Mathematical development

100. By the time they complete their year in Reception, some children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. They make satisfactory progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Some are beginning to handle simple calculations with numbers to five, and some to 10. Some can count on and back within 10, and occasionally 20, and are able to write numbers in the correct order. Children talk about various simple mathematical shapes, and about the number of sides and corners, as well as name them. Teaching provides children with a range of opportunities to develop their understanding of terms such as 'full' or 'empty'. Teachers devise interesting activities that successfully develop the children's understanding of shape, such as creating shape pictures. For children who are less confident with number, teaching is effectively organised by providing them with a wide variety of games and puzzles specifically designed to support their early understanding of number. They enjoy using these and staff are careful to demonstrate the correct use of mathematical vocabulary. As a result, children make suitable gains in their understanding of mathematical language such as 'add' or 'take away'. In one class children were observed sorting and identifying coins, and the more able were selecting the coins to match different values.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

101. Children make good progress in this area of learning because they have good opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. Children enter school with a very varied range of knowledge, but show a curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. They learn early on to use computers and show good control of the mouse. They click, drag and drop icons with increasing precision, for example to dress a bear in winter clothes. They have opportunities to use the computers in the classroom, as well as in the dedicated ICT suite, where they enjoy sustained access to computers and have time to improve their skills. Teachers and learning assistants give children appropriate support, emphasise correct technical language, and give good opportunities for children to learn through practical experience. Children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of artefacts. For example, during the inspection they were learning about the Chinese New Year and examined artefacts, sampled Chinese food (prepared by a pupil's grandmother) and smelt incense sticks. These activities were used well to extend the children's vocabulary as they described what they saw and experienced. They recognise changes that happen as they grow older, and learn about different countries of the world. Teachers ensure that the children learn through actual observation, and value all their suggestions. Adults use questioning well to develop the children's vocabulary and use of language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and encourage children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it. In this way they ensure that children are involved, interested and continuously learning.

Physical development

102. Some children will attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year but provision in this area of the curriculum is generally unsatisfactory. Children in the Nursery have direct, and almost continuous, access to the new dedicated outdoor

area adjacent to their classroom. However, children in the Reception classes have no access to the outdoor area and have only one planned physical activity session in the school hall each week. Although there is outdoor play twice a day, it is purely recreational and physical development is not guided. However, children are given good opportunities to manipulate a range of small equipment with dexterity. Fine motor movements are developed through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus. For example, children were observed using scissors to make Chinese lanterns, although the health and safety aspects of handling scissors were insufficiently emphasised. Given the restrictions of access, this area of learning is planned as well as it can be to develop children's physical skills.

Creative development

103. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creativity, and it is likely that many could attain the required standard by the end of the Reception year. Planning of this area is appropriate, giving children a range of artistic experiences. They use a variety of pencils, paints and collage to create images. They use paint and collage effectively to make representations of themselves. They handle playdough and use their imaginations to mould objects. During music lessons, children learn to use a variety of percussion instruments to create music using loud and quiet sounds. They learn to sing a number of rhymes, and are given opportunities to listen to music. Children are encouraged to use their imagination during role-play sessions, when they use the toyshop and make links with mathematics by using money to buy items.

ENGLISH

104. Standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in 2002. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in both reading and writing was close to the average for schools in similar circumstances. By the end of Year 6, standards in English were very low. Standards were also very low when pupils' prior attainment was taken into consideration. The progress made by this group of pupils since they entered the school was unsatisfactory. The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5, while below average in relation to schools nationally, was well above those of schools in similar circumstances.
105. Standards in English attained by pupils aged seven and 11 have fallen since the school was last inspected. This is because staffing difficulties and a lack of rigour in the teaching have prevented pupils from building consistently upon their knowledge and skills in English. In addition, the expectations of some teachers of what pupils could achieve has been too low.
106. In the last two years there have been significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls at the age of seven, with girls performing significantly worse than boys. At age 11, such differences have been less evident, with both groups performing below the level of boys and girls nationally and to a similar extent. During the inspection no evidence was found of significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or in the work of pupils from different cultural backgrounds.
107. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in Year 2 currently attain at well below the expected level nationally in writing and in reading. No children were achieving at the higher Level 3. However, pupils in Year 2 have made satisfactory progress against their low attainment on entry to the school. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining well below the expected level nationally and have made unsatisfactory progress since the end of

Year 2. Fewer pupils than expected nationally are attaining at the higher Level 5. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make even less progress than their classmates. Pupils for whom English is an additional language do not make satisfactory progress in acquiring literacy skills, while higher attaining pupils also do not make the expected levels of progress. This is because work in lessons is not sufficiently tailored to meet their specific needs.

108. Standards throughout the school in speaking and listening are below those expected. Pupils listen to teachers in order to find out what they need to learn. However, they do not pay close attention to the ideas of their classmates and, as a result, find it difficult to reflect on the opinions and viewpoints of others. Standards of speaking in most year groups are below those expected. Although pupils answer simple questions accurately, they are reluctant in many classes to offer contributions in open discussions. Many pupils do not speak clearly or correctly in standard English. In some lessons, teachers do correct errors in pupils' speaking in a supportive and sensitive manner, but often errors are not corrected. Some teachers tend to reflect back what they think pupils are attempting to say. They do not provide enough guidance or time for pupils to develop their ideas or to put their thoughts into words. Because many pupils tend to write in the way they speak this also constrains the quality of their writing.
109. Standards in reading are below those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 have made satisfactory progress against their attainment on entry to the school. They read familiar books accurately and confidently, but are less sure when approaching unfamiliar vocabulary. Many are tentative when sounding out unknown words. Their ability to interpret stories or factual accounts is not developed sufficiently, particularly for higher attaining pupils. For example, they can describe what is happening within a story but struggle to infer from the text such aspects as what a character might be feeling in a given situation.
110. By the end of Year 6 pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in developing higher-order reading skills. Many pupils read accurately and have secure skills in de-coding text. However, they do not talk confidently about their books and struggle to identify significant elements of a plot, interpret a storyline or make judgements about characters. This is because their understanding of vocabulary lags behind their ability to read words accurately. They rarely stop to work out the meaning of individual words because they have few opportunities to discuss their books in detail. Pupils lack confidence when reflecting on their personal choices, and struggle to give reasons for choosing particular books or to explain what they like about stories by authors they have enjoyed.
111. Opportunities for independent research are unsatisfactory. Pupils have some opportunities to use books and the Internet to find out information. Younger pupils know how to use the contents and index of an information book but older pupils do not know how to use non-fiction classification codes in a library to find books about specific subjects. This is largely because the school does not have its own library and older pupils do not have opportunities to visit the nearby public library regularly. The lack of a school library is seriously compromising pupils' opportunities to acquire secure research skills.
112. Standards in writing are well below average by the end of Year 2 but pupils have made satisfactory progress from a low starting point when they entered Year 1. Many pupils write legibly in sentences and learn to use simple punctuation.

However, they often write sentences that are not grammatically correct. This is because teachers do not regularly correct pupils' spoken language to model the use of Standard English in class discussions. Pupils use a balance of accurate and phonetically plausible spelling and much of their work can be interpreted at that level.

113. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have made unsatisfactory progress in extending their writing skills. They experience a range of styles and forms of writing as they progress through the school. They write stories, letters, character analyses and poems and alter their style to suit the form. For instance, when writing instructions (such as 'How to make a pot of tea') they give thought to the characteristics of instructional writing and the need for clarity and sequencing. Younger pupils consider the features of factual writing and show awareness of the differences between opinion and report. However, extended writing tasks are not set often enough throughout the school for pupils to develop confidence in applying the writing structures and techniques they have been taught.
114. Handwriting is practised regularly in all classes and joined handwriting is developed consistently throughout the school. However, because pupils do not often write at length, they do not develop a confident personal style and their use of ink is inconsistent.
115. Standards of spelling are below those expected and this is reflected in frequent misspellings in pupils' everyday work. Nearly all spell monosyllabic words accurately and they make good use of their knowledge of common spelling patterns to help them spell new words. As they move through the school more complex patterns are covered. Although many of the oldest pupils in the school apply spelling rules accurately and have satisfactory knowledge of irregular spellings, others remain insecure in applying these rules in their extended writing. The spelling of important vocabulary for other subjects is unsatisfactory and staff rarely correct inaccurate spelling in other books.
116. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory overall with some good lessons and a small number of unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers make appropriate use of the national literacy strategy to extend and develop pupils' English skills. They share the learning objectives for the lesson with pupils to make sure they know what they need to learn. They use a variety of teaching methods to interest and inspire pupils and to extend their understanding of the characteristics of different forms of writing. However, the work scrutiny suggests that teachers do not plan work that builds consistently upon pupils' previous learning. Often all pupils are given the same tasks to do, regardless of their ability. This is a significant weakness that leads to the under-achievement noted above. Too often, potential higher attaining pupils are not extended and some of the lower attaining pupils need adult support to complete the work successfully. Insufficient opportunities are planned for lower attaining pupils to find out what they can achieve on their own. Similarly, for higher attaining pupils, assignments in lessons are not planned regularly to challenge and extend their skills sufficiently. Nonetheless, for higher attaining pupils in Year 6 the after-school 'booster' club is now giving them an opportunity to extend their skills and those involved are making good progress.
117. Teachers use the end of the literacy sessions well to encourage pupils and to share examples of their work. However, it is less common for pupils to be asked to reflect upon their individual success towards a lesson's target, or for teachers to use the time to make informal evaluations of pupils' achievements in lessons. The quality of

marking is variable. All teachers give praise and encouragement generously, but only a few make extensive suggestions about how pupils can improve future assignments. All pupils have personal literacy targets and some teachers regularly evaluate pupils' progress against these targets. This has been helpful to those pupils involved but, because all teachers do not carry this out, its value in raising standards across the school is limited.

118. There is not enough use of literacy to support work in other subjects. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise extended writing skills in a range of subjects on a regular basis. Pupils do not use information and communication technology often enough to draft and edit their writing. Examples of word-processed assignments are not common at present and this element of the English curriculum requires attention.
119. There are sound procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment annually. The school has begun to track systematically pupils' progress in English, in order to highlight where pupils are not making sufficient progress. However, assessment findings are not used effectively to aid the planning of work for pupils of differing levels of attainment. The school does not yet evaluate pupils' extended writing closely and accurately on a regular basis and many teachers do not have a secure understanding of national criteria for writing. As a result, pupils do not receive sufficient individual feedback to help them improve.
120. Management of English is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new but has received good support from the previous co-ordinator as she has taken over the role. She has begun to monitor teachers' planning but does not have the opportunity to observe colleagues' teaching. Nor has she yet had time to look at a sample of pupils' books across the school. As a result, she does not have sufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision to enforce a rigorous approach to raising standards across the school. However, she has a strong commitment to raising standards and her own classroom practice gives a good lead to colleagues.
121. Resources for the learning of English are satisfactory, with a broad range of reading resources available both for individual and small group work. Class libraries contain a range of books of a quality and condition that encourages pupils to try new texts. There is a good selection of big books for use with whole classes to develop reading skills, to illustrate different forms of writing and to demonstrate grammatical and language elements of their lessons. However, the lack of a school library is a significant impediment to raising standards of literacy across the school.

MATHEMATICS

122. Standards in mathematics are well below average in Years 2 and 6. This is a similar picture to that indicated in the 2002 tests, but a decline from the broadly average standards described in the previous inspection report.
123. The progress pupils make in mathematics across the school is variable. Not all pupils learn as well as they should. Children enter the Nursery with poor mathematical skills. Many have limited understanding of English. Some spend only a short time in the school before they move elsewhere. At present, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making steady progress overall in mathematics. In these classes, staffing is stable and teaching is particularly effective in Year 2. In the mixed Year 1/Year 2 class, however, progress is less good. As in the other mixed-year classes, planning primarily targets the learning needs of the younger pupils. This means that the older

pupils are not given work appropriate to their age and ability; this significantly affects both their performance in the end of key stage tests and their overall progress. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is also compromised by planning issues, which particularly affect progress in the single-year classes. Although the planning seen during the inspection suggested that work is planned to meet the differing needs of pupils within each class, the work scrutiny indicated that this has not been common practice even in the current term. All pupils are given the same work. This is the fundamental reason why, in spite of sound teaching overall, attainment remains too low and the pace of progress is slow. At present, while progress in individual lessons is broadly satisfactory, tracking data indicates that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have been making insufficient progress. Too few pupils attain the higher levels in the national tests in either age group. Planning is insufficiently sharply focused on individual needs.

124. By the end of Year 2, the most able pupils are confident in counting in twos, fives and tens to 100. They have a growing knowledge of place value up to 100, with a few competent in three-digit numbers. They recognise odd and even numbers accurately. They confidently add on, totalling and subtracting numbers within 20. There is an appropriate focus on basic number skills of addition and subtraction. The most able, who are working at an average level overall, have an understanding of multiplication and basic division. Basic concepts are reinforced well. Pupils have an appropriately wide range of experience that is supported effectively through a comprehensive homework programme. The teacher plans work to meet individual needs and this is evident in pupils' recorded work. The weaknesses in Year 2 lie in the small number of pupils, particularly in the mixed-year class, who are working at higher levels. The pace of learning has been relatively slow, although progress has been satisfactory overall, given the very low starting point of the majority of pupils. Pupils with identified special educational needs receive targeted support and make some progress. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is less evident and they do not always seem to be fully engaged in lessons. Staff do not have a sufficiently clear appreciation of their level of understanding or language needs.
125. Standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 remain well below average. However, recent input to consolidate the numeracy initiative has had a positive effect and the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils have had varied prior experiences of mathematics. Some have entered the school relatively recently. By Year 6, around half the pupils are working at the expected level, while others (including the bulk of those in the mixed-year class) are working at a lower level. Progress remains unsatisfactory for the older pupils in the school. Although the climate for learning is good in the single year classes, it is much less good in the mixed-year classes. However, where teachers' management skills are secure and learning support staff effective then there is potential for raising the level of pupils' performance. The key residual weakness lies in the planning, which does not effectively differentiate between the needs of higher, average and lower-attaining pupils.
126. In Year 3, the higher attaining pupils count accurately in twos and fives, calculate doubles of given numbers and are beginning to cope successfully with number tasks that are embedded in word 'problems'. They recognise simple fractions, understand symmetry and recognise key features of simple shapes. They undertake some systematic recording of mathematical procedures independently. In Year 4, the most able pupils have satisfactory recall of a range of number bonds. A few are confident in partitioning and adding three-digit numbers in linear format. They know basic multiplication and division procedures, identify fractions of a shape and can calculate

equivalent fractions accurately. They recognise simple number sequences. The work sample from the Year 4 class is very thorough and carefully presented, indicating high expectations. Again, however, the attainment of the higher attainers is constrained because of weaknesses in the planning. As a result, the pace of learning remains relatively slow.

127. Pupils in Year 5 record their work thoroughly. They cover fractions, decimal place value, probability, and aspects of shape, space and measure. In a lesson observed in Year 5, pupils were calculating simple fractions, with the higher-attainers working out the factors of 60. It was evident that the majority of pupils still have restricted competence in simple multiplication and division. Higher attaining pupils are working at an appropriate, but average, level. However, they are few in number. The work sample of the Year 6 pupils is less thorough than that in Year 5 and it is not evident that the pace or rigour of learning is sufficient to enable standards to be pushed forward. In any case, Year 6 pupils in the mixed-age class are effectively excluded from appropriate learning opportunities because the planning focuses on the needs of younger pupils. That said, many pupils have significant gaps in their previous experience of mathematics, and this hinders their progress. The quality of presentation varies to some extent between classes, but is satisfactory overall.
128. There are occasional opportunities across the school for pupils to apply their mathematical skills. These are confined mostly to science, as neither geography, history nor design and technology are sufficiently well-established in the curriculum to provide any worthwhile or consistent opportunities for pupils to make use of their mathematical skills. There are, in consequence, many missed opportunities. The school is working to support pupils in applying their skills when faced with number problems. However, many pupils have difficulty in dealing with mathematical problems in context because their understanding of English, their overall literacy skills and their ability to record work speedily are restricted.
129. The teaching of mathematics was satisfactory in the majority of lessons observed, with a number of good lessons. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. However, the effect of teaching on standards is no better than satisfactory. On the positive side, the majority of lessons have clear learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils and displayed on the board. Relationships are a significant strength in the single-year classes, but are often compromised by poor behaviour in the mixed-year classes. Teachers use the end-of-lesson feedback session well to check pupils' learning, though this is sometimes rather rushed. Most teachers use questions effectively to extend pupils' thinking, but they do not always challenge pupils to analyse their strategy and to explain this to the group. Good examples were seen in Year 3, where the teacher probed pupils' understanding of comparative weights, and in Year 2, where the teacher frequently asked pupils: 'How did you do that?'. However, this remains an area for further development, given the restricted speaking skills of many pupils. There is occasional use of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 1 made good use of a program to reinforce their understanding of two-dimensional shapes. A new school-wide reinforcement program, individually tailored to pupils' current understanding, is about to be introduced. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment in mathematics are satisfactory. A range of tests and assessments gives teachers a clear view of what pupils have achieved and still need to do. However, information is not used effectively to target work closely to pupils' needs, and this is a key weakness. The quality of marking is variable and too often there are few indications about how pupils can improve their performance.

130. While there is a shared commitment to raise standards, the capacity to improve remains weak. The co-ordinator was not in school during the inspection. However, she provides satisfactory leadership and has had opportunities to monitor teaching. There is an understanding of the standards being achieved in different areas of the school. However, the monitoring of planning and of pupils' work and close tracking to ensure that the necessary progress and pace of improvement are being achieved is not sufficiently effective. Resources are satisfactory in both range and quality. Learning support staff, while willing, are not always sufficiently trained to meet the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is inadequate.

SCIENCE

131. Pupils' performance in national tests and teacher assessments has been well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for several years. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, when they were average. The test results in 2002 showed that pupils in Year 6 had made unsatisfactory progress compared with their results in Year 2. Nevertheless, the standard reached by these pupils was average compared with similar schools, and they performed better in science than in English or mathematics.
132. Standards in the present Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average but they are higher than indicated in recent test results. This is mainly because planning through the school is now securely based on an officially recommended scheme of work that gives a clear structure to the teaching. There are also frequent opportunities for pupils to carry out practical investigations and they respond well to such work.
133. Pupils through the school make satisfactory progress overall. Assessment procedures give a broad picture of standards, but it is a weakness that all teachers do not use this information to plan explanations and tasks that match the needs and potential of pupils at different levels of attainment. However, routines for carrying out investigations and recording results are clear, simple and well established, helping pupils to achieve successfully. The approach is consistently followed and is particularly helpful to pupils with lower attainment and with English as an additional language, who also benefit from extra adult help in class work. However, pupils with the potential for higher attainment do not always make satisfactory progress because they usually do the same tasks as others. As a result, they are not consistently challenged through the school by more difficult work, such as planning and recording their own investigations or evaluating their findings in the light of further study using reference books and other sources.
134. Pupils in Year 2 know the different parts of the body and identify them by drawing accurately labelled diagrams. Through their study of healthy foods, they know which foods are important for the body. They understand that some changes can be reversed, such as water turning to ice, but other changes cannot. They are generally accurate in sorting materials according to their properties, for instance in identifying which are translucent, transparent or opaque. They understand why a model car travels at different speeds down a ramp according to the degree of slope and the kind of surface. Many have weak writing skills so their explanations are very brief but their notes and labelled diagrams are accurate. They show sound understanding in teacher-led discussions, though some need a lot of help to say what they mean. Throughout the school, more use could be made of the subject to develop pupils' speaking skills, for instance in explaining cause and effect.

135. By Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of how to carry out an investigation. They learn the correct use of instruments such as thermometers and force meters, and know that investigations must meet the conditions of a 'fair test' to produce reliable results. Recorded work is generally brief, reflecting the limited ability of most pupils to explain complex processes in writing. However, many with average and above attainment include a good amount of correct information in their labelled drawings and notes. There are good examples in the study of electrical circuits in Year 4 and of gases in Year 5. Pupils in Year 6 show sound understanding of how plants adapt to different soil conditions and climate, presenting their findings in the form of attractive collages.
136. Teaching is satisfactory. One good lesson was seen, and no lessons were unsatisfactory. It is a good feature that teachers explain the purpose of lessons at the start, so that pupils understand what is expected of them and have a clear sense of purpose. Teachers give clear explanations, using technical terms correctly and expecting pupils to do the same. Some teachers use the board well to note main ideas and guide pupils' later written work. In one lesson seen, teacher-led explanation and discussion went on for a long time at a simple level. This benefited lower attaining pupils but held back those with potentially higher attainment, who could have left the discussion to work on other tasks independently.
137. Activities are well organised and managed. Pupils enjoy the practical work, collaborate well with others and stay on task. In a good lesson in Year 2, the tasks were thoughtfully adjusted for pupils in different ability groups. Those with lower attainment were therefore able to work independently for much of the time, while pupils with higher attainment were set a more challenging task that stimulated their interest. The objective of recording findings in the form of block charts and graphs linked well to work in mathematics and meant that pupils with little English or weak writing skills were able to take a full part. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons, the pace of practical work is too slow and expectations for what pupils are to learn and produce by the end of the lesson are not demanding enough. It was a successful feature of some lessons that teachers stopped the activity in good time for a probing discussion of what had been learned. This gave a useful opportunity to correct misunderstandings and reinforce the targets of the lesson.
138. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to good effect to ensure that teachers understand and follow the scheme of work. She has produced a well-focused action plan to guide future development. Further monitoring is needed to ensure that: (1) teaching and tasks are matched to the range of pupils' needs and potential in each class; (2) teachers have appropriate expectations for the pace and quality of pupils' work; (3) pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are developed satisfactorily through science.

ART AND DESIGN

139. Very few lessons in art took place during the inspection because the subject is often taught in rotation with design and technology, or towards the end of the week. As a result, it is not possible to arrive at an overall judgement on the standards achieved or on the quality of teaching. Most of the completed art is not retained in pupils' folders, but is displayed on classroom and corridor walls. This work generally matches the standard expected for the ages of the pupils.

140. The displays of pupils' work are attractive and varied, and normally highlight the themes and techniques that are being explored. It is clear that pupils experience a wide variety of artistic styles and techniques. Year 1 and 2 pupils paint attractive self-portraits with smiling faces and clearly defined eyes, noses and ears, showing good brush control and use of colour. Older infants learn about the paintings of Mondrian, and make successful attempts at recreating his style for themselves. This, however, is a rare example of the work of famous painters being used as a stimulus for pupils' work.
141. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 experience a variety of painting and modelling opportunities. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they can recall, among others, fabric printing in connection with African styles, still life drawing, clay modelling, drawing hieroglyphics, mask making and posters for a book fair. Classroom displays of art are restricted, but work in the corridor showed older pupils successfully using pencil sketches to re-create the style of Picasso, although there was no explanation of this from which other pupils could learn. Pupils' knowledge of famous painters is limited; out of six Year 6 pupils one knew of a painting by Monet, and two others named Van Gogh and Leonardo Da Vinci. However, all the pupils showed by their eager response to questions that they value their work in art and enjoy taking part in lessons.
142. In a number of years, pupils have good opportunities of exploring art through using computer programs, for example by putting costumes on to a screen teddy bear, or using a spray paint function to create firework patterns. They create portraits of their classmates, showing hairstyles and eye types. Work in other subjects is well supported in art. For instance, pupils make bookmarks, they illustrate work stories and poems, and paint finished models in design and technology.
143. The school has developed a scheme for work in art in line with national guidelines. However, there is too little time allowed for this in long and medium term planning. As a result, pupils have too few opportunities to engage in extended projects or return to previous topics and techniques. Pupils do not have regular opportunities to maintain a sketchbook for practising and refining their skills.
144. There is currently no co-ordinator for art. Although resources are sufficient for the subject, there is no system in place for tracking pupils' individual progress from year to year or for developing a portfolio of completed work that can be used as exemplars of best practice. It is clear from displayed work, however, that most teachers are committed to providing good opportunities for pupils to explore art in a variety of forms. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language all have valued work displayed on the walls. This indicates that they make satisfactory progress. At the time of the last inspection, achievement in art was unsatisfactory. There are indications from the quality of the work on display, and from the implementation of curriculum guidelines, that there has been at least satisfactory improvement since that time.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

145. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below those expected. They have declined since the last inspection, when they were in line with those expected. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards by the end of Year 6. However, discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that very little time is given to the

subject in any year, but least of all in Years 3 to 6. There is evidence that pupils are taught elements of design, but their skills in making are particularly neglected. As a result, pupils do not receive their curriculum entitlement. This is unsatisfactory.

146. Pupils in Year 2 have worked in groups to produce well-finished models of houses from card and boxes, with detail such as doors, windows and chimneys made to scale. They make bookmarks from card, in the shape of a snake, and write simple instructions on how to do it. Work in food technology involves making a salad. This is recorded through observational drawing and notes on their sense impressions. They do not write evaluations of their products.
147. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. Of the two lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, one was satisfactory and the other good. The two teachers involved in a Year 6 lesson gave clear instructions but spent too much time in discussion, reducing time for practical work. Pupils showed interest in drawing and making a container out of card or plasticene, but their making skills are well below those expected for their age. As a result, they are not confident in handling scissors or modelling tools, know little of jointing techniques and work very slowly. One Year 6 girl claimed to have done the project before, first in Year 4 then again in Year 5. Pupils in Year 5 are making good progress in the design element of a project on musical instruments. The teacher has planned the topic very carefully, with a visit to study instruments in a local museum used well to stimulate detailed drawings and written plans. The good qualities of the lesson observed included clear guidance in techniques and high expectations for the pace and accuracy of pupils' work. Pupils were successfully encouraged to show independence in developing their ideas and one used a computer to find out necessary information.
148. There is no co-ordinator for the subject, and the lack of monitoring is evident in the inadequate provision through the school. Planning is based on official guidelines but these are not being followed in enough depth and detail. There is evidence of repetition and lack of challenge in the projects undertaken.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

149. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well below those expected in geography and history. They have fallen since the last inspection, when they met expectations by the end of Year 2 in both subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards were at the expected level in history but were higher in geography. The decline is because not enough time is given to either subject for their programmes of study to be covered in the expected detail. The residential visit in Year 6 is intended as a time of intense focus on geography, but the time gap between units of work is too great for pupils to develop secure skills in either history or geography.
150. There are successful features. By the end of Year 2, pupils know key facts about the life of famous people from different traditions, including Ghandi and Mary Seacole. They draw recognisable maps of their route to school, and list facilities in the surrounding area. A tally of ways in which classmates come to school is clearly recorded in graphs, making a good link with work in mathematics. Pupils' limited writing skills result in very brief factual accounts.

151. Early work on drawing maps is not developed through the school, though pupils learn how to interpret maps of different scales. Pupils in Year 4 correctly find routes and locations on street maps and identify countries of the British Isles. Pupils in Year 5 produce detailed surveys of how water is used. The teacher's high expectations lead to well-presented data and commentaries, with good use of graphs and tallies to record results. By Year 6, pupils draw sensible conclusions from evidence such as aerial photographs and objects from times past. However, they do not record enough of their learning in any medium to focus and develop their understanding to the expected depth and detail. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language progress at a similar unsatisfactory rate to the others.
152. No judgement can be made on the quality of history teaching in Years 1 and 2 or on geography in any year since no lessons were timetabled during the inspection. The quality of history teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, with one very good lesson seen. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 held the interest of pupils well by providing an interesting range of objects representing the culture and customs of ancient Egypt. Pupils co-operate well and handle the objects carefully. Teachers show sound subject knowledge and use discussion well to focus pupils on detail and encourage them to draw conclusions from the evidence they see. All are able to tackle drawing tasks, but the approach needs a framework to help pupils note their findings in a logical way, so they can write longer accounts later. The very good lesson in Year 6 was similarly successful because resources were used imaginatively to catch pupils' interest. The teacher's enthusiasm and very good questioning technique led pupils to probe in great detail the significance of what they could see in photographs. They concentrated hard and made very good progress in their understanding. However, they are not reading enough information books or writing enough factual accounts to reach the expected level in history or to improve their literacy skills.
153. Planning is based on official guidance but is not sufficiently monitored to reduce repetition and ensure full coverage. For instance, there is evidence of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 5 studying the surrounding area. There is increased detail in their findings, but the focus is essentially the same each year, namely surveying shops and local facilities. This significantly limits their range of experience. More could be done to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through history and geography. Nevertheless, elements of history and geography make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. A notable example is the wall display in the Year 3 and 4 class that sets photographs of pupils on a world map to show their family origin, so celebrating the school's cultural diversity.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

154. Standards in information and communication technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This reflects the standards found at the last inspection. Improved resources and the quality of teaching have contributed to the maintenance of standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of information and communication technology, and of how equipment such as computers and digital cameras can be used to support their learning. There were limited opportunities to observe pupils learning, with only three lessons seen. Additional evidence was obtained from displays and portfolios of work, and from discussions with pupils and a presentation by pupils in Year 6.

155. Pupils' skills in using computers develop satisfactorily through the early years in school so that, by the end of Year 2, they have sufficient confidence in word-processing to produce simple text, with some able to add text to their drawings and clipart images. There is evidence that pupils have used graphs and pictograms, and have transferred information from block graphs, produced in mathematics, to computer programs. Recorded work shows that pupils have made charts of the ways in which they come to school. Development of control technology is satisfactory, and pupils can give simple instructions to robotic control devices. Ideas are explored through use of art, drawing and colour packages. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have limited opportunity to undertake research using ICT. Equipment is well prepared so that pupils are able to access software, and some can print their completed work where appropriate. They can save and retrieve their own files, though some require adult support. Pupils use audio-recordings to support reading.
156. By the age of 11, pupils are confident in the use of computers, although there are some limitations in keyboard and word-processing skills. By Year 6, skills have developed so that pupils can confidently move between different layers of certain software to combine graphics and text, for example in preparation of a personal profile of their favourite television programmes, hobbies and their particular friends. Four pupils in Year 6 presented their work and one was able to describe clearly the processes used. Others demonstrated the information they had researched and retrieved, linked to their studies of the Victorian age. They are developing a satisfactory awareness of the applications of ICT and of how this manifests itself in their daily lives, for example in controlling car park barriers.
157. Pupils' ability to retrieve and store information is variable. They develop their research skills satisfactorily throughout Years 3 to 6 by retrieving information from the Internet and CD-ROM software to support work in other subjects. By the end of Year 6 some pupils confidently access and evaluate information. Pupils are able to use e-mail and the school has appropriate safeguards to ensure that children are not at risk from this and other Internet use. The less developed aspect of pupils' use of ICT is their use of spreadsheets and data handling. Older pupils have too few opportunities to use data-handling software to produce charts and graphs in mathematics, science and elsewhere in the curriculum, so that this aspect of their learning is underdeveloped.
158. The use of ICT in applications other than computers is developing well, for example the use of digital cameras to record activities and work throughout the school. Some planned opportunities are provided to develop ICT skills through other subjects, such as downloading information about Victorian life. 'Powerpoint' slide shows are developed well but ICT opportunities are not identified regularly in teachers' planning, and there is scope for more consistent and extensive links in other subjects to develop pupils' skills.
159. Teaching is satisfactory overall and, with support from the local authority adviser, teachers have developed appropriate subject knowledge of ICT, using and reinforcing technical vocabulary well so that pupils learn the language of the subject. Good links are made with basic skills of literacy, but insufficient use is made of ICT in the development of numeracy. However, a new program is due to be implemented soon, which requires regular access by pupils to reinforcement activities tailored to their individual learning needs. Teachers' planning for lessons is supported by a coherent scheme of work. Although there are suitable expectations of pupils overall, higher attaining pupils are not yet challenged sufficiently. There are some missed opportunities for pupils to use computers during the course of daily lessons and older

pupils could make more independent use of the subject. Teaching assistants provide support for their classes but there is no dedicated technical assistant to aid in the day-to-day management of the suite. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are not catered for effectively, and planning does not show sufficient differentiation to support them. Teachers make satisfactory use of ongoing assessment, identifying pupils' errors and misconceptions and using them as a basis for reinforcing learning. Pupils' attitudes are good.

160. Leadership and management of the subject is good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and supports teachers well. The ratio of computers to pupils is good, and there is a rolling programme for renewal and updating. The computer suite is a major development in provision, but presents challenges for classroom organisation, especially with larger classes.

MUSIC

161. The provision for music is a strength of the school. Overall, pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy music-making activities. This is a great improvement since the last inspection, when provision for music was judged to be unsatisfactory. The contribution of the specialist music teacher who teaches all classes has been very effective in raising the standards of teaching and learning across the school.
162. Pupils throughout the school are given good opportunities to develop skills in playing a wide range of tuned and un-tuned instruments. Older pupils create and perform their own compositions, both individually and in small groups, and listen to and appreciate those of their classmates. Through this they learn the skills of working as a team, often following closely a member of the group who has adopted the role of conductor, to ensure the sounds they create blend well together. During the inspection, pupils performed their compositions to the rest of the school, gaining valuable experience of performing to a larger audience. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have equal opportunities to the others to participate fully in lessons.
163. Younger pupils compose in small groups using un-tuned and tuned percussion instruments. They then use their group compositions together to perform a piece of music as a class. For example, during the inspection younger pupils worked in pairs to compose from a limited scale using tuned percussion. They then performed their compositions in combination, while the class teacher conducted. Pupils read and write basic rhythm using the Kodaly system and many of those who have instrumental lessons learn to read music. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of untuned percussion as well as 'body percussion', for example when accompanying their chants. Their ability to watch and follow a 'conductor' closely is good.
164. All pupils achieve well and develop confidence in performing skills. However, throughout the school pupils' knowledge of composers and of different forms and styles of music is less secure. The co-ordinator has identified this as an area for development in the school's music provision.
165. The co-ordinator is a knowledgeable musician and teaches nearly all of the music in the school. All teaching of music observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory, and most was good. Lessons are well planned to give children suitable challenge and to extend their skills. The specialist music teacher manages firmly but

kindly those pupils with challenging behaviour, and plans imaginative and captivating opportunities for pupils to make music. As a result, pupils behave well during music lessons and this contributes effectively to the quality of their learning. In addition, she takes singing practice with the whole school each week. This is, however, an unsatisfactory experience since the range of skills and techniques required by each of the key stages are too diverse to be addressed simultaneously.

166. Assessment procedures in music comprise informal evaluations made by the teacher. However, good use is made of this information to plan further work for pupils so that their learning is extended well. For example, when it became clear that the composition work planned for two year-groups was too challenging for the pupils in the mixed age class, the curriculum for their class was adapted to better enable them to make progress in learning music-making skills. Since the music co-ordinator teaches all classes she is well-placed to ensure that work in music lessons builds steadily upon pupils' previous learning.
167. Pupils can learn to play keyboards, guitar or recorder in individual and small group instrumental lessons. This opportunity is available to all pupils who wish to participate because the school funds these and provides instruments. Pupils may book time to practise in the music room if they do not have their own instruments to take home. This is highly unusual and demonstrates very clearly the school's commitment to and success in promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils to enjoy music-making.
168. Resources for music are good and include a good range of tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments, and a good number of keyboards and guitars. The dedicated music room is a particular advantage and promotes the development and enjoyment of music throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

169. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards that at least match those expected nationally, with some pupils reaching advanced levels of competence. They play a wide variety of games and practise gymnastic movements and sequences. They learn to respond to music through dance. In the autumn term, older pupils develop skills in athletics. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have opportunities to engage in adventurous sports such as rock climbing. Swimming lessons are provided for pupils in Years 3 to 5. However, attainment in swimming is below expectations, with less than half of the pupils reaching basic competence in the water before they leave at the age of 11.
170. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils were observed in a gymnastics lesson. They showed a natural joy in movement, hopping and skipping in a lively manner. They learned to jump and land well, absorbing the impact through bending their knees. Most landed successfully when jumping off a beam, without the need to control their landing by using their arms or stepping forward. Higher attaining pupils showed well-controlled star jumps when they jumped off the beam. Junior pupils were observed in both gymnastics and games lessons. In Years 3 and 4, pupils showed good control when being challenged to find a balance using only one part of their body. Better attainment was evident from some pupils who were able to show a steady balance on the ball of one foot, while holding a ball with one outstretched arm. These pupils also demonstrated cartwheels with straight legs and movement in a

straight line. In a games lesson for Year 6, pupils developed their skills in rugby, learning to pass, run and dodge with control. Better skills were evident in some pupils who mastered the art of making a dummy pass to confuse the opposition. Pupils with special educational needs join in well and make suitable progress.

171. The quality of teaching is sound overall. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and there was evidence of very good teaching, especially for older juniors. Teachers generally set a good example by dressing correctly for lessons and this has a positive influence on the pupils. Teachers manage behaviour well, with an appropriate concern to ensure safety. Lessons begin and end with warm-up and cool-down activities. Teaching points are clearly made. Lessons proceed at a suitable pace. Very good teaching occurs when the teacher has specialist expertise, and practices take place in a very well controlled manner, even in the confines of the small indoor hall. Six groups practised passing techniques without any of the rugby balls going astray. When the teaching is only satisfactory, this is the result of a lack of clarity in pointing out the way in which pupils can improve their movements. Pupils who perform well are asked to demonstrate for the others, but the teacher does not emphasise what it is that makes the sequence of high quality, for instance pointed toes and straight legs in star jumps. On occasions, pupils with English as an additional language find it difficult to follow the teacher's instructions. They have to wait and copy the other pupils, and this makes their progress slower than it should be.
172. In all lessons, however, the active pupils have good or very good attitudes to their work, responding well to the teachers' enthusiasm and control. They have a natural joy in movement and a pleasant atmosphere is maintained as a result. Pupils watch each other's efforts well, choosing the best examples for demonstrations.
173. It is the practice of the school for pupils who have notes from parents or those who have forgotten their kit, to be asked to sit and watch the lesson proceed. This is inappropriate for these pupils, especially when the numbers involved reach a quarter of the class, as it did in one of the lessons observed. The pupils were bored and totally inactive. Any reluctance on their part for the activity would have been reinforced by their falling behind the rest of their peers.
174. The programme for physical education meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, although the time allowed on class weekly timetables is insufficient. It is limited to one session per week. However, Years 5 and 6 pupils have the additional opportunity to take part in adventurous sports, such as rock climbing and archery, in the residential visit that is organised, normally on an annual basis.
175. The co-ordinator of physical education is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and hard working. He is committed to supporting the pupils by organising regular games practices, and entering teams for inter-school events. This ensures a good provision of extra-curricular activities. These are open to both boys and girls. At present, the school does not have a rigorous system of tracking the progress of pupils from year to year and through the strands of the curriculum. Opportunities are not taken for pupils to become active in recording their progress, through the use of an ICT program, for example. This means that younger pupils who show particular talents are not sufficiently encouraged towards higher standards of performance. The subject co-ordinator is not given the time to monitor lessons across the school in order to identify occasions where this should occur. Resources for learning are

sufficient and maintained well. The school has no playing field, but can use a nearby park. The lower playground has an uneven surface, but plans are well advanced for resurfacing this. Although there remains much for the school to achieve in the subject, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

176. Pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory because of the sound teaching and learning and an interesting curriculum. Standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with the expectations in the Southwark Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and the school's own scheme of work. This shows an improvement since the last inspection, when the amount of time given to religious education was unsatisfactory. A scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that they are receiving weekly lessons in religious education. Learning and achievement are supported well by a range of assembly themes and there is now daily collective worship, also an improvement since the last inspection. Older pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to undertake independent writing and research.
177. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about the Christian faith with stories of the birth and life of Jesus. Some interesting original work resulted from a study of the gifts given by the Three Wise Men, and pupils wrote about their own ideas of what to give the baby Jesus. For example, one pupil wrote 'I would give wool to Jesus because I could make a fancy jumper for him'. The work was extended to encouraging pupils to think about gifts that do not cost any money, such as a smile. Later work includes studies of Sikhism, including the five Ks, and pupils have labelled drawings that demonstrate their understanding.
178. Last term several pupils were personally involved in Ramadan and the celebration of Eid, and pupils are currently learning about Islamic festivals. Displays support knowledge of other faiths, such as Christianity, with a good range of books, videos and other artefacts. Good lessons with pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed. They are developing a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of Islam. Respect and tolerance for the religious beliefs of others is nurtured well. With the broad range of religious beliefs and practices represented in the school community, teachers make good use of pupils' own knowledge and experience as a resource, promoting self-esteem and tolerance. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built on their knowledge from earlier years and their written work currently includes coverage of Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Such studies make cross-curricular links with history and art, and there were good cross-curricular links with information and communication technology, when pupils used 'Dreamwriters' to record their work.
179. The overall standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Several good lessons were observed. Planning is appropriate and demonstrates coverage of the requirements of the agreed syllabus. In general, work is well planned to cater for all the classes, including those of mixed ages. However, a lack of planning to meet individual needs in some classes does not enable those with special educational needs and English as an additional language to achieve satisfactorily consistently. Assessment, currently informal, is significantly underdeveloped. There is currently no co-ordinator for the subject. Pupils' interest and knowledge is enhanced through the use of the suitable range of resources, which includes artefacts, videos and tapes, and a range of books. Pupils are given good opportunities to handle a range of artefacts. There are few visits at present to different centres of worship, or visitors representing a variety of faiths and cultures.